



# MEMORANDUM OF MEETING



**Project:** Route 546 Bikeway Planning and Development Study      **S.O. No:** 2007BPP643C T.O. #11

**Date:** February 4, 2010      **Time:** 2:00 - 4:00 PM

**Place:** Room 212, Mc Dade Administration Building      **By:** Jim Van Schoick

**Purpose:** Study Coordinating Committee Meeting #2

## Attending:

Name		Representing
Pam	Mount	Councilwoman, Lawrence Township
Jim	Parvesse	Township Engineer, Lawrence Township
Tom	Ogren	Councilman, Pennington Borough
Leslie	Floyd	Assistant Director, Mercer County Planning Division
Matthew	Lawson	Principal Planner, Mercer County Planning Division
George	Fallat	County Traffic Engineer, Mercer County Engineering Division
William	Riviere	NJDOT - Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs (NJDOT-OBPP)
Regina	Del Vecchio	Michael Baker Jr. Inc.
Barry	Keppard	Michael Baker Jr. Inc.
Jim	Van Schoick	Michael Baker Jr. Inc.

The meeting began with Regina Del Vecchio welcoming everyone to the second Study Coordinating Committee (SCC) Meeting for the Route 546 Bikeway Planning and Development Study. Ms. Del Vecchio introduced William Riviere (NJDOT-OBPP), Barry Keppard, and Jim Van Schoick. Introductions by attendees followed.

Ms. Del Vecchio stated that the purpose of the second SCC meeting was to present and review preliminary recommendations resulting from earlier tasks, and to identify an Initial Preferred Alternative (IPA) for Route 546. Ms. Del Vecchio added that Baker had also followed up with Somerset and Burlington Counties regarding bicycle lane maintenance costs and with the NJDOT-Department of Project Development (NJDOT-DPD) regarding proposed improvements at the Route 31 Circle. Ms. Del Vecchio then stated that a *Feedback Form* had been provided for attendees to record their questions and comments during the meeting.

Ms. Del Vecchio introduced Mr. Keppard to review the Study Scope of Work and present the preliminary recommendations resulting from the Concept Development task.

### **Study Scope of Work**

Mr. Keppard briefly reviewed the Study Area and described the work performed according to the Scope of Work, including: 1) Data Collection, 2) Bikeway Inventory and Analysis, 3) Concept Development, and 4) County and Local Officials Coordination.



# MEMORANDUM OF MEETING



Mr. Keppard stated that concepts, which included roadway improvements, intersection Improvements, and improvements at the Route 31 Circle, were developed as a result of the previous tasks and input received at the first SCC meeting.

## ***Proposed Bikeway Improvement Concepts***

Mr. Keppard presented the roadway improvements, which included the three (3) following concepts:

- **Route 546**

- **Concept #1:** Bicycle Lanes

Concept #1 proposes 5' bicycle lanes along most of Route 546 between Washington Crossing State Park and the Johnson Trolley Line Trail. Sections where bicycle lanes can not be accommodated are: the Woolsey Creek Bridge, the approaches to Route 611 (Scotch Road), and the approaches to the Merrill Lynch/Hopewell Medical Center driveway. The Woolsey Creek Bridge is planned for future reconstruction with shoulders in each direction. At Route 611 and the Merrill Lynch/Hopewell Medical Center driveway, re-striping is proposed to provide 14' shared travel lanes.

- **Concept #2:** "Share the Road"

Concept #2 proposes installing bicycle warning signs and share the road plaques along Route 546. Most of the corridor is currently bicycle compatible based on to NJDOT guidelines since there are wide paved shoulders (5' or wider). In locations where there is no existing shoulder present, such as at Route 611 and the Merrill Lynch/Hopewell Medical Center driveway, 14' shared travel lanes are proposed.

- **Pennington Route**

- **Concept #3:** Signed Bike Route

Concept #3 proposes a signed bicycle route to guide bicyclists from Route 546 through Pennington Borough. Bicycle route signage would be installed at the intersections of Route 546, Route 631 (Ingleside Avenue), Route 640 (S. Main Street) and Route 632 (Lawrenceville-Pennington Road).

Mr. Keppard stated that the bicycle lane improvements (Concept #1) could be accommodated through re-striping, while the "Share the Road" improvements (Concept #2) could be accommodated through existing striping along the corridor. For the signed bike route (Concept #3), a minor road widening (approximately 4') on Route 632 is proposed to improve bicycle compatibility.

The following comments were received regarding the proposed roadway improvements:

- Pam Mount asked why the "Share the Road" concept was suggested. Mr. Keppard responded that the different concepts were included to present multiple bikeway options, especially since capital and maintenance costs can vary depending on the improvement.



## MEMORANDUM OF MEETING



- Tom Ogren asked if there was the potential for bicycle lanes on Route 632 if the roadway was widened. Mr. Keppard responded that as proposed, the minor widening would increase the shoulder width on either side to 4'. This width may allow for bicycle lanes, which will be confirmed following the meeting. *Follow up was performed after the meeting and identified that AASHTO bicycle facility guidelines state that 4' is the minimum width for a bicycle lane facility. A wider bicycle lane (e.g., 5' wide) is recommended for roadways with high volumes, high travel speeds, and/or on-street parking.*
- George Fallat asked how long the section of Route 632 was that would need to be widened. Mr. Keppard responded that the distance from Route 640 to Route 546 was between  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile and one (1) mile. *Follow up was performed after the meeting and identified that the length of segment on Route 632 was approximately 0.6 miles.*
- Jim Parvesse asked if the cross-section of Route 546 between Dayna Lane and Bergen Street in Lawrence Township was 50' wide. Mr. Keppard responded that the width measurements varied from 47' – 50'. Ms. DeVecchio added that the cross-sections may become narrower at the major intersections, and that the widths were measured for typical cross-sectional characteristics. *Follow up is being performed to confirm width between Dayna Lane and the Johnson Trolley Line Trail.*
- Mr. Fallat asked about where parking would not be permitted if the proposed improvements were advanced. Mr. Keppard responded that parking in bicycle lanes is prohibited, except in the event of an emergency. He then stated that parking would be permitted where roadway widths and a municipality would allow.

### **Intersection Improvements**

Mr. Keppard stated that signalized and un-signalized intersection improvements are proposed. Five (5)-foot bicycle lanes are proposed at intersections along Route 546 as part of Concept #1 where pavement width allows. When a bicycle lane cannot be accommodated at the intersection, a 14' wide through lane (approach or receiving) exists or is proposed at the intersection. The one exception is the approach of Route 546 westbound at Route 579 (Bear Tavern Road), where a 12' through lane can be accommodated due to the presence of right- and left-turn lanes.

Mr. Keppard stated that shared travel lanes can be provided at intersections under Concept #2, and striping and signage is proposed to alert motorists and bicyclists to the merging traffic. The following comments were received:

- Ms. Mount asked how new development near the intersection of Route 611 would address bicycle compatibility. Mr. Keppard responded that bicycle compatible improvements, such as widening the through travel lane could be made in advance of the development or incorporated as part of the development.

Mr. Keppard then turned the presentation over to Ms. DeVecchio to present the findings regarding the Route 31 Circle and bicycle facility maintenance costs.



# MEMORANDUM OF MEETING



## ***Route 31 Circle***

Ms. DelVecchio stated that to improve bicycle travel through the circle, Baker developed a concept for converting the Route 31 Circle to a modern roundabout. A meeting was then scheduled with NJDOT-DPD to review this concept and learn more about proposed improvements at the circle. In the meeting, it was identified that the NJDOT IPA for the circle was a modern roundabout. The NJDOT IPA was presented for the SCC participants, and the proposed geometric, access and signage improvements proposed for the circle were reviewed. Ms. Del Vecchio noted that installation of a traffic signal was planned for the intersection of Route 31 and Route 631 based on a traffic signal warrant analysis performed by NJDOT.

The following comments were noted regarding the proposed improvements at the Route 31 Circle:

- Mr. Ogren asked about the potential traffic impacts of the roundabout configuration given the high volume of vehicles that use the circle. Ms. DelVecchio responded that Baker performed a preliminary review of volumes at the circle to identify potential impacts. She also stated that the NJDOT IPA was primarily focused on safety improvements at the circle, such as slowing vehicle entry into the circle from Route 31 and reducing and relocating access for several driveways on the circle.
- Mr. Ogren stated both Pennington and Hopewell preferred installation of a pedestrian hybrid beacon (i.e., high-intensity activated crosswalk [HAWK] signal) at the intersection of Route 31 and Ingleside Avenue rather than the full signal proposed by the NJDOT.

## ***Bicycle Route Maintenance Costs***

Ms. DelVecchio stated that Burlington County and Somerset County were contacted to identify potential capital and maintenance costs associated with bicycle facilities. She stated that Burlington County referred to local transportation plans when roadway repaving or restriping was planned. If the plans included a bicycle lane, the County would then install the lanes if existing roadway width allowed. Somerset County consults with municipalities about including bicycle lanes and, if requested by the town, the County would install bicycle lanes if the existing roadway width allowed. Burlington County continues to maintain the approximately 40 miles of bicycle lanes, and stated that the additional maintenance costs are minimal; Somerset County hands over maintenance of the bicycle lanes to the town.

Ms. DelVecchio also recommended the use of long life epoxy resin for bicycle lane striping.

## ***Working Group Discussion***

A general discussion with the group followed the presentation. The following comments were received during the discussion regarding the preferred concept for Route 546:

- Several participants expressed preference for bicycle lanes along Route 546. Mr. Fallat also nominated the bicycle lanes as the preferred alternative for the proposed bikeway.



## MEMORANDUM OF MEETING



- Ms. Mount asked whether costs would be included in the final report. Ms. DelVecchio responded that preliminary cost estimates would be prepared.
- Mr. Ogren suggested splitting the bikeway into two phases, with Pennington as a midpoint between the phases. It was agreed that the bikeway could proceed in two phases if there were logical end points for each phase.
- Ms. Mount suggested that Mercer County, along with the municipalities, develop standards for intersections and lane widths relative to bicycle accommodations (e.g., shared travel lanes, bicycle lanes, etc.).
- Mr. Fallat stated that that Mercer County typically performs paving projects in segments, and not for entire corridors. It is preferred that improvements use existing pavement widths and occur through re-striping. Federal funding for widening projects is more difficult to obtain and requires more environmental review.
- Matt Lawson asked if a roadway section does not have sufficient pavement width for bicycle compatibility could it still be designated as a bicycle route. Ms. DelVecchio responded that for long sections of roadway that are not compatible, designation would not be recommended.

### ***Next Steps/Schedule***

Ms. DelVecchio informed attendees that the next step for the study was drafting the Final Action Plan and supporting Bikeway Route Map. A draft of the plan and map would be sent out to Mercer County and stakeholders for review and comment prior to it being finalized.

The meeting then concluded with attendees being thanked for their time and input.

---

Handouts at Meeting: Agenda, Fact Sheet, Feedback Form, and Route 546 Bikeway-SCC#2 Presentation

Next Steps: Final Action Plan and Bikeway Route (March)

Follow up Materials: Route 546 Bikeway-SCC#2 Presentation