



MEMORANDUM OF MEETING



Project: Route 546 Bikeway Planning and Development Study **S.O. No:** 2007BPP643C
Date: December 2, 2009 **Time:** T.O. #11
9:00 - 11:00 AM
Place: Room 212, **By:** James Van
Mc Dade Administration Building Schoick
Purpose: Study Coordinating Committee Meeting #1

Attending:

Name		Representing
Pam	Mount	Mayor, Lawrence Township
Richard	Krawczun	Municipal Manager, Lawrence Township
Jim	Parvesse	Township Engineer, Lawrence Township
Paul	Pogorzelski	Township Administrator/Engineer, Hopewell Township
David	Dafilou	Township Committee Member, Hopewell Township
Tom	Ogren	Pennington Borough Council, Pennington Borough
Matthew	Lawson	Principal Planner, Mercer County Planning Division
Greg	Sandusky	County Engineer, Mercer County Engineering Division
George	Fallat	County Traffic Engineer, Mercer County Engineering Division
Cheryl	Kastrenakes	Transportation Planner, Greater Mercer TMA
Daniel	Nemiroff	Transportation Planner, DVRPC
William	Riviere	NJDOT - Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs (NJDOT-OBPP)
Regina	Del Vecchio	Michael Baker Jr. Inc. (Baker)
Barry	Keppard	Michael Baker Jr. Inc. (Baker)
Jim	Van Schoick	Michael Baker Jr. Inc. (Baker)

The meeting began with Regina Del Vecchio welcoming everyone to the first 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 explained that the purpose of the first SCC meeting is to confirm the bicycle needs in the Study Area as identified through the tasks completed to date, and to present findings from the existing conditions assessment. Ms. Del Vecchio then stated that a *Feedback Form* has been provided for attendees to use during the meeting to record their questions and comments.

Scope of Work

Ms. Del Vecchio briefly summarized the tasks in the Scope of Work which included: 1) Data Collection, 2) Bikeway Inventory and Analysis, 3) Concept Development, 4) County and Local Officials Coordination, and 5) Bikeway Action Plan and Route Map. Mr. Keppard and Mr. Van Schoick then presented the findings from Tasks 1 and 2.



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Data Collection

Mr. Van Schoick reviewed the data collected to date, which included bicycle crash reports, a review of proposed projects in the Study Area, GIS data, traffic volumes and roadway cross sectional characteristics. Attendees were informed that three (3) field visits were performed to identify existing conditions of Study Area roadways, intersections, and the Route 31 Circle. The following comment was received:

- Paul Pogorzelski mentioned that striping changes are proposed at the entrance to the Twin Pines Airport Recreation Facility and that the roadway cross section will change in this area. Mr. Keppard responded that the Study team was aware of the proposed plan and the new striping will be considered during concept development.

Mr. Van Schoick reported that bicycle crash reports were provided by the NJDOT Bureau of Safety Programs and by the Lawrence Township, Hopewell Township and Pennington Borough Police Departments. Reported crashes were reviewed and mapped. The crash map was then presented to attendees. The following comments were received:

- Mr. Pogorzelski asked if the bicyclist fatality involving a deer on Route 546 from Summer 2009 was reported. Mr. Van Schoick responded that the crash was reported, but it was not reported as a fatality in the crash report. Mr. Keppard added that if the fatality occurred after the police report was issued, a follow up report was not received.
- Pam Mount asked if the number of crashes along the Study Area could be considered high. Ms. DeVecchio responded that since the seven (7) crashes occurred over a five (5) year period that it is not considered "high" per se. However, the data does indicate that bicyclists are using the route under the conditions that presently exist.

Mr. Van Schoick then turned the presentation over to Mr. Keppard to present the roadway bicycle compatibility assessment findings, intersection inventory and assessment, and the Route 31 Circle inventory and assessment.

Roadway Bicycle Compatibility Assessment

Mr. Keppard stated that roadways in the Study Area with existing traffic volumes were assessed for bicycle compatibility. A matrix was created to summarize the data collected and bicycle compatibility was determined using NJDOT guidelines. The Bicycle Compatibility Map was presented to illustrate compatible and non-compatible sections of roadway in the Study Area. The following comments were noted:

- It was asked why sections of the roadway were deemed not compatible. Mr. Keppard responded that the Study Team utilized the bicycle compatible roadway pavement widths table included in the NJDOT guidelines to assess compatibility. He explained that the guidelines use a combination of existing traffic volumes, posted speed limits, observed presence of truck traffic, lane widths, and shoulder widths to determine a roadway's ability to accommodate bicycles. Roadways identified as not compatible did not meet recommended travel lane or shoulder widths under the guidelines.
- Ms. Mount requested that a copy of the compatibility table from the guidelines be provided to the SCC. Mr. Keppard stated that the table and a link to the guidelines on the NJDOT website would be provided.



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- It was asked if parking on the shoulders would interfere with bicycle use of the shoulder. Mr. Keppard responded that if parking occurs intermittently then bicyclists could share the roadway, as few conflicts with vehicles would potentially exist. However, if parking occurs frequently, then the likelihood for potential conflicts increase and sharing the roadway may require additional width. Also, if bicycle lanes were installed, parking locations may change depending on the available roadway width.
- Richard Krawczun stated that a previous attempt by Lawrence Township to restrict parking along Route 546 resulted in public opposition by nearby residents.
- It was asked if restriping the incompatible roadway section west of Scotch Road could result in bicycle compatibility of this section. Mr. Keppard responded that restriping could result in compatibility, but this would need to be determined in concept development.

Intersection Inventory and Assessment

An intersection inventory and assessment was performed for five (5) signalized and four (4) unsignalized intersections. Mr. Keppard summarized the results of the intersection assessment including details on shoulder widths, striping, lane widths, intersection controls, intersection approaches, and turning movements. The results from the inventory and assessment include:

- *Signalized Intersections*
 1. Route 546 and Route 579 – 4' shoulders present except for shoulder on NE side of intersection.
 2. Route 546 and Route 611 - Eastbound separated through, right and left turn lanes, Westbound shared through/ right turn and left turn lanes.
 3. Route 546 and Route 632 – Channelized right turn lanes present on Route 546 and Route 632.
 4. Route 546 and Federal City/Stephenson Road – Shared through/right turn lane present on both sides of the intersection.
 5. Route 546 and Federal City/Keefe Road – Eastbound channelized turn lane present, channelized turn lane from Federal City Road to Route 546.
- *Unsignalized Intersections*
 1. Route 631 and Route 31 – Stop controlled intersection on Route 631 with flashing beacon.
 2. Route 640 and Route 631 – Stop controlled intersection on Route 631 with no separate turn lanes on either roadway.
 3. Route 640 and Route 632 – Skewed intersection, yield controlled merge on Route 632 with wide paved unstriped gore.
 4. Route 546 and Route 631 – Shoulders present on both sides of intersection on Route 546 but are not present on Route 631; stop controlled movement on Route 631.

Aerial photographs displayed the nine (9) inventoried intersections.



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Route 31 Circle Inventory and Assessment

An inventory and assessment was also performed for the Route 31 Circle. Mr. Keppard summarized the results of the assessment which included an inventory of shoulder widths, movements through the circle, and posted speed limits. The following comments were received:

- Mr. Pogorzelski stated that the proposed safety improvements to occur at the Route 31 circle will include driveway consolidation.
- Ms. Mount asked if a bikeway could be installed through the circle.
- It was suggested that an alternate route may be possible by using Reed Road, a new shared use path, Denow Road, and Wellington Road to connect to Route 546 East of Route 31.

Working Group Discussion

A general discussion with the group followed the presentation. The following comments were received during the discussion:

- Visibility of bike lanes are beneficial to the community.
- The eastern terminus of the proposed route may present an issue for eastbound riders accessing the Johnson Trolley Line Trail.
- The goal of the bikeway should be to accommodate bicyclists in a convenient and consistent manner.
- There are some historical constraints located along the proposed route.
- An increase in impervious coverage along the route may require NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) approval.
- Some attendees indicated a preference to have bike lanes instead of shared lanes or bicycle compatible shoulders where possible.
- If a bicycle facility is installed it would likely influence a future cross section of the roadway if new development occurs.
- As part of the railroad bridge replacement scoping project, a new traffic signal is proposed at Ingleside Avenue and Route 546 and a reduction in the speed limit (45 MPH → 35 MPH) is proposed between Ingleside Avenue and the Route 31 Circle.
- Study participants asked about where cyclists were observed travelling on Route 546.
- A traffic signal warrant study was performed by NJ DOT for the intersection of Route 31 and Ingleside Avenue.
- A High-intensity activated crosswalk (HAWK) signal was suggested for the intersection at Route 31 and Ingleside Avenue.
- It was asked if a disabled vehicle in a bike lane would impact liability if the vehicle causes a crash between a vehicle and a bicyclist.
- Projected traffic volumes from approved developments should be considered.
- It is important to connect Pennington on the bikeway due to observations by SCC attendees that it is a route currently used by cyclists.



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Next Steps/Schedule

Ms. Del Vecchio informed attendees about the next steps in the study, which include:

- Concept Development,
- Study Coordinating Committee Meeting # 2, and
- Final Action Plan and Bikeway Route Map.

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

Handouts at Meeting: Study Folder Containing: Agenda, Fact Sheet, Feedback Form, and Route 546 Bikeway-SCC#1 Presentation

Next Steps: Concept Development (January), SCC Meeting # 2 (January/Early Feb.)

Follow up Materials Provided to SCC Attendees via Email NJDOT-Bicycle Compatible Roadway Pavement Widths Matrix, Route 546 Bikeway-Bicycle Compatibility Matrix, and Route 546 Bikeway-SCC#1 Presentation