

Kelley's Corner Steering Committee

Meeting Minutes – 1 December 2017

These are the meeting minutes from the Kelley's Corner Steering Committee of the Town of Acton, Massachusetts. The meeting took place on 1 December 2017 in Room 204 at the Acton Town Hall.

Present: Andrew Brockway, Bob Van Meter, Eric Solomon, Jon Benson, Larry Kenah, Peter Darlow

Not Present:

Board of Peter Berry

Selectmen:

Town of Acton: Kristen Guichard, Matthew Selby, Robert Hummel

GPI: Lindsey Barbee, P.E. Project Manager

Timothy Letton, P.E. Executive VP

Guests: Erin Bettez

Membership Details

Peter Berry invited Erin Bettez, Director of Acton Boxborough Community Ed, to join the committee.

Meeting Summary

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:00 am by Andy Brockway. The primary purpose of this meeting was to review some revisions to the plans associated with roads and traffic signals that GPI developed after initial feedback from MassDOT.

Revised Plans

GPI received some feedback from MassDOT related to the interaction of the existing traffic signal and a proposed signal at the intersection of a re-aligned Charter Road and Route 111 (Mass Ave). GPI revised its plans in response to this feedback.

Traffic Signals

There will now be four traffic signals in Kelley's Corner.

- Existing signal at intersection of Route 111 (Mass Ave) and Route 27 (Main Street)
- New signal at intersection of Community Lane and Route 27 (by Gulf Station)
- New signal at intersection of Community Lane and Route 111 (by CVS and TD Bank)
- New signal at intersection of re-aligned Charter Road and Route 111 (by tennis courts and Baker Whitney Oil Co)

All four signals will use advanced signal technology. They will be coordinated with each other.

Lane Changes

Some changes were made to proposed traffic lanes through the main intersection.

- The left-hand turn lane from Route 27 southbound to Route 111 eastbound is eliminated.
 - Drivers can use Community Lane to skip the Route 27/Route 111 intersection.
- There will be two left-hand turn lanes from Route 111 eastbound to Route 27 northbound.
 - The increased traffic flow will reduce the backup on Route 111 in front of the junior high.
- The innermost lane on Route 27 northbound is changed from right-hand-turn only to combined right-hand turn and through traffic.

Other Changes

The plans will include so-called bike boxes that will help bicycles make left hand turns through the major intersection.

Implications

In order to help evaluate these changes, GPI created a report card that evaluated existing traffic conditions using several metrics:

- Volume to capacity ratio
 - If volume exceeds capacity, the queue grows without limit.
- Average delay time
- Queue length

They looked at conditions in both morning peak times and afternoon/evening peak times.

They presented three scenarios for twenty years out (1936) using current models and assumptions about traffic increase per year.

- No changes made to the intersection
- Changes proposed in initial draft plans
- Additional changes described earlier in this note

At the risk of oversimplifying, here are the results.

- The numbers associated with the “no build” option show degradation in all metrics twenty years out.
- The numbers associated with the initial proposed plans are better than the “no build” numbers but are also worse than today’s numbers.
- The numbers associated with the revised plans are about the same as today’s numbers. That is, the proposed changes will maintain service in spite of twenty years of projected growth in traffic volume.

All of the effects mentioned in the previous three points are larger for the evening hours than the morning hours.

Observations

Andy Brockway brought up the challenge of communicating these results. In particular, he questioned the use of school-like grades of D, E, and F to describe overall level of service.

GPI said that they have presented the proposed changes to MassDOT and got a positive response.

Rough Schedule and Timelines

GPI is getting close to submitting the 25% plan to MassDOT. There will be a design public hearing approximately 120 days after this submission.

People talked about two items associated with this project that should be presented at spring town meeting.

- We need to ask for some additional funds to cover additional engineering expenses.
- We need to get a general approval for the so-called takings required for the infrastructure changes.

Costs

Engineering Plans

The town is responsible for the engineering plans. We have previously allocated \$750k for this work. We anticipate an additional \$250k for work already completed (changes described in these minutes, Hosmer House, etc) and any additional design that might be needed.

Construction

The actual construction work will be funded by some combination of state and Federal moneys. We are currently on the FY22 calendar.

Land Acquisition

The town is responsible for all of these costs. We cannot begin any conversations with property owners until the 25% plan has been submitted.

Minutes

We approved, with minor edits, the minutes from two previous KCSC meetings: 2 February 2017 and 15 August 2017.

We took no action on meeting notes from three meeting in August and September.

In Closing

Peter Darlow left at 8:00 am. After reviewing and approving minutes from earlier meetings, this meeting adjourned shortly thereafter.

Future Meetings

There are no future meetings related to the infrastructure improvement project currently scheduled.

There is a meeting with Adam Winstanley scheduled for Thursday, 14 December 2017. Members from several other committees interested in the future development of the Kmart parcel are also invited to this meeting.

These minutes were recorded by Lawrence J Kenah.