

To: Brian Sullivan, Town Manager

From: Traffic Advisory Committee

Date: November 12, 2002

Subjects: Cambridge Street Improvements 25% Preliminary Design Review  
Cambridge Street at Everett Avenue and Myopia Road  
Cambridge Street at High Street and Church Street  
Bacon Street, Fletcher Street and Church Street  
Cambridge Street at Pond Street

Attendees: Robert Conway, Town Engineer  
Joseph Perritano, Police Chief  
John Nash, Fire Chief  
George Zambouras, Director of DPW  
Kevin Mawn, Safety Officer  
Brian Sullivan, Town Manager and Guest

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Per your request, the Traffic Advisory Committee (TAC) met on November 12, 2002, in conjunction with the Louis Berger Group Report dated November 6, 2002, to re-examine the plan set for the Cambridge Street Improvements 25% Preliminary Design dated January 23, 2002, Mass Highway Department's (MHD) Functional Design Report, and the numerous letters and petitions from the public. TAC was very appreciative of the valuable insight, ideas, and comments from the public and would welcome a continuation of the dialogue not only for this project for all future street design projects.

For the purposes of clarity, the TAC is an advisory town staff committee reporting to the Town Manager, comprised of representatives from Police Department, Fire Department, Department of Public Works, Department of Planning and Community Development, and Engineering Division. The Committee's primary focus is public safety for non-motorists and motorists alike, and other traffic issues within the Town of Winchester.

In general, the TAC felt that the plans, as designed by MHD, did not reflect the character of the existing neighborhoods and that the design did not present a safe enough

environment for non-motorists. The TAC took several months to discuss and finally redesign the intersections in an attempt to address the concerns of TAC members and the public. The overall goals of the redesign process were to:

- Ensure the safety, ease, and comfort of non-motorists and motorists alike.
- Reduce the number of accidents
- Maintain or increase green space and pedestrian amenities
- Refrain from expanding the right of way

The TAC recommendations, as outlined below, seek to strike a balance between the strong vehicular demand placed upon these intersections, and the needs of school children, the elderly, residents, bicyclists, and other non-motorists. The TAC has included several traffic calming techniques such as reduced turning radii, narrow travel lanes, gateway medians, and an exploration of textured pavement for use in pedestrian areas. Details regarding aesthetics, landscape design, and street furniture should be designed with public input as the design enters the next phase. TAC did not make specific recommendations in this regard.

It is assumed by the TAC, that all intersections will have the No Parking restrictions defined in the final design.

Accompanying sketches are schematic in nature.

The following are the TAC's recommendations for these intersections:

### **Cambridge Street at Everett Avenue and Myopia Road**

Again, this intersection is within a dense residential neighborhood and the TAC attempted to minimize the impact of the intersection on the abutting property owners and create an environment that was safe and pleasant for vehicles and pedestrians. In general, we recommend that the turning radii be significantly reduced and that a lane on Everett Avenue be eliminated. The majority of the changes that we propose are best exemplified in the attached sketch and are further detailed below:

We recommend that Everett Avenue on the north side of the existing island be reduced to two lanes total (one eastbound and one westbound) and that the curb line radius along the north side of Everett Avenue be significantly reduced. The landscaped island should be expanded eliminating the ancillary lane from Cambridge Street to Everett Avenue. With the reduction of the roadway and the island expansion, this will reduce the multiple street crossing which exists today.

We recommend that the curb line radii on Myopia Road be significantly reduced.

We recommend that a sidewalk be installed on the west side of Cambridge Street from Myopia Road to High Street, or at least, either remove or trim back the thick shrubbery along the westerly side of Cambridge Street from Swan Road to Myopia Road, to improve sight distance.

We concur with the proposed traffic signal configuration and layout, but recommend that the traffic signal have a long delay sequence for Everett Avenue and Myopia Road to discourage cut through traffic. The Town will press to have an agreement in hand with MHD for the traffic signal sequencing before proceeding with the project. The Town will continue to monitor traffic conditions in this neighborhood after completion, in order to make any additional adjustments necessary. Appropriate, decorative mast arms will have a positive impact on the intersection and will enhance the visual quality of the intersection.

### **Cambridge Street at Church Street and High Street**

This is a particularly critical intersection as it is utilized by numerous school children as they make their way to and from Ambrose School. In general, the TAC was concerned with the layout and design of the pedestrian system. The length of the proposed crosswalks and the lack of pedestrian amenities such as waiting areas or pedestrian refuges made the intersection a potential safety hazard for school children and other pedestrians. Therefore, the TAC redesigned the intersection with pedestrians in mind, and by shortened the turning radii (to give the pedestrians more room on the sidewalk and less distance to cross). The majority of the changes that we propose are best exemplified in the attached sketch and are further detailed below:

The TAC is concerned with the proposed width of Church Street at this intersection. A total of four travel lanes creates a vehicle-dominated environment and creates a very long crosswalk. The TAC would recommend that MHD re-evaluate the intersection as a three-lane road.

In combination with re-evaluation the width of Church Street at this intersection, we recommend that the curb radii on Church Street be significantly reduced to facilitate the reduction of the crosswalk length.

We recommend that a sidewalk be installed on the westerly side of Cambridge Street, from High Street to Myopia Road.

We feel that if there is any additional easement required on the northeast portion of the intersection that the road layout should be shifted westerly onto town owned property. This would avoid takings around the intersection.

We concur with the proposed traffic signal configuration and layout. Appropriate, decorative mast arms will have a positive impact on the intersection and will enhance the visual quality of the intersection.

The Committee has serious concerns with the alignment of High Street and Church Street. We recommend that MHD explore the options of shifting/widening High Street to the south to improve this alignment.

### **Bacon Street, Fletcher Street and Church Street Intersection**

This intersection, located in a dense residential neighborhood, is unique among the four intersections, as the streets involved are owned entirely by the Town of Winchester. Further, the traffic accident reports from the Winchester Police Department and the data found within the MHD Functional Design Report indicate that the traffic signalization at this intersection is substandard and is the cause of a majority of accidents. Therefore, in general, the TAC does not recommend a wholesale redesign of the intersection as proposed by MHD. The majority of the changes that we propose are best exemplified in the attached sketch and are further detailed below.

We recommend that the proposed cross-hatched painted island on Church Street easterly of Bacon Street be eliminated and the space be better used for traffic alignment.

We recommend that Fletcher Street be two lanes with no left turn only lane. MHD had proposed three lanes with a left turn only lane.

We recommend that Church Street west, (outbound) be a two lane configuration for the first 50 feet entering into the intersection with no lane markings blending into a single traffic lane beyond that point. This configuration would enhance the right turn motion out of Fletcher Street, especially for school busses. Each lane shall be a minimum of 11 feet wide.

We recommend that Church Street east, (inbound) be a two lane configuration with the inside lane dedicated to right turns only, with no right on red signage. The outside lane would be for straight and left turns. Each lane shall be a minimum of 11 feet wide.

All roadway layouts can and should be contained within the existing curb layouts with the possible exception of the base for the proposed mast arm traffic signal.

We concur with the proposed traffic signal configuration and layout. Appropriate, decorative mast arms will have a positive impact on the intersection and will enhance the visual quality of the intersection.

We will be continually researching durable, textured roadway materials to explore the possibility of having textured crosswalks or an infield crosswalk diamond. Textured pavement can have a positive impact on the visual character of an intersection as well as inform drivers that the area is a shared environment.

### **Cambridge Street at Pond Street Intersection**

The TAC concurs with the MHD Preliminary Design Plan, but recommends that the Pond Street alignment be shifted to the south so that the established trees along the north side of Pond Street will not be disturbed.

We recommend that the existing bus stop, approximately 300 feet south of the intersection, be relocated approximately 100 feet south of the intersection. We would also recommend that a bus turnout, a sidewalk to the bus stop from the intersection, and crosswalk be incorporated into the design.