

**New Jersey Department of Transportation
Local Transportation Planning Assistance
East Hanover Avenue Corridor Transportation Study**

**Project Kick-Off Meeting
Haggerty Education Center at Frelinghuysen Arboretum – Classroom B
Wednesday, October 5, 2011
10:00 AM**

I. Introduction of Participants

II. Introduction to NJDOT Local Transportation Planning Assistance (LTPA)

III. Meeting Purpose

IV. Overview of the East Hanover Avenue Corridor

- a. Discussion of Existing Conditions/Issues
- b. Study Goals and Objectives
- c. Corridor Land-Use Changes

V. Study Scope of Work

VI. Opportunities

- a. Improved pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access.
- b. Peak-period traffic flow improvements.
- c. Municipal land-use coordination.
- d. Private-sector fair share contributions.
- e. Other issues.

VII. Next Steps

- a. Information from municipalities.
- b. Study advisory committee?
- c. Follow-up actions.

Meeting Notes



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Project Kick-Off Meeting

East Hanover Avenue Corridor Transportation Study

Date/Time: October 5, 2011 10:00 AM
Place: Haggerty Education Center at Frelinghuysen Arboretum
Attendees: See Attachment
Distribution: Attendees, File

I. Meeting Purpose

The purpose of the meeting was twofold: to present the scope of the East Hanover Avenue Corridor Study to representatives from the municipalities in which the project study area is located, and to obtain information regarding planned developments, current operational issues, and potential opportunities for “complete streets” improvements to the corridor. This meeting also initiated the involvement of the municipalities along the East Hanover Avenue corridor, which will continue throughout the project process.

The following is a summary of the items discussed during the project kick-off meeting between representatives from Morris County, Hanover Township, Morris Township, Morris Plains Borough, the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), and NJDOT’s consultant, Stantec. A sign-in sheet was used to record attendance and is attached to this document.

II. Study Background, Goals, and Objectives

Following an introduction of all meeting attendees, Steve Hammond provided a brief introduction to the project and discussed the issues that led the corridor study. The East Hanover Avenue corridor between Speedwell Avenue and Whippany Road experiences high vehicle delay during both peak periods. Land use along the corridor has been predominantly industrial in nature, with pockets of small commercial/retail, residential, and cultural/recreational sites. Many of the abandoned industrial sites along the corridor have been identified for redevelopment, which would result in an increase in traffic volume along the corridor and change traffic operations during peak and off-peak times. In addition, while there are several cultural/recreational sites along the corridor, continuous pedestrian and bicycle facilities are not provided in all locations.

In order to facilitate a corridor-wide transportation plan, Morris County reached out to NJDOT to assist with a corridor study. The objectives of the study include the following:

- Identify physical improvements that would mitigate existing and future anticipated operational issues.

One Team. Infinite Solutions.

- Improve the corridor for all users, including vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders.
- Involve stakeholders in developing a comprehensive plan for the corridor across all three municipalities to facilitate a cohesive approach to mitigating increases in traffic volumes associated with individual developments.
- Provide documentation that would allow the County to negotiate pro rata contributions for transportation improvements with developers along the corridor.

III. East Hanover Avenue Corridor Discussion

Utilizing aeriels of the corridor, Adam Catherine and Louis Luglio of Stantec led a discussion that provided an opportunity for representatives from the municipalities to provide feedback, including future anticipated development along the corridor, and operational, safety, pedestrian, and bicycle issues. These items were discussed from the western limit of the study area (Speedwell Avenue) to the eastern limit (Whippany Road). Below is a summary of the items discussed:

Intersection of West/East Hanover Avenue and Speedwell Avenue (US 202)

- Vehicles queue along eastbound West Hanover Avenue during the AM peak period and along westbound East Hanover Avenue during the PM peak period. The queuing is due to high volumes, as well as the single lane configuration that exists along West Hanover Avenue between Speedwell Avenue and Stiles Avenue.
- Improvements discussed included additional right turn lanes on all approaches, or an increase in the number of lanes on West Hanover Avenue between Speedwell Avenue and Stiles Avenue.

NJ TRANSIT Rail Overpass

- The increase in traffic along the corridor may exceed the capacity of the four-lane section on the overpass.
- Widening of the overpass would be costly and require extensive right-of-way (ROW) acquisitions. While this study does not preclude additional lanes on the corridor, it will focus on maximizing the existing infrastructure.

Intersection of East Hanover Avenue and The American Road

- A 160-unit age-restricted housing complex was proposed for a site located along The American Road. However, that site has been revised to a 60-unit townhome community (not age-restricted).
- Based on information provided by Hanover Township, the 60-unit townhome community would generate less traffic than the original 160-unit facility.

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- Morris Plains is planning a pedestrian pathway from The American Road to the NJ TRANSIT rail station along an unutilized portion of the Route 24 Extension ROW. This path would also connect to existing sidewalks so that pedestrians could access the Mennen Arena.
- Hanover Township has signed a long-term lease with NJDOT to utilize a portion of the Route 24 ROW for a recreational path that would extend from The American Road to Ridgedale Avenue.

Mennen Arena

- The property directly across the street from the Mennen Arena driveway is being remediated and there are no current redevelopment plans.
- Mennen Arena experiences the heaviest use between April and September. There are three playing surfaces in the arena, and it can seat up to 2,500 people.
- Highest activity at the Arena occurs on weekends and weekday evenings.
- Large events require three to four police officers to direct traffic.
- The Arena is looking into shared parking on nearby sites to assist with parking demand.
- Improvements to the driveway would help improve flow into and out of the Arena during events. Stantec should consider an acceleration lane out of the site to match the deceleration lane into the site. In addition, a traffic signal may be considered if the site across the street is redeveloped.
- Mennen maintains the right to control entrance and egress from the Arena.

Intersection of East Hanover Avenue and Horse Hill Road/Martin Luther King

- The property on the northwest corner of the intersection is slated for an 80,000 S.F. supermarket, a bank, and 10,000 S.F. of additional retail.
- There will be two points of ingress and egress to the proposed development along East Hanover Avenue, and one on Horse Hill Road. The eastern driveway on East Hanover Avenue will be right-out only and the western driveway will be full access. A center turn lane will be provided to allow left turns into both driveways. Left-turn lanes will also be provided on both East Hanover Avenue approaches to the Horse Hill Road/Martin Luther King Drive intersections.
- Acceleration and deceleration lanes into and out of the site should be considered.

- The signal runs under a split-phased operation, which was enacted to reduce left-turn crashes. Left-turn crashes have been reduced, but the operation of the signal is not optimal for traffic flow.
- There is a bus transit stop on East Hanover Avenue, west of the intersection that should be improved.
- Full sidewalks and crosswalks should be provided at the intersection in order to facilitate a connection between the proposed retail site and the existing residential neighborhood.
- The YMCA on Horsehill Road, north of the intersection, generates some running/jogging and bicycle activity along East Hanover Avenue.

Intersection of Ridgedale Avenue and East Hanover Avenue

- The property on the northwest quadrant of the intersection has been re-zoned to commercial uses along the East Hanover Avenue frontage, with a subdivided portion of residential uses to the rear of the property with access to Horsehill Road. There have been redevelopment applications in the past that included a supermarket and a Home Depot, but there are no current applications.
- The site has environmental restrictions, including a capped portion with contaminated fill.
- The signal currently runs under a split-phased operation, which was enacted to reduce left-turn crashes. Left-turn crashes have been reduced, but the operation of the signal is not optimal for traffic flow.
- Vehicles wait through multiple signal cycles as late as 9:30 AM, well after the queue along eastbound East Hanover Avenue from the Whippany Road intersection dissipates.
- There is transit along Ridgedale Avenue. Sidewalks and crosswalks are needed along all approaches to the intersection to facilitate access to the transit stops.

Patriots' Path

- Patriots' Path is an important cultural resource, and additional connections between the Path and other facilities, such as the Mennen Arena, should be explored.
- Patriots' Path intersects East Hanover Avenue between the at-grade railroad crossing and the I-287 overpass. The official path route requires that pedestrians walk east to the signalized intersection at the Library driveway and then backtrack west to the trailhead, a total distance of 2,700 feet.

- A pedestrian crosswalk that facilitates a direct connection of the trail across East Hanover Avenue should be explored.

Intersection of East Hanover Avenue and Whippany Road

- Eastbound East Hanover Avenue experiences heavy congestion in the AM peak hour. Queues regularly extend along East Hanover Avenue through the intersection with the Library driveway.
- There is a need to balance delays across all approaches to the intersection. Whippany Road typically clears during the AM peak period. More green time could be assigned to the East Hanover Avenue approach. Both the County and local police have sent written requests to NJDOT on multiple occasions to have the signal timing adjusted, but have not received a response.
- Vehicle queuing blocks access from Academy Drive during the peak periods.
- Academy Estates residential neighborhood is adjacent to the Morris County Library. A stub of Lynn Terrace extends to the Library's eastern property line in the rear of the property. If connected through the Library property, residents of the Academy Estates could utilize the traffic signal. However, this proposal would require that vehicles circulate through the Library parking lot in order to access the signal.
- There is potential to relocate the signalized intersection so that the entrance to the Library is directly across from the Arboretum's driveway. This would facilitate access to the residential properties without having vehicles circulating through the parking lot. Hanover Township originally opposed this concept because the driveway would be located closer to the rear of several residential properties; however, Township officials would be willing to reconsider in order to alleviate the access issues.
- The redevelopment of the Honeywell site may add some additional traffic to Whippany Road.

IV. Scope of Work

Adam Catherine of Stantec presented a brief description of the scope of work. The study will be divided into two phases:

- Phase one will consist of a corridor traffic study and alternatives analysis that will identify and evaluate several potential mitigation strategies for the corridor, as well as individual intersections. The stakeholders will be involved at multiple points during the study process. Draft concept plans and a report will be completed by the end of 2011. Stakeholders will have an opportunity to review and comment on the concept plans and reports, and provide input to the selection of the preferred alternative.

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- Phase 2 consists of 95% design of the improvements selected from the results of the corridor traffic study and alternatives analysis. The timeline for completion and the final products of this phase will depend greatly on the improvements that are selected in the corridor study.

V. Next Steps

The following action items were identified:

- Stantec will develop Existing and Future No-Build condition simulation models for the corridor, which will be presented to the stakeholders for further input.
- The County will facilitate all future meetings and provide the municipalities with details as to the content of each meeting so they can select the most appropriate representatives to attend.
- Future technical meetings should include members of other agencies, such as TransOptions and NJ TRANSIT, when appropriate.
- The municipalities will provide Stantec with any additional information that they deem relevant to the project, including crash data, land use plans, etc.

The foregoing is considered to be a true and accurate record of all items discussed. If any discrepancies or inconsistencies are noted, please contact the writer within one week.

STANTEC CONSULTING SERVICES INC.

Adam Catherine, P.E.
Traffic Engineer
adam.catherine@stantec.com

Attachment: Attendee List



East Hanover Corridor Study Kick-Off Meeting



Wednesday, October 05, 2011

Haggerty Center, Frelinghuysen Arboretum

Attendance Summary

Name:	Organization:	Guests:	Fee:	Comment:
Confirmed				
Barilla, Joseph, Senior Planner	Morris County Development Review	1		
Biggs, Jeff, Director of Engineering	Morris County Park Commission	1		
Catherine, Adam L., P.E., Traffic Engineer	Stantec Consulting	1		
Conrads, Ed, Police Lieutenant	Township of Morris	1		
Cybulski, Deena, AICP, P.P., Director	Morris County Dept. of Planning & Development	1		
Dellagiacoma, Debra, Assistant Engineer	Morris County Engineering Division	1		
Druetzler, Frank J., Mayor	Borough of Morris Plains	1		
Falkoski, Joseph, MC Planning Board Chairman	Morris County Planning Board	1		
Ferrone, Richard, Police Captain	Township of Morris	1		
Gallagher, Stephen W., Police Chief	Township of Hanover	1		
Hall, Leon C., P.E., Engineer	Borough of Morris Plains	1		
Hammond, Steve, P.E., County Engineer	Morris County Engineering Division	1		
Hayes, John, P.P.	Morris County Division of Transportation	1		
Helmer, Dave, Executive Director	Morris County Park Commission	1		
Luglio, Louis J., P.E., Senior Principal	Stantec Consulting	1		
Maceira, Gerardo, P.E., Engineer	Township of Hanover	1		
Manahan, Ilene Dorf, Chairperson	Morris County Board of Transportation	1		Will arrive around 11am
Marion, Christine G., PP/AICP, Director	Morris County Planning Board Staff	1		
Perry, Gregory, P.P., Supervising Planner	Morris County Development Review	1		
Peslis, Jim, Police Sergeant	Township of Hanover	1		
Powell, Dave, Traffic Safety Officer	Township of Morris	1		
Quinn, Timothy F., Administrator	Township of Morris	1		
Reilly, Dennis, Police Chief	Township of Morris	1		
Rohsler, Gerald, Director	Morris County Division of Transportation	1		
Rotando, Ralph	Borough of Morris Plains	1		
Rubin, Helene K., P.P., Section Chief	New Jersey Department of Transportation	1		
Sheridan, John T., Mayor	Township of Hanover	1		
Slate, James, P.E., Engineer	Township of Morris	1		
Soriano, Anthony, P.P., Supervising Planner	Morris County Planning Board Staff	1		
Vitz, Chris, P.E., County Traffic Engineer	Morris County Engineering Division	1		
Zabihach, Roman, Council Member	Borough of Morris Plains	1		

Name: Organization: Guests: Fee: Comment:

Total Confirmed Guests: 31