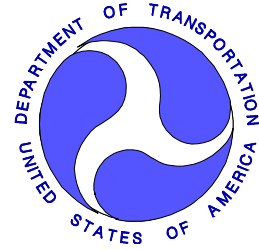


**Maine Department of Transportation**  
**I-395 / Route 9 Transportation Study**  
May 2, 2001  
Public Advisory Committee Meeting



**Contact Susanna Liller at 1-800-370-2458, extension 112**

***Meeting Minutes***

***Wednesday, May 2***

***6:00-9:00 pm***

***PAC Meeting #6***

**Public Advisory Committee (PAC):**

Rick Bronson  
Joan Brooks  
Rodney Buswell  
Ellen Campbell  
Manley DeBeck, Jr.  
Sandi Duchesne  
Keith Guttormsen  
Linda Johns  
Scott A. Leach  
Stan Moses  
Margaret McKinney (for Ed Harrow)  
Melody Knadler  
Gerry Palmer  
Charles Plummer  
Roger Raymond  
Jim Ring

**Not in attendance:**

Allan Bromley  
Ed Harrow  
Al Skolfield

**Study Team:**

Richard Bostwick  
John Derr  
Mari Costanzo  
Raymond Faucher  
Susanna Liller  
Mike Morgan  
Fred Michaud  
William Plumpton  
Redington Robbins

**Not in Attendance**

Andrew Bickmore  
Terry Blair, Sr.  
Bill Coombs  
Dale Doughty  
Phillip A. Dunn  
Bill Leet  
Jim Linker  
Dale Mayo

**Agenda Item #1: Old Business**

Susanna welcomed everyone and reminded the group that this would be a work session for the PAC. She asked the public to hold any questions until 8:45.

Mari announced that notebooks containing all the PAC materials would be located in each town office for reference purposes.

Everyone received the last meeting's minutes and an agenda in the mail.

Bill Plumpton quickly reviewed where we were in the study process, and the items to be completed in the short term.

### **Agenda Item #2: Feedback on Public Meeting**

Bill Plumpton asked for feedback on the recent public meeting:

1. Sandi Duchesne received 3 phone calls afterwards
2. Ray Faucher thought the meeting had gone well and that no new issues had arisen
3. Bill mentioned that MDOT had only received one set of comments from Janet Henry that would be considered.

### **Agenda Item #3: Traffic Forecasts**

Mike Morgan from the Bureau of Planning presented information on how the traffic forecasts had been developed. (A handout accompanied his presentation)

- o Forecasts came from the East/West Highway Study with a study team including the Maine State Planning Office, the Maine Department of Transportation, and RKG Associates
- o Sub Consultants for the East/West Highway Study included: Standards & Poors DRI, Davidson Peterson Associates, Charles S. Colgan, Kevin Hooper Associates, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., Wilbur Smith Associates and Roger Mallar Associates
- o Travel forecasts {for the East /West Highway Study and the current study} were estimated using a modified Maine Statewide Travel Demand Model.
- o Corridor “B” assignments and forecasts from the East/West Highway Study are the basis for the traffic projections for the I-395/ Route 9 Study.
- o Corridor “B” traffic assignments include travel time savings {for the East/West Highway Study and the current study} from potential improvements to Routes 9, 46, 1A and 2 including: 2 lane upgrade, 37 miles of reconstruction and 15 miles of widening.
- o Corridor “B” traffic assignments also include travel time savings for the East/West Highway Study from potential improvements to travel through the following areas: Calais/St.Stephens International Border Crossing, I-395/Rt.9 area, Skowhegan.

Several technical reports are available through MDOT or at the web address:

[www.state.me.us/mdot/ewhiway/homepage.htm](http://www.state.me.us/mdot/ewhiway/homepage.htm)

A comparison was shown at seven locations between the traffic forecasts from the Statewide travel Demand Model and historical traffic growth. (See handout).

Rick Bronson commented that he thought that the traffic projections for the East/West Highway study were low. There were no other comments.

#### **Agenda Item #4: Identification of Natural and Social Features**

Bill went on to present new features information. (See map)

- o Farmland- there is new information specifically in the Hancock area, with data from 1998. The land was studied through field observations, with boundaries drawn from conservation maps, and it is regulated under the Federal Farmland Protection Act.
- o Unofficial zoning, a good indicator of future land use
- o Community facilities and services- publicly owned, but not true public property- there are no known true public properties
- o Private property- All properties are outlined on map with a little work still to be done in Hancock County

Bill stated that this information completes the feature information that would be presented to the PAC prior to the formation of a reasonable range of alternatives.

There was a discussion of non-attainment areas. EPA is charged with keeping track of various pollutants (ozone, CO<sub>2</sub>, etc.), which it does through pollution thresholds. A non-attainment area goes above the threshold in one or more pollutants. There are no non-attainment areas within the I-395 study area.

Richard Bostwick mentioned that a parcel in the Felts Brook area might be a wetland compensation site. Bill suggested the study team check on that.

#### **Agenda Item #5: Preliminary Alternatives Identification and Development**

Bill went on to prepare the PAC for developing corridors. (A handout accompanied his presentation.) He reminded everyone of the critical elements list, which must be consulted if the PAC has to fall back on a less-than-optimal transportation solution. He added that studies very rarely end with the no-build option, but that it has to be considered along with other corridor.

On the composite maps laid out for each group working on corridors, the dark red represented areas protected by specific legislation, the blue represented important areas but ones not protected by specific legislation, and the green represented other areas. Most of the green areas were forest or open land. Some point features were shown in pink; these were predominately wells or areas of potential hazardous waste.

The PAC was given the goal to create 1000-ft wide corridors that satisfy the needs and purpose of the study, connecting logical termini with the least adverse environmental impacts.

Each group was given a set of transparent corridor templates to develop proposed corridors. They were told this would not be the last chance to design corridors and that a professional team would take their designs, put them in CAD software, and bring them back at the next meeting.

Susanna stated the process rules. This is brainstorming, so:

1. No judgement.
2. After a certain amount of time, one representative from each group would report back to everyone on that group's proposed corridors.

### **Agenda Item #7: Questions from the Public**

Public comment time was held while the PAC members were identifying preliminary alternatives in small groups.

Janet Henry from Holden summarized from a written statement submitted to the DOT:

1. Scoping definition- scoping means environmental to me. I think the public should also be given the chance to list environmental concerns. You could do this through the web page.
2. I'm concerned that quality of life issues are not being addressed. We should have a chance to create mitigation measures for what communities think might impact their quality of life.
3. I'd like to see MDOT consider one directional alignment. This minimizes the effect of a 200-foot wide corridor.

Steve Barkin from Mann Hill Road in Holden noted that in the DOT's regression analysis for each location, only a few data points were used. He questioned how it would be possible to know that the line would continue along the same slope. Mike Morgan explained that the regression projections are not being used in this study; They are just being compared with the statewide travel demand model traffic projections.

Greg Davies from Holden asked if the study is part of the continued east west highway and why the DOT couldn't look at something smaller than a divided highway. Ray responded that other sections of road are being looked at in other studies and that no one had settled on a divided highway.

Barbara Tennen from Holden said she wonders why the study doesn't focus on the 11,000 cars on Route 1A heading towards Ellsworth and she also questioned why the study seems to be moving so quickly. Fred Michaud responded that other studies are focusing on Route 1A and that this study is separated out because of the truck traffic in

Holden. He also said that a mass transit study is moving at a faster pace and he would be happy to send Barbara a copy of the Department's Six Year Plan.

John Bryant from Holden asked if all alternatives would have to fit within the 18 million dollar budget. Ray answered that additional funds could probably be secured if necessary, but he also said that the study team wouldn't look at money until later in the process.

Ray and Fred went on to talk briefly about mass transit and the movement for alternative transport tied to Bangor International Airport, especially with regard to the tourist industry.

John Bryant asked what chance there would be to veto something going through Holden with only two Holden citizens out of eighteen on the PAC. Ray said that there would also be public meetings and that the PAC should be passing along any public feedback as the process moves forward.

#### **Agenda Item #5, Continued: Presentations from the workgroups:**

These presentations will be distributed at the next PAC meeting when they have been converted to digital form.

#### **Agenda Item #6: Next Steps and Activities**

The study team announced they would take the PAC's drawings and place them in digital maps with the centerlines falling within the 1000-foot corridors.

Bill made clear that it is never too late to add alternatives to the range of alternatives considered.

The next meeting was scheduled for June 27<sup>th</sup>, at the Holbrook school. Sandi will not be able to attend.