

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** File

**FROM:** William P. Grace

**NOTE:** **Review comments were solicited from Derry, Londonderry, FHWA, and NHDOT on 7/25/01. Those comments that were received have been incorporated.**

**DATE:** July 17, 2001

**RE:** Derry-Londonderry Exit 4A  
Environmental Impact Statement  
CLD Reference No. 97-0209

**SUBJECT:** Combined Local Administrative Oversight Committee (LAOC)/Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting

**LOCATION:** CLD Office, Manchester, NH

**ATTENDEES:**

*Carol Granfield	Town of Derry
*Jim MacEachern	Town of Derry
*Ed Boutin, Esq.	Town of Derry
*Troy Brown	Town of Londonderry
**George Sioras	Town of Derry
**Janusz Czyzowski	Town of Londonderry
**Butch Waidelich	FHWA
**Bill O'Donnell	FHWA
**Jeff Brillhart	NHDOT
Bill Cass	NHDOT
Marc Laurin	NHDOT
Roberta Robie	Derry CATF Member
Christopher Bean	CLD
Bill Grace	CLD
Paul Konieczka	CLD
Jameson Paine	CLD

\*LAOC Members  
\*\*TAC Members

LAOC members unable to attend: Bob Carr, Esq. Town of Londonderry  
Andrew Greco Town of Londonderry

TAC members unable to attend: Moni Sharma SNHPC

**Items discussed:**

**1. Meeting Purpose**

Chris Bean explained that the two basic purposes of the meeting were to discuss revisions to the proposed new alternatives and define the direction of the project.

**2. Possible Alternatives 'G' and 'H'**

At the last combined TAC/LAOC Meeting held on 5/22/01, CLD was asked by the Towns to modify the design of Alternatives G and H to minimize right-of-way acquisitions to the extent practicable. Chris Bean presented the modified design using 100-scale plans. These alternatives would begin on NH Route 102 (Broadway) just east of the Exit 4 ramps and require modifications to the Broadway/Londonderry Road intersection, providing a primary through movement for traffic along Londonderry Road and a secondary movement for traffic continuing down Broadway. This intersection would be signalized. The initial pre-conceptual design for the Londonderry Road/Broadway intersection called for the acquisition of several residences/businesses on the east side of Londonderry Road. The modified design results in fewer acquisitions by shifting the widened Londonderry Road towards the west. Also, the alignment was shifted to avoid impacting three homes on Madden Road. Alternative G now matches into Alternative A and Alternative H matches into Alternative B, north of Ash Street. A preliminary environmental impact matrix that listed the remaining alternatives (A, B, C, and D, as well as Alternative F, which is the minor upgrade of NH 102) and the two new alternatives (G and H) was distributed for discussion. (The no-build alternative would also be carried through the Draft EIS.)

Both Alternatives G and H would require the expansion of Londonderry Road to five lanes and would involve substantial right-of-way impacts to homes and businesses along Londonderry Road and NH Route 102. These include the Derry Plaza, which contains seven businesses.

Access to properties on the east side of Londonderry Road appears to be feasible by using the bypassed section of that road to provide access to Broadway. Access for commercial properties on the south side of Broadway may be difficult. One option would be to use the bypassed section of Broadway to provide access via Ela Avenue or St. Charles Street. Another option may be to allow only right turns in and out of these businesses (currently gas stations).

A question was raised regarding the shifting of Londonderry Road towards the east near Ash Street. CLD explained that this was an attempt to minimize property impacts on the west side of Londonderry Road. There are also engineering concerns regarding the widening of the Londonderry Road/Ash Street intersection, which would require a wider bridge over I-93. Bill Cass noted that the I-93 widening project would likely impact the properties on the west side of Londonderry Road. Therefore, a shift towards the west should be considered if this alternative moves into the detailed design phase.

Paul Konieczka explained the changes in the "Purpose and Need" section of the environmental impacts matrix. Under the heading of "Economic Development," the alternatives were labeled as

having “direct,” “slightly improved,” or “indirect” interstate access to the industrial/commercial zoned lands between I-93 and the Derry Industrial Park. Also, a new traffic volume location (ADT) for a location east of I-93 and west of Londonderry Road has been included in the matrix under the ‘Purpose and Need’ section for comparison purposes. The results of the traffic modeling showed Alternatives G and H were the least effective alternatives (5-7% reductions) for removing traffic from downtown Derry, and providing indirect interstate access for the commercial/industrial land in both Derry and Londonderry.

Alternative G would require the acquisition of 21 buildings (10 residential and 11 commercial), impact 1.3 acres of wetlands, 11 historic properties including 6 buildings, and would cost approximately \$13.4 million, including engineering design, construction and right-of-way. One of the acquired commercial buildings would be the Derry Plaza, which contains seven businesses.

Alternative H would require the acquisition of 24 buildings, 13 residential and 11 commercial, impact 4.2 acres of wetlands, 4 historic properties (no buildings), and would cost approximately \$15.5 million for design, construction and right-of-way. This alternative would also require the acquisition of the Derry Plaza.

CLD recommended continuing the studies of Alternatives A, B, C, D, and F, as well as the no-build option, and discontinuing Alternatives G and H. Alternatives G and H provide little traffic reduction on Broadway, and would have substantial right-of-way impacts, but do provide access, albeit indirect, to the industrially/commercially zoned lands.

### **3. Comments and Concerns for Alternatives G and H**

#### **FHWA**

Bill O'Donnell felt that although the traffic model information for the location west of Londonderry Road may be useful, he does not feel that this short section of NH 102 is critical relative to the project ‘Purpose and Need’ and should be removed from the matrix. Butch Waidelich agreed that it may not be critical to the purpose and need; however, it is an impact that would still be considered when comparing alternatives. CLD explained that the traffic volumes along this stretch would be substantial (close to 40,000 vehicles per day) if Alternatives G or H were pursued, and there is serious congestion in that area at the present time. These projected heavy volumes will dictate the amount of access control required. For now, this traffic evaluation point will remain in the matrix.

Bill O'Donnell noted that there was not much difference between Alternatives C or D, and G or H, relative to the reduction of traffic volumes on Broadway. However, Alternatives G and H do provide some traffic reduction along Broadway and do serve the industrial lands east of I-93. Later in the discussion, Bill agreed that public input should be solicited before dismissing Alternatives G and H.

Butch Waidelich noted that the remaining lands along Londonderry Road, after the buildings were removed, could be consolidated and possibly resold for new development to compensate for the commercial business impacts.

Butch explained that NEPA regulations require that the natural, socio-economic, and cultural environments need to be considered. The new alternatives have serious impacts to the socio-economic environment. If these alternatives and their impacts are considered reasonable, then they should be carried forward for further study. The Towns need to collectively decide if these impacts are reasonable and acceptable. At this point, the Towns appear to be saying that the impacts are not acceptable. These decisions need to be well-documented in the Rationale Report and in the Draft EIS.

### **Londonderry**

Janusz Czyzowski noted that the largest single expense of Alternatives G or H would be right-of-way costs, and if the remaining lands could be consolidated and resold this could result in a lower overall cost. However, with the revised design, and the proposed I-93 widening, there may not be enough room to effectively consolidate the properties.

Troy Brown asked if Alternatives A or B were selected, could improvements on NH 102 at Exit 4 and west of Exit 4 also be implemented. The response was that this might be practicable. However, the I-93 widening project will also be considering improvements to Exit 4 and to NH 102. Impacts west of Exit 4 are not part of the "Purpose and Need" for this project. Coordination of the two projects will continue.

Troy felt that the socio-economic impacts of Alternatives G and H might be unacceptable. At the last TAC/LAOC meeting, the impacts were viewed as potentially acceptable. Janusz felt that they provided some traffic benefits and improved access to industrial lands.

### **NHDOT**

Jeff Brillhart commented that the NHDOT would be responsible for any improvements to Exit 4. He also felt that the new designs of the new alternatives have reduced impacts to some of the properties along Londonderry Road and Madden Road. He felt the new alternatives are still viable, and the Towns would incur substantial risk of a legal challenge if these alternatives were dropped at this point. He reminded the group that the NEPA process requires substantial public input, and he recommends another Public Informational Meeting to discuss these alternatives. Jeff has been involved with many EIS projects, and it has been his experience that the impacts such as those associated with Alternatives G and H are not insurmountable. The environmental impact matrix shows little difference among the remaining alternatives, particularly relative to reducing traffic congestion on Broadway. Therefore, public input is even more critical.

### **Derry**

Carol Granfield stated that Derry and Londonderry want to move this project forward as expeditiously as possible. Informed decisions regarding the remaining alternatives to be studied further need to be made conclusively. However, the two towns are funding this project on their own and resources are limited.

Carol noted that Alternatives G and H do not provide enough traffic reduction on Broadway and should not be studied further. The Towns need to determine what is reasonable to study.

Ed Boutin noted the consolidation of remaining properties on Londonderry Road might result in access issues that may diminish the effectiveness of that road. He also noted that access to the industrially/commercially zoned lands east of I-93 has always been a secondary focus of this project, but access to lands along Londonderry Road has not been.

Ed asked if Alternatives G and H were studied further, is it likely that any new information would arise that would possibly affect the decision. CLD responded that the additional studies, including more detailed impacts to air quality, noise, field studies of natural and cultural resources and further traffic analyses, are not likely to provide such information.

George Sioras reminded the group that the original intent of this project was to relieve traffic congestion on NH 102 in Derry and Londonderry and to maintain the integrity of Exit 4. NHDOT modified Exit 4 in the late 1980's and further improvements are expected with the proposed widening of I-93. The industrial land east of I-93 became a secondary issue. George also noted that NHDOT is working with Derry and Londonderry to study possible widening of NH 28 near the Wal-Mart. Also, George noted that there is increasing traffic to and from Chester and Sandown, and there have been many new subdivisions recently approved, especially in Chester.

Jim MacEachern stated that there have been numerous public meetings and the consensus was to move forward with Alternatives A, B, C, D and F. He felt that the TAC and LAOC have completed sufficient studies of Alternatives G and H and could comfortably discontinue further studies.

Roberta Robie felt that the results from the SNHPC traffic model show that the new alternatives would not divert much traffic from Broadway. Many vehicles would continue to use Broadway not only to access the downtown area, but also to continue easterly along NH 102. Roberta also noted that most of the impacts and the potential socio-economic and traffic benefits of Alternatives G and H would occur in Londonderry. She reminded the group that the primary goal of the project is to relieve traffic congestion on Broadway. Economic development is secondary.

#### **4. Removing Alternatives**

Questions were raised as to why further review is needed for Alternatives G and H. After some discussion, it was agreed that a series of meetings to discuss the elimination of Alternatives G and H would be held in the near future. These will include a meeting with the Resource Agencies, the Derry Town Council, the Londonderry Town Council, and a Public Informational Meeting.

Chris Bean stated that the Towns had requested the elimination of Alternatives C and D from further study to save time and reduce costs. FHWA had suggested that CLD carefully document the rationale for eliminating those alternatives and submit that request to FHWA for consideration. However, CLD has analyzed the elimination of these alternatives and feels that there is insufficient evidence to clearly document reasons for eliminating Alternatives C and D, and also insufficient public support or non-support for these alternatives.

Although there has been some discussion regarding the elimination of the so-called bypass alternatives (B and C). FHWA felt these alternatives are still reasonable and should continue to be studied. The Towns would encumber a greater level of risk if these alternatives were dropped from further study. Legal challenges could be expected. Jim MacEachern stated that the Derry Town Council has voted to support Alternative B if it were truncated at NH Route 28. CLD noted that this alternative may result in substantial traffic complications and has not yet been given full consideration. Butch noted that this truncated alternative can be investigated further or reconsidered later in the NEPA process without having to analyze an entirely new alternative, since it is part of an alternative already identified

Some discussion centered on the origination of alternatives G and H. It was noted that similar options were discussed in the 1980's. The current recommendation came from a Londonderry Councilor during the January, 2001, Public Informational Meetings.

## **5. Next Steps**

### **a) Resource Agency Meeting**

CLD will meet with the Resource Agencies at the next NHDOT monthly meeting (Wednesday, July 18, 2001) to present Alternatives G and H and recommend that those two alternatives be removed from further consideration. Alternatives A, B, C, D and F, as well as the no-build option, would remain for further in-depth environmental review (carried through the DEIS) and design work.

### **b) Town Council Meetings**

CLD will present the revised design and impacts analyses for Alternatives G and H to the Derry Town Council and to the Londonderry Town Council with the recommendation for no further study of these alternatives. An official letter from each Town Council will be requested. Butch Waidelich pointed out that the local officials' endorsement of a particular alignment should only be used as input for the DEIS. It should not be considered as selection of a preferred alternative at this time. The Derry Town Council meets on the first and third Tuesday of each month, and the Londonderry Town Council meets on the first and third Monday of each month. Potential dates for Derry were 7/24, 8/7, or 8/21. Potential dates for Londonderry were 8/6 or 8/20.

### **c) Public Informational Meeting**

After some discussion, it was determined that one joint public meeting, given appropriate announcement in local newspapers and on local cable access channels, should be held to notify the public that Alternatives G and H have been analyzed and are not being proposed for further study and announce that Alternatives A, B, C, D, and F will be carried through the DEIS. The meeting will be held in Derry in September.

**d) Public Notification**

The Towns will notify abutters along the new proposed alternatives (G and H), as well as the other alternatives to be studied further (A, B, C, D and F), of the Public Informational Meeting individually by letter.

**e) Amendment Request**

CLD will prepare an amendment request to cover additional out-of-scope tasks associated with the new alternatives and submit it to the Town Managers of Derry and Londonderry.

The meeting adjourned at 12:40 PM.

If the above notes do not agree with your recollection of the meeting, please advise this office within 5 business days of receipt.

CRB:WPG:cww

cc: Technical Advisory Committee (TAC):

Derry:	George Sioras, Alan Swan, Doug Rathburn
Londonderry:	Andre Garron and Janusz Czyzowski
FHWA:	Bill O'Donnell, Butch Waidelich
NHDOT:	David J. Brillhart and Marc Laurin
SNHPC:	Moni Sharma

Local Administrative Oversight Committee (LAOC):

Carol Granfield	Derry Town Administrator
James MacEachern	Derry Town Councilor
Edmund Boutin, Esq.	Derry Counsel
Troy Brown	Londonderry Interim Town Manager
Andrew Greco	Londonderry Town Councilor
Robert Carr, Esq.	Londonderry Counsel

Citizens Advisory Task Force (CATF):

<u>Derry:</u>	<u>Londonderry:</u>
George Sioras	Troy Brown
Albert Doolittle	Jim Anagnos
Roberta Robie	Eugene Harrington
Jack Dowd	Jennifer A. Sollars
Barbara Concannon	Gerry Shuck
Frank Mazzuchelli	Rep. Sherman Packard
Suzanne Regali	

Project Team

Victoria Bunker	Lynne Monroe (Preservation Company)	Bruce Mayberry
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