

MEETING NOTES

Route 9W Corridor Management Plan Towns of Marlborough and Lloyd, NY

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
July 13, 2017, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

1. Public Outreach

- Public Workshop #1
 - The first public workshop was held on June 8th from 6:30 to 8:30 pm at the Marlboro Elementary School.
 - The workshop was attended by 22 people, including three members of TAC. Participants were engaged and provided constructive feedback and ideas.
 - The workshop summary is attached to the meeting notes.
- Focus Group Meeting
 - First focus group took place on June 1 with five agriculture and hospitality business owners. A meeting summary is attached to the meeting notes.
 - In lieu of the emergency services focus group, the Project Team will hold individual meetings with emergency service providers.
 - Met with Chief Cocozza on June 1
 - In the process of scheduling a meeting with a representative from the Town of Lloyd Police Department
 - The final focus group has been scheduled for the afternoon of Wednesday, September 20. Participants will be asked to evaluate preliminary recommendations.
- Online Survey
 - We have received 29 responses to the online survey. The Project Team hopes to increase the number of responses to 50 or 60.
 - BFJ has created a press release and flier to advertise the survey. Electronic copies will be provided to members of the TAC. Members are encouraged to post links to the online survey on social media and share with local newspapers and blogs.

2. Task Update

- Inventory and Corridor Assessment
 - UCTC to inquire with contractor regarding ATR schedule
 - BFJ has requested signal timing plans for signalized intersections via FOIL request
 - UCTC has signed an agreement with Central Hudson to view gas line maps. These maps cannot be republished.
- Coordination with Marlborough Comprehensive Plan Update
 - The Project Team met with Behan Planning and representatives from the Town of Marlborough & Ulster County on July 12 to discuss zoning, access management, and opportunities to increase pedestrian & bicycle mobility.
 - Route 9W Overlay District (500 ft Buffer) needs to be fine-tuned to better regulate future development. The access management plan must be done in coordination.
 - Future development, including expansion of water and sewer district, should be consolidated to Hamlets. Agricultural areas of corridor should be preserved.

Route 9W Corridor Management Plan

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

- Feasibility of roundabouts in the hamlets to reduce speeds, improve circulation, and serve as gateways to Marlborough
- Increasing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure along corridor
 - Feasibility of consistent shoulder or multi-use path along 9W to connect the hamlets
 - Create network of sidewalks and bicycle routes in hamlets.
 - Increase opportunities to cross 9W, ie Cluett Schantz Park
- Access Management
 - BFJ has begun working on access management plan, which will provide parcel level recommendations to improve safety, traffic flow, and aesthetics along 9W.
 - The plan will consist of a series of maps and guidelines to assist planning boards that will serve as an important tool for planning boards.
 - The plan should consider that all lots along corridor have the right to access 9W.
 - Must coordinate with NYSDOT to understand implications that repaving/paving shoulders will have on existing driveways.

3. Roadway Safety Audit

- Introduction to RSA Process
 - Identify locations to be assessed
 - 3 to 6 people to form RSA team
 - Field review potentially scheduled around August TAC meeting
- Candidate Locations
 - Marlboro Triangle (as part of BFJ's review of 2008 study)
 - Milton Turnpike
 - Milton Industrial Park
 - Four-lane segment
- Involvement of NYSDOT
 - Committee agreed that RSA should not proceed before a meeting is held with NYSDOT. UCTC will reach out to DOT to schedule meeting for earliest date possible.

4. Next Steps

- Next in-person TAC Meeting: Thursday, August 10 from 10 to 12pm at Milton Train Station
- Next TAC Conference Call: Wednesday, September 6
- 2nd Focus Group: Wednesday, September 20th from 2 to 4 pm
- Public Workshop #2: Thursday, November 9 (tentative)

Attachments:

- Meeting Agenda
- Public Workshop #1 Summary
- Focus Group Summary
- Online survey press release and flier



Route 9W Corridor Management Plan Public Workshop 1: Meeting Summary

Thursday, June 8 2017

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- Public Workshop Presentation
- Roundtable Discussion Materials
 - Study area map with sections
 - Study area map with crash data

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Introduction

The Ulster County Transportation Council (UCTC), with project consultants BFJ Planning and Susan G. Blickstein, hosted the first public workshop for the Route 9W Corridor Management Plan (CMP) on Thursday, June 8 2017. The workshop was held at the Marlboro Elementary School from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. The workshop was attended by 22 people, including members of the Technical Advisory Committee; the Town of Marlborough; and members of the community. All of the participants are frequent users of Route 9W.

Brian Slack, Senior Transportation Planner at UCTC, opened the workshop with introductory remarks explaining the overall process and introducing members of the project team. Georges Jacquemart, Principal at BFJ, provided an overview of the study's objectives and introduced concepts in safety and traffic management. Lauren Rennée, Senior Planner at BFJ, provided an overview of the study area and crash analysis. Susan Blickstein, Principal, presented issues and opportunities for bicyclists and pedestrians and a summary of public outreach efforts completed thus far.

Following the presentation and a brief coffee break, participants were split into four roundtable groups lead by members of the project team. Each table was provided with a study area map summarizing crashes from the previous five years. The discussions were moderated by a member of the project team, who encouraged participants to identify issues and opportunities for improvement for vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle travel as well as future development. After 45 minutes of discussion the group came back together for a report back. One participant from each table was asked to summarize the main talking points and takeaways from their discussion. At the end of the meeting, participants were asked to prioritize the study's objectives through a dot point exercise.

This was one of two public workshops outlined in the CMP's Public Engagement Plan. A second public workshop will be held in the Fall of 2017.

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Workshop Agenda

1. **Presentation (45 Min)**
 - Introduction
 - Project Team & TAC
 - Project Timeline
 - What is a Corridor Management Plan?
 - Purpose
 - Key Elements
 - Study Objectives
 - Corridor Inventory and Assessment
 - Overview of four sections of corridor
 - Transit
 - Crash analysis
 - Bicycle, Pedestrian, ADA Conditions
 - Public Outreach – Results of Intercept Survey
 - How Can You Get Involved?
2. **Coffee Break (15 Min)**
3. **Roundtable Discussion (45 Min)**
4. **Wrap Up (15 Min)**
 - Report Back
 - Dot-Point Exercise

A copy of the presentation is contained in the Appendix.

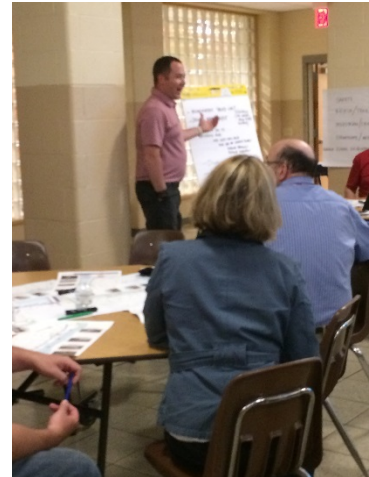


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Roundtable Discussions & Report Back

After the presentation and a short break, participants were split into four roundtable discussion groups. Each roundtable discussion was facilitated by a member of the project team. Participants were encouraged to answer the following guiding questions, which consider all modes of transportation:

- Is there anything missing from the study objectives?
- Are there opportunities for bicycling in the corridor?
- Where should we encourage pedestrian activity? Where should we not?
- Would a consistent shoulder along 9W be a reasonable goal?
- Should we maintain passing lanes?
- Should we control left turns?
- Do you use transit, taxi, or ride-share services?



Each table was given a study area maps summarizing the corridor's lane configurations and the five-year crash analysis. Copies of these maps are contained in the Appendix.

After 45 minutes of discussion, workshop participants reconvened and one person from each table presented the table's main talking points. The comments are summarized below:

- Study Objectives
 - "Improve traffic flow" was added to the study's objectives.
- High speeds along corridor
 - Drivers often speed in segments that have more than two traffic lanes, creating unsafe speed differentials. Eliminate four lane section between Marlboro and Milton.
 - The speed limit should be lower in segments that have a limit of 55.
 - The section between CVS and Milton Turnpike should be lowered from 55 mph to 45 mph.
 - Difficult to make safe turn off of Route 9W. Left turn pockets should be available in more places such as Willow Tree Rd, Old Indian Rd, and Lyons Lane
- Traffic Congestion
 - Very difficult to make left turns on to Route 9W
 - Passing lanes should be maintained in some areas of corridor
 - Left turn at intersection of Route 9W and Western Avenue causes congestion. Construct northbound left-turn lane at Western Avenue to allow through vehicles to pass.
 - Consider roundabouts in hamlets to alleviate congestion
- Safety
 - Improve lighting at high crash locations.



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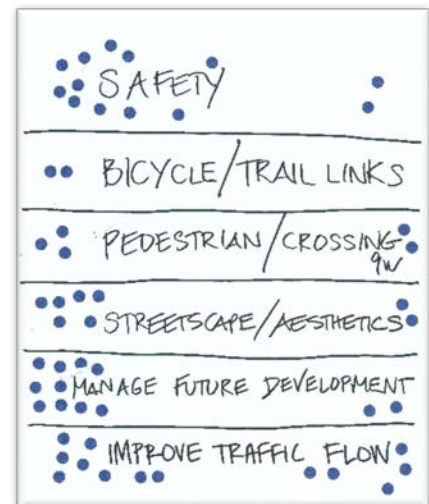
- Poor driving behavior, such as aggressive driving and distracted driving, contribute to unsafe conditions.
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure
 - Pedestrian activity is most appropriate in the hamlets. Sidewalks network should be expanded to connect gaps and reach more destinations.
 - Pedestrian infrastructure should be prioritized around Marlboro's schools.
 - Extend sidewalks in Marlboro Hamlet to CVS.
 - Extend sidewalks from Main Street to intersection of Route 9W & Milton Turnpike in Milton Hamlet
 - Long term goal to connect hamlets
 - There are no pedestrian crossings outside of Marlboro Hamlet.
 - Difficult for pedestrians and bicyclists to access Cluett Schantz Memorial Park.
 - Effort should be made to maintain a consistent shoulder throughout corridor for pedestrian and bicycle use. A separate facility would be ideal if feasible.
 - Hamlets should be more bicycle friendly.
 - Sidewalks should be required as part of future developments
- Corridor Aesthetics
 - Pavement is in poor condition in some sections of corridor. General concern that NYSDOT does not have the resources to improve or maintain corridor.
 - Improve visual character of corridor
 - Gateway treatments with plantings
 - Improved property maintenance
 - Introduce design guidelines for future development
 - Better wayfinding signage

Dot Point Exercise

The purpose of the dot-point exercise is for participants to rank the study's objectives to inform how the plan should prioritize recommendations. Participants were each given three dots and were asked to stick them next to the objectives they thought were most important. This activity gave participants the opportunity to vote independently after hearing feedback from the group roundtable discussion. Five objectives were developed by the project team and TAC. A sixth, improve traffic flow, was added after the Report Back.

The results of the dot-point exercise are as follows:

- Address traffic safety issues, reduce speeding - **13 dots**
- Improve traffic flow - **13 dots**
- Manage and mitigate future land use development - **12 dots**
- Improve streetscape aesthetics - 8 dots
- Improve pedestrian walking and crossing conditions along select sections of corridor - 5 dots
- Improve bicycle opportunities in corridor and connections to surrounding trails - 2 dots



Appendix

- Workshop Advertisement and Sign-in Sheet
- Public Workshop Presentation
- Roundtable Discussion Materials
 - Study area map with sections
 - Study area map with crash data

Full version with appendix available for download at:
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/8i5174h0y5oli0z/AADuTGFHe2v7JzVcdrYTOVF4a?dl=0>

June 1, 2017
Route 9W Corridor Management Plan
Focus Group Notes

Overview

A focus group was held in the Milton Hamlet on June 1st with various business owners/operators in the service and farm sectors. The businesses included farms, vineyards, animal breeding, inns, and lodging. There was a mix of long established businesses, as well as newer businesses. The meeting opened with a brief overview of the Corridor Management Plan, noting that it will analyze and address crash history/safety, multi-modal accessibility, and streetscape design and aesthetics. Below is a summary of the discussion and some key quotes.

Business Operations

All the businesses represented at the meeting are open year-round, but vary in productivity and operations seasonally. Most of the businesses are multifaceted, including retail, wholesale, restaurant, event space, and/or lodging with overnight guests. Most serve the public directly, but one of the farms is primarily wholesale and serves the public through a farm stand and a farmers market in Milton.

Market Area & Route 9W Challenges

Visitors often come from points south and New York City and often do not know where they are going and slow down traffic. Guests tell the businesses that it is difficult to navigate at night due to the lack of signage and lighting and that 9W is not an aesthetically pleasing corridor. Lodging, event/restaurant, and vineyard businesses often encourage large parties to travel by shuttle to avoid drinking and driving, parking, and navigation issues. Several businesses direct visitors via routes that minimize time spent on Route 9W due to aesthetic concerns.

- “Most guests come by car, but some by train from the city and then taxi/shuttle over. We encourage buses/shuttles for big parties or weddings. The restaurant provides valet because there is not enough parking on-site or nearby.”
- “It is pretty much busy year-round now, especially when there is no snow during the winter. We are always turning business away.”
- “June to October there is a farmers market close to the entrance to the town park, which is hard to find. You have to watch speeding and there will be more people and traffic going in and out. May to October there is a lot of traffic for weddings.”

Safety/Traffic & Business Operations

The business representatives were asked about the challenges and constraints of operating a business in the area and their concerns about the corridor, as it currently operates, related to

their business entity/needs. Overall, safety and traffic along the corridor were the primary concerns. There are different conditions during each season – fall has more traffic, but there are difficult conditions in the winter. Traffic is often trying to cross the road, make left turns, or slow down to turn into driveways. Chestnut Lane was a of particular concern due to the location and access to a daycare business that serves the community. “It is crazy that people are making the left there [Chestnut Lane] and dropping off their kids.”

Some businesses have tractor trailers and cars of both employees, clients, and customers going in and out of driveways throughout the day, with many more employees and pick-ups in the morning and increased numbers of employees and business overall in the summer and fall seasons, especially with weddings and events. Employment varies per business between a few employees and 250 part-time and full-time employees at peak times, but also varies seasonally. This creates additional traffic in peak seasons, but mostly in the morning and evening. Summer and fall are the busiest seasons, but winter is sometimes busy, depending on the weather conditions. Some employers live on the site, while others house their employees on-site or nearby, and other employees come from throughout the Mid-Hudson Valley Region. It is difficult for employees in tractor-trailers pulling in and out of the driveways into traffic and they must make sure there is plenty of space. An accident could jeopardize lives and the value of the cargo on the trailers.

Currently, 9W serves as a local road, a commercial road, and a bypass for thruway and truck traffic avoiding tolls. The common response was that they try to have guests avoid 9W as much as possible, primarily for safety reasons because traffic is too fast, but also because of the negative image of the corridor and the more attractive side roads. Tourist drivers should be encouraged to use more scenic routes rather than 9W, which is used most by commuter traffic. It was recognized that 9W is primarily a commercial corridor and is not well-suited to serve residences. Additionally, businesses worry that people tend to miss the hamlets and businesses off the corridor because they are directed to Highland or Marlboro.

- “We don't have very many options for people to bypass 9W to get to us. There are many access points to the property, but nobody knows how to get off Route 9W safely.”
- “The whole thing [9W] is an eyesore, especially Highland to Middlehope. The road is not nice enough to be residential.”
- “9W is a commercial corridor and we need to encourage businesses - need it to remain that way to help offset the high taxes.”
- “We have had visitors who couldn't believe that there were driveways right on the highway. The speed is 55mph with driveways in the mix.”

Needs & Potential Solutions

There was an acute awareness of the danger of speeding traffic and the need to find ways to calm traffic. It was evident that some locations are worse and that merging and diverging lanes dramatically increased speeds and accidents. Some of the representatives felt that having two lanes would be safer than four. Marlboro Hamlet has the slowest traffic, but it is the most

populated and has the most accidents. It is also very difficult for people to turn at some intersections due to the high speed. The group was not opposed to reducing the speed limit to 40 miles per hour, but they also wanted to see a comparison of speed and crashes with Route 9 and whether there have been any changes in the data on 9W prior to 5 years ago. Most of the representatives felt that better traffic signalization at places like Milton Turnpike would improve safety and make them more comfortable to direct traffic that way. Some businesses already direct people through Milton Turnpike because it is more “beautiful”. However, one was unsure of the effectiveness of the traffic lights due to high crash rates.

- “You feel dread any time you have to pull in or out or cross the street.”
- “It was a common occurrence many years ago to have vehicles screeching and seeing people killed – it still happens.”
- “The turn lane is slowing people down and making people think, but it is not ideal because people are traveling so fast. Pulling into driveway is worse, though. We have to train [employees] to pump the brakes so that they don’t get rear ended, but people are driving fast and not paying attention.”
- “There are tractors going down the road to the farms. We could use tractor crossing caution signs. Much more needs to be done, but at least make people aware of slower, working traffic.”
- “We are in competition with Route 9 and people are making choices to come down this road because it is faster.”
- “In the winter, it is nice to have the extra lane when somebody is struggling to go up the hill.”
- “I am not fond of the center turning lanes in Highland because it is still high-speed and high-frequency with fast oncoming traffic and so many things going on – businesses, tourists, commuters in Highland.”
- “We wait when the light turns green because of people running red lights.”

However, other scenic routes are often still not safe and encourage speeding, such as on South Road and Lattintown Road. They felt that there should be a long-term vision to provide more opportunities for people to walk or bike between the hamlets and other attractions, such as a path away from 9W. Visitors often ask how they can walk from place to place, but there are no sidewalks. A river trail was suggested, as well as improving the existing farm trail for better utilization. The focus group representatives said that there needs better access, signage, and education about the trail because many people don’t know about it and there is not enough advanced notice to turn onto the trail.

- “South Road is very dangerous coming off 9W. People are still going the same speed as on 9W and the shoulder, signage, and lighting are terrible.”
- “Guests don’t want to drive back from wine tastings, but worry about walking.”
- “We provide bicycles for our guests, but encourage them not to go out onto 9W.”
- “There is no opportunity to walk or bike. It would be beneficial for people visiting to be able to do so.”
- “NY’s first farm trail is in this town. We should capitalize on that and improve it.”

Other issues that were discussed included continuing to incorporate agriculture and agro-tourism near the corridor, which is “part of the town’s blood”; closing off Chestnut Lane and providing the access to the daycare at the end of what would then be a dead-end street; and providing better cautionary signage for deer. There is currently some signage, but it is sporadic and it is also nearly impossible to predict where they will cross. Additionally, many businesses do not have curbs, making it difficult to tell when people are turning in and out, although the Town might have a curbing requirement. The property lines along 9W are somewhat ambiguous and unclear where the State property ends and the private property begins. Property owners along the corridor maintain the land to varying extents.

Rte 9W Corridor Management Plan

(In the Towns of Marlborough and Lloyd)

Sponsored by the Ulster County Transportation Council (UCTC), in conjunction with the Towns of Marlborough and Lloyd and NYS Department of Transportation

A public survey has been developed to better understand concerns of safety, aesthetics and accessibility along the Route 9W corridor. All interested residents, employees, property owners and other stakeholders are encouraged to participate.

The survey is part of a study to improve conditions along the corridor for all modes of transportation (car, bus, pedestrian and bicycle) while considering aesthetic and economic development goals.

There will be a workshop in held in Fall 2017 to solicit feedback on initial recommendations.

For more information, visit
<http://ulstercountyny.gov/planning/planning/active-studies/route-9w-corridor>.

Share your opinion!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Rte9WPlan>

PRESS RELEASE

July 18, 2017

Public Survey for Route 9W Corridor Management Plan

The Ulster County Transportation Council (UCTC), in conjunction with the Towns of Marlborough and Lloyd and NYS Department of Transportation, is seeking help from the public in developing a corridor management plan for the Route 9W corridor. The Plan will provide a long-term vision for the corridor with a list of improvements needed to enhance conditions for all modes of transportation (car, bus, pedestrian and bicycle) while considering aesthetic and economic development goals. Recommendations will address traffic safety and flow as well as improving pedestrian and bicycle conditions at key locations.

A public survey has been developed to better understand concerns of safety, aesthetics and accessibility along the corridor. All interested residents, employees, property owners and other stakeholders are encouraged to participate. The survey can be accessed at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Rte9WPlan>. There will also be a workshop on Thursday, November 9 to solicit feedback on initial recommendations.

For more information, residents are encouraged to visit <http://ulstercountyny.gov/planning/planning/active-studies/route-9w-corridor>.