



February 15, 2011

To: William Clark
Director of Planning & Community Development
Town of Milton

Through: Keri Pyke, P.E., PTOE
Howard/Stein-Hudson
Project Manager

From: Nathaniel Curtis
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RE: **East Milton Square Parking and Access Study
Meeting of the Business & Citizens Advisory Council (BCAC)¹
Meeting Notes of February 9, 2011**

William (Bill) Clark (Director of Planning & Community Development for the Town of Milton) opened the meeting by welcoming the members of the BCAC and thanking them for their attendance. For the benefit of the local public access channel which filmed the proceedings, he noted the date and explained that the meeting was part of the East Milton Square Parking and Access Study.

Highlights of the Presentation

Following his opening remarks, Bill turned the meeting over to Keri Pyke (Howard/Stein-Hudson) who briefed the audience on the current status of the project with a PowerPoint presentation. Much of the presentation consisted of diagrams and pictures; as such readers may find it helpful to have these to review in reading the minutes. A copy of the presentation can be found at: <http://www.eastmiltonsquarestudy.com/documents.html>. Highlights of the presentation included the following:

- o Topics for discussion in the presentation included:
 - o Traffic analysis of existing conditions including traffic volumes, intersection operations, and crash data.
 - o Review of potential short- and long-term options for the redesign of Square. A more in-depth look at these options will be presented at the BCAC's next meeting in early March. Due to the volume of material to be presented, two meetings are being used to discuss this information.
 - o Results of the local merchant survey.
 - o Next steps.
- o The weekday morning or a.m. peak for traffic volumes in East Milton Square takes place between 8:00 and 9:00 a.m.² The data is what most observers would expect with:
 - o High volumes on Granite Avenue between Adams and Bassett Streets (1,559 vehicles).
 - o 424 vehicles entering the Square from the east via Adams Street.
 - o Slightly more than 1,000 vehicles entering the Square from the south along Granite Avenue, possibly from the I-93 exit ramp to the south.
 - o 628 vehicles turning off Adams Street eastbound onto Bryant Avenue, possibly to access the I-93 southbound.

¹ Meeting attendance sheets are reproduced in Appendix 1.

² The graphic Keri Pyke referred to during this section of her remarks can be found at <http://www.eastmiltonsquarestudy.com/documents.html>. Also included is a graphic showing traffic volumes for all of the study area intersections for AM, PM and Saturday Midday peaks.

- The weekday afternoon or p.m. peak for traffic volumes in East Milton Square takes place between 5:00 and 6:00 and present some interesting differences from what one would intuitively expect with:
 - 1,143 vehicles entering the Square along Granite Avenue from the south. This is unusual in that I-93 tends to be very directional in terms of flow and in the evening, the direction with the heaviest volumes is southbound. This may indicate a large number of vehicles entering the Square from Willard Street in West Quincy.
 - 426 vehicles entering the Square from Adams Street eastbound.
 - Approximately 1,500 vehicles traversing Granite Avenue between Adams and Bassett streets.
 - 1,162 vehicles turning off Adams Street eastbound onto Bryant Avenue, possibly to access I-93 southbound.
- The Saturday midday peak for traffic volumes in the Square is on the early side, taking place between 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. with:
 - 1,134 vehicles entering the Square along Granite Avenue from the south.
 - 419 vehicles entering the Square from Adams Street eastbound.
 - Approximately 1,400 vehicles traversing Granite Avenue between Adams and Bassett streets.
 - 1,059 vehicles turning off Adams Street eastbound onto Bryant Avenue, possibly to access I-93 southbound.
- Overall, the volumes in East Milton Square are surprisingly consistent and do not show significant directionality by time of day or a major drop in volume during the Saturday peak hour.
- When analyzing intersections, intersections are “graded” with a level of service or LOS letter. These letters are similar to those received on a school report card with LOS A being excellent and LOS F being poor. These grades are based on the amount of delay experienced by motorists, and a number of other factors.
- The four major intersections at the center of the Square are all operating reasonably well. During the a.m., p.m., and Saturday midday peaks, the intersections of Granite Avenue and Boulevard Street, Granite Avenue and Adams Street, and Bryant Avenue and Boulevard Street all operate at LOS C. The intersection of Adams Street and Bryant Avenue operates at LOS A during the same periods.³
 - It is worth noting that this does not mean that these intersections operate perfectly. For example, they may experience long queues of stopped vehicles during the peak hour, but it does mean that in general the signal timings are working under current conditions.
 - Some of the outlying intersections in the study area such as Granite Avenue and Squantum Street operate as LOS E or F. The project team believes these intersections can be improved with changes to signal timing or newer sensor-based signal control equipment that does not rely on pre-timings.
- Key intersections in the Square were also analyzed for crashes:
 - The intersection of Adams Street and Granite Street had 42 crashes between 2006 and 2008.⁴ Of these, 34 were recorded with enough information to be “located” or placed on a diagram of the intersection. The crash rate at this location is 1.34/million entering vehicles, significantly higher than the district average for signalized intersections of 0.78/million entering vehicles. The most common crash type at this location was a rear-ending collision on the northbound approach of Granite Avenue. This is consistent with vehicles attempting to run the markedly lengthy red light at this approach. Also noted were a few head-on collisions on Adams Street. This may stem from the fact that Adams Street over I-93 includes two eastbound lanes which merge into a single lane east of Granite Avenue.
 - The intersection of Adams Street and Bryant Avenue is considered to be signalized; its crash rate is 0.28/million entering vehicles, lower than the district average. The most common type of crash here

³ A version of the graphic referred to here can be found on the project website including an expanded one featuring all study area intersections.

⁴ This data is available on the project website’s documents page and was extracted from the MassDOT crash records system.

- is a sideswipe. This seems to be consistent with people attempting to make the turn onto Bryant Avenue from the middle lane of Adams Street.
- The intersection of Bryant Avenue and Boulevard Street has a crash rate of 0.51/million entering vehicles. The most common type of accident in this location is an angle crash where two cars hit each other in the middle of the intersection. This is consistent with a few possibilities including a signal timing issue with a very short all-red phase or motorists not seeing the light due to solar glare.
 - A major goal of the Parking and Access Study is to provide the Town of Milton with short-term solutions that can be enacted quickly following the study's conclusion as well as longer-term solutions which may require additional time and funding to implement. Redesign concepts are presented for both timeframes. It is worth noting that the options presented are not "either/or" and elements from the different options can be blended to create the preferred alternative.
 - **Short-term** options for consideration include the following:
 - *Improved curbside management and wayfinding:*
 - Current parking regulations in East Milton Square generally make sense in that "prime" parking spaces near the center of the Square allow shorter stays, a half-hour to an hour, and spaces further away from the center allow longer stays, an hour to two hours. There appears to be an issue with when these time limits are in effect and standardizing this window to be 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. or 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. throughout the square would be one early action step of a curbside management plan.
 - It may also make sense to think about converting some service zone areas such as the one along the Manning Community Park to public parking and shifting service zones to less frequently-used, outlying parking such as along Bryant Avenue just north of State Street.
 - Enforcement of parking regulations will be needed to encourage parking turnover. The Town of Concord has determined that making use of parking meters has allowed their police force to monitor their time-limited parking in two hours rather than five, resulting in a significant cost saving.⁵ While meters are not a "must" for East Milton Square, this does present a strong argument for their use as a parking enforcement tool.
 - Wayfinding should be improved both for vehicles, so motorists can find their way to parking both on- and off-street, and for pedestrians so that they can find their way to destinations in the Square from their parked cars. Wayfinding should also be improved to aid in circulation patterns. The exact type of signage to be used and the information conveyed still needs to be fleshed out.
 - *Circulation Changes and Pedestrian Improvements:*
 - Curb extensions would be placed at most of the key crosswalks in the center of the Square. This would both formalize parking lanes, protecting the first parked car in a row from approaching traffic, and shortening crosswalks to make the pedestrian experience more comfortable.
 - Edge Hill Road between Bryant Avenue and Boulevard Street would be changed to be one-way westbound, providing the opportunity for some additional parking, while Boulevard Street between Edge Hill Road and Bryant Avenue would be changed to be one-way eastbound, also providing an opportunity for additional parking.
 - The section of Adams Street over I-93 would be converted to a single lane, providing additional parking and improving the current situation where two eastbound lanes have to merge into one in front of the fire station.
 - Overall, this option could be implemented relatively quickly, and minus the curb extensions could be achieved with new striping and signage alone. This option could also include bicycle lanes.
 - **Long-term** options include the following:⁶

⁵ This is because if an area is signed, officers need to visit a car, chalk the tires, and then return to it later to determine if the vehicle has stayed beyond the time limit. Meters allow the officer to walk by once and make a quick determination of whether the meter is expired or not.

⁶ BCAC member Kurt Fraser is thanked for providing his Auto-CAD files to the project team to provide a base for these options.

- *East Milton Revitalization Plan of 1991:*
 - This plan converts much of the deck on which the Manning Community Park sits to parking and leaves a small landscaped area at the deck's approximate center. Additional parking is created along Bassett Street through the acquisition and demolition of four homes.
 - This option has an impact on both wayfinding and traffic patterns. Traffic patterns in particular would be changed with the complete closure of Adams Street over I-93. Traffic seeking to continue eastbound along Adams Street from the west would need to turn south, cross I-93 on Boulevard Street, and then turn north on Granite Avenue before turning right onto Adams Street eastbound.
 - The Manning Community Park and the deck on which it rests were paid for through federal demonstration funds. As such, conversion of the Manning Park to a parking lot may require a 4f process or act of the state legislature. These are not insurmountable barriers, but would contribute to a lengthier process.
- *Kurt Fraser's Plan:*
 - This option maximizes the amount of parking to be created on the deck over I-93 by foregoing the central landscaped section envisioned by the Revitalization Plan.
 - The Adams Street eastbound slip lane to Granite Avenue northbound is maintained, but traffic seeking to continue eastbound along Adams Street to the center of the Square would still need to circulate around the new parking facility.
 - A cycle track⁷ would run along the slip lane between Adams Street and Granite Avenue.
- *Modern Roundabout:*
 - This concept is not a rotary. A roundabout is a circular intersection in which traffic travels in one direction around a central island. Right-of-way is given to drivers already in the circle. Roundabouts are different from rotaries or traffic circles in that they are significantly smaller, designed for lower speeds, and act as a traffic calming tool. In this case, the roundabout would consist of a single lane around an island with an outside diameter of 130 feet. The roundabout itself can move to the north or south along the deck depending on where space is most needed.
 - This option presents some significant advantages based on themes the project team has gathered through the public involvement process. These include:
 - Returning Adams Street to two-way circulation over I-93
 - Other traffic movements in the Square can operate more smoothly.
 - 20,000 additional square feet on the I-93 deck which can be used for additional parking. This creation of additional space could leave much of the existing green space intact avoiding the potentially complex and length 4f process.
 - The direction of Edge Hill Road would be one-way towards the Square, while Boulevard Street would become one-way away from the Square.
 - This option has some challenges to work out. One of them would be fire department access. This could potentially be solved through mountable curbs.
- *Two-Way Adams Street:*
 - This concept would return Adams Street to two-way traffic, requiring several changes including:
 - Changes to the intersection of Adams Street and Antwerp Street immediately west of the Jesson Building; in all likelihood, the intersection would become a more standard T-junction.
 - Shifting the parking on Adam Street over I-93 from the north side to the south side of the street.
 - An exclusive right-turn to Bryant Avenue would be needed as well as a left-turn pocket to access Granite Avenue.
 - This option presents a number of challenges that need to be further investigated. It may not improve traffic operations significantly and may cost parking spaces.

⁷ A grade separated bicycle lane.

- The project team is also considering a menu of traffic calming options for the areas surrounding the Square. The goal of these options is to reduce the speed and volume of cut-through traffic. Options include:
 - *Curb extensions*, also known as bump-outs, and already existing on some of the crosswalks in East Milton Square. By bringing the curb out into the street, curb extensions narrow streets and slow traffic while shortening crossing distances.
 - *Speed humps* are a larger version of speed bumps. The humps are more gradual so as to slow vehicles without the jarring sensation for passengers. Additionally, speed humps do not go all the way to the curb to allow for drainage. Typically white triangles or yellow arrows are painted on the hump to alert motorists to its presence. They represent a strong deterrent to cut-through traffic.
 - *Raised crosswalks* take speed humps up a level by bringing the crosswalk to the level of the sidewalk. Raised crosswalks can be supplemented with lights that flash when a pedestrian is crossing.
 - *Raised or tabled intersections*⁸ raise the entire center area of an intersection to the level of the sidewalk. Such intersections have a strong impact on vehicle speeds. Pavement markings are often used to warn approaching motorists of the raised pavement. Raised intersections can incur drainage issues and tend to require more complex design.
 - *Chicanes* are curb extensions which make traffic slow down by forcing it to shift first left and then back to the right. These generally work well on one-way streets, but can be adapted for two-way streets as well.

- Another potential option for the Square is reverse angle parking. With this method of parking which has been used in several cities in the eastern United States including Frederick, Maryland, Philadelphia, and New York City, vehicles back into an angle parking space rather than driving into it frontward. Several areas in Boston will also have this style of parking soon.⁹ Before implementing this style of parking, signage and an education campaign are required. Reverse angle parking presents several safety advantages:
 - 3 steps to park a vehicle as opposed to the 5 associated with traditional parallel parking.
 - Increased visibility for motorists when leaving the parking space.
 - Increased safety for passengers, particularly children, who are directed towards the curb by the open car doors.
 - Increased safety for cyclists who can be more easily seen by motorists.
 - Loading and unloading of a car can be done directly from the sidewalk instead of adjacent to a live travel lane.
 - Handicapped spaces can be placed at the end of a section of parking facilitating access to handicapped ramps.

- During January 2011, the project team ran a web survey for area merchants. Merchants were sent a letter, followed by a telephone call requesting that they participate by web or telephone. The businesses to be surveyed were selected using a listing provided by the Town of Milton. Results of the survey included the following:
 - Businesses in East Milton Square tend to cluster in the area immediately to the northeast of the Manning Community Park. Forty-seven percent of respondents listed their business as being on Granite Avenue north of Adams Street, 20% on Adams Street east of I-93, and 13% on Granite Avenue south of Adams Street.
 - Businesses tend to be service or specialty retail oriented and are generally small, the largest single group of respondents (38%) indicated that their business employs 1-5 individuals. Most businesses employ a mix of part-time and full-time workers.
 - East Milton Square businesses are busiest from 9-5, Monday-Saturday, and are not heavily impacted by season.
 - Most business owners, employees, and patrons travel to the Square by car, and respondents tended to believe that arriving any other way would present significant difficulties for them, their workers, and customers.
 - Employers and employees tend to park in either dedicated parking lots or use the Square's service zone parking. Patrons tend to use dedicated lots (47%) or curbside spaces (20%).

⁸ Several such intersections are in place in Cambridge in the streets around Harvard University.

⁹ A list of additional cities using reverse angle parking can be found in the presentation given at this meeting and available from the project website.

- In general, merchants indicated that finding parking in the Square is relatively easy:
 - 99% of respondents are able to find parking in five minutes or less upon arrival at their business.
 - 87% of respondents indicated that their employees complain about difficulty in finding parking either “occasionally” or “never.”
 - 66 of respondents indicated that their patrons complain about difficulty in finding parking either “occasionally” or “never.”
- With regard to shared parking, respondents indicated that while they and their employees know about and are generally willing to use it; patrons are far less likely to use it due to the distance between the parking and the business.
- Respondents picked a similar set of benchmark squares to the BCAC: Hingham Center (73%), Wellesley Center (55%) and Concord Center (36%). The top three items contributing to a good square were: easy parking (54%), clear wayfinding (46%), and an intuitive circulation pattern for all modes (46%).
- Like the BCAC, merchants would like to see more specialty retail locate to the Square.

Question & Answer/Brain-Storming Session

Q: Meryl Manin (MM): What day did you take the counts for the traffic volumes? I think Mondays and Saturdays tend to be the heaviest days.

A: Keri Pyke (KP): We did a Saturday midday count, and I believe that the weekday was a Thursday. In general we don't do counts on Mondays or Fridays, unless of course the area in question has something that makes those days particularly active. Monday and Friday are considered abnormal days due to people taking three day weekends or leaving work early on Friday.

Q: John Virgona (JV): Where do you think all the volume is coming from on Granite Avenue northbound?

A: KP: Currently, I'm speculating that much of it is coming from people who are trying to detour around traffic on I-93 northbound, but we are working with CTPS¹⁰ to determine where that volume is coming from.

C: JV: I believe that a certain amount of the traffic on Granite Avenue is coming from Willard Street in West Quincy.

A: KP: That's something we should be able to find out with the CTPS data.

Q: Ken Caldwell (KC): I recall that in the past few years the state DOT took counts in our area with those tubes on the road. Is this data drawn from those counts?

A: KP: That data is probably reflected to some extent in the numbers that we are using. Typically the data that you can find on MassDOT's website from the ATR – the tubes you mentioned – counts is a few years old. What we did was to ask MassDOT for their newest data for your area in advance of their posting it to the website.

Q: KC: Has traffic increased or decreased since MassDOT took their most recent counts? I would imagine that the Greenbush Line and ferry boats are taking away some volume.

A: KP: We might also see some of that in the CTPS data. Generally, across the Boston area we have seen a decrease in traffic over the past few years due to the economy, but we will be able to say that with greater certainty with additional information.

Q: Lesley Will (LW): Maybe you're going to get to this, but are there goals or benchmarks associated with these volumes?

¹⁰ Central Transportation Planning Staff

A: KP: Yes, there are, and that makes a great segue to our next slide. If you still have questions after I present the next few slides, we can come back to them.

Q: Brian O'Shea (BO): Was the highway as active on Saturday as it was on the weekdays?

A: KP: I'm not 100% sure about that, but certainly when we had the counts taken, none of the people doing the work reported that the highway was abnormally backed up on any of the days they were out.

Q: JV: Do you have any numbers that speak to the maximum number of cars that can pass through these intersections, because it's possible that they are maxed out.

A: KP: We do know that information, and we will be covering some of that on the next slide.

C: Arthur Doyle (AD): I think that if you took all of the traffic which travels through Precinct Seven in the area around the Square to bypass the main intersections around the Manning Community Park, the LOS C's that you reported there would fall quite a bit.

A: KP: You might well be right. I was surprised by the fact that Boulevard Street and Granite Avenue is at LOS C, but I think that's due to the three northbound lanes.

Q: JV: What [pointing to slide 6 of the presentation] are those numbers up there?

A: KP: Those are the seconds of delay experienced by a motorist at the different LOS levels. That's just one number that we get when we model intersections, we also get queue lengths and a volume-to-capacity ratio which tells us how full the intersection is and whether it can accept more cars.

Q: BO: How many seconds of delay are associated with LOS C?

A: KP: It's between 20 and 30 seconds.

C: BO: I've been driving around a lot in the past few weeks and it's taken me five minutes to go from Dave's Bike Shop to Adams Street.

A: Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis (NCC): Do you think the snow banks narrowing the street may have contributed to that?

A: KP: That's one possibility. I also think that some of it has to do with the fact that the third lane at Adams Street and Granite Avenue doesn't really start until just before the fire station.

Q: MM: Did you account for accidents between vehicles and pedestrians?

A: KP: It doesn't mean that it hasn't been uncomfortable for pedestrians out there, and it doesn't mean that there haven't been near misses, but we didn't see any crashes involving a pedestrian in the past three years.

Q: Kurt Fraser (KF): So this data is from MassDOT, and not the local police?

A: KP: Correct, our data came from the MassDOT crash reporting system which pulls its data from the Registry of Motor Vehicles.

Q: Bill Clark (BC): Do you think any of these accidents actually took place on the highway? Sometimes if there's an accident on I-93 they will refer to the nearest overpass to help locate it.

A: KP: The descriptions we read suggest that these crashes were on the surface network, not the highway.

Q: BO: Are the numbers of crashes even for each approach of this intersection?

A: KP: The Granite Avenue approach has a few more crashes than the two Adams Street approaches.

Q: JV: Where do the district¹¹ crash averages come from?

A: KP: MassDOT maintains district crash averages for signalized and unsignalized intersections as well as road segments.

C: AD: Not that I would want to see pedestrian accidents, but right now the culture is that people don't walk around East Milton Square because it's not a pleasant pedestrian environment. Right now they stay in their cars rather than taking a chance.

C: Paul Maduri (PM): The major crash area in front of the fire station – it takes three to five light cycles to get through there. If you extended the cycle by 15 seconds it could make a huge difference.

A: KP: You could be right. The data does suggest a lot of those crashes are rear-end collisions where the second car back from the stop line decides to run the red light, but the one in front does not.

C: AD: At least once a week, I see someone who comes up the right hand lane at that location and then cheat the queue by scooting over to the left.

C: KC: One more observation: the issue of the light not being red long enough for people to cross from the park to the dry cleaners on the corner is important. Cars always step on it there to get across the intersection, but then outside the liquor store there will be one or two cars double parked to let somebody out. It creates a very dangerous situation for pedestrians who can be sort of trapped in the middle.

C: BO: You might try having one of your staff press the button on the smaller crosswalk near the Post Office, whether the light works or not, people still go flying through the crosswalk.

A: NCC: Yes, I have definitely experienced that, especially during the parking study.

C: KC: So let me please speak to that for a moment. Adams at that location is three lanes wide and there's only really a single light for all three lanes.

Q: KP: So you'd like a light for each lane?

A: KC: I think that would be appropriate.

A: KP: Certainly we can get you a few extra signal heads to solve that problem.

C: JV: I don't know if it's conscious or not, but I think many motorists just don't think of a light being there. Many long-term residents remember back to a time when there was no light in front of the Post Office and that's what sticks in their memory. One suggestion is to put a strobe light into the red light there so you really notice it.

A: KP: That's not a bad idea. When we get into alternatives we'll be looking at some ways to make this location safer and help with the sideswiping in the short-term.

Q: BC: Take a look at this picture, what do you suppose the most predominant path is?

¹¹ MassDOT Highway Division District.

- A: KP: The striping is all worn away on the right turn from Adams Street onto Bryant, but by the number of crashes this isn't the most difficult spot in the Square even if people are coming around the corner faster than they should.
- C: AD: Over the past ten years the police have stopped people who took a left from Adams Street onto Granite Avenue when the light was read. Each time the motorists beat the ticket because he explained there was no overhead light that he could see.
- A: KP: Like I said, we can definitely get a few more signal heads for this location.
- C: KC: Another observation: the pedestrian traffic light that crosses Adams Street by the Post Office seems to be the only one where the button works. Or the wait time on the shorter crosswalks from pushing the button to getting a light is so long people just make a run for it.
- C: LW: There are two parking spaces in front of the Post Office which everyone seems to want because they are the ones right outside the door. It's a gamble to know if you'll find something on Edge Hill or Adams, but if you took away the two spots in front of the Post Office you might be able to open up the intersection a bit more. Those two spots don't do much to give us more parking, but they do seem to create a traffic problem. There's also an issue at that location with double parking.
- A: KP: That is certainly something to think about.
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Q: KF: Do you have dates and times for these crashes?

A: KP: Not in this presentation, but we can put the information up on the website. We've numbered all the crashes and you can check the numbers against the detail table which we will also post.

C: JV: I guess the point I would make about this scheme with the bump-outs is that in front of the Post Office you have two competing flows intersecting. The Brook Road side is trying to go straight while on the other side people are coming around and going down towards the highway. To add to that problem, the traffic can back all the way up to Brook Road. I think the reason it was made two lanes on the deck over I-93 was to move cars past the Post Office. I think this will just back up more traffic.

A: KP: Remember, we can take out individual elements of any plan that you don't like.

C: BO: Recently, with all the snow, the intersection of Boulevard Street and Bryant Avenue had bump-outs. Traffic backed all the way up to the school because drivers had to wait their turn to go right or left with the road narrowed to one lane.

A: KP: So maybe we take out a few parking spaces and make the turning lane there a little longer. Does it make sense to shorten the parking or just take it out? Think on it.

C: AD: There's a lot of volume at that location. I think you'll have issues forcing everyone into one lane.

Q: LW: Well, how many cars were there during the peak hour?

A: KP: It's around 350 cars per hour.

Q: LW: I think it's worth investigating this option further. Can you test any of it?

A: KP: With some of these bump-outs and the circulation pattern, you could test it with jersey barriers, paint and some signs. You could just try testing out the circulation pattern. I don't think many people come down Edge Hill Road to Bryant Avenue because it sends you back where you would have been if you stayed on Boulevard Street.

- C: LW: My impression is that there isn't too much traffic going down Boulevard Street to get to I-93. So, if we look at this traffic pattern, then we would need to look at traffic calming in the neighborhood to stop people from cutting through to State Street.
- A: KP: Yes, and we'll be making some recommendations about that later in the presentation.
- C: JV: If you were to make Boulevard Street two lanes, one-way, then you could have parallel parking all the way down to the intersection. Going up Edge Hill, people really speed around the corner by the Post Office so those first few angle parking spaces could be dangerous.
- C: PM: If you put parking there next to the Post Office, you'd have to cut it back to half of what you're showing to make it safe. Another thing: I really like bump-outs, they help pedestrians, but right now after each and every storm the highway department has to come in a clear them with a front-end loader and it's inefficient and messy. Could you accomplish the same thing with paint and keep it flush?
- A: KP: The problem is that paint doesn't help the pedestrians. It doesn't offer any physical protection where someone would be jumping a curb.
- A: KC: I think we need to remember this has been an extraordinary winter. Usually, the conditions Paul is describing are there for one month out of the year. The other 11 months we want to provide pedestrians with as much safety as we can.
- Q: KF: Have you checked the LOS on any of these?
- A: KP: My traffic people tell me I'm not showing any concept that can't be made to work, but at the next meeting we'll have LOS for all of these options.
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- Q: LW: The additional parking spaces off Bassett Street, where does the land come from for those and how many additional spaces would we get?
- A: KP: You would get approximately 43 spaces, give or take, and the land would need to be taken by the Town with compensation paid to the owner. In this option [the Milton Revitalization Plan of 1991] you get another 36 spaces on the deck over I-93. Something to be noted is that the deck over the expressway was a federal demonstration project. I'm looking into what that means, but it could have some big impacts. At a minimum we probably get into a 4f process which is more or less complex and exacting depending on whether we can get enough open space elsewhere for it to be an even swap. That leads to a "diminimus" finding which is the easiest possible route. You might be in a situation where you need an act of the legislature. None of this is insurmountable, but it's a lot of time; just words of caution.
- Q: AD: Well how much time do you think it would require?
- A: KP: With FHWA it could be a matter of years filing for environmental purposes. To collapse the time frame a little bit you could begin your design, but you'd do so at risk – there'd be no guarantee you would receive an O.K. to build. There'd also be construction staging. Given the complexity of staging over a highway, you'd probably be looking at two construction seasons.
- Q: Bernard Lynch (BL): So we would need to replicate the park land elsewhere?
- A: KP: I would say yes right now, but I have a phone call into FHWA to confirm that. If you can replicate to the nearest square foot you get a diminimus ruling, but it still requires a filing. If we can't do that we need to demonstrate that there's no reasonable alternative. They could be very cranky about taking away a park that was designed to reconnect East Milton and they might make you pay back the money. I'm still working to confirm these things, but this is fair warning.

Q: LW: So this plan completely closes off Adams Street over the deck?

A: KP: Correct, the all traffic would need to circulate around the new parking area whether you wanted to continue east on Adams Street or go north on Granite Avenue.

C: KC: This option seems like there could be a lot of costs associated with it. Given the current fiscal situation I think we might not see enough money available for some time.

A: KP: That is quite possibly true. We want to help you think about long-term funding and of course we are closely watching the discussion of the transportation bill and earmarks. Right now we are seeing even MassDOT complete projects by combining more than one funding stream so money is definitely an issue here.

Q: LW: Could you compromise and at least keep the slip lane from Adams Street to Granite Avenue?

A: KP: That's a great segue to Kurt Fraser's concept. Let's turn to that.

Q: BO: So in this concept, how many lights is it from west to east? How many parking spaces do we get?

A: KP: It would be three, possibly four with a pedestrian light at the Post Office. This option can give you up to 82 spaces on the deck give or take depending on how much landscaping you want.

C: PM: I think if you combined this option [Kurt Fraser's] with the Revitalization Plan it would be great.

A: KC: Not if you actually have to live next to it.

C: KP: Another version of Kurt's plan includes a cycle track in it. We are keeping bikes and pedestrians in mind as we move forward.

Q: JV: Would it be possible to consider looking at these intersections and determine that they are so congested that bikes need to be kept out of them entirely?

A: KP: There are two issues with that. One is that you're putting that onto your police to enforce and there will be someone, like Nate here, who is brave enough to want to try it. It is much more responsible of us as your consultant to say that we need to find a way to safely incorporate bikes, maybe a grade separated cycle track, that's the sort of thing we'll be layering in.

C: KF: To piggyback on that, a project at this scale can't be done without including bikes. My goal with this plan was to improve the traffic flow by making it work more like a roundabout.

Q: AD: If the park is immovable or unchangeable can Kurt's plan be made to work on additional decking?

A: KP: That's one thing we're trying to hunt down right now. We have heard that there was once a plan for a longer deck. I've talked to the deck designer and he doesn't remember it, but that doesn't mean it never happened. One additional issue is the national fire code which has changed since the deck was built. They may have shortened the length of covered roadway you can have before it's considered a tunnel which would bring us into having to have a vent structure. We'll wrap that in.

Q: JV: If we remove Adams Street in this plan, can we incorporate a u-turn from Granite Avenue south of Boulevard Street to Bryant Avenue? I think it would pull some traffic out of the Square.

A: KP: That's definitely something we can look into?

Q: BO: Maybe Boulevard Street south of the park should be two ways so that people wanting to head towards Edge Hill Road don't have to go all the way around the Square?

A: KP: Also a good idea. We can look into that as well.

Q: KP: One issue that we will need to solve with the roundabout is how the fire trucks get in and out. Maybe it's a mountable curb somewhere. Are there any ongoing talks about moving the fire station?

A: BL: Not really. Michael Shields and the present fire chief are starting a dialog to review each of the three fire stations to see if it's in the best location, but there's no committee yet.

Q: Pat Desmond (PD): How much parking does this option offer us?

A: KP: In part that depends on where we put the parking. It makes sense to put it in the northeastern quadrant near Fitness Unlimited. It appears on first blush that this option gives you up to 30 additional spaces, and we still need to analyze the net loss and gain, but this was more of an exercise to draw it, see if it works and see if you want us to look into it further. We need to lay out the pedestrian connections and see if any of the desire lines are problematic. This will help you to manage cut-through traffic because it will slow traffic down. This is some food for thought.

C: BC: I'd take a look at the North Andover roundabout. There was some awful nay-saying at the public hearings, but now it works quite well. It has park land; the roads come in at all different angles. I think it's something to look at.

A: KP: This has a lot of safety benefits, and I think it gets us past some 4f issues and provides additional parking.

C: BL: This is different. Please take a look at it further.

Q: BO: Is this just one lane?

A: KP: Yes, the road around the center island is just one lane, but we can make it so that a large truck can get around it with some sort of flush or mountable curb. This is a traffic calming measure, and it is allowed in a business district.

Q: AD: And would you extend consideration down Adams Street so that we can understand how this would work?

A: KP: Definitely, we can't have a two-way stretch and then a one-way stretch right up against each other.

C: MM: So I'm going to say something unpopular. I don't think people use the parkland now and they definitely won't use this. Your second plan, if we made the parking lot look pretty, it would be much better. They numbers on this plan don't sound like 80 parking spaces to me, and I think that's the kind of numbers we need.

A: KP: Let us go back and draw in the parking; I think we may be able to get more than 30.

Q: JV: It seems like Boulevard Street and Edge Hill Road wind up as a circle within the circle. Is there a possible conflict there?

A: KP: Yes, that's something I've been thinking about. That's something for next meeting.

Q: JV: Does the parking on Granite Avenue have to be converted to angle parking?

A: KP: It doesn't have to, but angle parking could give you more spaces in the roundabout concept.

C: BC: My comment is one of formality. Keri, we are giving this one back to you for further analysis.

- Q: JV: Can you make a left on Bryant Avenue from Adams Street if Adams Street is reconnected?
- A: KP: I think that the intersection next to the Post Office would need to be signalized to make that work, but that's something to look into from an analysis perspective.
- Q: LW: What's going on with the old library building?
- A: BC: The selectmen issued an RFP, the arts council responded to it. The selectmen are hashing out what to do with it.
- Q: LW: So is that space we can use for parking?
- A: BC: If it was in the front and not in the back, then yes, but the building stays. Town meeting has voted that the building is to be leased by the selectmen. You can't tear it down and make parking. When the library went in there, there was a meeting of the ZBA that allowed eight parking spaces in the back. The agreement was that the next lessee would need to go to the ZBA again regarding parking. Right now we have no plans to go back to them.
- C: JV: You're implying that the tenants would need to get the right for that. Don't give it to them. Make it into parking.
- A: BC: That's a residential zone you'd be putting parking into. That's probably not going to happen.
- C: AD: Thinking for a moment of the totality of this project, of its mission, let's cross Bassett Street for a moment and look at the municipal lot. Has any consideration been given to an appropriately designed parking deck that would sit above that lot and extending out over the Milton Marketplace lot so that the second level feeds people up Adams Court to Adams Street and so on? That's the center of everything as far as I have heard; where the greatest limitation and opportunity exists. Have we considered such an opportunity and looked into its feasibility?
- A: BC: That "municipal lot" is leased. The Adams Building owns that land. It's called the Greenspan lot and we have a parking arrangement with them. They get I believe 8-12 spots and we get the rest, but supposedly those spots are for customers of that building.
- Q: BL: How is that policed?
- A: BC: As you might guess from some of the material gathered through the parking survey it isn't. I've been down this road once before. Brueggers had to deal with the issue, and the ZBA only let them in after they said they would be able to provide some parking in that lot. It works because the turnaround time in a Brueggers is about eight minutes.
- Q: BL: So regardless of who owns what, can we put in a parking deck?
- C: AD: And if it is feasible, you have two options you could go to the current limits or take it over to Franklin Street.
- A: BC: That is a significant expense, and it crosses a zoning district.
- Q: AD: And in the Revitalization Plan the residential area stays?
- A: BC: The buildings you would need to demolish are in a residential zone.
- C: PM: 2 of them are in a residential zone to be precise it's more like 2.25.
- Q: KP: So is it worth looking at the feasibility of buying the land the town currently leases and some other items on Bassett Street for a parking structure?

A: AD: First, please determine how many additional spaces we would get from it, and give us an order of magnitude cost. If the numbers aren't worth it, then there's no need to go further.

C: KP: We can lay it out and see how many parking spaces we could get. The big issue is how much it costs to build the structure.

C: JV: With the land already sloping down in the area along Adams Court, maybe you could put parking off Bassett Street and then place the deck above that level with Adams Street. Putting the deck over the parking lot puts it in everyone's line of vision. I can't imagine people being excited by the idea.

A: KP: All right we will look at what you would need for ramping and give you an order of magnitude cost.

C: AD: I just think that while we're thinking, we ought to be willing to think big.

C: BL: I think we have one of those raised crosswalks by Shields Park.

A: BC: It's more of a table as opposed to a crosswalk; it's awfully abrupt when you drive over it.

A: AD: Sandwich Center has six streets that come together by Town Hall. They didn't put in a traffic light, but they did install brick crosswalks and it has truly changed the character of their traffic; it's much slower now.

C: KP: Generally we shy away from actual brick because of the challenges it can present for people with limited mobility, but we can use stamped asphalt to look like brick

Q: BC: Can you enforce a 15 mile an hour speed limit over a speed hump?

A: KP: No, it's a guideline.

Q: BL: Are there any examples of reverse angle parking in Massachusetts?

A: KP: Cambridge is considering it as part of their Western Avenue redesign. There was a test done in Northampton, but they only tested a very few spaces and didn't keep it. Some cities in Maine are looking at it as a possibility and New York City has lots of it. The City of Boston is also considering it for East Boston.

Q: KC: Do you think it would be worth having the community meeting first before the next local leaders' briefing?

A: KP: It is kind of a catch-22, and I can understand the value of having community input before going to local leaders. However, I think we have found that it's good to address local leaders first. For one thing it ensures that they understand the status of the project and can answer questions from their constituents, but it also helps us avoid presenting an option to the community which the local leaders understand – for whatever reason – to be a nonstarter.

Next Steps

The BCAC will next meet on Wednesday, March 2nd at 6:30 p.m. in the selectmen's conference room at Milton Town Hall. The 2nd legislative briefing is currently set for Tuesday, March 8th with the 2nd community meeting tentatively set for the following week.

Appendix 1: Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Nathaniel	Cabral-Curtis	Howard/Stein-Hudson
Kenneth	Caldwell	BCAC
Bill	Clark	Town of Milton
Pat	Desmond	Milton Times
Arthur	Doyle	BCAC
Kurt	Fraser	BCAC
Nancy	Jesson	BCAC
Bernard	Lynch	BCAC
Paul	Maduri	Local business owner
Meryl	Manin	BCAC
Brian	O'Shea	BCAC
Keri	Pyke	Howard/Stein-Hudson
John	Virgona	BCAC
Mike	Whalen	Milton Times
Lesley	Will	BCAC

