



July 12, 2010

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

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

From: Nathaniel Curtis
Howard/Stein-Hudson
Public Involvement Specialist

RE: **Public Involvement Plan**
East Milton Square Parking & Access Study
HSH project no. 2010053

Public Involvement Goals and Overall Approach

As articulated in our proposal for the East Milton Square Parking and Access Study, Howard/Stein-Hudson (HSH) will provide the Town of Milton with a public involvement process that actively seeks community input to help direct and refine the outcome of this project. The public involvement efforts will be organized into three interconnected and mutually-supporting tracks:

- Work with Business and Citizen Advisory Committee (BCAC) to develop initial concepts to be shared with the broader community.
- Virtual outreach including a project website and, depending on guidance from the Town of Milton, a Face Book page and Twitter feed. This effort will serve as an ongoing, two-way line of communication between the project team and the general public, broadcasting new information and gathering input before and between public meetings.
- A face-to-face outreach effort including briefings for state and local officials and broadly advertised meetings with members of the community

Throughout the public involvement process, HSH will coordinate its outreach efforts with the Town of Milton. The timing of all aspects of the public involvement process will be cleared with the Town in advance as will the content and appearance of all materials released to the public.¹

The Public Involvement Process

Work with the BCAC

HSH will begin the public involvement process by meeting with the members of the BCAC. Throughout the public involvement effort, the BCAC will play a central role to the project team assisting the in development of alternatives for East Milton Square, reviewing input obtained from meetings with the community, and refining project concepts based on that input. While the Town of Milton has already constituted a membership for the BCAC, it may be useful over the course of the project to augment it with additional members representing new constituencies that emerge. The BCAC will serve as the

¹ The project team will ensure that all materials, paper or electronic, to be released as part of the public involvement effort will be provided to William Clark, Director of Planning & Community Development, and any other members of his staff he would like to add as reviewers.

core of the project stakeholder database and mailing list, which HSH will maintain and update throughout the course of the project.²

Throughout the public involvement process, the project team expects to coordinate its efforts closely with the BCAC. We anticipate an initial meeting with the group in July 2010 and continuing to meet thereafter approximately every six weeks until the end of the project in May 2011. We anticipate that at this meeting, the project team will develop operational norms for its interactions with the BCAC such as preferred methods of communication, convenient meeting times etc. Meetings may vary from this schedule to allow for thorough data collection and analysis, periods when it is difficult to assemble the BCAC such as over the winter holidays in December and January, and for other major project milestones such as meetings with the community. HSH will document all BCAC meetings in the form of minutes which could be posted to the project website with the permission of the members and Town of Milton.

Digital Outreach

Over the past several years, HSH has created a number of successful websites for an array of projects in Massachusetts, New York and New Jersey. Development of such a website is included as one of the key outreach methods for this project. The site will have its own unique address, easy to remember, and appearance developed by HSH and approved by the Town of Milton. This unique appearance helps to define the project and give it an identity in the eyes of the community at large. A prominent link to the Town's website will be displayed to ensure a clear connection between the project and the Town of Milton. The project website will serve as:

- A 24-hour point of contact for the project allowing members of the public to learn about the project on their own time outside of scheduled public meetings.
- A method to ensure that the project maintains a community presence before and between public meetings.
- One of several methods through which members of the community can learn about upcoming public meetings.
- A repository for project documents such as presentations and minutes of meetings.
- A mechanism through which members of the public can add themselves to the stakeholder database and mailing list.

HSH anticipates being able to launch the project website shortly after our first meeting with the BCAC. As the project grows and develops between summer 2010 and May 2011, we expect that the project website will expand and change along with it, adding or subtracting/replacing content as is appropriate. During the start-up phase of the website, prior to launch and in the period immediately thereafter, HSH will coordinate closely with the Town of Milton as to what appears on the website. As the project moves forward, we anticipate that certain maintenance activities will become automatic and require minimal input from the Town. For example, in several public involvement efforts currently underway, the posting of the PowerPoint presentations³ given at public meetings, on the day following the event has become an expected task for HSH and does not require direct input from the client.

At the time of the writing of this plan, there are several elements of the virtual outreach which HSH could add to the effort with the permission of the Town of Milton. All three were included in the budget of the project. These include:

- A Face Book page for the project. This could be a useful tool for monitoring community thoughts about the project and seeking public feedback between meetings. Such a page would also allow the project team to alert users to upcoming meetings.

² HSH will maintain this database in Microsoft's Excel as the software is widely distributed allowing easy sharing and allows for easy sorting for stakeholders by an array of categories.

³ In PDF format to avoid tampering.

- An on-line survey. HSH has extensive experience with on-line surveys and a simple survey of less than 10 questions⁴ could be used not only to gauge community sentiments at the outset of the project, but to get a sense of the public response to concepts presented at community meetings.
- A Twitter account. Using 140 character “tweets” HSH can alert users to new web content, when public surveys would be available, and when community meetings are upcoming.

Face-to-Face Outreach

HSH will also conduct a face-to-face public involvement effort, to be supplemented by the digital path outlined above, with both the general public and state and local officials.

State and Local Officials

We anticipate briefing state and local officials on the status of the work three times over the course of the project. These briefings will take place at roughly the beginning, middle, and end of the project in summer 2010, December 2010, and March 2011. By meeting with state and local officials, we will not only ensure that their thoughts and concerns are incorporated into the project, but will help the project to gain the public’s trust by working closely with their local leaders. State and local officials, both elected and appointed, will be added to the project’s mailing list and encouraged to attend both public and BCAC meetings. HSH will assist with the development of materials for these briefings such as handouts and PowerPoint presentations and document the meeting through the production of minutes. With the permission of the Town of Milton, these minutes could be posted to the project website.

The General Public

We anticipate meeting with the general public three times over the course of the project: October 2010, February 2011 and April 2011. At the first meeting, we expect to present the community with a review of the project team’s findings regarding current conditions and possibly some early concepts for East Milton Square evolved by the BCAC. In the following meeting, we would expect to be able to share several refined alternatives for the square based on community input received at the first meeting and through our electronic outreach methods. At the final meeting, we would anticipate being able to share a locally preferred alternative. HSH will assist with the development of materials for these briefings such as handouts and PowerPoint presentations and document the meeting through the production of minutes. We would anticipate posting these minutes to the website along with copies of the presentation made for the meeting so that members of the community unable to attend the meeting could participate by reading these materials and then commenting through one of the digital methods previously outlined.

Working with the Town of Milton

It is our goal to conduct a public involvement process that solicits and makes real use of community input. At all steps of the process, we will work closely with the Town of Milton to ensure that materials given to the public are accurate and aligned with the Town’s goals. If at any point during the public involvement process you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us. We look forward to working with you on this exciting project.

⁴ The online survey tool used by HSH provides survey hosting for free for surveys of ten questions or less. More than ten questions triggers a monthly fee of \$20. Of the three options in the bulleted list above, this is the only option which is not completely free.