

**Lee Area Traffic Study**  
**Summary of Fifth Working Group Meeting**  
Tuesday, March 11, 2008, 3:30 PM.  
Lee Library Gallery, 100 Main Street, Lee, MA

**Attendees:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Michael Supranowicz	Berkshire Chamber of Commerce
Greg Federspiel	Lenox Town Manager
Bryan Emmett	Berkshire Natural Resources Council
Jerry LePrevost	Lee Traffic Commission
George Shippey	Stockbridge Selectboard Chair
Jorja-Ann Marsden	Stockbridge Town Administrator
Robert Gorden	Becket Historical Commission
Steven LaBelle	Becket Representative
Mark Moore	MassHighway District 1
Peter Frieri	MassHighway District 1
Nat Karns	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
Alison Church	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
Anuja Koirala	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
Christine Neumann	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

**1. Introductions**

Mr. Karns welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. Summary of 12-11-07 Working Group Meeting**

The group reviewed the summary of the December 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**3. Discussion of Purpose and Need Statement**

Ms. Church reviewed the Purpose and Need statement. The major conclusion is that there is a high percentage (~11%) and number (approximately 100 per hour, in both directions) of trucks traveling on Main Street in Lee. Although the data is inconclusive on how many of the trucks do not have destinations in Lee, there is clearly a through traffic component of the truck traffic.

Mr. Frieri suggested providing field observations for the PM peak LOS of non-signalized intersections. Field counts may provide a better picture than the model, which shows a delay time of 1,000 seconds. Mr. Moore added that that AM peak numbers generated by the model are pretty conservative – the intersections are worse than the numbers show – so it may be useful to provide field observations for the AM peak as well.

**4. Discussion of Alternatives under consideration**

Mr. Karns reviewed the alternatives which have been identified through previous studies and public meetings. For most, if not all of the alternatives, the effect/impact of selection/construction may extend far beyond its limits of construction and will need to be assessed.

The downtown Lee alternatives having to do with intersection improvements, widening or intersection signalization will be considered as Transportation Systems Management (TSM) strategies. Mr. Emmett suggested evaluating using both High Street and Canal Street as a “one-way pair” with Main Street, i.e. have Main Street run one way and have High Street and Canal Street run the other way. Mr. Gorden added that the Canal Street alternative would not involve many takings.

**5. Discussion of additional alternatives presented in MHD North Central Access Study**

The group spent some time reviewing additional alternatives presented in MHD’s North Central Access Study for

inclusion in the study. Many of the alternatives identified in this study are outside the Lee Traffic Study scope, have already been implemented, or are already covered by previously identified alternatives. There were several alternatives which the group decided should be incorporated. These are:

1. "Reconfigure on-street diagonal parking in downtown Lee to parallel parking and/or designate off-street public parking spaces (page 4)." The Working Group decided to leave this in as part of a TSM approach.
2. "Construct a northbound climbing lane between downtown Lee and Navin Ave (page 8)." This alternative would be located on Laurel Hill. Although this alternative would have huge neighborhood impacts, it was determined that it should be included. A capacity analysis for Route 20 north of the Housatonic River will be needed to determine if a climbing lane would be warranted.
3. "Construct a northbound climbing lane in the vicinity of the Cranwell Resort (page 9)." Similarly, it was decided that this alternative should be left in, but a capacity analysis will be needed.

Several alternatives in the North Central Access Study were considered as "variations" of previously identified alternatives. These alternatives will be added as "sub-alternatives" to those already identified. These are:

1. "Construct a trumpet-type interchange, toll plaza and a new connector road between the Route 7 and West Road overpasses at Lee/Stockbridge town lines (page 15)." This alternative will be added as a variation of Alternative 4.
2. "Construct new two-lane frontage road along the southerly side of the turnpike to Marble Street and construct new alignment along the Housatonic River between West Park Street and Route 20 (page 17)." This alternative will be added as a variation of Alternative 3.
3. "Construct a four-lane bypass from Route 20 in Lee to Route 8 in Pittsfield along the westerly edge of October Mountain. Construct a new overpass west of the existing East St. overpass. The northern part of the alignment will connect to Route 7/20 at the northerly end of the Lenox bypass (page 19)." This alternative will be added as a variation of Alternative 6 that would stay on the east side of Woods Pond and would cut across New Lenox Road.
4. "Construct a four-lane bypass from Route 20 in Lee to downtown Pittsfield along the westerly edge of October Mountain. Construct a new overpass west of the existing East St. overpass. The connector road will follow a railroad right-of-way into downtown Pittsfield within the vicinity of West Street. Access to and from Route 7/20 will be provided within the vicinity of South Mountain Road (page 28)." This alternative will be added as a variation of Alternative 6.
5. "Construct a four-lane bypass from Route 20 in Lee to downtown Pittsfield along the westerly side of October Mountain. Construct a new overpass west of the existing East St. overpass. The northern end of this alternative would provide access to the Downing industrial park and connections to Route 8 north of Coltsville (page 29)." This alternative will be added as a variation of Alternative 6.

Mr. Karns noted that, once these the additions are made, a full wrap up of all the alternatives will be provided.

## **6. Discussion of Evaluation Criteria**

Mr. Karns explained that the evaluation process will include several steps. The first step will be to identify the alternatives that improve the LOS and decrease truck traffic and improve travel time. This will be done by performing testing for changes in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT). Once this is done, several alternatives may need to be eliminated. After that, there will be a "coarse" screening to eliminate those alternatives that create a large number of impacts without providing much benefit. After that, the remaining alternatives will undergo a "fine" screening. Mr. Karns reviewed the evaluation criteria for which a spreadsheet was provided.

## **7. BRPC progress update on Coarse Screening of Alternatives**

This agenda item was left for discussion at the next meeting.

## **8. Discussion of cohesive neighborhoods**

Working Group members were provided with maps and were asked to take the maps home and identify cohesive neighborhoods in their communities. The Working Group members were also asked to identify scenic roads to help determine visual impacts.

## **9. Next meeting date**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 9<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 pm at the Lee Library. By April, BRPC plans to provide the Working Group with the preliminary VMT and VHT analysis for each alternative.