

BERKSHIRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

1 FENN STREET, SUITE 201, PITTSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS 01201

TELEPHONE (413) 442-1521 · FAX (413) 442-1523

www.berkshireplanning.org transportation@berkshireplanning.org

LEE AREA TRAFFIC STUDY

2ND PUBLIC MEETING – AUGUST 27, 2008

COMMENT FORM RESPONSES

What are your thoughts on specific alternatives? Please tell us which of the alternatives listed below you feel are the most important and why.

- “My choice would be Alternative 2 because it’s the easiest to achieve, least expensive of all the other alternatives and would keep the problem to be solved right in the town of Lee, where it belongs. My reasons really come down to the obvious fact that Lee has contributed to its traffic problem with the encouragement of Prime Outlets, Quarry Hill Business Park, and the soon to be redeveloped Diesel Dan establishment. All of these have made it inevitable that Lee would invite and benefit from these businesses. Therefore, it is in Lee that the traffic problem should be addressed.
- #1: Trucks and cars could go off the on ramp and on the off ramp in Lee.
#2: Need an exit for cars only on Route 20 where Johnson Road goes over Mass Pike. Cars can go to Jacobs Pillow and Route 8 South.
- The traffic and access issue being studied is a regional issue and needs to be looked at in this manner. Narrowing this to an issue of traffic in the Town of Lee only will not solve this problem for the long term and for the full benefit of the region.
My opinion of the alternatives that are still on the list for further analysis would be to favor the Rte. 7 interchange (north only if necessary, to protect any environmentally sensitive areas.) I believe we should try to use existing roadways instead of trying to reroute traffic from exit 2 and build new roads. The fact that the Mass Pike crosses Route 7 and that Route 7 would not need much in the way of improvements to accommodate this proposal, and that a good portion of the northbound traffic winding through the Town of Lee is heading to Route 7 or Lenox at the present time. I feel that for these reasons, this option has a lot of merit. This change would help alleviate a good portion of the unnecessary traffic through Lee and reduce some of the pressure on exit 2. Exit 2 is getting very congested and will only get more congested in the future. Many of the other alternatives presented will not alleviate or address this issue.
The traffic from the Lee Outlet Village, Diesel Dan’s future development, Berkshire County Tourism and hopefully new industry to fill some of the recently vacated industrial sites in the Town of Lee, along with needed industry in the rest of Berkshire County will inevitably increase pressure on exit 2 and Route 102 in the future. Having another option to access the Mass Pike will help take some of the pressure off of exit 2 and make access to northern Berkshire County much more efficient from the Mass Pike. The West Road Mass Pike interchange would be my second choice.
I strongly believe the best long-term answer to the regional traffic and access problem would be to relocate the last exit on the Mass Pike to the Becket, Russell, or Blanford area. This would create a Berkshire spur of the Mass Pike and would allow an exit on Route 7 or anywhere else an exit may be needed (with careful consideration) now or in the future. This concept would make it easier for exits to be installed on this stretch of road without the need for the large footprint required for a full interchange. It also would limit the negative aesthetic and environmental impacts of a full interchange.

Five Alternatives to be Considered for Further Analysis	
• Install traffic lights at Park/Main and at Center/Main; possibly eliminate or reconfigure parking on Main Street; intersection modifications (Transportation Systems Management)	0
• One-way pairs –Main Street/Canal & Railroad Streets	1
• Bypass on west side of River – from Laurel Street to Park Street and extend south to Route 102	0
• Rte. 7 MassPike interchange	0
• West Road MassPike interchange, with widened West Road north to Rte. 7	0

No comment forms were submitted at the Public Meeting.

1 comment form was submitted by mail on Wednesday, September 3rd.

1 comment form was submitted after the Working Group meeting on Thursday, September 10th.

1 comment form was submitted by mail on Friday, September 12th.