

BOS 3-16-16

Washington Street Corridor Study Holliston, MA

Comments

Responses

Signal Design Details	
Will there be right on red or will it be posted no right on red?	FHWA recommends that right turn on red (RTOR) be prohibited where and/or when there are high pedestrian volumes. There are multiple options for RTOR restriction signage including a simple sign posting or a variable message No Turn on Red sign that is only displayed when the exclusive pedestrian phase is called. The current pedestrian volumes do not meet RTOR restrictions.
Are you allowing right turn on red at Central, Exchange and Hollis Streets?	Signal timing adjustments can be made for different time periods to optimize traffic flow. Lane assignments will remain the same for all time periods.
Most traffic is going northbound in the mornings (weekdays) and southbound in the evenings. Could signal patterns be designed in some way to maximize the flow in these directions at heavy traffic times?	The traffic light at the Green Street/Exchange Street intersection is necessary to control the traffic flow in the area and maintain coordination with the other two proposed traffic signals.
Is it really necessary to have a third light at the intersection of Green and Exchange Streets?	The proposed design is expected to minimize the current queues on the side streets that are a result of infrequent gaps in Washington Street traffic. The addition of signals is expected to spread the delay amongst all vehicles and minimize the overall delay of the intersections. While the side street delay will be reduced significantly, the Washington Street delay is expected to increase slightly, but not to a level that would result in re-routed traffic.
Has the traffic increased so much that the expense of a third light is warranted?	The proposed traffic signals will be coordinated with different coordination times for different time periods throughout the day using sophisticated traffic signal controllers and detectors.
I am wondering how the new traffic lights will affect this rolling bumper to bumper traffic during these periods of heavy traffic?	
Are we actually putting in traffic lights?	
We need lights at Hollis and Washington and Washington and Central. Or do we need another death to prove what two previous already recommended?	
Why were lights never placed at Hollis and Washington?	
Wouldn't longer wait times encourage people to find their way through Mudville to avoid this?	
How do you maintain correct sequencing?	
Roadway Operations	
Open Charles Street up to two way traffic with the light signal why not? Is it wide enough? High School traffic could travel both ways. Where are the handicap spaces?	The analysis of two-way traffic along Charles Street is beyond the existing scope of work and has not been considered as part of the project to date. Handicapped spaces will be provided as required by the current ADA/AAB regulations. The location of required handicapped spaces will be determined during the final design process.
Any thought given to traffic exiting from Congregational Church exit on Hollis Street?	Traffic counts were not taken at the intersection of the church exit and Hollis Street. However, the traffic exiting the church and destined to Washington Street is included in the traffic counts completed for the project.

Traffic Analysis	
The other documents are all dated 2014, I did not read them, but I pray we have more recent information?	The annual traffic growth rate is 1% per year. The minimal increase in traffic does not change the results of the analysis and therefore the traffic counts from 2014 are a valid representation of existing conditions.
Therefore, I respectfully request that the Board have the engineers provide an analysis of installing a roundabout at the Central Street and Washington Street intersection and or installing one at Hollis Street, Charles Street and Washington Street intersection.	Early on in the conceptual design process, roundabouts were considered. However, they resulted in substantial right-of-way impacts and therefore were not further developed.
Please provide data/numbers regarding why a single lane (through) does not work. How does the wait time increase?	The analysis of a single through lane in each direction has been provided in a previous memorandum from McMahan to the Town of Holliston and dated June 5, 2014. (Memo attached)
Heavy Vehicles	
Can one fire truck negotiate through here?	
Wouldn't the optional bump out, as described at the High School meeting, make it much harder for cars and especially fire trucks to make a right hand turn out of Central Street onto Washington ?	The proposed design considered emergency response and heavy vehicle restrictions in the geometry of the roadway. Truck turning templates were used to ensure that the vehicles could maneuver within the intersections. The optional curb extensions were proposed as part of a previous design alternative which was not selected as the preferred alternative by the town. During the design phase, features such as 12-foot versus 11-foot travel lanes can be reviewed.
And wouldn't it make plowing Washington Street in winter much harder as well?	
Big trucks turning in and out of Central plus stopping to make deliveries with parked cars and traffic waiting to turn make this a challenge. Are we even considering that?	
Painted 11' lane markings that don't physically restrict fire vehicles but do visually narrow roadway?	
Any way to prohibit or limit large trucks downtown?	There is a legal process for truck restrictions, in which a community must demonstrate that there is a reasonable alternative route, that does not involve re-routing through adjacent municipalities.
Enforcement	
Can we lower the speed limit to 20 mph?	
Has decreasing the speed limit to say 20 mph from where the current speed limit signs are located now (going south on Washington Street located before the Town Hall and going North on Washington Street located near Pleasant and Spring Streets) ever been considered by McMahan Transportation Engineers & Planners?	Speed limits are established based on location jurisdiction and the geometry of the roadway. Studies have shown that reduced speed limits are not effective means of traffic calming without roadway design changes.
Now that we seem to have the full backing and support of our state representatives, is it possible to finally get a lower speed limit for the downtown (town hall to Pearl Street)?	
Why is it 25 mph heading North just after the Police Station towards Dunkin Donuts and 30 mph downtown where there are more pedestrians crossing Washington Street?	
Presently, we try to avoid Pleasant and Union Streets on our afternoon walks because of cars speeding through the neighborhood and we can only imagine this becoming worse. Do drivers actually abide by turn restrictions?	There are no turn restrictions proposed under the preferred alternative.

Parking and Roadway Cross-Section

What is happening with the parking spots on Central Street up to the signals – spot next to Jasper Hill, spots in front of the candy store? Are parking spots staying on Exchange Street as they are already?	Existing parking spaces on the side streets will not be effected by the proposed design on Washington Street.
Empty building next to Fiske's and library has lots of spaces. Can we buy it and make more parking?	Town of Holliston to respond.
Won't eliminating parking spaces 1-5 and 14-17 actually widen the road and encourage drivers to go faster, not slower? Probably the most contested eliminated parking spaces are the two proposed in front of Fiske's, numbers 25 and 26. Wouldn't this also make the street wider, allowing cars to go faster? I don't see much being done to narrow Washington Street, which I believe was a key finding of one of the studies. Why is this? In addition, if widening the street and making the cross walk longer is dangerous, why are we adding a lane there? If so why a light there?	Parking spaces are being eliminated to create space for the additional travel lanes along the roadway. The existing roadway cross-section in these areas is comprised of two travel lanes and two parking lanes and the proposed cross-section calls for the construction of four travel lanes, two in each direction. The allocation of existing roadway space for the creation of additional travel lanes is not expected to increase speeds along Washington Street.

Aesthetics

Trees, in front of our historical buildings, along sidewalks, and likely to the dismay of the DPW – can we fill in the giant yellow ponds of stripes in the center of the road with raised curbs, trees or flowers?	As part of the proposed design, a majority of the painted medians will be converted into space for the additional travel lanes. The one painted median to be incorporated in the proposed design is short in length and not wide enough to support tree growth.
---	---

Pedestrian Crossings

What is the cost of replacing the raised crosswalk at Exchange and Green Streets with a level crosswalk? The crosswalk now in front of the library does not appear to be raised. Likewise, what would be the cost of replacing it?	Costs were only estimated for the preferred alternative. The crosswalk in front of the library is to be removed because midblock crossings create potential safety issues. It would be safer for pedestrians to cross at the signalized intersections when traffic is stopped.
If that is no longer where the crosswalk will be, wouldn't it be more cost effective to just paint over the bricks and borders with black paint suitable for roadways? Wouldn't it also ease the burden on town coffers to just paint over it appropriately instead of taking out all the bricks and borders?	Paint will not hold up over time and would require continuous maintenance.
Perhaps policing and issuing of jay walking fines would be something to consider?	Police enforcement results in high costs for the town and is not proven to decrease jaywalking when enforcement is removed.

Other	
Why do "special" stakeholders get a different meeting?	
Another question I have is the expense of this project, how will it be funded and has there been an economic impact or cost benefit study to the Town?	Town of Holliston to respond.
Who will decide what gets incorporated Selectmen or McMahon?	The Town of Holliston will decide on the final design.
How about a written summary with some details on the current plan?	In addition to the concept plans, a Conceptual Design Report was also submitted to the Town of Holliston in February 2014. The report provides a written summary of the study process and the alternatives.
Common courtesy and respect can handle most traffic issues. Isn't that why a majority of folks enjoy living in a quaint Town?	
But let us always remember that engineers are NOT always right. Weren't they the ones that put in the current walk-lights that nobody can see?	No response.

Notes: