

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes of July 22, 2013

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Phil LoChiatto called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Selectmen Ross McLeod, Al Letizio, Kathleen DiFruscia and Roger Hohenberger were present; as was Town Administrator David Sullivan. Also present were Mr. Peter Stamas, Mr. Dan Primo, and Mr. Mike Dugas of the NH Department of Transportation. Mr. LoChiatto opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LoChiatto then reiterated for the record that this workshop would be limited to the Board and the DOT; adding that public input regarding this matter had previously been sought and would not be solicited that evening.

Mr. Stamas opened the discussion by noting much of what he has read/heard regarding the signal at the Route 111/Range Road intersection has been inaccurate; and that the DOT hoped to be able to clarify the facts to date. He indicated that, ultimately, the DOT is looking for a written recommendation from the Board of Selectmen regarding the signal; which will then be reviewed and responded to by the DOT.

Mr. Stamas went on to review several aerial views of the area, as well as plans regarding the intersection in question. Highlights of his presentation/explanation included:

- Multiple alternatives were considered as part of the preliminary process in 2002, involving several hearings.
- The original concept was to create a right in/right out connector road to provide access to the Park and Ride, as well as to open up access to the area businesses. This would have intersected with Range Road and maintained the signal in question.
- Over the course of two (2) workshops in 2002, there was much discussion regarding the potential negative impacts of the aforementioned concept, as well as concerns regarding the mixing of Park and Ride and commercial traffic in the area.
- As a result of those workshops, the plan was revised to relocate Route 111A to the west with a new signalized four-way intersection; leaving Range Road to become a local road and the existing intersection re-designed similar to that at Searles Road.
- The plan, as it is today, involves six (6) signalized intersections from the Southbound ramp to Route 28 at the following: SB ramp; NB ramp; relocated Route 111A; Delahunty Road; Range/Lamson roads, and; Route 111/Route 28. Each of these signals are relatively equally spaced apart.
- As to the future of the Range Road/Route 111 intersection after removal of the signal, permissive lefts are planned at the intersection, with right turns out onto Route 111 only. Mr. Stamas also noted that Convenient MD's driveway permit included a second access to allow for in/out traffic at that site.
- The new signal at the NB ramp will allow u-turns, which provides additional access to the south end.
- The majority of the day, drivers will be able to safely take a left from Route 111 onto Range Road; as they do now onto Searles Road. Mr. Stamas indicated that during high volume periods, drivers would likely travel to the new signal.
- As to the warrant analysis presented to the DOT, Mr. Stamas confirmed that, if left hand turns off of Range onto Route 111 were maintained, then the warrant is met.

Mr. Hohenberger sought clarification as to where the Park and Ride was going to be located. Mr. Stamnas indicated that the preferred location is within the NB loop ramp and old NB land area. Discussion ensued relative to this location being further north than where it was proposed ten years ago.

Mr. LoChiatto requested that Mr. Stamnas clarify access to the commercial properties from the relocated Route 111A. Mr. Stamnas indicated that a connector road is planned leading to the Country Shoppes, Nault's, Klemm's and the Ray properties; which will provide better access to same at the same point of access to the Park and Ride. He added that the Park and Ride itself will be built in phases, beginning with approximately 150 spaces with a final buildout of approximately 450 spaces plus a terminal.

Mr. Letizio noted concerns regarding the original Park and Ride location versus the current; noting that the latter is prime property with frontage on Route 111. Mr. Stamnas clarified that the State does not own the property further to the rear, and that the current location will also involve less blasting. Discussion ensued regarding other locations considered and environmental factors involved.

Mrs. DiFruscia indicated that she had concerns regarding access to the golf course property if the signal were removed; adding that there is no existing right of way to allow a right turn into that parcel from Delahunty Road. Mr. Stamnas indicated that the State, when speaking with developers, does work with them regarding traffic mitigation and access; adding that it is unknown at this time what the development of that property will be.

Mrs. DiFruscia then noted concerns that had been raised regarding impacts to businesses to the east if the light is removed. Mr. Stamnas reiterated that the permissive left provides access to same for the majority of the day and that, during peak times, travelers will utilize the signal further down. Discussion ensued as to the downside of leaving the signal, including less efficient traffic flow, delays, and maintenance costs.

Mr. Letizio noted that it appeared the significant in/out traffic to the golf course property would be off of Delahunty Road, and Mrs. DiFruscia noted that an easement would be needed to get to the acreage as Delahunty Road only extends in so far and stops at the access to the Nursery parking lot. Mr. Stamnas noted that the former curb cut to the golf course property still exists, reiterating that any developer would need to present a proposal to the DOT which is willing to work with all as part of the normal process. Mr. Stamnas added that the State has made a large investment in these improvements and needs to make sure it works efficiently.

Mr. Hohenberger noted that the same needs could be met via a service road off of Range Road, without a curb cut on Route 111, while leaving the signal as it is. Mr. LoChiatto noted the potential negative impacts of same via dumping of the Park and Ride and Gateway District traffic to Range Road. Discussion ensued.

Mr. McLeod noted that he would like to hear the Planning Board's opinion, as this had not been available until after the previous hearing. Mr. LoChiatto indicated he would be willing to allow Ms. St. Laurent of the Planning Board to read their written recommendation into the record.

Ms. St. Laurent approached and summarized the Planning Board's correspondence as attached. Mr. Stamnas noted in response that right in/right out traffic was a consideration in 2002, however, no one had supported same. He also indicated that by removing the new signal access is lost to a substantial amount of acreage which is pending development and that, from an engineering, standpoint while many concerns can be addressed not all can be fixed. Mr. Stamnas then noted that, as it pertained to a roundabout, that is not something that could be done immediately as a plan would be needed and it, therefore, would not be

done within the timeline of the Route 111 project. Mr. Letizio noted that, as one who had suggested a roundabout, he was no longer promoting same due to the need to remove the Searles wall and the fact that the Town would bear the cost for same. Discussion ensued, and Mrs. DiFruscia expressed her concurrence with Mr. Letizio's lack of support for a roundabout.

Mr. Letizio noted that he supported the plan as it is, as it provides functionality and addresses all factors for existing and future residential and commercial properties in the area. He indicated that he had also spoken to the owner of the Country Shoppes who now also supports the plan; adding that as designed the proposal offers a buffer of sorts to the existing residential properties. Discussion ensued.

Mr. McLeod noted that in 2002 the key point was the relocated Route 111A and how to encourage people to use it, which the plan addresses, and that in 2004 much input had been offered regarding traffic impacts without the relocation. Mr. McLeod noted that there would have to be a signal at the relocated access, and that the question was what to do with the other two lights; adding that there was nothing concrete regarding installation of a signal at Delahunty Road. He indicated he did not see the issue with allowing the existing signal at Range Road/Route 111 to remain until a light is installed at Delahunty Road, at which time the area could be reevaluated. Discussion ensued, and Mr. Stamnas sought clarification that Mr. McLeod was suggesting swapping the lights out when Delahunty was installed. Mr. McLeod replied in the affirmative, and Mrs. DiFruscia concurred.

Mr. LoChiatto noted that, in looking at the aerial view, it was clear that keeping the light would create a bottleneck and push us closer toward looking like Route 28, which no one wants. He felt that Mr. McLeod's suggestion only delayed the inevitable and that the Board needed to make a decision; adding that the proposal as presented seems to be the correct plan.

Discussion ensued as to the number of lanes planned in the area, which were clarified as two through lanes and an exclusive left turn lane when headed west bound, and two through lanes and an exclusive right and left turn lane headed east bound. Also discussed were the similarities, as planned, to the Searles intersection and the benefits of installation of a light at Delahunty. Mr. Stamnas clarified that, as to the latter, the costs for same will be borne by the future developer of the property as part of their traffic mitigation.

Mr. LoChiatto sought clarification as to the potential costs if the Board did decide to request the State change the plan. Mr. Stamnas noted costs to re-design the area would be approximately \$5-10,000. Discussion ensued as to the coordinated system of signals in the area, and Mr. Stamnas clarified that there can be only one entity maintaining same; whether it be the Town or the State.

Lengthy debate then ensued amongst the Board members wherein each reiterated their concerns/positions. Also discussed was the future of the Park and Ride and whether the location would change again. Mr. Stamnas again advised that this is the preferred location for the Park and Ride and, in fact, the area is currently being pre-filled in preparation.

Mr. Letizio then moved and Mr. LoChiatto seconded that a letter be forwarded to the DOT in support of the plan as presented. Discussion ensued before the motion failed 2-3, with Mr. Hohenberger, Mrs. DiFruscia, and Mr. McLeod opposed.

Mr. McLeod then moved and Mrs. DiFruscia seconded to keep the light as it is until such time as the DOT installs a new signal at the new NH 111A and/or Delahunty Drive. Mr. Stamnas reiterated that the DOT would not be installing the signal at Delahunty.

Mr. McLeod amended his motion and Mrs. DiFruscia her second to remove reference to the DOT installing the light at Delahunty. Further discussion ensued regarding this light and that the developer would also be responsible to remove the signal at Range Road. Mr. Stamnas indicated that the developer could justify not having to remove the light, which would result in three signals within 1400 feet. Further, lengthy discussion ensued as to how the status would be evaluated and the proposed permissive lefts before the motion failed 2-3, with Mr. Hohenberger, Mr. LoChiatto, and Mr. Letizio opposed.

Mr. Hohenberger suggested that the light be left as it is until the DOT installs the NB signal, at which time it be removed. Discussion ensued, and Mr. Hohenberger moved and Mrs. DiFruscia seconded that the DOT not install a signal at the relocated Route 111A.

Discussion ensued regarding this scenario pushing traffic onto Range Road, as well as the need to extend the medians/close access once the Range Road/Route 111 signal is removed. Motion failed 1-4, with all opposed save Mr. Hohenberger.

Mr. Hohenberger moved and Mrs. DiFruscia seconded to table this matter to a future date to be determined. Mrs. DiFruscia indicated she would like the opportunity to have one more meeting with both public input and DOT input. Discussion ensued as to what effect that would have on the DOT's plans, which Mr. Stamnas indicated would be none as the State is moving forward. Motion failed 2-3, with Mr. McLeod, Mr. Letizio, and Mr. LoChiatto opposed.

Mr. McLeod then moved and Mrs. DiFruscia seconded to keep the signal at the Range Road/Route 111 intersection as it is. After lengthy discussion regarding the timing of the new lights and shifting of the traffic, the motion passed 3-2, with Mr. Letizio and Mr. LoChiatto opposed.

Mr. McLeod moved and Mr. Letizio seconded to adjourn. Passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendi Devlin, Administrative Assistant

Note: These minutes are in draft form and have not yet been submitted to the Board for approval.