
MEMORANDUM

To: Route 111/202 Corridor Committee
From: Suzanne LePage, Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission
Re: Public Meeting in Arundel
Date: November 19, 2003
Attachments: Meeting Handout (ArundelHandout.doc); Excerpts from the Draft 2003 Arundel Comprehensive Plan Update (ArundelCPExcerpts.doc)
CC: Arundel Planning Board

On Thursday evening, November 13, 2003, staff from the Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission (SMRPC) and the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) attended an Arundel Planning Board meeting to discuss corridor planning along Route 111 through the Town. The goal was to solicit suggestions and local support on specific strategies to address the future mobility and safety of Route 111.

Dennis Emidy gave a brief presentation on his traffic study of the corridor, including a discussion on transportation improvements proposed for Arundel. I discussed a handout comparing the Route 111 Corridor Committee's general recommendations to communities with recommendations from the Draft 2003 Arundel Comprehensive Plan Update. Suggestions for strengthening the Comprehensive Plan strategies were given in the handout. (attached) Chief Ouellette from the York County Sheriff's Department was also in attendance and discussed the activities of law enforcement over the past few years.

In general, the Planning Board appeared receptive to the suggestions for expanding the Comprehensive Plan objectives to better address the long-term mobility and safety needs of the Route 111 Corridor. However, the Town of Arundel has not yet adopted the Comprehensive Plan Update, so it was suggested to schedule a similar meeting with the Comprehensive Plan Committee sometime in the next few months as they prepare to gain public support and possibly rework the Plan. It may also be beneficial for Mr. Emidy to present his work to a broader public audience in Arundel at that time.

During the question-and-answer portions of the meeting, the role of Route 111 was discussed. In response to a question, Dennis explained that the traffic data reviewed definitely displayed commuting patterns with a heavy eastbound flow in the morning and westbound flow in the afternoon. Suzanne added that the pattern will likely increase in the future as large retail establishments develop in Biddeford attracting workers and shoppers from the west. Both Dennis and Chief Ouellette verified that the traffic exiting from Hill Road onto Route 111 are drivers cutting through to avoid the Route 35 intersection in Lyman and get to the Turnpike interchange in Biddeford. It is anticipated that improvements to the intersection of Route 35 with Route 111 will discourage the use of Hill Road as a shortcut.

Also notable, Planning Board Chair Tom McGinn asked if the potential for transit service was studied. Suzanne answered that it was not, as part of this effort, but has been in the past. In 1998, an analysis of transportation alternatives for Route 111 in Biddeford was completed as part of the planning process to widen a section of that highway. That study compared doing nothing, implementing peak period bus service, all day bus service, and three different widening scenarios in Biddeford. The peak period bus service analysis resulted in the highest benefit/cost ratio at 1.76. The study states the following:

The recommended approach to address existing and future congestion in the Route 111 corridor [in Biddeford] is to implement a combination of transportation alternative strategies that provides the greatest transportation benefits for the least cost. The following strategies are recommended:

- **Peak Period Transit Service.** Available information indicates that there is an apparent market for a commuter-oriented transit service between the Biddeford area and the Sanford-Alfred area that is not being met. This analysis has found that a peak-period bus service is a cost-effective means of meeting this demand that will generate benefits for the general traveling public as well as for its riders. Development of this service or an equivalent vanpool service should be pursued further. ... Whatever form Biddeford-Sanford transit service takes, it should be coordinated with other regional and local public transportation services, both existing and proposed.
- **Widening Route 111.** To have a major reduction in traffic congestion and accidents in the Route 111 Corridor [in Biddeford], capital improvements to the roadway will be necessary. To produce the greatest benefits, these improvements should include (1) a major improvement to the Five-Points intersection to increase vehicular capacity and improve safety, (2) a lane for sheltering left-turning vehicles from through traffic wherever feasible between Five Points and Exit 4, (3) an additional through lane in both directions between May Street and Exit 4. ... the widening of Route 111 should be sensitive to the transportation needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in the corridor, and consistent with access management principles.

Now under construction, the Route 111 improvements east of Exit 4 include upgrades to the Five Points intersection and additional travel lanes on Route 111 between Five Points and Exit 4. Transit service has not been implemented. **Perhaps, when the Corridor Committee meets again, we should discuss this item further.**

The next Implementation Meeting has been scheduled for Sanford on December 3. Dennis will be presenting his intersection model to kick off the Planning Board workshop, which is being devoted entirely to the discussion of transportation planning in Sanford. Efforts underway for the Route 109 corridor are also on the agenda. SMRPC and MDOT staff will be there as will Jim Gulnac, who served on our committee and is the Town Planner. This may be an interesting meeting for other Corridor Committee members to attend also. The public is invited.