

**CTDOT Route 15 Interchange 59
Deficiencies and Needs Study
Summary of Public Information Meeting
Mitchell Library
37 Harrison Street, New Haven
October 6, 2010
6:00 to 8:00 p.m.**

A Public Information Meeting was held on Wednesday, October 6, 2010 to review the purpose and findings-to-date of the CTDOT Route 15 Interchange 59 Deficiencies and Needs Study and provide for an exchange of information between the study team and the public. There were about 45 individuals who attended the meeting.

An open-house session was held before and after a short presentation. During the formal presentation, there were questions and comments from the public. Questions were answered primarily by a member of the consultant team hired by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) to conduct the study. During the informal open house, members of the study team gathered around information boards and responded to questions and comments one-on-one.

Melanie Zimyeski, project manager for CTDOT welcomed attendees and introduced the manager of the consultant team, Jerry Gluck, who then made the presentation.

Jerry Gluck began by explaining the background of the study and study goals. This study was developed in response to the high number of accidents associated with Interchange 59 of the Wilbur Cross Parkway and the surrounding area, including Routes 63 and 69. The study will produce a recommendation plan for the interchange and surrounding roadway network.

Study goals include: 1) improving traffic safety, 2) improving connectivity of the transportation network, 3) reducing traffic congestion, 4) improving pedestrian accommodations, 5) increasing the efficiency of the transportation and 6) involving the public throughout the study.

A list of major issues developed through field visits and review of existing data was presented for public review and comments. The summary of issues and comments is listed below:

- High frequency of accidents on the southbound entrance ramp
- Nonstandard acceleration lane on southbound entrance and exit ramps and northbound exit ramp
- Congestion on southbound Route 69 approaching Interchange 59
- Lane changing on northbound Route 69 approaching the northbound and southbound entrance ramps

- Lane changing on southbound Route 63 approaching the southbound entrance ramp and Amity Plaza
- Complex intersection of Route 63/Route 69/Wright Avenue
- Frequent driveways and traffic signals
- Need for improved pedestrian accommodations

Jerry Gluck told attendees that feedback from the public would be appreciated concerning the issues identified by the study team. He then asked attendees to share their views on the study area. Listed below are comments and questions. The responses to questions are presented in italics.

Comments and questions during public group session

Were short-term sign solutions installed several months ago?

All new signs will be up later on this year.

How much more information do you need to complete the report of deficiencies?

We have collected and reviewed the traffic data that we needed and we are looking for confirmation of the issues that we identified before we proceed with the development of improvement alternatives.

Please include Route 69 (Litchfield Turnpike) at Bradley Road in your study. The westbound intersection approach that exits the area by Research Drive gets very congested, especially during the evening rush hour.

The traffic light on Route 69 at the southbound Parkway ramps backs traffic up. It would help to put in an extra lane on southbound Route 69 to get people onto the Parkway. Other traffic signals in the area either provide too much or not enough green time for their related traffic movements.

If you are going through (eastbound) on Lucy Street to Litchfield Turnpike, traffic backs up too much on Lucy Street. It could take five cycles to get through.

Too often one has to change lanes to continue straight.

Are you looking at short term solutions as well as long term? It seems like restricting certain movements to right-turn only, providing some road widening, and better synchronizing traffic lights would help.

Yes, we are examining short-term solutions, but we will only consider those solutions that would not preclude long-term improvements.

The bridge by Pond Lily Avenue should be widened to provide two lanes in each direction.

What bicycle and pedestrian data has been collected? Will you be addressing complete streets?

We have inventoried sidewalks and shoulder widths along Routes 63 and 69 in the study area. We have the new Complete Streets manual and it will provide guidance as we progress into the development of alternatives.

Although Route 69 is narrow in the study area, it is a popular bike route, especially for recreation.

Woodbridge did a village district study in the project area.
We are aware of the study; Alan Plattus attended a meeting of the project Stakeholder Committee.

Have you looked at transit in the area and park n' ride?
We have looked at the transit service and will consider it as we progress in the development of alternative improvements.

Cut through traffic is really bad in New Haven neighborhoods. As you look at signal optimization, please consider making these roads as efficient for cars as possible to keep people out of the neighborhoods. We'd like to see optimizing the use of the arterial roads.

Is most of the traffic going into New Haven or getting on to the Parkway?
We didn't do an Origin-Destination Study to determine that but are able to infer some of this from examining traffic volumes. We know many people seem to be going to Southern CT University. The traffic count data we are using is pre-construction of the current project on Whalley Avenue.

Why couldn't Litchfield Turnpike be widened to create a second southbound lane from Starbucks to Lucy Street? People were driving over the curb to create a second lane until the state put posts there to prevent it.
There is a house on the corner that would be impacted. But, this will be considered in the development of alternatives.

Will the state regularly review the traffic counts at Bradley Road and Amity Road to determine if a traffic signal is needed?
Yes, depending on development in that area; there is an ongoing study there right now regarding whether signalization is warranted.

There is considerable flooding, ponding of water from the West River all along Amity Road.

Comment from Woodbridge Police attendee that the northbound turn onto the Parkway on Route 69 may have many more crashes than the data indicates. Due to the location, there are three different sources of crash data collected – by state police, New Haven and Woodbridge. Did you get information from all three?
Yes.

Comment from Woodbridge Police attendee that a longer left-turn only signal phase at this location and better timing of the light may help.

Summary of additional comments

These comments were made to individual members of the project team during the open house portion of the meeting:

- The northbound approach on Route 69 to Pond Lily Avenue was changed and has worsened traffic conditions in the area.
- There is a major need for better traffic signal coordination in the area.
- There should be a longer left-turn phase for the left turn from southbound Litchfield Turnpike to Pond Lily Avenue.
- There should be a dedicated right-turn lane from northbound Litchfield Turnpike to Pond Lily Avenue.
- There are no pedestrian facilities (not even an unpaved path) on Amity Road north of the car dealerships.
- A preliminary design for pedestrian improvements for the Amity/Whalley intersection was developed during the design of the Whalley Avenue.
- Flooding is an issue on Merritt Avenue.
- Traffic signals on Route 69 (Litchfield Turnpike) should be coordinated.
- The southbound on ramp should not have a STOP sign (a merge would be better).
- A connector road between Route 63 and 69 was suggested.
- Eliminate the No Turn on Red on Lucy Street at Route 69.
- The movement from Merritt Avenue to Lucy Street is especially difficult when the traffic backs up on southbound Route 69 approaching the Route 15 interchange.
- Eliminate the traffic signal at Route 69/ Bradley Road.
- Make the businesses north of Bradley Road more accessible, and allow for more traffic to exit from westbound Bradley Road onto Route 69. This is especially important in the event of an emergency.
- Plan should incorporate New Haven's 'Complete Streets' design manual.
- Left-turn phase at Pond Lily Avenue should have a 'lead' not 'lag' green arrow.
- Widening was requested on Litchfield Turnpike southbound in the vicinity of Starbucks to create an additional southbound lane to the Route 15 southbound entrance.
- Remember that bicyclists use these roads too.
- Route 69 is used by bicyclists.
- Traffic sometimes backs up on Route 15 southbound off ramp.
- More sidewalks are needed for children dropped off from the school bus on Litchfield Turnpike in the vicinity of Landin Street.
- Increased development and use of existing retail space would increase the amount of vehicular and pedestrian traffic in the area. CTDOT should look at installing a traffic light at Bradley Road and Route 63.
- Make the Route 15 north bound and south bound off ramps right-turn only and force cars to go south on Route 69 to go north.

- Consider a multi-use path east of Route 69 by West River/Lily Pond for recreational use and to accommodate bicyclists in the area. Provisions would be needed to get the multi-use path under the Parkway.