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**Project:** KACTS - Berwick Downtown Vehicle, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Study  
**MMI #:** 6510-02  
**Subject:** Kick-Off Meeting  
**Location:** Berwick Town Hall  
**Date:** August 27, 2018, at 3:00 p.m.

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**ATTENDEES:**

John Adams, MMI	Rick Vanderburg, Credere Associates
Jason Ready, MMI	Lee Jay Feldman, KACTS/SMPDC
Carl Eppich, MMI	Tom Reinauer, KACTS/SMPDC
Frank Underwood, Envision Berwick	Erik Sanderson, KACTS/SMPDC
Steve Eldridge, Town Manager	James Bellissimo, Planning Technician, Berwick
Tom Wright, Board of Selectman	Mark Kehaya, Fund of Jupiter

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**1. Introductions**

Introductions were made around the table. Representatives identified as missing are: Maine DOT representatives, Chris Mann, and/or Daryl Belz. Representatives which should be invited: Somersworth, NH staff Shana Sanders and/or Mike Bobinsky and Falls Chamber of Commerce representatives (joint chamber for Berwick and Somersworth). James Bellissimo will create a list of land and business owners for MMI.

**2. Determine Final Study Scope and Schedule**

Staff asked the committee to review Milone & MacBroom's (MMI) proposal scope for suggestions of edits and additions. Modifications to all rights of way in the area should be utilized as necessary for geometric and one/two-way street vehicle flow modifications. The committee desires improvements to vehicular mobility, reduced congestion, traffic calming, improving and adding bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and overall safety of the downtown area. The committee desires access to additional transit service and, a shuttle to the Navy yard. Parking in the downtown is perceived to be inadequate today, specifically the need for more on street parking. Mark Kehaya noted that the redevelopment of the tannery site will require significant additional parking and traffic management.

The study area was confirmed to include the areas highlighted in the study RFP, though additional areas just outside of the study area should be taken into consideration such as the proposed site for a community center near the town's ball fields off of Sweetser Street (but accessible from Sullivan Street and Knox Lane). The study area will include the Tannery parcels (3) and the public roads that abut those parcels (Sullivan Street on the west side of the old tannery site from the bridge to the intersection with Wilson Street. Wilson Street from Sullivan Street east to the School Street intersection. School Street from Wilson Street south to the Saw Mill Hill and Sullivan Street intersection.) Other streets within the study area include the near portions of Bow/Bridge Street, Rochester Street, Eleanor Street, and Saw Mill Hill. (Local streets will be included as able based on MaineDOT and FHWA allowances.)

PROJECTS: Tannery site plan was brought to the meeting (we will get from James/Mark) and is by far the largest development going on; Other future projects: New fire station to the north of Wilson Street – two site options with 3 access points; New community center in 5-10 years off)

- What developer is doing; what MMI is doing; what is fixed and what can change?

The developer Mark Kahaya is focused internally onsite but has a planned new roadway connecting the Eleanor's Street intersection to School Street/Lyman Street intersection. Although the preliminary Tannery site plans have extensive transportation component, Kahaya and has not done any preliminary transportation engineering on or off site to date. It is assumed a MaineDOT traffic movement permit will be required.

ACTION: Confirm scope elements, tasks, and time line schedule.

SCOPE: Confirmed as AREA above and Tasks remain as requested in the RFP and scoped in the MMI proposal.

- Identify most convenient and safest crossings for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Identify where bicycle lanes [and other bike infrastructure such as shared lane markings, etc.] can and should go
- Develop a priority list of sidewalk development within the Village Center
- An evaluation of ADA deficiencies of existing facilities

TIMELINE: Project tasks are shifted forward about 2 weeks to a month as compared to the schedule proposed by MMI, but the kick off was 2-3 weeks later than originally assumed. Overall the timeline proposed is accurate with a late spring final report anticipated for late April.

### 3. Purpose & Need (P&N)

- Proposed P&N statement – review and edit
- Send out P&N statement to the Study Team for review and comment

ACTION: Confirm agreement. The MMI Team will draft and circulate via for agreement .

Basically, as stated in the RFP but summarized this way:

- Vehicle traffic in the downtown area can be confusing -need improvements for mobility, circulation, and safety
- Poor sidewalk conditions, connectivity, and facilities for bicycles need to be improved
- Vehicles in the downtown travel too fast for the desired character and actual speeds need to be reduced through addition of traffic calming elements
- The sense of a single downtown with Somersworth, New Hampshire should be improved in concert with recent proposed improvements to the former Prime Tanning parcels in the downtown.
- To provide the foundation to enhance and attract economic development.

For the Tannery site, Kahaya's plan as accepted by the community:

- For the development site to serve as the new downtown; a central space for the public to be
- To provide a mix of retail, commercial and residential uses
- To provide a green space or park and connecting trail
- Parking will be dispersed around the site, and anticipate a potential future parking structure
- Need to develop/build in a phased approach, starting with the southern "tip" end near Bridge Street.
- Provide for bicycle and pedestrian movements through site

### 4. Data Collection – What is available/what do we collect?

- Parking – current on street and municipal parking lots in project area
- Bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Traffic – turning movement count locations; safety/crash data – HCLS, bike/pedestrian problem areas, speeding areas, etc.
- Subsurface utilities, drainage

**PARKING:** Although no comprehensive parking study has been conducted for the entire downtown, the representatives and planning so far indicates that there is a deficiency of parking today. The Tannery site development anticipates and plans for additional surface parking internally, and desires as much on street parking as possible. The lot in front of Town Hall will be removed and landscaped.

**BICYCLE and PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES:** There are currently no on or off-road bicycle facilities. Although desired, not plans to date. There are sidewalks on the public roads, however gaps and condition vary. Widths and materials vary as well. There is s

**TRAFFIC (MOTOR VEHICLES):** The VHB study collected 2015 data. There is MaineDOT 2016 available (Tom Reinauer). This should be adequate but MMI plans to do some (turning?) counts at the intersections and calibrate. Bridge project data that exists will be helpful

**SAFETY/HIGH CRASH LOCATIONS:** A major component of the study as speeds are perceived to be higher than posted (25mph throughout) and there are conflicts and near misses at crosswalks. The intersections mentioned include the Eleanor's Street Sullivan Street; Eleanor's Street and Rochester Street; Sullivan/Rochester/Saw Mill Hill and the bridge; the School Street and Saw Mill Hill; and the School Street and Wilson/Allen Street; and Wilson-Jordan/Sullivan Streets.

**UTILITIES:** A lot of interest and support to bury them wherever possible. This is Kahaya's plan for the tannery site. James has some utilities mapped and can provide that data (GIS). Lighting inventory and plan is also desired, but a previous data set does not currently exist. A discussion about getting natural gas into the downtown was mentioned – gas lines are across the river in Somersworth. The town has a storm water infrastructure mapped for the study area (James will provide). No condition data for the system exists in the data set.

**NOTE:** When the bridge between Berwick and Somersworth was replaced, the signal at the bridge was removed and a major detour was implemented. It worked very well. The community reps at the table believe that valuable data about traffic function. They don't believe the signal is warranted/would meet traffic warrants and data related to that should be collected.

**ACTION:** Identify data available and who supplies and data MMI needs to generate

- A thorough parking assessment, existing and needed is desired. No complete assessment has been completed.
- No bicycle data has been gathered in the study area by Berwick or KACTS. MaineDOT data likely is insufficient or does not exist. MMI will research the availability of data.
- Traffic data from 2016 will be acquired by MMI through KACTS/MaineDOT.
- MaineDOT HCL and other safety data will be researched and included by MMI.

## **5. Public Meeting and Prior Stakeholder Meeting**

- List of interested, affected stakeholders – from town
- Meeting with land/business stakeholders PRIOR to public meeting
- Potential dates early November

The discussion included outreach media including local public TV and news bulletins. It was mentioned that the residents of Berwick are a very engaging group and that they have high participation rates. The town representatives (James) will provide a list of abutting and interested land, business, and residents. The Town will manage the outreach and communications components, and coordinate with the MMI

team on communication content. The town representatives agreed that a separate meeting prior to the initial Public Meeting is in order and will coordinate with the MMI team on date, agenda, and communications. The town representatives, KACTS, and MMI team agreed that an early November date for the Public Meeting is a likely time frame.

ACTION: Tentative first public meeting date(s)  
The MMI team will coordinate with the Study Team members on a date in early November.

## **6. Next study team Meeting Date**

ACTION: MMI staff will float some options for the next Study Team meeting towards the end of October.

**\*\*\*Questions or corrections to Carl Eppich [ceppich@mminc.com](mailto:ceppich@mminc.com) by September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018 Please. \*\*\***

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