Martha's Vineyard Beach Road Study Working Group Meeting #1
Thursday, July 27, 2023 at 1:00 PM
Held virtually via zoom

Meeting Summary

On July 27, 2023 MassDOT held the first Working Group meeting for the Martha's Vineyard Beach Road Study in Tisbury. At this meeting, the study team provided an overview of the Working Group purpose and the study background. The study team asked for input from Working Group members on the state of resiliency and road safety/operations at Beach Road and Five Corners. The meeting was also open to members of the public and a public comment period was provided at the end of the meeting. No members of the public commented.

Meeting Attendance

Name	Organization
Patrick Snyder (Project Manager)	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
Ethan Britland	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
Raissah Kouame	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
Joe Zissman (Project Manager)	Cambridge Systematics
Seema Singh	Cambridge Systematics
Michael Holcomb	Office of Senator Cyr
Kaylea Moore	Office of Representative Fernandes
Richard Bilski	MassDOT Highway Division District 5
Ana Celerier Salcedo	MassDOT Highway Division District 5
Andrea Coates	MassDOT Highway Division District 5
Jay Grande	Town of Tisbury, Town Administrator
Shaun Handy	MassDOT Highway Division District 5
James Houle	University of New Hampshire Stormwater Center
Barbara Lachance	MassDOT Highway Division District 5
Joseph Lane	MassDOT Highway Division District 5
Kirk Mattel	Town of Tisbury, DPW Director

Name	Organization
Hung Pham	MassDOT Highway Division
Ben Robinson	Town of Tisbury, Water Resources Committee
Gareth Saunders	MassDOT Legislative Affairs
Jason Walters	MassDOT Highway Division District 5

Presentations

- **Patrick Snyder** outlined the purpose and rules of the Working Group. We anticipate three meetings of this group (including this one) over the course of the study.

- **Joe Zissman** presented the geographic and subject matter scope of the study, including a map of the study area and a brief discussion of existing conditions. He noted the importance of the Five Corners intersection; in particular, the flows of people and freight. He briefly touched on the flood vulnerability of the study area the intersection, expected to become more acute with climate change. He noted there have been 20 injury-causing crashes in the study area in the past five years, two of them at Five Corners, and one of them fatal. Finally, he noted that the intersection is unsignalized and operates informally based on driver courtesy, creating inefficiencies for operations.

Discussion

- **Ben Robinson** raised concerns about drainage outfalls, apart from Beach Road Extension, which could be facing similar concerns of siltation and should be assessed. Ben further added that he could provide drainage plans, if required. It was noted that the town has a different outfall at the Union Street extension (the Ferry Terminal) but accessing it might be too far up the hill to drain Five Corners.

  - **Hung Pham** mentioned the concern was about the Beach Road Extension location, where the pipe isn't high enough above the water to avoid siltation and sand deposits from waves. It was also noted that the Beach Road siltation issue might be difficult to resolve completely, and so, a new location should be sought. A closer look at the elevations of the intersections and the approach roads would be needed to determine alternatives.

- **Richard Bilski** suggested the project team should verify alternatives based on 20-year and 50-year horizons for flood vulnerability. It might be possible that a complete relocation of all utilities is required, making ‘cost’ an important factor for consideration.

- **Joe Zissman** noted that CS will be looking at a range of options across different time periods.

- **Richard Bilski** noted that cost estimates for conceptual design alternatives should include the cost of reconstructing underground utilities.

- **Ben Robinson** raised questions about whether the study could incorporate new NOAA precipitation data if it became available, as the frequency of 100-year storm is increasing. He asked if the State is updating their flood projections model.

  - **Hung Pham** responded that MassDOT uses NOAA Atlas 14 data for precipitation, but that if new data become available early enough in the project (before substantial work has been completed on conceptual design alternatives) that it can be considered. He also noted that the Department of Environmental Protection has proposed a "plus factor" to account for worsening storms with Climate Change and that some municipalities have adopted similar systems – MassDOT does not currently use them.
  - **James Houle** noted that he believes that Massachusetts has been considering a 10% increase factor for precipitation off of NOAA Atlas 14. New Hampshire, where he works, uses a 15% factor.
  - **Patrick Snyder** noted MassDOT is currently working on a Flood Risk Assessment and noted that the project is dynamic; depending on when results are available, they could be incorporated in this study.

- **Richard Bilski** noted the need to study impacts to adjacent properties, particularly during future storm events.

  - **Joe Zissman** confirmed conceptual design alternatives will consider impacts to adjacent properties and right of way.

- **Jay Grande** noted the intersection between State Road and Edgartown Road backs up when a ferry arrives (in addition to Five Corners) and speculated that any capacity added at Five Corners may not be fully effective if both intersections are not addressed.

- **Richard Bilski** asked if MassDOT will conduct an Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) for Five Corners.

  - **Patrick Snyder** replied that this project may lay the groundwork for an ICE report.
  - **Richard Bilski** responded that at the conceptual design phase MassDOT may wish to assess whether a future ICE would negate the alternative.

This concluded the discussion by members of the Working Group.

Public Comment Period

- There were no comments made by members of the public at this meeting.

The meeting concluded after the public comment period.