



Martha's Vineyard Beach Road Study Working Group Meeting #2
Monday, October 2, 2023 at 1:00 PM
Held virtually via zoom

Meeting Summary

On October 2, 2023 MassDOT held the second Working Group meeting for the Martha's Vineyard Beach Road Study in Tisbury. At this meeting, the study team presented their work on existing conditions, including data collection and a site visit. The study team asked for input from Working Group members on their perceptions of the current 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.

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 State Senator Julian Cyr
Richard Bilski	MassDOT Highway Division District 5, Development Engineer
Amy Upton	Town of Tisbury, Planning Board Administrator
Andrea Coates	MassDOT Highway Division District 5, Environmental Engineer
Jay Grande	Town of Tisbury, Administrator
Shaun Handy	MassDOT Highway Division District 5

Name	Organization
Mark Higgins	Steamship Authority, Chief Operating Officer
Barbara Lachance	MassDOT Highway Division District 5, Planner
Hung Pham	MassDOT Highway Division, Senior Program Manager - Resiliency
Ben Robinson	Town of Tisbury, Planning Board and Water Resources Committee
Melinda Loberg	Town of Tisbury, Climate Committee Chair
Cheryl Doble	Town of Tisbury, Open Space and Recreation Committee Chair
Jake Newman	Massachusetts House of Representatives, Legislative Aid
Louisa Hufstader	Vineyard Gazette
Teresa Kruszewski	<i>Did not identify</i>
Cheryl Doble	<i>Did not identify</i>
Alex Scicchitano	<i>Did not identify</i>
<i>Did not identify (phone)</i>	Office of Dylan Fernandes
<i>Did not identify (phone)</i>	<i>Did not identify</i>
<i>Did not identify (phone)</i>	<i>Did not identify</i>
<i>Did not identify (phone)</i>	<i>Did not identify</i>

Presentations

- **Patrick Snyder** outlined the purpose and rules of the Working Group. He informed the group that after today's meeting, there will be two public meetings and another working group meeting. Attendance of the group in future meetings will be appreciated, though not strictly required.
- **Joe Zissman** presented the existing site conditions resulting from the project site visit in August this year and analysis of safety and multimodal operations at Five Corners. He discussed the physical infrastructure conditions highlighting that the study area is not friendly for bicyclists and pedestrians. He then elaborated on the operational conditions, including the modeled traffic volumes and movement along the five streets approaching the Five Corners intersection and some other surrounding streets.

Next, Joe discussed the findings from the crash data analysis to highlight the crash clusters in the area. He also discussed the flood vulnerability of the study area, the stormwater drainage conditions, and flood risk. He noted that the only outfall for Five Corners is located at the foot of Beach Road extension where debris from the waves can block the outfall. While other outfalls exist, they are not in Five Corners.

Finally, he noted that the team will move toward developing conceptual design alternatives following this meeting.

Discussion

- **Jay Grande** asked if the team considered street lighting, particularly pedestrian scaled lights near crosswalks.
 - **Joe Zissman** responded that the team has not considered lighting yet. A note was made of this concern.
- **Ben Robinson** noted that the Lagoon Pond Road is a fairly slow-moving road with a lot of commercial activities.
 - **Joe Zissman** clarified that the road's straight approach and geometry into the intersection was noted as a possible speeding concern.
- **Ben Robinson** asked if the project team evaluated or will be evaluating the possibility of rerouting some of the drainage routes, particularly routing stormwater from Beach Street to the Union Street outfall.
 - **Hung Pham** responded that they considered the Main Street outfall but, due to the topographic change, rerouting does not seem doable. Hung also noted that he will relook at the drainage database and topography to reevaluate the Union Street outfall.
 - **Patrick Snyder** added that a separate drainage study is currently being carried out by MassDOT's Highway Division to address the stormwater and drainage issues in the area. Though this study is separate from the drainage study, MassDOT is balancing both the studies and will ensure that the studies inform each other.
- **Melinda Loberg** shared that the town has a FEMA grant and is currently conducting a study to reinforce the seawall along Beach Road. She also noted that there is an outfall pipe in that area that goes into Lagoon Pond. The town is advocating reorienting the outfall pipe to the Harbor as a better health outcome for Lagoon Pond.
- **Ben Robinson** raised concerns about access to land for alternative drainage systems, pointing out that neither MassDOT nor the Town own the necessary property. Ben asked if the project team have assessed which properties lie in the low-lying areas. He also mentioned that there are ongoing discussions about relocating the Post Office to a less-flooding prone area.

- **Patrick Snyder** noted that property impacts will be considered during the conceptual design alternatives phase of the study.
- **Ben Robinson** also asked how planning decisions are being made for different planning horizons (next 20 years versus 50 years) when targets related to sea level rise are constantly changing, and infrastructure put in place for 20 years might not work for longer horizons.
 - **Patrick Snyder** responded that the project team and MassDOT are currently discussing the planning horizons and scenarios for the study. He noted they are currently running models and the results from various scenarios are being used to inform these decisions.
 - **Joe Zissman** added that the planning horizon will also be determined by the intended lifespan of the infrastructure.
- **Ben Robinson** highlighted the Vineyard Transit Authority's plans for electric buses, which have included discussion of potential overhead charging facilities in the Vineyard Haven bus loop. These buses have a lower tolerance for water on the road than diesel or hybrid buses due to the batteries under the floor.
- **Melinda Loberg** noted that alternatives to having bikes in five corners were considered during the recently completed Beach Road project. She then asked whether the project team would incorporate the prior Beach Road Mixed-Use Path project's alternatives for bicycle infrastructure.
 - **Patrick Snyder** clarified that this study includes a complete streets approach to evaluate multimodal accommodations at Five Corners.

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.