

## **SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AIRPORT ACTIVITIES**

**January 5, 1999**

**5:30 PM**

Chairman Pariseau called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

**Present:** Aldermen Pariseau, Pinard, Shea, Rivard, Thibault

**Messrs:** F. Testa, T. Goldie

Chairman Pariseau addressed Item 3 of the agenda:

### Review of Brown Avenue Traffic Study

Mr. Testa stated do you remember the last time we met and the request of Alderman Rivard was to visit Brown Avenue and what we could do to relieve some of the traffic on Brown Avenue. What we did was we went out and hired CLD, a local firm that has a lot of traffic experience in the Manchester area and we had them look extensively at Brown Avenue. They came up with a draft report with some recommendations. With that draft report with recommendations, we then met with the four department heads that are involved. Tom Lolicata of Traffic, Bob MacKenzie from Planning, Frank Thomas and I all met with CLD and listened to the draft report and out of that draft report came some suggestions from both Planning and from Highway as to some further things. We incorporated those into the plan and what we are here to present to you tonight is the plan for the Airport. We also then met with the Mayor and he listened to all of the suggestions and I am going to let Tim Goldie go through it really quickly.

Mr. Goldie stated I think the graphic to my left and your right describes the results of our study best. The study started with looking at the intersection of Airport Road with Brown Avenue, what could be done there, short-term, long-term, whatever, to improve conditions due to increasing volume from regular growth as well as what is happening at the Airport. Clearly at that location there is a large volume of traffic into the Airport in the morning rush hour. However, in the afternoon rush hour, that demand is not the same. There is not a huge volume going into the Airport. The majority of the volume is headed south to all the neighborhoods and to Litchfield and Londonderry and so on. We looked at the way the signal is set-up today. We looked at the way the signal used to be set-up.

1/5/99 Spcl. Cmte. on Airport Activities

2

We looked at the possibility of adding additional lanes and after meeting with the

Planning Department, Public Works Department, as well as the Airport, we made a recommendation that we install changeable lane use signs so that during the morning rush hour until the mid mark of the day the lane use would be the left turn lane would be shared left through lane because that is what the current traffic volumes are looking for. However, in the afternoon the lane use would change. It would be a through lane only and what Fred pointed to here is as you come around the corner heading southbound there would be an advanced arm with a sign on it that lights up. In the afternoon it would just have a straight arrow and the word only would light up underneath. That message would be repeated to the traffic and public as you cross over the bridge and that message would be sent a third time when you actually get to the signal because you would only have the through arrow signal then as opposed to the through with the left arrow. What that does is it allows us to do what traffic is looking for in the morning and the afternoon without installing the additional lane. We looked at the additional lane and what that would do capacity-wise. We also priced it given the acquisitions necessary for the three homes and the market in that location. We recommended that that money would be better spent elsewhere. We also looked at some other intersections as study areas. We looked at the Goffs Falls Road intersection. Goffs Falls Road currently has one lane in each direction northbound and southbound. There is a left turn lane into Goffs Falls Road for all the people to get up to Blue Cross/Blue Shield and so forth. There is also an exclusive right turn lane going onto Goffs Falls Road. However, there is so much volume going through that intersection that it exceeds the capacity of that intersection. Now the queues for that intersection very frequently extend all the way down Brown Avenue and they interfere with the operation of Airport Road. What we looked at was if we could convert that right turn lane into a shared through right turn lane and carry the additional northbound lane up to Jeffrey Street with is an area which has no homes in it. It is City-owned. We could do that for a reasonable cost and that would be a drastic improvement in the operations of the Goffs Falls Road intersection. That improvement would carry over and you would even see improvement all the way down as far as the Airport.

Mr. Testa stated what we agreed to at this particular time is...this by-pass lane would cost us about \$250,000. It would be in place for maybe a year or two until the new entrance road that we are building is built and that is going forward. What Mr. MacKenzie and Mr. Thomas had brought up was are we at the Airport willing to give the \$250,000 that would have been spent here to help the City with this intersection and we agreed that we would put the \$250,000 into that intersection because in reality it would also free up some of the traffic from the Airport. When we say the Airport, we also mean all the people who work in that area. It would receive some of the traffic for the homes here so we can get the traffic to flow more evenly here. We have agreed to put the \$250,000 into the

1/5/99 Spcl. Cmte. on Airport Activities

4

Public Works budget and transfer it from the Airport which would be reasonable for us. I am

sure the FAA would go along with it because this also has implications on the Airport exit. Our expenditures here for two big mast arms, these are two programmable message boards that we change, we can then after this year and a half to two years, this road will go back to its old way of doing things and we can take the mast arms and programmable boards and bring them to the Airport. During the construction over the next half dozen years we can use those at various locations so we don't lose any money which seems to us to be the best use of the dollars and cents.

Mr. Goldie stated the other location that we looked at...well let me go back for a second to the Airport Road intersection. There were a couple of recommendations there that in addition to the signs we propose, we propose adding a right turn lane to the Airport Road. Most of the volume on Airport Road to of the Airport wants to head north on Brown Avenue. Very little of the volume wants to turn left and go south to Litchfield. However, those few that do that really mess things up. It only takes two cars and the queue backs all the way up the hill so if we put that right turn lane there that wouldn't happen. There is a volume coming south and turning right into the Airport, particularly in the morning and the same type of thing happens so we made a recommendation for that. Relative to the double left, the geometry really could be improved. What happens is the cars in the left lane tend to drift into the right lane as they go around the corner. They don't stay in their own lane. So we made a recommendation that that geometry be changed to improve that situation.

Mr. Testa replied we have agreed to do those also.

Mr. Goldie stated we are talking about a project that we would put out immediately to get the lane in place. As soon as the thaw is out of the ground, we can get the geometric changes at Airport Road in place which on the ledger here what is purple is the lane use project which would be Winter of 99'. Blue is the Airport Road geometry changes along with North Perimeter Road which will be bid in March and constructed in the Spring and the yellow would be the Goffs Falls Road intersection project which will go out to bid in the Spring for construction in the Summer. I don't know if they will be able to complete everything in one season, but certainly a majority of it.

Alderman Pariseau asked what is the total cost assigned to the Goffs Falls Road project.

Mr. Goldie answered \$500,000.

Alderman Pariseau asked so the Airport is willing to pay half.

Mr. Thomas answered the plan right now is that money would be turned over to us. We are in the process of designing those improvements now at the Highway Department. We haven't done a detailed estimate yet. The estimate that Tim was talking about was a conceptual one. We hope to fine tune that and cut the price down and potentially do a lot of the work ourselves as far as the pavement widening, the overlay, we could get the Traffic Department to do the striping and then contract out the signal work so I am hoping that the cost of the improvements in the Goffs Falls Road area, if it is the desire of the Board to accept it, I think we can do it for quite a bit less than that \$500,000 or \$550,000.

Mr. Goldie stated our estimate was as if we bid it for the whole thing.

Mr. Testa stated this is one way that we think we can put money into the system. Now we have gone one further step. Since the meeting with the Mayor, Skip Beaulieu has come to me and suggested one other change here that I think everyone will agree to. One of the ideas is that we would use North Perimeter Road as an entrance and exit to take some of the pressure off of Brown Avenue. You have got to understand that Brown Avenue right now, all of the traffic on Brown Avenue, the Airport only accounts for between 30 and 40% on a daily basis. 60% to 70% is due to the increased business of the City in general. If you just travel on the roads now, the traffic is a lot worse than it was in 1991. What we have to do is we have to move this road. This road right now is...we have to move this out of the way to put an instrument planning system on Runway 6. This road cannot be within 400 feet of the center line because it interferes with the radio signals. We have to move this road. We originally were looking at a red light here that we could then make a left hand turn because if we direct people into this road, they can't get across with traffic at the Airport so by moving this closer, it makes the geometry a little bit tougher to do. We have agreed that we will look at the operation of all the improvements by the end of the Summer and see what they have improved. If they haven't done as much as we think they would do, we will go back and revisit the red light here and the entrance road and also have people come in and out that way. What we are doing in order to move cars around now, all rental cars that come out of the Airport, when they give directions out to people they are requesting all Route 93 and 101 out along River Road, get off at Brown Avenue and go out by South Willow and anybody stopping by the information booth to ask for instructions are also given those directions. That traffic count is up to 6,000 or 7,000 cars a day on just North River Road. We have already paved, last year the City Public Works Department took some sewer pipes and we helped pave the road so it is doing its part right now but we think with all of the other things...and this way it doesn't make any permanent changes that we will lose the money for.

Alderman Shea stated I was going to mention that I go to the Executive Club and there are quite a few cars there.

Mr. Testa replied that is right. There are a lot of cars there, local cars that know how to get there quick and use that area. It is very, very tough to get in that way now.

Alderman Shea stated I know that there are a lot of cars there at 5 PM or 5:30 PM.

Mr. Testa replied we are going to look at it at the end of the Summer and I told Alderman Rivard earlier that we would put the light in at the end of the Summer if things didn't improve.

Alderman Rivard asked, Fred, you said if it does what we think. What does that mean? If the changes that are being proposed do what why won't we encourage them to use Perimeter Road? I guess I am confused.

Mr. Testa answered if we relieve the pressure on the back-ups. We won't do the study again toward the end of the Summer. So if the phone calls are cut way down because people are able to get to their homes and there is no back-up traffic on Brown Avenue and we delete the congestion, then we have done at least that part of the job because we know in two years we are going to have a brand new entrance road to the Airport that you have seen the plans for that will relieve all of this because Brown Avenue at that point will be five or six lanes wide. It will relieve the congestion down at this end because it will all be funneled to the new entrance road. I am not talking about the DOT project. I am talking about our individual project.

Alderman Rivard asked the improvement back on Goffs Falls Road, I understand what that is going to do and I understand what the turning out of the Airport is going to do for people who are going north into the City. I can't figure out how that is going to relieve traffic for people going south to the Airport. What is the improvement at that intersection going to do to benefit the people who are trying to get to the Airport? How is that going to work?

Mr. Goldie answered the traffic along any corridor is really controlled by the intersections along the corridor. It is the lights and the stop signs and the points of conflict along the corridor that really dictate how it works and how it functions. At Goffs Falls right now, north of Jeffrey Street, and these figures here when you put them together end to end, show the Goffs Falls Road intersection. North of Jeffrey Street there is four lanes. So at least if someone wants to turn right, then can swing around to the left and if someone wants to turn left they can swing

1/5/99 Spcl. Cmte. on Airport Activities

8

around to the right, but as you get down to Goffs Falls Road, there is only one lane north and

one lane south and there is a signal. So what this improvement does is it gives us two lanes north and two lanes south. If you have two lanes you get twice as much through on a green light as you can with one light.

Alderman Rivard asked through that intersection?

Mr. Goldie answered through that intersection.

Alderman Rivard stated but the problem we have is between that intersection and the Airport. All of those houses there.

Mr. Goldie responded they will merge into one lane between Goffs Falls and Airport Road and in the morning we have a lot of problems know at Airport Road when we only have one left turn lane because 75% of the volume in the morning wants to go into the Airport. The way this is now, we have a problem because we only have one southbound lane, or we don't have one southbound lane, we only have half a southbound lane because it is combined but by having to change ranges we will be back to a full southbound lane so again we will be able to get more. It is not the end all solution. The end all solution is the Interstate project. You know bring them across the river from the turnpike.

Alderman Rivard stated I have a concern about talking about widening Brown Avenue when the main entrance to the Airport is going to be on Brown Avenue, isn't it. So we are still going to be using Brown Avenue to get to the Airport.

Mr. Testa replied until the State project is done.

Alderman Rivard stated but it is still going to be the main entrance.

Mr. Testa responded yes it is, but it is going to be about 1,500 feet further south with five and six lanes and that will allow a lot more cars to stack. We will get two lanes in and we will have one straight southbound lane so everybody can still slip south and what it will do is improve the flow. It will pull cars further south and the timing of the lights all along the road and you explained it once to me and I finally understood I think. By letting more cars go through Goffs Falls Road, you will allow more green time for the other direction.

Mr. Goldie stated regardless, I think the discussion we were having is sometimes you can add a lane on one light and two operations on the other because you can steal some of that green time. There will be some of that at Airport Road where we are talking about adding some more lanes and we can steal some of that green time back, but the plan is that if you look at the situation when the State's project

is in, when the new entrance is in, when Airport Road is no longer Airport Road it is called North Perimeter Road, the three lanes will be fine.

Alderman Rivard stated by I think it is interesting to hear about the temporary solution that usually takes place in most construction projects because I have been involved in some of them where they spend a million dollars to prep a site, arrange detours and everything else so that they can do this project and in this particular case we don't want to do anything unless it is a permanent fix because they don't want to waste \$200,000 for two years which is a pretty long distance. I understand what is happening and I know what the plan is before us, but I just find it very interesting.

Mr. Goldie replied obviously we have been involved in many of those projects with the expensive detours and sometimes we go through the analysis on those projects and we say gee we need a temporary signal here for traffic based on the numbers we have. Sometimes we do that same analysis and we say no, we don't need that. Sometimes we say the temporary signals aren't going to do it because we need to have at least two lanes in each direction all the time and we need a whole new grid.

Alderman Thibault asked what is the time-table for the State road to get done.

Mr. Testa answered they expect to have all the licenses and the permits by this Summer. The final hearing will be sometime in February or the month after. They said February or March for the final public hearing and then they will get the decision for environmental permits because the environmental agencies have been involved right along. As I told Alderman Pariseau, we got these this morning in the mail so these are just as new to me as they are to you. This is the noise study that we did subject to Alderman Pariseau's request and they just came in this morning so this is very preliminary data, okay. What I want to show you, and this is going to be tough but this is the noise curves that are used as the basis for soundproofing. These are the official noise curves. I am going to try to show you that these are the noise curves and the new noise curves that I have in my hand, everything else is confirmed for this operation. Noise curves are modeled from how many jets a day fly in and out of the Airport and of what kind of quality. All they did was add a little blip to the north, but this is Nutts Pond. They just added a little blip to the north, not much difference, it really reconfirmed the operations that this curve was built on. These noise curves were built on 47 jets a day. After the Year 2000 when all of the quieter jets were in there. We have 40 a day now so we are in the right ballpark. We then asked for Wylie Labs to come in and revisit this whole thing and I am going to have to get on the floor guys. You are going to have to stand up to look at this. These are the 20 positions that all the noise

1/5/99 Spcl. Cmte. on Airport Activities

11

monitors were set-up. If you go north again, you will see all of the positions

mostly to the north because that is where most of the complaints were coming from and the complaints didn't have to do with noise, they had to do with they weren't eligible for soundproofing. Under the Federal rules, you have to be within these noise curves I showed you earlier. Also, we wanted to check to the south and to the west a little bit and we had some near the river. What they did was they rechecked these noise curves and these are the ones they came up with. You see the line coming through, that is Nutts Pond. Everything is almost the same so they said that based upon what the FAA criteria was, the noise curves are right. That it will be that with 47 jets a day sometime after the Year 2000 when all the noisy jets have to be out of the air. However, what I promised the Alderman was that we would look at existing noise conditions. What are they like today because people are hearing noise. So we did existing noise conditions and I want to show you, indeed, look how far the noise curve comes out. Yes, Alderman Pariseau and Any Gelinas and all of the neighbors are absolutely right. The noise is there because based on today's noise curves that we have 40 jets a day, a lot of those jets, about 30% or 40% of them are Stage 2 and creating this big blip out here. Now, FAA won't use this noise curve because they are saying in the Year 2000 all of the old jets have to be out and we won't soundproof homes that are going to be in the quiet area so what we also had to do was say well we don't believe that it is going to be that way. What we had them model then was what we call 2003, 77 jets a day. We are saying 77 jets a day because you will notice that this goes out here but this noise curve does increase and we are going to try to convince them to use this noise curve. Will it happen? I don't know. Will 77 jets come in here? I don't know. We are saying it is probably more realistic by the Year 2003 or 2004 so what we are looking at is...now don't forget one of the things we asked was to lengthen that cross wind runway and go across Harvey Road. One of the reasons was and if you look at the present noise curves you will see that there is no blip to the west because nothing goes out that way because the runway is too short. By lengthening that runway, you see where all the noise is going, out over the west. So by the use of that runway, by making it usable by 2,000 feet, we have pushed the noise out this way over the wetlands here into the industrial section up here towards Massabesic where very, very few people live. What I am more interested in here for Alderman Pariseau's and Alderman Rivard's wards are this curve has increased. We are trying to say this, there is Nutt's Pond again, and instead of going through it, it has increased here and actually brings in about 50 or 60 more homes. We are trying to say this is the curve that we should use.

Alderman Pariseau asked is that down to Mitchell Street.

Mr. Testa answered this is all preliminary. We will have better maps for you later.

1/5/99 Spcl. Cmte. on Airport Activities

13

I know that Titus is there. This is Gold Street. I don't know. Again, this is preliminary data. I put the book in my car and I have to bring it home tonight to read. They just came in this morning.

Alderman Shea stated I am getting concerns from people who live on Cilley Road. Did the flight pattern change last Summer so that it is going now between Lincoln and Wilson Street. A lot of the people there in my ward are complaining that the jets are coming closer. You are going to hear from them because they are starting to call me.

Mr. Testa asked they are coming more east.

Alderman Shea answered yes.

Mr. Testa replied yes there was. What happened last Summer is some of the jets coming in, instead of lining up on the ILS they have to...jet pilots have to make so many approaches called DOR approaches. They are approaches that line up on a radio beacon somewhere outside. The DOR approach used for the approach from the north is from Concord Airport and what it does is move the line over to the east. I live on that flight pattern. This past Summer I was outside the house and I noticed them coming over this way over my house and yes they did change the DOR approaches but then we called and asked them to use nothing but ILS approaches which puts them over the river.

Alderman Shea asked in other words they are over the river now.

Mr. Testa answered most should be going over the river.

Alderman Shea stated I think you will be getting a call from Mr. Boutin tomorrow and he can talk to you about it.

Mr. Testa replied I know which are given him problems, the 727's. You have that low rumbling frequency sound. Those will be out of the fleet by the end of this year. By December 31 of this year, you won't get that annoying noise.

Alderman Pariseau asked can you put up a barrier when they take off southerly. I hear that engine noise at my house.

Mr. Testa answered that is the 727's. I put a lot of stock in December 31, 1999. All of the noisy planes will be out of the fleet.

Alderman Pariseau stated there are just two other things I want to touch on. Is it feasible for this Committee to review those residential properties on Brown Avenue that you have proposed to take.

Alderman Rivard stated I have the addresses and that is a good point, Mr. Chairman. I think what we need to do is we need to have some kind of policy when they tell someone they are going to buy it we need to know because I have people call me and Fred and I have met with they have been told that they are going to be bought and then they get a letter telling them they are not going to be bought. That shouldn't happen.

Mr. Testa responded right, that shouldn't happen. That has been rectified since then. That was a mistake made on two homes on Brown Avenue. These homes should have never been built on a runway protection zone. There is a risk attached to living there. You have a home at the base of that runway. How they allowed those homes to be built, I will never know but I don't want to get into that.

Alderman Pariseau stated again referring to the minutes of your meeting in October, 34 noise complaints were reported. Do we have an idea of where those complaints were from?

Mr. Testa replied yes we have those logged. Every noise complaint is registered. I can give you that.

Alderman Pariseau stated I don't know how many are from Ward 6 or 7 or 8.

Mr. Testa responded we can give you the addresses, the reasons they called, how they were answered, whether we sent a letter or called on the phone. We have a log that goes back to 1991 when I first got here. I can give you that.

Alderman Rivard asked on the noise curve, is there a time-frame where you are going to identify what houses that includes.

Mr. Testa answered first I have to get it approved by the FAA.

Alderman Rivard asked so it will be four or five months before you are going to be able to present us with the addresses of the homes.

Mr. Testa answered it will be at least into the Spring.

Alderman Pariseau stated getting back to that, the people are waiting for another neighborhood meeting that we told them we would have maybe in the end of December. Can we scheduled that as soon as possible please?

Mr. Testa replied we have to make this data permanent first. This is all preliminary data. I want to make sure that maps are easily readable. That is what I want to do first. Once these become more than a draft we will absolutely do that for you.

Alderman Pariseau asked what is the situation with funding from the Feds for soundproofing.

Mr. Testa answered funding from the Feds right now, they only got a six month resolution out of Congress. The only funded the FAA and the AIP, which is where we get our money, for 45% of what we should be getting. We have already put in an application for the noise money this year. I would suggest that calls be made to your Congressman saying that we should fund the FAA for three year authorization so that we can get our \$2.5 million and complete the job. Every year we want \$2.5 million.

Alderman Pariseau asked for the next three years.

Mr. Testa answered yes. There should be a three year authorization. Congressman Bass has already asked me to serve on his Aviation Committee so we will make sure that we get everybody here.

Alderman Pinard stated we should have more information into this Committee so we can do our job right.

Mr. Testa replied I will make sure that you get a list of all of the homes that were purchased. Now if you remember there are some people who don't live in the runway protection zone that wanted to be purchased. We have reprioritized and rededicated some money and we have written them a letter if they want to be purchased to let us know. It is all voluntary. We don't want to force anybody out but if they don't want to live down there we will entertain any questions they may have. I can give you that list within a week.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion of Alderman Thibault, duly seconded by Alderman Rivard, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee