



Local Safety Program
Local Safety Engineering Assistance Program



New Central Avenue (CR 31) and North Hope Chapel Road (CR 639) Roundabout
Township of Jackson, Ocean County

PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER MEETING
SUMMARY REPORT

DATE: Wednesday, October 20, 2020
TIME: 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM
LOCATION: Virtual (Cisco WebEx)
ATTENDEES: Call-in User List (available upon request)

PURPOSE OF MEETING

The purpose of the Public Information Center meeting is to inform the public of the Purpose and Need Statement and to solicit public input and comment on the conceptual alternative for the corridor-wide safety improvement project. The meeting was conducted in conformance with Federal and State regulations.

MEETING SUMMARY:

1. A total of 11 individuals signed onto the WebEx session from 7:00 p.m. to approximately 8:00 p.m. with 9 project team members in attendance.
2. A PIC Project Information Sheet was provided in the meeting advertisement (attached). A power point presentation (attached) was shown during the virtual meeting to provide project information for viewing by the general public and to provide reference in addressing any questions from the public. A PIC Comment form was available at the Project Website (www.jacksonroundabout.com) and on the NJTPA's website (<https://www.njtpa.org/Get-Involved/Info-Resources/Calendar/2020/October/Public-Meeting-New-Central-Ave-North-Hope-Chapel-R.aspx>) to be emailed, faxed, or mailed to the County of Ocean's Project Manager John N. Ernst. This PIC Meeting Summary Report is posted on the aforementioned web site, as well.
3. Project Team members were present on the virtual meeting to share information during the presentation and answer questions.
4. The presentation began by welcoming attendees on behalf of Ocean County and the Township of Jackson. After introductions from the Project Team members, Brad Miller, Project Manager



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from Michael Baker International provided an overview of the project and progress made to date. This included a description of the project, summarized below:

NJTPA has developed a Local Safety Engineering Assistance Program (LSEAP) to provide professional consultant support services for necessary planning and design services and construction document preparation to successful funding program applicants. Through LSEAP, Ocean County is receiving Federal Highway Safety Improvement Program funds from the Federal Highway Administration through LSP and LSEAP for the design and construction of a modern roundabout at the intersection of New Central Avenue (CR 31) and North Hope Chapel Road (CR 639).

This four-leg intersection is currently stop controlled on the New Central Avenue approaches with skewed geometry. Planning, evaluation, and design work commenced in December 2019 and the conceptual design has been completed. The proposed improvements include a modern roundabout to eliminate left-turn conflicts and lower speeds approaching the intersection. It will include advanced signage and pavement markings on all approaches.

A modern roundabout is an identified Federal Highway Administration proven safety countermeasure and the preferred safety alternative for intersections. Roundabouts have been shown to reduce fatal and severe crashes by as much as 82% at previous 2-way stop-controlled intersections. They are designed to improve safety for all users, including pedestrians and bicyclists, and can substantially reduce the types of crashes that result in fatal and serious injuries (such as right-angle crashes). Design features include:

- Counterclockwise Flow: Traffic travels counterclockwise around a center island;
- Entry Yield Control: Vehicles entering the roundabout yield to traffic already circulating;
- Lower Speed: Curvature produces lower vehicle speeds, generally 15-25 MPH, throughout the roundabout.

5. The anticipated project schedule was discussed, and is summarized below:

Local Officials Briefing	Held July 16, 2020
Hold Public Information Center (PIC)	Held October 20, 2020
Complete Preliminary Design	January 2021
NJDOT Approve Environmental Doc.	January 2022
Commence Right of Way Acquisition	March 2022
Complete Final Design	December 2022
Federal Authorization to Construct	Spring 2023
Construction Substantially Completed	Winter 23/24

6. No questions or comments were shared by attendees during the Q&A at the end of the presentation. Due to a lack of attendees at the virtual meeting the County sent an additional follow up mailing to ensure residents had an opportunity to review the recorded meeting and project



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information online. In addition, the Township of Jackson posted a link to the project website on the Township's Facebook page.

Additional Notes:

During the 14-day public meeting comment period which ended on November 4, 2020, a total of two submitted written comments were received by the County. The PIC Comments received are as follows:

Question/Comment #1: John JD Juchniewicz: I am writing you out of concern about the proposed roundabout at the intersection of New Central Avenue (CR 31) and North Hope Chapel Road (CR 639). While I realize that this intersection (with its blinking light) has safety concerns, I do not believe that a roundabout is the solution.

Experienced drivers frequently have difficulty navigating roundabouts. I have had multiple experiences where I was almost hit by a driver who did not yield when they were supposed to on a roundabout. The roundabout that is being proposed is less than $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from Liberty High School, which each year has about $\frac{1}{4}$ of its students becoming new drivers. I myself have a 15 year old who will be learning to drive in less than a year. Newer drivers are even more likely to fail to properly negotiate the rules of a roundabout. Jackson has been fortunate to not have any deaths of teenage drivers due to motor vehicle accidents in the last few years. However when several such unfortunate incidents were occurring with regularity a few years ago, it appeared that these accidents were due to new driver error. Adding a roundabout so close to where there will always be new drivers (as new students get their licenses every year) is just a recipe for future collisions and injuries at best.

I respectfully request that you and your engineering team explore other options (like perhaps making the blinking light a smart traffic light) that will be better negotiated by newer (as well as more experienced) drivers who will be going through the area.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John JD Juchniewicz

Response #1: As discussed during the virtual public meeting (the presentation and meeting can be viewed at www.JacksonRoundabout.com), a roundabout was selected as the preferred treatment for the North Hope Chapel Road and New Central Avenue intersection due to the expected significantly greater safety benefits than that provided by a signalized intersection. Roundabouts reduce vehicular entry speeds and reduce the frequency of right-angle crashes. The number of vehicular conflict points (areas where vehicles have the potential to cross paths) is reduced from 32 for a signalized intersection to 8 for a roundabout. In addition, a roundabout removes all possible crossing conflict points, which typically present the greatest potential for severe crashes. Over the past five years, there have been 59 right-angle crashes at this intersection. Of these crashes, 17 resulted in injuries to one or more involved parties. Construction of a roundabout is an appropriate method to reduce the frequency and severity of crashes at this intersection.

Concern about the difficulty that young and inexperienced drivers may have navigating a roundabout is understandable. The Project Team plans to perform additional public outreach and education throughout the design and construction of this safety improvement project. Outreach efforts may feature a coordinated campaign with Jackson Liberty High School to instruct students how to safely navigate a modern roundabout. There are a variety of forms this outreach could take; including the creation of a mock roundabout in the school parking lot, instructional videos, assemblies, and tours of the roundabout



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prior to opening. It is important to note, that these ideas are under consideration and specific outreach efforts have not been decided at this time.

Additionally, it is worth noting that roundabouts have been successfully constructed to improve safety near other high schools and colleges in New Jersey. For example, in 2014 the New Jersey Department of Transportation constructed a roundabout at the intersection of Knightsbridge Road and Ericson Drive in Piscataway, New Jersey. This intersection, just over a third of a mile from Piscataway High School, is traversed by a portion of Piscataway High School's 2,000+ student body each day. Other roundabouts constructed near high schools include:

- The Newman Springs Road and Campus Drive roundabout in Lincroft, NJ
 - Located at the entrance to Brookdale Community College and less than one mile from High Technology High School, in Lincroft
- The High Mountain Road & Franklin Lakes Road roundabout in Franklin Lakes, NJ
 - Located one mile from Ramapo High School
- The NJ 28 and South Avenue roundabout in Westfield, NJ
 - Located .3 miles from Westfield High School

Question/Comment #2: Gabriel Dalfin: Hello John,

- 1- How do i get a copy of all comments submitted
- 2- What is the plan for pedestrian crossings?

Response #2:

1. This document contains a summary of the comments and will be posted on the project website www.JacksonRoundabout.com.
2. A 5' wide sidewalk is proposed around the entirety of the roundabout within the project limits to facilitate pedestrian use. Striped high-visibility crosswalks with supplemental pedestrian warning signage are proposed approximately 40' (two car lengths) away from the roundabout along each approach. Page 18 of the presentation explains that Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) are under consideration for each of the crosswalks. RRFBs utilize push button actuated amber LED beacons installed on pedestrian crossing warning signs to alert drivers of the presence of crossing pedestrians. More information regarding RRFBs can be found here: https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/intersection/conventional/unsignalized/tech_sum/fhwasa09009/. In addition, roadway and pedestrian scale lighting will be installed to provide the required illumination levels at the crosswalks and in the vicinity of the roundabout.

Below is a graphic illustrating the proposed sidewalks and crosswalks:



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We believe the foregoing to be an accurate summary of discussions and related decisions. We would appreciate notification of exceptions or corrections to the meeting summary within three (3) working days of receipt. Without notification, this meeting summary will be considered to be record of fact.

New Central Avenue (CR 31) and North Hope Chapel Road (CR 639) Roundabout Project Team