

Park Street Transportation Study
Public Meeting #1 – January 10, 2018

Group #1 Notes

- Sight Distance Issues
 - Grove, College, and North Main Ave all have issues with sight distance in both directions – in addition to difficulty finding a break in the traffic to access Park
 - Some vehicles do use Pierce to get from North Main Ave to Park as there is better site distance in this location.
- North Main Ave / Park Alignment
 - North Maine Ave intersects with Park at an oblique angle making it difficult to turn left and right – even with the College Street signal uphill
 - The radius coming north on Park turning right on to North Main Ave is too large, allowing for high speeds. North Main should “t” into Park to make it safer for vehicles and pedestrians.
 - Save the landscape island at the intersection of North Main and Park.
- University Inn
 - The hedges along Park screen the parking, but block views of vehicles and pedestrians. The parking lot entrance is also not in a safe location. Is there any way to access the site from College Ave?
- College Ave / Park Street Intersection
 - This intersection needs to be redesigned. High speeds, dangerous for pedestrians.
- Connectivity
 - There have been conversations about connecting Chapel Road to Grove Street to make it easier to move through the area, but Chapel residents were not in favor. Is there another way to get out of Grove? Through the campus or a new street connection?
 - Pond, Peters and Pierce Street all have potential connections to abutting land (easements exist) but a decision was made by the Planning Board to not allow future connection (note: do not think the Planning Board can make such decisions).
 - Hillside does have a locked emergency back access to Orchard Trails, but not regular connectivity.
 - None of the major housing developments serving the school connect to each other
 - The Avenue has an emergency connection to Penobscot Street and students are sometimes dropped off / picked up at this gate to avoid Park and because it is short walk to the housing
 - Pedestrians and cyclists use Penobscot to go downtown, but there are not proper facilities.
- Sidewalks / Paths
 - The sidewalk on the east side of Park is difficult to negotiate because of placement of utility poles. Move poles to create more space. Bury the utilities or run them one lot deep.
 - The path connecting Grove to Pierce (Marden Park) needs to be rebuilt as it is often flooded and muddy.

- Hillside Path aligns with an undeveloped path across the street accessing public lands. Most people are not aware of this connection or “trail head”.
- Extend the sidewalk from Colburn to the entrance to The Reserve.
- There should be quality and safe sidewalks on both side of Park
- Grove Street is important bike/ped connection and should be improved.
- Crosswalks
 - There are many crosswalks. Inventory and create a common theme / plan for crosswalks that encourage walking, but are visible to vehicles.
- Student Housing
 - The University has a “Freshman Experience” policy where you have to live on campus as a freshman. Sophomores through Seniors can live on campus if they can find housing, but very difficult
 - The Edge at Orchard Trails has not been built because there is still capacity at places like The Reserve and the Avenue
 - The University should build housing (or joint venture) on campus to increase walkability and discourage vehicles from using Park
 - The future location of student housing is important to consider from a land use and traffic impact perspective.
 - Too much student housing along the Park Street corridor.
- Student Commuting
 - Most students make single occupancy trips from housing to Campus. Gas is cheap. Parking is plentiful and cheap.
 - The majority of students drive and do not walk or take shuttles. Bus shuttle service usage is down.
- Roundabout
 - Is this going to solve issues or make them worse in terms of accessing Park from streets and driveways. Won’t vehicles be lined up for miles?
 - Will the roundabout be pedestrian friendly?
 - The roundabout is already triggering interest in redeveloping adjacent parcels.
- Redevelopment
 - The roundabout will encourage (re)development.
 - The group was in favor of a mixed-use development serving the area. Make strong pedestrian connections along Park and to backlands to any new mixed-use development.
 - There are a number of housing and commercial developments along Park – basically from Pierce to Colburn – that should be redeveloped with better access and design.
- Streetscape
 - Create an attractive streetscape with sidewalks, street lights, street trees, and other amenities along Park – at least to Colburn North of Colburn there is not much development and streetscape could be less fancy.

Group #2 Notes

- Grove Street Sight Distance
 - Difficult seeing pedestrians and oncoming traffic in both directions at intersection with Park Street.
- Dead ends at large student housing developments
 - Per Planning Board conditions to approval, there cannot be vehicular connections between the student housing developments and pre-established neighborhoods, such as the Webster neighborhood.
- North Main Ave intersection should be taken into consideration during the study.
 - Crosby to North Main Ave used as a shortcut to avoid light at College.
- Going to be a need for cohesive appropriately placed signage for roundabout and for pedestrian safety.
- Better crosswalk access at Grove Street to Marden Park.
- Vehicles do not stop at crosswalks; although better at flashing beacons.
- Difficulty turning in and out of businesses on Park Street; particularly the dentist office.
- Backups can span one mile in both directions on Route 2 from the Rangeley intersection during peak traffic hours.
- Uncertainty behind how the roundabout will function.
 - Will there be queuing in the roundabout because of too much traffic?
 - How will the traffic flow on either side of the roundabout?
- Light synchronization during large events on campus help with vehicles exiting the campus, but make it difficult for residents who live on side streets to merge into the flowing traffic.
- In favor of neighborhood use commercial development that would complement the downtown and not take away from the downtown.
 - Design would incorporate the use of a frontage road.

Group #3 Notes

- Cabin's Field
 - Not an official path from Park to University as it is not ADA compliant (need to research this).
 - Is there an opportunity to connect this path to Grove?
- Grove Street
 - Important downtown to campus connection for bikes and pedestrians
- College Ave / Park Intersection
 - A roundabout in this location will create bottlenecks.
 - Timing not efficient with other lights.
 - Difficult intersection for pedestrians to negotiate
 - Roundabout will shift traffic from College. Study implications.
- U-Turns
 - Vehicles make U-turns in order to negotiate traffic. Vehicles will take a right out of Rangeley then a left on to Pierce and then a right out of Pierce to go north on Park (ad hoc roundabout...)
- Walkability
 - Create bike lanes
 - Improve and build sidewalks and crosswalks
 - Change policies to encourage walking, biking, and carpooling.
 - Connect existing and new housing to each other with paths and vehicle parcel connections.
- Roundabout
 - Will this work? Will it just encourage more students to drive?
 - Create inter-parcel connection from Washburn along the permitted "The Edge", across Orchard Trails, and behind gas station in order to access leg of roundabout.
 - Right out of bank is good.
 - Access management of Rangeley Road to back of bank is good.
 - Taking a left out of Orchard Trails will be difficult.
- Redevelopment
 - Yes to redeveloping between Washburn and Colburn as a neighborhood center. Create connections to existing developments.
- New University Access
 - Review potential for accessing University near Old Town line.
 - How much traffic will go north and take this versus going south to the roundabout?
 - How much traffic coming from Old Town will be captured by the access drive, reducing the volume at the roundabout.
- Penobscot
 - Do not encourage vehicles to use Penobscot. This should not become a back/parallel road to Park accessing student housing.

Group #4 Notes

- Hillside
 - There is only emergency access between Hillside and Orchard Trails
- Dentist Office
 - It is so difficult to get out of the dentist office that they have adjusted hours to not conflict with traffic.
- Redevelopment
 - Mixed-use redevelopment is appropriate for this area.
- Intersections
 - Washburn serves The Avenue and the intersection with Park Street is not safe due to other driveways in proximity.
- Add an additional roundabout closer to Old Town, preferably at The Reserve. This would allow cars to turn right to turn left.
- Add an additional entrance to UMaine on the northern end of campus (Hilltop area).
- Improve the trail onto campus across from Orchard Trails so that it's plowed in the winter.
- Connect Washburn with Orchard Trails all the way to a leg to the roundabout.
- There was also something about the College/Park intersection. I think it had to do with connecting the signals to the Main St signals.