

Meeting Summary - Public Involvement Meeting # 1
Albany Shaker Road Corridor Study
June 13, 2017



The first public involvement meeting for the Albany Shaker Road Corridor Study was held on Tuesday, June 13, 2017, at the Shaker Road Loudonville Fire Department. The meeting was well attended with over 115 residents, stakeholders, and study advisory committee members present. The meeting began with Don Adams from Creighton Manning going through the presentation for the meeting. See Attachment A for the PowerPoint presentation.

The purpose of the meeting was to inform the public about this corridor study, provide the public with an understanding of existing conditions and potential traffic from future development, and obtain input from the public on existing needs/concerns and ideas for improvements, that should be considered as the study progresses.

A Corridor map was used as “Where do you live” to mark up the location of the meeting attendees to show an approximate location of their home/office. This map shows that the meeting was well attended and had an overall representation of the corridor. See Attachment B for this map and other posters presented during the meeting.

Meeting attendees had several opportunities to provide input, ask questions, and offer comments. This included open forum question/comment session throughout the presentation, “Poll everywhere” – text enabled responses from public for specific questions, written comment forms, poster stations where attendees were asked to provide or locate their concerns/needs/priorities. Post-it notes, aerial map mark-ups, and meeting/facilitator notes were used to record the public input received. Attendees were also given the project website address www.albanyshakercolonie.com and encouraged to review the material on the website and provide comments via the website email.

1. Comments/questions, including from the presentation, poster stations, email/website and comment forms received

As of July 12, 2017, four weeks after the public meeting, 17 written comments (8 via emails, 9 comment forms) have been received (attachment C). Below is a summary of all the comments broken into major themes:

- Future of undeveloped land

- Concern with more development: desire is to put a cap on development
- Extend study area past former Engel Farm and up to Corporate Woods (at least to Town Border)
- Should a moratorium on development be considered until this study is completed
- Make the undeveloped land a resource for the public that the Town should protect
- Create environmentally friendly areas for community gathering
- Preserve green space, create community gathering areas with reduced speed limits
- Rezone to prevent high density buildings
- Expansion of Stewart’s at Everett Road should be included



- 55 and older residential units built with reduced trip gen forecasts are deceiving
- Albany Shaker Road is a critical local as well as regional road
- No new PDDs should be allowed in the corridor

- **Unsafe and/or undesirable conditions for pedestrians**
 - Improved signage/visibility at Shaker Elementary crosswalk
 - Pedestrian improvements are critical for the Shaker El intersection as well as the Marie Parkway intersection.
 - Better pedestrian access between neighborhoods and retailers along corridor (i.e. north neighborhood to Scoups Ice Cream or South neighborhood to Price Chopper)
 - Poor pavement condition on side streets, potholes/uneven pavement
 - Poor or nonexistent street lighting on side streets
 - Balance between different modes of transport
 - Need better pedestrian connectivity on both sides of the street, one side is not adequate

- **Traffic Volumes/capacity**
 - There was a recommendation to increased number of roundabouts along corridor and throughout town
 - Improved access to Northway, Thruway is important to the operation of the Albany Shaker Road corridor
 - Consider adding a WB left turn lane at The Crossings (use the Albany Shaker Road and Corporate Woods intersection as an example)
 - Evaluate options to address the event traffic at The Crossings
 - Additional turn lanes needed at multiple locations
 - Everett Road intersection - difficult to turn and lane merging is an issue
 - Increase capacity by road widening/increasing the lanes
 - Postal vehicles, garbage trucks and delivery trucks do not have room to stop without noticeable delays.
 - Traffic overflow on adjacent neighborhood streets is a concern
 - Traffic data should be presented for 24 hour periods, particularly speed data to show the variations
 - Concern with how and when traffic data was collected, is it representative of the issues in the corridor
 - Does the data provided you information on where the trips are going to and coming from? What traffic is local versus regional? Is there a way to limit regional traffic?
 - When you make it easier for cars to traverse Albany Shaker Road, you will make even more regional traffic.
 - When you make it easier for cars to traverse Albany Shaker Road you also make it HARDER for other users (cyclists, pedestrians, children, elderly)
 - Low average speeds presented are a result of the congestion
 - Aviation Road connection to Maxwell Road (fourth leg) to increase traffic in and around the corridor – has this been evaluated, will it be evaluated with this study



- In October 2015, the Town provided the Town Board a traffic update, which identified the majority of intersections as being at level D or on the verge of level D in the Albany Shaker Road corridor.
- Concern with that residents and neighbors have appropriate commuting capacity and access to their homes and destinations before we worry about complete streets. The concept of complete streets may be more fitting at certain stretches and intersections; Shaker Elementary, Crossings, Osborne Road, etc. At these intersections, pedestrian crosswalk signage, light change buttons, bike access certainly seem to be appropriate.
- The traffic on this corridor is related to the growth in Saratoga County, this is the short cut between Albany and Saratoga Springs
- Is a road diet being considered?

- **Safety**
 - Complete Streets:
 - Pro: make road more complete street, might reduce non-local cut-through traffic because they won't want to travel on a slower street
 - Con: make road more complete street, the amount of traffic increases
 - Enforcement in the form of police presence on the corridor, primarily for speed control
 - Quality of life – less/slower traffic
 - Maxwell roundabout eastbound merge is a safety concern
 - Biking in the corridor is not accommodating for the average rider or families, hard to connect to park
 - Consider a roundabout at The Crossings, this would improve traffic flow and improve pedestrian safety
 - Turning traffic at Shaker Elementary intersection, accessing Albany Shaker Road from Shaker Elementary
 - Signing for crosswalk should be improved
 - Concern mentioned with using this access when dark
 - Site distance, particularly to the west seems to be a contributing factor
 - Consider a roundabout at the Shaker El intersection. It appears you could use some the church frontage to make that intersection safer for children.
 - All pedestrian phase isn't necessary at The Crossings, this doesn't occur in major cities
 - Left turn access into the driveway/side streets difficult with oncoming traffic

- **Website**
 - Request for more information on complete streets to be posted to website

- **Discuss**
 - Include Chief of Police and Emergency Personnel (EMT & Fire Chief) as part of steering/advisory committee

- **Secondary Study Area**
 - In the vicinity of Maxwell Road, Old Niskayuna Road and Osborne Road traffic is the worst during morning and evening commute times, and when there is an incident on the Northway, I-90 or on any major road arteries.



- During workdays between 4:00 pm and 6:30 pm traffic heading north on Maxwell Road towards Old Niskayuna Road can take up to six cycles of the traffic signal.
- Traffic on Old Niskayuna Road and Osborne Road face significant backups during the prime morning and evening commutes.
- Northbound traffic between Maxwell Road and Old Niskayuna Road in the pm peak hours is a concern
- Similar backups between Old Niskayuna Road and Osborne Road
- Secondary study areas (Maxwell, Osborne, Old Niskayuna) should be included/analyzed in the study
- No sidewalks on Maxwell Road and the shoulders are narrow
- Concern with the impact of the Aviation Road extension to Albany Shaker Road will have on Albany Shaker Road, Maxwell Road and other local roads in the vicinity.

- **Miscellaneous**

- Maxwell Road development near the library looks terrible
- Look at what other communities have done, “no reason to reinvent the wheel”
- Encourage pedestrians to wear reflective gear, particularly after dark
- Maxwell roundabout has improved the quality of life
- Consider more roundabouts, at each signalized intersection
- Principal Bill Dollard at Shaker Road Elementary would be a good resource to discuss his input on this project. He is the one of the major employers that is directly located on Albany Shaker Road, next to Price Chopper.
- Pavement condition on residential streets is also an issue, in particular James/Joy drive.
- The texting word cloud was well received by most, but there are a significant number of older adults in this portion of the town that are not so adept at technology. A handout at the door, preparing the participants with information to expect, and easy, readable walkthrough steps for how to participate. This would have eased a lot of anxiety for those folks.
- There is also the option of making Sand Creek Rd ONE WAY only and making Albany SHAKER RD the OTHER WAY only as many large cities have been forced to do.
- Since there are significant wetlands in this region and the water table is rather high, building roads ABOVE the ground might be the option, since going below the earth might not be an option due to flooding.
- At the State Level there is also a huge problem at Exit 24 and Exit 25 on the NYS Thruway and it has existed for 15 yrs. at least. There is also no easy entrance to the NYS Thruway or I-90 from Wolf Rd, Albany Shaker other than getting on the Northway, which contributes to the current traffic jams.
- Trucks have an issue with exit 24 and 25 and are forced to drive down residential roads, such as Morris Rd.
- The study should include an analysis of the cumulative impact of development and traffic on the Roads and neighborhoods as a result of the new Northway Exit 4. The Airport GEIS revision should include this study as part of its findings. Given the new Northway Exit 4 and the continuation of Albany Shaker Road to the Airport itself, potential development along this corridor should be included and analyzed.



- The study should recommend that a series of capital improvements to the roads, intersections, signals and signage be undertaken. This study should be able to provide Town, County and State decision makers with the level of costs and funding alternatives (public or private). This way, public and private entities will be able to plan for their respective funding responsibilities.
- How much will a complete street cost?
- Will the study be available to the public
- no regard of the wildlife in the area
- A tree ordinance is necessary to protect mature trees
- Consider a median down the center
- Measure impact of The Crossings events start limiting the number of charity events held there. Allowing charity events is not benefiting the surrounding residents and town resident's farmers' market benefits many charitable events only benefit people traveling for the cause.
- Fix "pot holes" at Osborne front of Rite Aid (severe)
- The undeveloped parcel at the intersection with Osborne (contaminated) would be a good place for a park for walking shoppers, provide community character. Green space is needed at that intersection.
- You should have a line for people to come up to use the mike the next time.

All the comments provided were compiled and categorized as see above. All the relevant comments and suggestions, within the scope of this Study, will be considered as the Study progresses.

2. Poll Everywhere Responses

During the presentation, the public was invited to provide their input on specific questions via text message and be able to see the responses in real time on the screen using "Poll Everywhere". Some of the questions were open-ended while some had multiple choice options to pick. The list of questions are:

- What do you like about Albany Shaker Road corridor?
- Do you think Albany Shaker Road is a Complete Street?
 - Yes
 - No
- How do you get around Albany Shaker Road?
- How would you LIKE to get around Albany Shaker Road?
- Is there a time when you have experienced traffic congestion?
 - Yes
 - No
- What time of day have you experienced traffic congestion?
 - Mornings
 - Afternoons
 - Evenings
 - Weekends
 - During Special Event
 - All the time
 - Incident on highway
- What is your top concern for Albany Shaker Road?
 - Traffic congestion
 - Drive safety
 - Cyclist or pedestrian safety
 - Driveway access
 - Community character
 - Transit accommodations



- Any other Albany Shaker Road concerns not listed here?

The responses to the poll everywhere questions can be seen in Attachment D.

The public meeting concluded with an invitation for meeting attendees to stay involved in the study through the study website and public comment form. Meeting attendees were also encouraged to contact the SAC members for any additional questions or concerns.