

## **MEETING MINUTES**

Community Facilities Building Committee

March 8, 2023 at 7:00pm – Town Hall Council Chambers

Present Members:           Lori Hayes-O'Brien, Chairman  
                                  Dawn Cantafio, Vice Chairman  
                                  Mike Buswell  
                                  Dean Fabrizio Ron Foligno  
                                  Dave Galla  
                                  Tony Silber

Absent Members:           Gail Ritacco

Also Present:               Vicki A. Tesoro - First Selectman  
                                  Tom Arcari – QA&M Architects  
                                  Joe Balskus – VHB  
                                  Cynthia Katske - Chief Administrative Officer  
                                  Gia Mentillo - Clerk (Via Conference Call)

Residents:                   Richard White, 169 Church Hill Road  
                                  Jacob Colton, 19 Woodlawn Drive

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:01p.m.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

### **Public Comment**

Richard White of 169 Church Hill Road stated concerns regarding various elements that were left out of the traffic study report shared with the public (See Exhibit 1 Attached).

Jacob Colton of 91 Woodlawn Drive asked whether the .65 acre metric had been corrected since his previous inquiry and, if so, what the new metric was for the total area of site disturbance for the proposed center.

Public comment closed at 7:10p.m.

### **Acceptance of January 11, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

MOTION made by Ms. Cantafio, seconded Mr. Buswell to approve the January 11, 2023 Community Facilities Building Committee (CFBC) meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Traffic Study Presentation**

MOTION made by Mr. Galla, seconded Ms. Cantafio to take a brief recess to resolve technical issues. The motion carried unanimously. The Committee adjourned for recess at 7:15p.m. and returned at 7:18p.m.

Joe Balskus introduced himself as the director of transportation systems for VHB and presented the findings of the “Trumbull Senior / Community Center Draft Traffic Impact and Access

Study” to the Committee. The presentation covered existing conditions, site line considerations, DOT parameters, crash history, existing senior center consideration, traffic analysis methods, comparisons to the Woodbridge Jewish Community Center, the overall results of the study, and recommendations for the site based on VHB’s findings. Mr. Balskus noted that the study was conducted over President’s Day weekend through happenstance resulting from availability of the professionals needed to conduct the study.

Chairman Hayes-O’Brien stated that page 7 of the VHB report references a fatal car accident that was not included in the table shown in the presentation. Mr. Balskus stated that said fatality occurred further up Quality Street whereas the table in question pertains to the area nearest Hardy Lane. Mr. Buswell asked whether senior center buses were considered when assessing site line concerns, and Mr. Balskus stated they were not.

The Chairman asked for clarification regarding the possibility of maintaining the two large trees at either side of the Hardy Lane exit/entrance. Mr. Balskus clarified that the tree to the left (as you exit) will need to be removed, but the tree to the right has a possibility of being saved as it may lay just outside the site line area. He further recommended that Hardy Lane be widened to allow for a two lane exit.

Ms. Cantafio asked for a recommendation regarding ways to improve intersection traffic flow between Hardy Lane and Bonita Drive. Mr. Balskus stated there is not a need to add a left turning lane for entering Hardy Lane after having exited Bonita Drive, but noted that widening the road to allow for a wider shoulder (termed “bypass lane”) would ultimately provide an opportunity for traffic to continue to flow around cars turning left onto Hardy Lane. He further stated that pedestrian traffic was not factored into his projections. VHB recommends extending the existing sidewalk down Hardy Lane and adding a crosswalk at the roadway entrance/exit. This can be looked at in greater detail in the future, but this would require some pedestrian data from the Town. It may be possible for VHB to find a community center of similar nature by which they can create estimates for this proposed site. Mr. Balskus stated that he did not feel the need to have a traffic light at this point but noted other options for increasing pedestrian safety. Mr. Balskus spoke to what types of elements would require DOT approval, noting that considerations have changed since 2017.

Mr. Buswell asked whether there would be an option to require that people exiting Hardy Lane to the right, and Mr. Balskus stated he did not feel that would be prudent in this situation as there are adequate site lines. Mr. Buswell asked how the Town’s purchase of the property to the right of the exit would impact the layout of the intersection in question. Mr. Balskus stated that it may be best to move the exit of Hardy Lane, but stated it to be an unnecessary cost at this time.

Mr. Galla asked how the placement of the exit/entrance to Hardy Lane impacted the placement of the recommended bypass lane. Mr. Balskus explained that the bypass lane would shift to remain adjacent to the exit/entrance, noting that any trees that would need to be removed expand the roadway are in the Town right of way.

Mr. Fabrizio asked how the Woodbridge Jewish Community Center compared to the proposed Hardy Lane center in size. Mr. Balskus stated the two to be of comparable size. The Chair noted

2 that she felt the afternoon estimates of travel to and from the proposed center were much higher than what they would be in actuality. She then asked why the trip generation summary table showed 39 people entering but 85 people exiting the facility during weekday peak hours. Mr. Balskus stated that this was likely influenced by drop off numbers and the window of time being considered. Mr. Silber stated that seniors do not typically follow the same time patterns of entering and exiting a community center as adults and children. Mr. Balskus stated that this could be considered in the future in a more detailed analysis. Tom Arcari of QA&M Architecture stated that the Town has good data on their current senior center attendance, which will help to identify peak attendance hours. He noted that seniors tend to leave these types of centers during earlier parts of the day than other residents which ultimately helps reduce traffic congestion for each time frame overall.

Mr. Silber stated that, in his experience, Church Hill Road is particularly congested from 2:30p.m. - 3:30p.m. due to school dismissal times. First Selectman Tesoro stated concerns regarding the fact that the seniors tend to leave the senior center around the same time of day as said school dismissal times and asked whether school buses were factored into the current study being presented. Mr. Galla shared his findings regarding school bus stops on Church Hill Road which indicated that school buses primarily use the road as a travel route with minimal stops occurring. The Chair proposed the community center programming be scheduled to avoid creating additional traffic during school dismissal hours. Mr. Balskus stated that school bus stops were not factored into the current study, adding that VHB could calculate that using the data they collected on vehicle type.

The Chairman asked what the site line distance from Hardy Lane would be if the tree proposed to be removed is removed, and Mr. Balskus stated the site line would likely increase to over 500ft. Mr. Galla referred to the slide depicting “Hardy Lane Options” and asked whether the two proposed intersection layouts could be considered in conjunction with one another, meaning a separate exit and entrance with an island separator. Mr. Balskus stated that to be a potential consideration, noting that it may necessitate bypass lanes on both sides of Church Hill Road and is potentially less likely to receive DOT approval as it creates concerns when you have cars turning left both off of and onto Hardy Lane at the same time.

Mr. Balskus stated his intent to provide a written response to some of the public concerns raised earlier in the meeting. The Committee discussed their recommendations for adjustments to the traffic study which are listed below:

1. A new traffic count for Hardy Lane to be conducted outside of any holiday times;
2. An expansion to the area considered in the study to include a traffic count for both Bonita Drive and Middlebrook Avenue;
3. Utilization of the existing senior center programming information to get a better sense of peak traffic hours for seniors;
4. Considerations for pedestrian traffic in the area (particularly in regards to school-aged children);
5. Provide a list of DOT pedestrian amenity options that would be appropriate for the

discussed scenarios.

Mr. Foligno asked whether state DOT requirements could influence the physical amenities required at the Hardy Lane intersection which Mr. Balskus confirmed to be likely, noting that those requirements will be addressed once the project is further along. He then asked for data on the number of middle school children who walk to school.

Ms. Cantafio asked how the above requests would influence the original scope of work agreed upon between QA&M and the Town. Mr. Arcari noted that the scope of work and associated costs will be altered to some degree, noting his intent to coordinate this information with the appropriate parties and provide a full, final report to the Committee at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

Mr. Balskus noted a need to increase the amount of overhead lighting at the Hardy Lane intersection to improve pedestrian and traffic safety, particularly considering the fact that there will most certainly be a need for a crosswalk at said intersection. Mr. Acari helped to clarify that the final traffic report will include a diagrammatic recommendation for intersection improvements as opposed to a full scale engineering schematic. He informed of the option to have preliminary discussion with CT DOT but noted that such conversation typically happen further along in the design process.

Mr. Fabrizio asked about the question raised by Mr. Colton regarding the estimated .65 acre Hardy Lane site impact. The Chairman clarified that that information was included in the last concept plan shared by QA&M Architects. Mr. Aracari stated that the original assessment of .65 acres was based on the original concept; the site concept has since changed to significantly reduce site impact. He noted it would be prudent to revise that evaluation for the next meeting.

The Chair informed that once the Committee receives the final traffic study from VHB, then they will send the report to the Town Council, noting that the Committee does not vote on any of the profession reports they receive. Mr. Arcari informed that their environmental team has conducted much of their research and intends to finalize the report for the next regularly scheduled CFBC meeting.

## **New Business**

### **April Meeting Date**

The Chairman stated that she would not be able to attend the next regularly scheduled CFBC meeting, noting that April 12th is a school vacation week. She proposed conducting a special meeting on March 29th, adding that the ability to conduct said meeting will be dependent on the availability of the environmental report from Fuss & O'Neil.

### **April Town Council Update**

The Chairman stated that providing a full CFBC update to the Town Council during their April meeting may not be appropriate if the results of the environmental study have not been received and reviewed. She asked that, if this is the case, Ms. Cantafio provide a brief update during the April meeting with the intention that the Chair will provide a fuller update during the May Town Council meeting.

### **QA&M Invoice**

MOTION made by Ms. Cantafio, seconded Mr. Foligno to approve QA&M invoice #14902 in the amount of \$3,861.25 for conceptual design costs. The motion carried unanimously.

**Adjournment**

MOTION to adjourn made by Ms. Cantafio, seconded by Mr. Foligno. The motion carried unanimously. The March 8, 2023 Regular Meeting of the Trumbull Community Facilities Building Committee adjourned at 9:20p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Gia Mentillo, Committee Clerk

## Public Comments — Scope of Work

For projects like a Traffic Study or an Environmental Study, the scope-of-work or, if one was not created, the contract is a key element when reviewing the results. We have the draft report as a response, but we do not know what was asked for by this committee.

In order to properly review this Traffic Report without a scope-of-work or contract, I looked for similar reports in the area. I have reviewed the Traffic Report for Old Church Hill Road and Quality Lane for the prior Community Center proposed location. There are multiple elements that were included in that report that appear to be missing in this draft. A site plan, proposed traffic control device diagrams, actual line-of-sight calculations, a five-year projection, and a warrant study for the proposed changes. This Traffic Study appears to be “less” than what was commissioned by this committee before. Why?

I have also reviewed the Traffic Reports for Daniels Farms Road — there are four in total. The first one is more similar to the Old Church Hill Road and Quality Lane report. The second report is an addendum to the first report in response to questions from the public during public comment. In that spirit I would like to submit my own questions of this report to the traffic engineer for comment. I’m assuming that over half of them will be answered by the presentation, but I may have new questions. I would like to request that I be allowed to resubmit my questions.

The third and fourth reports are a peer review of the original traffic engineer’s work by Tighe & Bond. They recommended adding additional years of study to both the traffic and accident datasets, reviewing accidents at intersections up and down Daniels Farms Road, discusses pedestrian crossings, and comments on school being in session during the actual study.

I would like to ask this committee to request an independent review of this work, by an independent and qualified traffic engineer, prior to your making any move forward decisions. If not, I plan on asking Town Council to make the request at your next quarterly review and our Planning and Zoning Commission to make the request as part of their 8-20 review.

Without a scope-of-work or contract, in addition to reviewing similar traffic reports, we can also go back to comments made during prior Building Committee meetings.

For example, the committee’s architect suggested that the entire corridor from White Plains Road to Main Street might be studied. Was a larger traffic study, as suggested, considered by this committee?

The committee's architect suggested that by studying the entire corridor, problems in Trumbull Center and Quality Lane might be improved with development at Hardy Lane. Was a more holistic study, as suggested, considered by this committee?

A key metric considered by the Building Committee was titled "Traffic and Pedestrians". I do not see any references to pedestrian traffic to and from the site. Currently, over 400 families and 1,000 people live between Middlebrooks Avenue and Quality Lane, with more down below Woodlawn Drive. These families frequently walk to Stop and Shop, the Library, the Gazebo for summer concerts, and Town Hall for Memorial Day Parades. Walkability is part of living in the neighborhood and is highlighted in our current Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). Was pedestrian access to the site considered? How and where would those crossings be located? Would those crossings be safe?

Finally, while I have applauded this committee in the past for postponing the Traffic Study until after the end of summer and start of the school year and I believe the committee has discussed avoiding Halloween, Thanksgiving Week, and Winter Break, I do not understand why you choose to conduct a Traffic Study over the long Presidents Day Weekend, especially when much of the model is coming from traffic counts at the Woodbridge Community Center. Trumbull Schools were closed Friday and Monday and the Bridgeport Schools (including magnet schools with Trumbull students) were also closed Thursday. Woodbridge schools were open on Thursday and Friday and closed on Monday and Tuesday.

Trumbull only has one real-time traffic monitor on the Merritt Parkway which shows swings of plus or minus 15 to 30 percent when comparing weekends in February with and without Presidents Day Weekend. Please tell me that someone involved in this project bothered to check that the Woodbridge Community Center was even open over the long weekend.

# Questions

## 1.1 — Introduction — Project Description

Total parking of 135 parking spaces with overflow parking along the driveway; this is referring to the driveway between the upper and lower levels. Has the Town Fire Marshall signed off on this concept? If there isn't provision for overflow parking during highest usage, how will parking along Church Hill Road and across the street impact traffic along Church Hill Road and into and out of Hardy Lane? The architect referred to this as "lawn parking".

Figure 1 is missing from the draft report. Was VHB provided with any site plan documents by either the Town or the committee's architect?

## 1.2 — Introduction — Summary of Findings

The large oak tree mentioned in this report is also called out for preservation by the Naturalist retained by our Conservation Commission in his report after walking the property. There are two other large oaks nearby. Will other trees in this area need to be removed to provide proper visibility?

Opposite the large oak tree mentioned in this report is a utility pole that was recently replaced that currently blocks site distances when turning out of Hardy Lane. Will this utility pole also need to be (re)moved?

How are "acceptable Levels of Service (LOS)" in this section being defined? LOS D might be acceptable in Trumbull Center queueing at Starbucks, however, it is not acceptable in a currently residential neighborhood.

## 1.3 — Introduction — Study Methodology

Were the same dates used for both Hardy Lane and Woodbridge Community Center? Was additional data used in an attempt to adjust for the long weekend and different school closing schedules between the two towns?

While there are references to state DOT traffic and accident websites and data, there is very little supporting material attached to this report. Will the supporting material be attached in the final report?

What other outside datasets were included in the report? There are references to 9,200 ADT counts from the CT DOT datasets, but those appear to be COVID-epoch November 2020 results and not the newer February 2022 results which are much higher at 10,000 ADT. Also, the 85-percentile speed from the traffic counters was used and not the 85-percentile speed from the CT DOT datasets which seem much more realistic at 46 MPH in 2022 and 51 MPH in 2020.



Was any kind of traffic study done at our current Senior Center? Did the committee consider using the current membership, users, and employees at Pricilla Place in addition to the Woodbridge study? Did committee consider using the scheduled and ad-hoc Senior Bus trips at Pricilla Place in addition to the Woodbridge study? If not, why not?

The town has commissioned additional traffic studies from Trumbull Center, Old Church Hill Road and Quality Lane, and Long Hill Green. Were any of these additional studies reviewed by VHB as part of this traffic study?

In particular, the prior traffic study at Old Church Hill Road and Quality Lane included a five-year projection of traffic along Church Hill Road. How well did the prior study's projection align with today's traffic? Was a five-year projection included in this study? If not, why not?

A key metric considered by the Building Committee was titled "Public Transportation". There are not any references to the current BRTA stops at Hardy Lane and across the street. Will the current BRTA stops be relocated into the Community Center parking lot? If not, how will BRTA passengers, utilizing the Community Center, cross Church Hill Road? Was a multi-modal study coordinated with BRTA traffic engineers to take advantage of the committee's "Public Transportation" metric?

From a maximum parking capacity point of view, it seems to me that the worse case scenario would be some sort of Senior Center event on the upper floor with some sort of youth basketball event in the gym, especially if there were back to back games. Probably on a Saturday. What would the queuing times be for 135 cars entering with 135 cars exiting?

Was there any kind of exhaustive capacity testing performed? What happens if the current counts are doubled? Tripled?

## 2.1 — 2022 Existing Conditions — Study Area

Note: is this section properly captioned? The conclusion refers to 2023 Existing Conditions.

Are sidewalks being considered on the east side of Church Hill Road north of the intersection? What would be the increase in impervious surface for these sidewalks that would fall within the Pequonnock River Watershed?

Are sidewalks being considered for Hardy Lane? What would be the increase in impervious surface for these sidewalks that would fall within the Pequonnock River Watershed?

Could the Study Area be increased to include Bonita Ave and intersections up and down Church Hill Road?

## 2.2 — 2022 Existing Conditions — Crash History and Analysis

Focusing the Study Area on the intersection of Church Hill Road and Hardy Lane makes sense from a speed and traffic point of view. However, from an accident point of view, why wasn't the study area increased to include intersections along Church Hill Road (other than Bonita Ave), north of Edison Road and south of Quality Lane considered?

The UCONN / CT DOT Crash Data Repository has two defaults — three-year and five-year. Why was the three-year default chosen? 2020 and 2021 were both during COVID; only 2023 is post-COVID. The CT DOT Traffic Volume and Speed website clearly labels any dataset retrieved from 2020 and 2021 as “during the COVID epoch” and the general accident rates in Trumbull and traffic volume along Church Hill Road drop significantly during this period. Could the dates of the study be increased include two years pre-COVID, two years during COVID, and one year post-COVID?

How difficult would it be to redo your Crash History and Analysis to include additional intersections along Church Hill Road and go back to the default five-year option?

## 2.3 — 2022 Existing Conditions — Traffic Count Data

The traffic volumes on the CT DOT traffic volumes map are showing 9,200 Average Daily Traffic (ADT), but this is the data from the November 2020 survey. This is clearly labeled as “during the COVID epoch”. The data from the February 2022 survey is 10,000 ADT. Why were the older COVID epoch numbers used?

## 2.4 — 2022 Existing Conditions — Speeds and Sight Distance

The ATR calculated speed of 41 MPH, feels low for this section of Church Hill Road. The 85-percentile speeds from the state datasets are 46 MPH in 2022 and 51 MPH in 2020. The state also removes all “close” vehicles which is a frightening 48%. Basically, in Trumbull, we both speed AND tailgate. Why weren't the more realistic speeds used?

Sight distances appear to be using the non-gradient, intersection values. Generally, with non-intersection sight distances, a “multiplier” is used to calculate distances on a steep gradient. Optionally, this can also be applied to an intersection. Was using a longer sight distance considered for the south side of the intersection? If not, why not?

The sight distances appear to be based on passenger cars. One of the often-stated problems with the current Senior Center is parking, partially due to the Senior Buses. The CT Highway Design Manual would consider these Single Unit Trucks with a significantly longer sight distance. The GBTA Buses are even bigger. Were the current trip counts for the Senior Center Buses provided and taken into consideration? If not, why not?

Can the sight distance calculations be redone with more realistic speeds, based on graded intersections, and include the common Senior Buses?

Were sight distances and crossing times calculated for pedestrians trying to access the Community Center?

### 3 — 2023 Build Conditions

You are subtracting from the Woodbridge Community Center TMSs the LUC 210 Single-family detached housing for five units for Hardy Lane. Basically 17 trips at morning and afternoon peak and 14 trips at weekend midday.

Everyone on this committee and in this room knows that three of the five units are abandoned. The Murdochs are a young family of four with zero teenage drivers (Jeff grew up in the house) and Mrs. <<< >>> (whose husband built their house) is an elderly widow who doesn't get out much.

Can Table 3 be redone with more realistic Residential Housing estimates?

#### 4.1 — Traffic Operations Analysis — Method

Currently the Level of Service (LOS) for the intersection at Hardy Lane is LOS A or LOS B. Can you provide some examples of LOS C, D, E, and F along Church Hill Road? Can you provide an example of an acceptable LOS D?

Theoretically, can an increase in LOS at one intersection lead to an increase and unacceptable LOS at another intersection along the same corridor?

#### 4.2 — Traffic Operations Analysis — Unsignalized Capacity Analysis

Note: You reference 2023 Existing Conditions and 2023 Build Conditions, but only 2022 Existing Conditions were provided elsewhere in the report. Is this correct?

There are three cases or proposals: doing nothing, Option 1, or Option 2. Is this correct?

Only Option 2 does not require the removal of the large tree on the corner. Is this correct? Do other trees need to be removed in any of these three cases?

**Table 5** — It is not clear if this is with zero changes to the existing intersection or with either Option 1 and / or Option 2.

**WB-LTR** is leaving Hardy Lane, turning left (L) or right (R). There is no through traffic (T) or is that "darting" over to Bonita Ave?

**NB-TR** is heading north or "up" Church Hill Road, going through (T) or turning right (R) into Hardy Lane. There is zero expected delay either currently or with the proposed community center?

**SB-LTR** is heading south or “down” Church Hill Road, going through (T) or turning left (L) into Hardy Lane. There is no right (R) or is that turning onto Bonita Ave?

**Option 1** — The “existing Hardy Lane approach” is referring to Church Hill Road. Basically removing the tree and creating a turning lane along Church Hill Road south of Hardy Lane. Is this correct?

**Option 2** — Does “realigning” basically mean that we’d move the entire intersection of Hardy Lane (which was just paved) and Church Hill Road further south and away from Bonita Ave?

Doesn’t this mean that the line of sight issues remain to the south and get worse to the north?

A stated benefit of Option 2 is that it potentially reduces headlights shining into the houses across from Hardy Lane. However, doesn’t this increase the headlights shining into the houses already on Hardy Lane and at the corner of Church Hill Road?

In the opinion of the traffic engineer, is there anything that can be done to the proposed parking and driveways to eliminate the headlight and traffic noise to the neighboring properties?

Both Option 1 and Option 2 would require approval from CT DOT, the same agency that has repeatedly designed other changes along Church Hill Road and other state numbered highways in town. Does doing nothing other than building a new town owned facility also require approval or at least notice to CT DOT or MetroCOG?

What would be the increase in impervious surface for each of these options be, all of which fall within the Pequonnock River Watershed?

## 5 — Conclusion

Sections 1.2, 4.2, and the conclusion do not appear to be in alignment. Is there a better way to describe the current situation and each of the proposed options?

Your preferred option is Option 2, moving Hardy Lane. Option 1 might also work, You do not recommend doing nothing other than removing the large tree. Is this correct?

If this Building Committee chooses to ignore the recommendations in this report and do nothing and this turns out to be a mistake, will adding either Option 1 or Option 2 in the future still require approval from CT DOT?

## References

### Old Church Hill Road and Quality Lane Traffic Report

<https://www.trumbull-ct.gov/DocumentCenter/View/904/Trumbull-Community-Center-Traffic-Impact-Study-2017-03-20-PDF>

### Daniels Farm Road Traffic Reports

Initial Traffic Report:

<https://www.trumbull-ct.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1210/10-2017-147-Daniels-Farm-Road-Traffic-Report-PDF>

Addendum from public comments:

<https://www.trumbull-ct.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1212/01-15-and-01-17-2018-147-Daniels-Farm-Road-Traffic-Study---Supplement-PDF>

Peer reviews:

<https://www.trumbull-ct.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1214/01-12-18-147-Daniels-Farm-Road-Review-of-Traffic-Impact-Study-and-Site-Plan-PDF>

<https://www.trumbull-ct.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1216/01-26-2018-147-Daniels-Farm-Road-Tigher-and-Bond-Traffic-Report-Update-PDF>

### CT DOT Traffic Monitoring Stations

Note: the map displays 9,200 ADT for Church Hill Road. This data is from the older November, 2020 study that is subtitled “from COVID epoch”.

<https://arcg.is/0uWb5T>

<https://tminfo-dot.ct.gov/TMINFO/top?year=latest,town=144,station=97,dataset=0>

<https://tminfo-dot.ct.gov/TMINFO/reparse?wgid=e0f171675.f=SPEED>

### CT DOT Traffic Accidents

<https://www.ctcrash.uconn.edu>

Note: This is a publicly accessible website, but you will need to create a login to access.