



The Town of Hilton Head Island
U.S. 278 Gateway Corridor Committee

October 23, 2019, 4:00 p.m.

Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers

AGENDA

*As a courtesy to others please turn off / silence ALL mobile devices during the meeting.
Thank You.*

1. Call to Order

2. FOIA Compliance - Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and distributed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act and the requirements of the Town of Hilton Head Island.

3. Approval of Minutes

- a. Minutes from October 9, 2019

4. New Business

- a. Discussion of SCDOT Comment Letter
- b. Discussion on SCDOT's "Reasonable Alternatives"
- c. Committee's Upcoming Schedule
- d. Chairman's Comments
- e. Public Comment

5. Adjournment

Please note a quorum of Town Council may result if four (4) or more Town Council members attend this meeting.



Town of Hilton Head Island
U.S. 278 Gateway Corridor Committee

Wednesday, October 9, 2019 at 4:00 p.m.

Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers

MEETING MINUTES

Present From the Committee: David Johnson, Jr., *Chairman*; Sarah Stewart, *Co-Chair*; Frank Babel, Alex Brown, Tom Crews, Jerry Cutrer, Craig Forrest, David Lunka, Tom Peeples, Brendan Reilley, John Taylor, *Members*; Marc Grant, *Hilton Head Island Liaison*;

Absent from Committee: Hannah Horne, Kyle Theodore *Member*, Dan Wood, *Bluffton Liaison*; Larry McElynn, *Beaufort County Liaison*; Palmer E. Simmons

Present from Town Council and Town Staff: Charles Cousins, *Assistant to the Town Manager*, Shawn Colin, *Director of Community Development*; Jeff Buckalew, *Town Engineer*, Anne Cyran, *Senior Planner*, Taylor Ladd, *Senior Planner*

1. Call to Order

Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

2. **FOIA Compliance** – Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and mailed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.

3. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Peeples moved to approve the minutes from October 3, 2019. Mr. Babel seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. Unfinished Business – None

5. New Business

a. Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Mr. Babel made a brief presentation stating the objectives are to provide safe, attractive and connected bicycle and pedestrian facilities between Hilton Head Island and the mainland that accommodates all users. Separated bike and pedestrian facilities will be illuminated for nighttime use with appropriate lighting designs. Mr. Babel presented pictures featuring separated bike and pedestrian facilities and concluded with a list of recommendations.

b. Discussion on SCDOT's "Reasonable Alternatives"

Chairman Johnson started the meeting by reading the Committee's Guiding Principles. He went on to say the SCDOT's reasonable alternatives can be accessed via the Town's website. SCDOT has extended the deadline to submit comments until October 25, 2019. Chairman Johnson announced the Town of Hilton Head Island will host a drop-in style public information session on Thursday, October 17, 2019, to share information that was previously provided at the official U.S. 278 Corridor Improvements project Public Information Meeting on September 19, 2019.

The October session will be held from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Hilton Head Island Public Library and SCDOT will be there to answer questions. Ms. Stewart and Chairman Johnson are scheduling a meeting with the residents of Stoney in approximately two weeks. Chairman Johnson stated many outreach meetings are planned and he will send out the schedule to all Committee members.

Chairman Johnson asked what issues/concerns should the Committee submit to SCDOT prior to the October 25th deadline. He went on to say we should provide input as to where we are at this point in time regarding the alternatives. We should not pick between alternatives - one over the other.

There was lengthy discussion among the Committee and the public at large expressing the following concerns:

- Still just one way on the Island and one way off – this needs to be addressed.
- Push for new bridges incorporate pedestrian/bike facilities.
- Aesthetics
- Raise causeways
- Grade separated interchanges
- Storm water
- Properties right on the corridor
- Reusing/repurpose existing infrastructure
- Guiding principles are missing from SCDOT's alternatives.
- SCDOT not improving quality of life.
- Congestion during construction will have a big impact on tourism, businesses and residents. What is the plan for transportation system management?
- Approved budget numbers have not been released.

Chairman Johnson asked the Committee to send their comments to him and he will put together a draft for their next meeting on October 23, 2019.

c. Public Comment

Mr. Gray Smith submitted a typed statement to be included as an attachment to the minutes. Mr. Raymond Duxbury also submitted a typed statement to be included as an attachment to the minutes.

6. Adjournment – The meeting concluded and was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Please note a quorum of Town Council may result if four (4) or more Town Council members attend this meeting.

Submitted by: Eileen Wilson, Senior Administrative Assistant

Approved: [DATE]

October 24, 2019

Mr. Craig Winn, PE, Program Manager
South Carolina Department of Transportation
Lowcountry Regional Production Group
955 Park Street, Room 401
Columbia, SC 29202-0191

Re: U.S. 278 Gateway Corridor Committee Public Comment Submission

Dear Craig,

We very much appreciate working with you and your team over these last eight months during the initial stage of the Environmental Assessment for the U.S. 278 Gateway Corridor. We, along with the many residences and businesses of Hilton Head Island have been impressed with the time your team has taken to become familiar with our citizens, issues, problems and opportunities. Many people have complimented you and your team on your hard work. One longtime resident who has had previous interaction with the SCDOT summed it up with the following: *“This new generation is very different, I’ve been impressed with how they have come in and gotten to know our community and concerns.”*

As the Chairman of the U.S. 278 Gateway Corridor Committee, I am submitting the attached list of questions and concerns from our committee during the official public comment period. These are based on comments or issues from the public as well as members of the committee. This information is being shared to provide local points of view we believe are important for the success of this project.

I want to be very clear that nothing in this letter should be considered as an endorsement of any of the reasonable alternatives or any of their elements. As per our charter, we will make a recommendation to Town Council once the committee has reviewed and discussed the alternatives. This recommendation will be influenced by the guiding principles (which you have received a copy of) that have been endorsed both by the Town of Hilton Head and by Beaufort County).

Thank you,

David Johnson, Chairman
U.S. 278 Gateway Corridor Committee

**INPUT FROM US 278 GATEWAY CORRIDOR COMMITTEE
DURING SCDOT OFFICIAL COMMENT PERIOD
FOR US 278 CORRIDOR PROJECT
OCTOBER 24, 2019**

Process

We are looking forward to SCDOT developing details on intersection improvements, signals, etc. and that information being shared with the public. Additionally, while we have heard from you that merely making improvements to intersection design and signals will not significantly improve congestion and capacity of the corridor, the public needs to better understand why this is so and have access to the data that backs this up.

How do you address public comments that six lanes will not be enough and in the future and we will be back with another discussion of widening the corridor roadway beyond six lanes?

How is the project team considering current and future transportation alternatives? While we understand that current mass transit impacts were incorporated into the traffic model and projections how will the future growth of alternatives be considered? How long term is the project team's horizon?

How is the project team considering congestion and traffic during the construction phase of the project?

What information will you share with the public before the Preferred Alternative is announced? Specifically will you share any cost estimates? It will be difficult for the public to be put into a position of favoring certain alternatives only to find out that the SCDOT has determined that they are not feasible from a cost perspective.

How will you collaborate with the HHI Town staff and County staff on any right of way acquisitions? How might you work with the same staff on comprehensive solutions to issues presented by this project?

Specifics

All of the proposed alternatives would impact the Stoney community. Can you provide additional information about what the SCDOT is considering to mitigate this impact?

Why do Alternatives 5 and 6 tie into the existing route at Spanish Wells Road rather than connecting directly with the Cross Island Parkway? This has repeatedly come up at our public forums and presentations as a logical connection.

None of the alternatives include grade-separated intersections on Jenkins Island. What is SCDOT's thinking on this?

Are you considering reversible lanes during high traffic hours?

Are you considering pedestrian improvements and pedestrian friendly crossings for certain high traffic areas?

Storm/Accident Readiness

What consideration is being given to improve the existing causeways resilience to storm surge during hurricanes? Current conditions during storms or high tides seem to suggest that they are extremely low.

How do you consider the impacts of significant events such as natural disasters on the viability of the bridges, or major accidents on continuous traffic flow on the bridges? Does this affect bridge design?

DRAFT

Committee Schedule through March 2020

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| Thursday, October 31 st , 3:00 p.m. | Wednesday, January 29 th , 3:00 p.m. |
| Thursday, November 7 th , 4:00 p.m. | Wednesday, February 5 th , 3:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday, November 13 th , 4:00 p.m. | Wednesday, February 12 th , 4:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday, December 4 th , 3:00 p.m. | Thursday, February 20 th , 3:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday, December 11 th , 3:00 p.m. | Wednesday, February 26 th , 4:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday, January 8 th , 3:00 p.m. | Wednesday, March 4 th , 3:00 p.m. |
| Thursday, January 16 th , 4:00 p.m. | Wednesday, March 11 th , 3:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday, January 22 nd , 3:00 p.m. | Wednesday, March 25 th , 3:00 p.m. |

Please note the following dates were NOT available due to the upcoming holiday season or scheduling conflicts with Council Chambers:

- November 20th
- November 21st
- November 27th (day before Thanksgiving)
- November 28th (Thanksgiving)
- December 18th
- December 19th
- December 25th (Christmas)
- December 26th (day after Christmas)