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TO: City of Taunton

DATE: January 7, 2016

FROM: HSH Design Team

HSH PROJECT NO.: 2011055

SUBJECT: PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING & CITY COMMENTS

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## General Comments

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**Comment 1: Complete sidewalk re-construction on Stevens St. + Pinehill Street with water main replacement.**

Response: The sidewalk on Stevens Street and Pinehill will be replaced in kind in locations where the water main or lateral services connections disturb the area.

**Comment 2: Harts Four Corners: Need dedicated turn signals for Hart Street in both directions. Through traffic prevents crossing left.**

Response: This intersection is under MassDOT jurisdiction. The City will recommend to MassDOT that protected left-turns be added to the signal phasing for Hart Street.

**Comment 3a: Directional bore the 16" water main that is proposed for Stevens Street.**

Response: Directional boring of the water main is not conducive to the type of construction required to install the water main on Stevens Street.

**Comment 3b: Prevent the use of 10 Stevens Street (Oldfield property) as any form of access to the site.**

Response: No access to the site is anticipated to be provided at 10 Stevens Street. Access to the site will be at O'Connell Way and the Service Road.

**Comment 3c: Prevent proposed Service Road from having access to Stevens Street – Deny curb cut.**

Response: The Service Road is needed for truck and bus access to and from the site. This access was agreed upon in the IGA.



**Comment 3d: Install granite curbed island from O’Connell Way north to proposed Service Road entrance.**

Response: A median with vertical granite curb on either side is proposed on Stevens Street from just north of O’Connell Way to just south of the proposed Service Road.

**Comment 3e: Move facility west to its original position as presented previously.**

Response: The location of the proposed facility is outside the scope of these public infrastructure improvements.

**Comment 3f: Install 12” granite curbed island on Stevens Street from the New Route 140 NB ramp to O’Connell Way.**

Response: The ramp to Route 140 from Stevens Street was eliminated during the environmental review process (FEIR/FEIS) as it was not permittable by the Army Corp of Engineers due the impacts to the existing wetlands. A median with 6” high vertical granite curbing (city and state standard) will be installed from just north of the Route 140 off-ramp to O’Connell Way.

**Comment 3g: Utilize proposed new ramp from Stevens Street for ingress and egress to facility regardless of vehicle type.**

Response: The ramp to Route 140 from Stevens Street was eliminated during the environmental review process (FEIR/FEIS) as it was not permittable by the Army Corp of Engineers due the impacts to the existing wetlands.

**Comment 3h: Install 12” granite curbed island on Stevens Street from Route 140 NB off ramp to O’Connell Way.**

Response: A median with 6” high vertical granite curbing (city and state standard) will be installed from just north of the Route 140 off-ramp to O’Connell Way.

**Comment 3i: Install “Do Not Enter” sign to attempt to prevent traffic from entering Stevens Street.**

Response: “Do Not Enter” signs cannot be installed to prevent traffic from entering Stevens Street as it violates Federal and State standards. Signs will be installed indicating



motorists that they are entering a local neighborhood and will include signage discouraging casino related traffic.

**Comment 3j: Install 12” granite curbed island at traffic signal where Route 140 NB off ramp meets Stevens Street.**

Response: A median with 6” high vertical granite curbing (city and state standard) will be installed from just north of the Route 140 off-ramp to O’Connell Way. The existing Island separating right turns from the Route 140 NB off ramp will be modified.

**Comment 3k: Page 43 of the R.O.D. is in conflict with City of Taunton memorandum issued by Mark Slusarz, P.E., City Engineer. Stevens Street cannot be made a “Heavy Truck Exclusion” street.**

Response: A formal application has been submitted to the MassDOT on behalf of the City of Taunton requesting heavy vehicle truck exclusion on Stevens Street and Pinehill Street. MassDOT will decide if the exclusion is acceptable or not. That agency has sole authority over all such exclusionary signage.

**Comment 4: Speed Control; Signage 30 MPH only strictly enforced; Speed Bumps.**

Response: Speed limit and speed radar signs are proposed along Stevens Street at Pinehill Street and the Elementary School Driveway but speed bumps were neither recommended nor acceptable to Taunton DPW due to maintenance concerns and public safety response times.

**Comment 5a: Truck exclusion – out route from Fed Express?**

Response: Only heavy vehicles with a carrying capacity of 2.5 tons or higher will be excluded from Stevens Street and Pinehill Street (except those with local destinations). Smaller trucks, such as FedEx, will still be permitted to travel along Stevens Street and Pinehill Street.

**Comment 5b: 18 Stevens – Fix easements; limit takings & temp easements**

Response: A temporary easement will be required at 18 Stevens Street to reconstruct the adjacent sidewalk. Any disturbance to the land within the easement will be fixed prior construction being completed. Permanent easements will not be required.



**Comment 6: Post office intersection – sidewalk project should be down to the elderly housing. If improvements are needed to connect maybe the elderly will get out.**

Response: At this current time, the scope of work is limited to the intersection improvements.

**Comment 7: Need dedicated turn traffic signal arrow to turn left from Hart St. onto County, both directions on Hart onto County.**

Response: This intersection is under MassDOT jurisdiction. The City will recommend to MassDOT that protected left-turns be added to the signal phasing for Hart Street.

**Comment 8: The corner of Pinehill Street and Caswell is very difficult to navigate. This is due to the building of “East Side Pizza” being so close to the road. Was there any consideration given to taking that building down to improve sightlines and therefore, public safety?**

Response: No significant property takings were anticipated during the planning process. The design as currently shown is acceptable to City Officials. Signalizing the intersection will increase safety and eliminate the sight distance issue; opposing vehicles will be stopped at a red light.

**Comment 9a: Harts Four Corners--Instead of just County Street in both directions having a left-turn lane with a left-turn priority light, I believe that both sides of Hart Street should also have a left turn priority light for the left turn lanes at that intersection. The large volume of traffic from both sides of Hart Street making respective left turns warrants those left-turn priority lights on both sides of Hart Street being part of the complete project. It can be extremely dangerous trying to make a left hand turn onto County Street from either direction of Hart Street, never mind increasing traffic in all four directions because of the addition of the casino into that general area. It may move traffic a little slower throughout the intersection, but those additional steps will move traffic a lot safer through the intersection with minimal cost to the project related to that intersection.**

Response: This intersection is under MassDOT jurisdiction. The City will recommend to MassDOT that protected left-turns be added to the signal phasing for Hart Street.



**Comment 9b: Hart Street-Bristol-Plymouth Vocational School exit/entrance–Poole Street intersections– By squaring up the intersection as you have submitted last night, it places all traffic in all four directions into a condensed area. Today, the intersection is off-set and somewhat spread out offering all directions more options to travel in and out of the intersection. If you are now going to adjust the intersection to be more squared off and condensed, instead of yellow red beacon lights in the new intersection, place regular traffic lights into the complete intersection. The traffic lights could then be priority programmed for students arriving and leaving the area from B-P, and also from Taunton High School, which is located close to the area of this intersection. Understand, you are also now adding additional traffic into the area because of the casino, which in street mileage is probably a mile and a half away from this intersection. You are dealing with less experienced drivers entering a more condensed intersection with much more traffic entering the intersection from all four directions.**

Response: The 2012 volume data at the intersection meets 3 hours out of the 4 hour warrant criteria (signal warrants along with engineering judgment are utilized to establish if a traffic signal is acceptable at a given location). Not enough information is available to determine if a signal is warranted; therefore additional data will be collected. If the signal is still not warranted, then conduit will be installed for future use should the intersection ever warrant a signal. This intersection will be closely monitored after the proposed development is open, as was agreed upon in the IGA.

**Comment 10: I strongly feel that a regular traffic light would work better at the Poole St and BP School with Hart St intersection. If could be a blinking light on off hours and a red, yellow, green light during peak hours in AM and PM.**

Response: The 2012 volume data at the intersection meets 3 hours out of the 4 hour warrant criteria (signal warrants along with engineering judgment are utilized to establish if a traffic signal is acceptable at a given location). Not enough information is available to determine if a signal is warranted; therefore additional data will be collected. If the signal is still not warranted, then conduit will be installed for future use should the intersection ever warrant a signal. This intersection will be closely monitored after the proposed development is open, as was agreed upon in the IGA.



**Comment 11: I feel very strongly that left turn signal arrows are necessary on Hart St. when turning left onto County St. when entering Hart's 4 Corner's from either direction.**

Response: This intersection is under MassDOT jurisdiction. The City will recommend to MassDOT that protected left-turns be added to the signal phasing for Hart Street.

**Comment 12a: Middleboro Ave. - next to Amaro's gas station sign, water puddles during any rain or melting - please provide for adequate drainage**

Response: New curbing, re-grading, drainage improvements, and pavement surface restoration will be conducted as part of the intersection reconstruction. This will eliminate the issue.

**Comment 12b: Liberty St. & Middleboro Ave. - there is no parking lot for busy ET Postoffice - please allow for adequate on street parking on both sides of Liberty and on Middleboro Ave. in front of Post office**

Response: Parking on Liberty Street and behind the post office will remain. Parking is not allowed within a signalized intersection.

**Comment 13: Having attended the MassDOT presentation held this past spring, and the meeting of November 16th, I am concerned for the impact on all the neighborhood affected by the proposed changes to be made at all the various intersections as described. I am a resident of Briarwood Drive – so very close to the Harts Corners nightmare! – and we are all worried about traffic, as well as increased noise – especially with the planned construction at the old Mozzone's Site. My question – when are all the target dates for instituting these necessary changes? Will there be extra police details available for control of traffic? Lastly – who will pay for all of these projects?**

Response: The project at Harts Four Corners is managed by MassDOT. The current schedule anticipates construction to begin spring 2017. Police details and traffic management are included in the contract and will be paid by MassDOT. It is anticipated that the other IGA related City improvements will begin in spring 2016. However, the exact sequence of work has yet to be determined. All City improvements will include police details and traffic management. These improvements will be paid for by the project proponent.



Advanced notice prior to the start of all work will be given to the City of Taunton and its residents.

**Comment 14a: The cut away to DOT parking lot from B-P Tech driveway is very concerning to us. At this time that lane is just an entrance lane, the cut away would create more traffic into our driveway, the problem is when DOT traffic is trying to exit from our entrance there is potential for the entrance to be blocked creating back up to County St. There have been many accidents at our driveway adding more traffic in that area increases the potential of hazardous conditions. The safety of our students, staff and public is most important. Remember there are heavy vehicles that enter and leave DOT driveway. Let's leave alone, no cut away to DOT parking lot from our drive way.**

**Response:** The intersection is under MassDOT jurisdiction. The design team is currently working with MassDOT to provide a solution to the intersection as part of a permit application. All modifications to the intersection will require MassDOT approval. The design team has met with the school administration on several occasions and will continue to coordinate as the design progresses.

**Comment 14b: Hart St. driveway, I was told that there would be a traffic light at that intersection not warning lights. If this is the case the best option is to add sensor lights that would be used at high traffic times. As you know there is a lot of traffic in the morning and afternoon when both B-P Tech and Taunton High School is in recess.**

**Response:** The 2012 volume data at the intersection meets 3 hours out of the 4 hour warrant criteria (signal warrants along with engineering judgment are utilized to establish if a traffic signal is acceptable at a given location). Not enough information is available to determine if a signal is warranted; therefore additional data will be collected. If the signal is still not warranted, then conduit will be installed for future use should the intersection ever warrant a signal. This intersection will be closely monitored after the proposed development is open, as was agreed upon in the IGA.



**Comment 15a: There should be a time controlled traffic light at the intersection of Hart Street and the Bristol Plymouth High School entrance/exit and Poole Street. This traffic light should be operational during the times when Bristol Plymouth students/staff/faculty are entering school grounds in the morning and exiting at the end of the school day, and when Taunton High students/staff/faculty are utilizing Poole Street to/from THS. These lights should control traffic at this intersection during such times as 6:30 to 8:00 AM and 2:15 to 3:15 PM. This will facilitate a safer and smoother traffic pattern during these busy times of day, especially when students from both Bristol Plymouth and Taunton High are driving in this area to/from their respective schools.**

Response: The 2012 volume data at the intersection meets 3 hours out of the 4 hour warrant criteria (signal warrants along with engineering judgment are utilized to establish if a traffic signal is acceptable at a given location). Not enough information is available to determine if a signal is warranted; therefore additional data will be collected. If the signal is still not warranted, then conduit will be installed for future use should the intersection ever warrant a signal. This intersection will be closely monitored after the proposed development is open, as was agreed upon in the IGA.

**Comment 15b: All traffic to and from the proposed casino should be required to enter and exit via the interchanges of Routes 140 and 24. In order to maintain the safety and integrity of the neighborhoods, Hart Street, Middleboro Ave., Stevens Street, and Pinehill Street should be designated and posted as local traffic only. The Taunton Police Department should consistently patrol these areas, and issue citations to all traffic violating the "local traffic" areas. This requirement would apply to delivery vehicles as well as patrons and employees of the casino.**

Response: The majority of casino traffic will travel through the Route 24 and 140 interchange. Signage will be developed to alert motorists they are entering a local neighborhood and discourage casino traffic.



**Comment 15c: All construction vehicles should be required to utilize Route 140 to access the site throughout the construction process. Construction vehicles should not be allowed to utilize Hart Street, Middleboro Ave., Stevens Street, and Pinehill Street at any time in order to maintain the safety and integrity of the neighborhoods.**

Response: Construction vehicles will be limited to the greatest extent possible from utilizing local streets.

**Comment 16: TRAFFIC CAMERAS !! I live south of the mall intersection on County St. and pass thru there frequently. The number of cars that run red lights is alarming -- ESP. those exiting the mall to 140S. The city and state could benefit from ticket money. The same is true at Harts Four Corners.**

Response: Installing cameras would require a change to the Massachusetts legislation and therefore are not proposed.

**Comment 17a: As the Trustee of a small Industrial Park at 160 Middleboro Avenue, for over 2 years, I have been told by two water supervisors recently by the Assist. DPW Commissioner that as part of the infrastructure improvements the discolored rusty water supplied between Pine Hill and Stevens would be resolved by repair or replacement of the main serving the immediate area. I expect that to happen.**

Response: The drinking water infrastructure work includes improvements to the Middleboro Avenue. Water main between Pinehill Street and Williams Street in an attempt to mitigate the discolored water concerns in this area. Please be advised that while the public infrastructure will be improved, this project will not include any work on private property, including the water service into the building.



**Comment 17b: Moving BP's driveway at Hart and installing flashing lights will do little to resolve the ongoing traffic problem at the intersection. What will help create less traffic not only there but at Hart's Four Corners through the Middleboro Ave is making the driveway into BP from Hart a "one" way "in" only to all traffic including buses with an exit at County (Rt. 140).**

Response: The access and egress of the BP High School are on property Bristol Plymouth Regional Tech. The city does not have jurisdiction over the internal operations of the BP Regional Tech property.

**Comment 18: At the corner of Pinehill Street and Stevens Street there is concern with the driveway access as it directly abuts the intersection.**

Response: Driveway access will be maintained. The design team will evaluate potential improvements to the driveway approach..

**Comment 19: Please make them slow down when flying over the railroad tracks. No need for this speed!!! We would like to see some kind of slow down blind driveway signs for a railroad arm, that comes down when the train is approaching. In front of our home at 159 Middleboro Ave. Street is real bad. They fly over the tracks Well not even slow down when they see you trying to cross the road to get mail. Real bad. We need help in that department.**

Response: Multiple traffic calming measures are proposed for Stevens Street and Middleboro Avenue including speed radar signs at Stevens Street at Pinehill Street, flashing warning beacon at Middleboro Avenue at Stevens Street and, school zone signage at Stevens Street at the Elementary School Driveway.

**Comment 20: 159 Middleboro Ave has problem with bad rusty water for many years. We would like to see the sewer drain be changed on Middleboro Ave. We have been promised for years that our water/sewer pipes would be changed. We have one of the oldest properties on Middleboro Ave that is still tied into old water/sewer lines. Our laundry has been ruined by rusty water. We also have a small farm and our animals also get to drink rusty water, not to mention, shower, pool, hot tub.**

Response: The drinking water infrastructure work includes improvements to the Middleboro Avenue. Water main between Pinehill Street and Williams Street in an attempt to



mitigate the discolored water concerns in this area. Please be advised that while the public infrastructure will be improved, this project will not include any work on private property, including the water service into the building.

**Comment 21a: Thank you for the information from the first meeting and the opportunity to respond. My main concerns and ‘would be’ goals for the City of Taunton and the Stevens Street neighborhood in particular are defined as increased pedestrian/resident safety and vehicular accident prevention. Whiling blinking lights may slow down some speeders, additional measures need to be implemented in my opinion. I would suggest action to be taken to include in the traffic mitigation plan provisions for another full traffic light control at the intersection of ET Elementary School property and Stevens Street in addition to the one being proposed for the Home Plate area intersection. This action should result in lower speeds in these areas and possibly reduce likely accidents. The real benefit would be increased public safety all around since traffic would be slowed down the entire length of Street, a relatively short roadway and true speedway in both directions because of easy access to Routes 140 and 24. I believe a traffic light control at this location on Stevens Street is just as, if not more, important as a four way stop with traffic lights at the Homeplate intersect. Further, implementing more stringent traffic control initially, rather than later, I would expect to have a better result. Also with modern, highly flexible traffic control signaling (full stop vs.blinking,etc) where timing sequences can be adjusted as needed, is a good first step in the right direction towards increasing public safety.**

Response: Volumes at the intersection of Stevens Street/ET Elementary School do not warrant a signal. Signal warrants based on federal standards related to traffic volumes at an intersection, along with engineering judgment are utilized to establish if a traffic signal is permissible at a given location.



**Comment 21b: As another general observation, I would suggest consideration of an off ramp, exit only from Route 24 in the area of Poole Street near the bridge over Rt 24 connecting Middleboro Ave with Hart Street, in order to alleviate traffic backup congestion on Rt 24 and overuse of Stevens Street whenever an accident occurs on either Rt 24 or 140.**

Response: An off-ramp at this location would not be allowed under Federal design standards. Additionally, installing a new off-ramp from Route 24 would be disadvantageous to the East Taunton neighborhood. This would increase traffic flow to the residential area. The installation of a new off ramp from Route 24 would require Federal approvals.

**Comment 21c: To address some of the other traffic mitigation measures as currently proposed.....At the top of Stevens St (O'Connell Way) I would anticipate additional measures necessary such as physical barriers (Jersey type) to route traffic from the proposed Casino to the highways and preventing a left hand turn and proceeding down Stevens Street into the school zone area.**

Response: Left-turns out of O'Connell Way onto Stevens Street are already restricted by the proposed traffic island.

**Comment 21d: Additional exclusive measures may be needed such as "local traffic only" or even "one way only" designations for various portions of Stevens Street and especially at the lower end of Stevens Street where it meets Middleboro Avenue. This area (lower Stevens St) is currently well known as "the backway to the Galleria Mall" and could easily be construed as the backway to the proposed Casino. I look forward to further discussion of these and other individuals' comments with you at the next meeting.**

Response: Signage will be installed to advise motorists they are entering a local residential neighborhood and discourage casino related traffic.



**Comment 22: STEVENS STREET CORRIDOR/O’CONNELL WAY @ REVOLUTIONARY DRIVE**

- 1. Consider painting the traffic control equipment (controller cabinet, etc.) with a “Project First Light” theme.**

Response: We anticipate the equipment will be to City standard color, black.

- 2. The O’Connell Way exit does not allow for a left turn onto Stevens Street. Although this is desirable from a traffic point of view, does this pose a public safety concern? Has the TPD/TFD commented on this?**

Response: The Service Road can be used to turn left onto Stevens Street from the site. Under an emergency situation an emergency vehicle could U-turn at the O’Connell Way intersection.

- 3. The southbound Stevens Street approach lane does not line up with the receiving lane, it seems to line up more with the northbound left turn lane and median. This needs to be revised.**

Response: We will utilize vehicle tracking pavements lines and make an adjustment to the alignment to ensure the appropriate taper length is achieved for the through movement.

**BRISTOL PLYMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL at HART STREET**

- 1. I see no need for a sidewalk at the northeast corner of the intersection. Any future sidewalk construction will likely be on the west side of Poole Street (where the houses are located), and/or the south side of Hart Street (where the existing sidewalk on the bridge is located). Eliminating the sidewalk there will eliminate the need for a crosswalk across Poole Street and allow the stop bar to be moved forward to provide better visibility for vehicles exiting Poole Street.**

Response: The sidewalk on the northeast corner of the intersection and crosswalk on Poole Street will be removed. Additional signage will be incorporated into the design plans to make motorist aware of the intersection as they approach from the east over Route 24.