

SENT: Wednesday, February 28, 2024

TO: The Concord Select Board: Henry Dane, Chair; Mary Hartman, Clerk; Terri Ackerman; Linda Escobedo; and Mark Howell
CC: Shannon McAndrew, Executive Assistant
FROM: Laura Davis, Outgoing Chair of Transportation Advisory Committee
SUBJECT: Position on Route 2 Corridor Study

The Select Board and Transportation Advisory Committee of the Town of Concord are pleased to see that MassDOT has produced a conceptual study for short term improvements to the Route 2 Corridor. Our position on the proposed concepts is as follows:

We have strong concerns about the proposals for the crossings at Main St. (Route 62), Old Road to Nine Acre Corner, Sudbury Road, and Walden Street. Essentially, it is proposed to widen the roadway from four to six lanes at those intersections. We oppose this plan. Starting with the work on our most recent Comprehensive Long Range Plan, discussions and surveys of our residents consistently indicate that our most urgent priority is safer crossing of Route 2 for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. This urgency was again indicated in our most recent 2023 survey of residents.

The concepts proposed for the Concord Rotary may offer the possibility of improved flow of the bulk of the traffic through the rotary. Since it is only a concept at this point, much will depend on the detailed design and how well it will deal with the complexity of the intersection plus the need to provide enhancements to pedestrian and bicycle access. We also wonder if a detailed design should await decisions on the plans for the MCI Concord land.

The concepts proposed for the intersection with Baker Ave. Extension and Elm Street also appear promising, depending on the actual detailed design.

The proposed widening of Route 2 at those intersections exacerbates safety and connectivity concerns of pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists crossing the highway. We are doubtful that any mitigation that would emerge in a detailed design will improve the situation for crossing traffic when one considers that crossing time will have to increase by 50% to accommodate the larger number of lanes.

Note that Route 2 divides the Town of Concord in half, creating a barrier between our two town centers and dividing every school district.

We ask that MassDOT reconsider the conceptual design of these intersections, taking into account the safety priorities of Concord's residents, its Select Board, and its Transportation Advisory Committee.