



Legislation Text

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TITLE:

Request to adopt a resolution supporting NCDOT investment in Bicycle/Pedestrian improvements at the Franklin Street/Merritt Mill Road/Brewer Lane intersection

PURPOSE: The purpose of this agenda item is for the Board of Aldermen to consider adopting a resolution in support of the proposed design for the East Main Street/Brewer Lane/Merritt Mill Road/East Franklin Street intersection.

DEPARTMENT: Planning

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INFORMATION: This intersection forms a critical transportation junction between Carrboro and Chapel Hill and the towns jointly submitted this intersection as a roundabout through the SPOT process, beginning as a highway project. NCDOT shared its initial roundabout designs and analysis, but it was determined that all fell short of an optimal design--due to the substantial right-of-way requirements and minimal operational improvements. During this time, discussion with staff and elected officials identified the need for improvements in bike/ped infrastructure at this intersection, with a particular focus on safety. With this new focus, NCDOT recommended abandoning the highway project and resubmitting as a bike/ped project to allow for that shift in design focus. The Board last received an update on this project's status on September 19th, 2017. (<https://carrboro.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3158181&GUID=0616F2E0-976F-473A-AD60-C575DE1D968E>) Since that update, there have been two additional meetings with Town Staff, NCDOT Staff, and Elected officials regarding the proposed alternatives.

In the first meeting (held on 2/22/18) the group decided that because the right-of-way costs for the highway project were so high, the focus should shift to providing improvements to bicycle and pedestrian safety both due to lowering overall project costs but also due to the problematic nature of the intersection (poorly marked crosswalks, crosswalks without signal heads, and large intersection geometry). This also provided an opportunity to consider addition bike/ped enhancements not originally considered.

In the second meeting (held on 6/26/18) the staff representatives reconvened to review NCDOT's updated design of the intersection. In addition to the bike/ped improvements and considerations for the road diet on Chapel Hill's side of the intersection, improved signage was also proposed on the approaches to the intersection in order to better direct travelers (these would be NCDOT standard signs, Carrboro specific wayfinding signs could be designed in the future). The proposed design, which was provided to Town staff by NCDOT staff can be found as Attachment B. It would also be noted that this is not the final design, and additional modifications which had been requested by staff and elected officials are still being considered.

This improvement will be fully funded and managed by NCDOT, and we anticipate the construction project will be let sometime in October. As such they would like a resolution supporting the proposed design be passed (Attachment A).

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: Some use of staff time will be anticipated to assist with public outreach prior to construction.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Board adopt the proposed resolution supporting NCDOT's investment in constructing Bicycle/Pedestrian improvements indicated in the attached final design.