



**Town of Hilton Head Island  
WILLIAM HILTON PARKWAY GATEWAY  
CORRIDOR INDEPENDENT REVIEW  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
Wednesday, June 12, 2024, 1:00 PM  
Minutes**

**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Perry called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

**2. Approval of the Minutes**

**a. Regular Meeting Minutes of April 22, 2024.**

Mr. Advocaat raised questions pertaining to the April 22, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes regarding the Town's venture to Columbia to discuss Lochmueller findings with SCDOT. After some discussion and clarification, a motion was made by Mr. Advocaat to approve the minutes of April 22, 2024, with a second by Mr. Warner. The motion passed unanimously.

**b. Regular Meeting Minutes of May 8, 2024.**

Mr. Advocaat made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 8, 2024. Mr. Warner seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**3. Unfinished Business**

**a. Update on Project Progress**

Prior to the beginning of the update, Mr. Advocaat proposed that the Committee move 'Appearance by Citizens' from item five to item three on the agenda as he felt it necessary to hear public comment prior to presentations. Mayor Perry called for a vote in which Mr. Advocaat made the motion to move the item, with a second by Mr. Walczak. The motion tied with a 2-0-2 vote, and the motion did not carry. Shawn Colin, Assistant Town Manager - Engineering and Capital Projects, opened up the floor to Nathan Nohren, Senior Traffic Engineer for the Lochmueller consultant group, to give updates on the project progress. Mr. Nohren also introduced Kate Swinford, Michelle Romine, and Chad Costa who virtually attended the meeting to assist in presenting and addressing any questions from the committee.

The project progress, along with the agenda items that follow, consider the selection of Alternative #1 as previously presented by Lochmueller with the modification of having a

single eastbound left turn and a single southbound right turn onto Squire Pope Road, developing a Visum Model optimizing the timing considering the adaptive system from Bluffton all the way through the Gum Tree Road, as well as incorporating the intersections remaining within the study areas from Indigo Run down to the Sea Pines Circle which Mr. Nohren noted are merely impacts and no mitigation strategies have been evaluated pertaining to these intersections. Mr. Nohren stated that Lochmueller is currently 75% completed with the entirety of the project, Task 1 is pending a meeting with Town Staff and is near 100% complete, Task 3 is considered 90% complete with the anticipation of presenting the findings to Town Council, Task 4 is considered 50% complete with the understanding of what the impacts will be, and Task 5 is a comprehensive document which will memorialize Lochmueller's work which will be executed after completion of Task 4.

Mr. Advocaat expressed concern that the projects are moving at a rapid pace, and questioned whether Lochmueller's work would be completed ahead of the June 17th Town Council meeting. Mr. Nohren addressed this question and explained that Lochmueller would be engaging council for the first time beginning June 17th, and the meaning of the future Town Council meetings is to update Council with progress being made from Task 1 through Task 3 explaining that all subject deliverables have been completed and will be provided.

Kate Swinford addressed the committee by going over review items reiterating Lochmueller's method of progress as well as answering questions received regarding levels of service criteria and generation of base traffic data. Ms. Swinford reminded the committee that Lochmueller's analysis was completed independently of outside input and stated there was no significant variation between prior study efforts and their study efforts with respect to previously considered alternatives. According to Ms. Swinford, Lochmueller has not been involved in any meetings with SCDOT nor have they ever coordinated with SCDOT in regards to the respective project. Not only did Lochmueller evaluate previous ideas, but also brought new ideas to the table to provide for consideration regarding Alternatives 2, 3 and 4. Ms. Swinford went on to explain that levels-of-service is one method used among a three-pronged approach analyzing the effectiveness of a certain approach with the remaining two prongs being queue and volume-to-capacity ratio. Queue length speaks to the resulting number of cars waiting to make their turn to enter the corridor based upon the configuration, while volume-to-capacity ratio speaks to the lane capacity.

Ms. Swinford stated that all hourly volumes used as a basis for this independent analysis and provided scenarios were collected in March of 2023, and both hourly volumes and daily volumes are taken into consideration with the main bulk of analysis being based upon hourly volumes. The 30th highest traffic volume day recorded was specifically utilized to ensure the research conducted by Lochmueller responsibly reflected peak conditions without overestimating or underestimating traffic volumes. Using a singular growth rate, Lochmueller developed a model depicting the future scenario at the year 2045 which they explain would be the "worst case scenario" compared to years prior.

## 4. New Business

### a. Presentation of Findings for Downstream Intersection Impacts

Michelle Romine presented the Downstream Impacts by first building upon Kate Swinford's statements stating that Lochmueller has provided some excerpts of traffic volumes to show the hourly volumes used in the analysis. All traffic volumes were provided as part of the William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Independent Review Advisory Committee meeting on March 27th, 2024 as well as within the corridor, an Alternatives Analysis Memorandum which was submitted on May 3rd, 2024.

Ms. Romine explains that her focus for the presentation will be west of Section 9, which is known as the Squire Pope area. The morning peak hour consists of approximately 2,800 vehicles traveling in the eastbound direction which includes 159 left turns, 2,620 through vehicles, and two right turning vehicles. In the evening, just west of Section 9 at Squire Pope, there are approximately 3,000 vehicles traveling in the westbound direction which includes 2,687 through vehicles, 2 northbound left turns, and 341 southbound right turns. Ms. Romine reiterated that these are the 2023 traffic volumes used in the analysis. Lochmueller took these volumes and raised them by their determined growth rate of 0.56% which brings morning peak hour volume to approximately 3,150 vehicles traveling eastbound and evening peak hour volume to 3,400 vehicles traveling westbound, these volumes were then used for the 2045 scenarios with Squire Pope being an excerpt of one intersection out of the many provided by Lochmueller.

Ms. Romine went on to present their Task 4 Scope of Findings. There were previously 4 alternatives considered between Moss Creek Drive and Gum Tree Road, and after review of the findings and discussion with SCDOT, Lochmueller was directed by the Town of Hilton Head Island to pursue Alternative 1 SCDOT Modified Recommended Preferred with additional modifications to provide a single eastbound left turn lane, and a single southbound right turn lane at U.S. 278 and Squire Pope. Lochmueller is in the process of determining what impacts this alternative might have, as well as evaluating what, if any, improvements need to be made. The analysis presented now includes the entire study area including intersections near Indigo Run, traveling all the way down to the Sea Pines Circle. The Visum Model, which is a simulation tool used to accurately replicate vehicles and their interactions within complex traffic streams, travel time runs for the Modified Alternative 1, as well as the SCDOT Alternative, match the numbers of the "No-Build" scenario previously presented by Lochmueller. Ms. Romine presented the Synchro results for the first time for the Modified Alternative 1 to serve as a comparison which Lochmueller expected to be less pronounced than the original Visum Model, as it is noted that Visum provides a more accurate representation. The values from these models presented in the table included the use of an Adaptive Traffic Signal System along U.S. 278 along the Modified 1 Alternative Traffic System.

Under the 2045 "No-Build" scenario, it is expected that it would take approximately 26.3 minutes to travel eastbound along Hilton Parkway between Moss Creek and Indigo Run

during the AM peak hour. Using the Visum Model, it is expected that this travel time would be reduced to 10.5 minutes under the Modified Alternative 1. Under the same 2045 "No-Build" scenario, it is expected that it would take 25.7 minutes in the evening peak hour to travel westbound along Hilton Parkway between Moss Creek and Indigo Run. It is now expected that the travel time would be reduced to 10.3 minutes under the Modified Alternative 1 Scenario, and these are expected to be the final travel times, assuming no changes along U.S. 278 east of Gum Tree or along the Cross Island Parkway. However, as Lochmueller proceeds through mitigation strategies, the values are subject to changes that may reflect potential improvements. Ms. Romine displayed and narrated a simulated video presentation to help visualize the 2045 Modified Alternative 1 Scenario displaying both AM and PM peak hours as well as specific locations where queuing issues are being addressed.

Ms. Romine elaborated further by displaying results based upon the operating conditions expected from this scenario provided by Visum, with the operating conditions for each intersection being included in the Appendix of the presentation for reference. The results presented for key intersections of note were provided as follows: The intersections between Squire Pope and Gum Tree are expected to operate acceptably overall during the AM and PM peak hours. Each signalized intersection is expected to have an LOS-D or better, which is the target LOS for an intersection overall, and the individual approaches are expected to operate with an LOS-E or better, which Ms. Romine notes is typically considered acceptable during peak hours concerning some of the side street approaches. Ms. Romine states that Lochmueller is considering any additional improvements that can be made, including reconfiguring intersections and turn lanes to improve efficiency, addition of lanes to improve capacity, and most certainly looking to improve the Sea Pines roundabout, which is performing the least efficiently out of all the performance studies conducted. Mr. Advocaat had questions regarding traffic volumes and breakdown lanes which Ms. Romine addressed. Mr. Walczak had additional questions regarding emergency lanes, which were also addressed by Lochmueller as well as Shawn Colin, Assistant Town Manager. There was a lengthy discussion by the Committee regarding the option of a Southern Bypass which Lochmueller, Shawn Colin and Mayor Perry addressed in detail.

**b. Consideration of a Resolution to Accept the Findings of the William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Independent End to End Analysis**

On February 21st, 2023 Town Council authorized the creation and appointment of the William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Independent Review Advisory Committee. Shawn Colin, Assistant Town Manager, went over the resolution which created the Committee stating the resolution required the Committee to secure a consultant to adopt a scope of work to recommend to Town Council. On May 12th, 2023 the Committee recommended an agreed upon scope of work, and on June 6th, 2023 Town Council unanimously adopted a resolution approving the scope of work and request for qualifications. On August 28th the Committee unanimously recommended the Town negotiate a contract with Lochmueller group, and on October 12th, 2023 the Town

executed the contract with Lochmueller to perform the independent analysis. Since then, the Town has held ten public meetings spanning from November 3rd, 2023 to June 12th, 2024 to review the consultants findings and recommendations for the William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Independent End-to-End Analysis as well as to receive public input. As of today, the consultant has presented technical reports and deliverables as outlined in the contract.

Shawn Colin requested consideration from the Committee to accept the findings and recommendations of the William Hilton Parkway Gateway Corridor Independent End-to-End Analysis delivered by the consultant. Secondly, Mr. Colin asks that the Committee authorize the Town Manager to use the findings and recommendations for future planning purposes. Mayor Perry called for a motion, Mr. Warner made the motion to approve. Mayor Perry passed the gavel to Mr. Warner and seconded the motion. The motion failed with a vote of 2-2. Mr. Advocaat asked that the record reflect that he is not in favor of this motion.

## **5. Appearance by Citizens:**

Mayor Perry opened up the floor for public comment.

Christopher Cliff made comments regarding the letter from SCDOT as well as completion percentages.

Jack Alderman, Chairman of the Housing Action Committee, stated that the development of the roadways is a key component to the island's growth and economic vitality, and he was disappointed to hear some of the same issues being discussed that were resolved early on in the process.

Kris Ruffner commented that she is from Chicago and has experienced some of the worst traffic delays. Further, Ms. Ruffner explained that further development will increase induced demand and will not solve the issue, "if you build it, they will come."

Frank Babel, former member of the original Gateway Corridor Committee, made comments regarding the need for development of the roadways and mentioned the frequency of accidents. Mr. Babel stated the roadway does not work as it stands now, and that the traffic has affected the businesses on the island.

Gerald Devito commented stating he believes Alternative #1 is the only viable option and mentioned that the cross-sections would address various issues.

Tammy Becker, Member of Council, thanked Lochmueller for their review of the Southern Bypass option. Ms. Becker then clarified that she does not remember Council ever being further consulted regarding the Bypass which Lochmueller addressed.

Greg Whitaker stated that the simulation displayed at this afternoon's meeting was very beneficial and requested that Lochmueller display it at the next Town Council meeting where these alternatives will be discussed. Mr. Whitaker also suggested that Lochmueller discuss why reversible lanes were considered but dismissed, and that they shed some light on the Southern Bypass option.

Gray Smith noted that the amount of lanes are not the issue in his opinion, but how free flowing the traffic is through the corridor. Mr. Smith also stated that he believes voting on the findings is premature at this point.

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Richard Busy explained that he believes the Southern Bypass should have received the same evaluation efforts as the other alternatives presented by Lochmueller.

Kathleen Redman stated she believes two lanes in each direction would suffice and she does not think we need six lanes.

Carol Vuxxer made comment stating she agrees with Ms. Redman regarding the two lane bridge as opposed to six. Ms. Vuxxer also noted that she is against taking any Stoney property to complete this project.

## **6. Adjournment**

The meeting was declared adjourned at 4:00 PM.

**APPROVED:** August 14th, 2024.

**The recording of this Meeting can be found on the Town's website at [www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov](http://www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov)**