

NEWTOWN ACCESS MANAGEMENT STUDY IS NOW UNDERWAY!!

Newtown, in partnership with the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials ([HVCEO](#)) has just embarked on a 6-month study of driveways and other access points along Routes 6, 25 and Church Hill Road in town. The purpose of the study is to achieve better safety, traffic flow, and ease of access to businesses and homes by improving how driveways intersect with the road.

This is known as [access management](#). The end result of will be a Curb Cut and Access Management Plan for these heavily traveled roadways in town. ([Click here to see a general study area map](#), [a corridor zoning map](#), or [view specific Route 6 or Route 25 maps](#)). The study consultant, Fitzgerald & Halliday Inc. (FHI), will be working with the Town of Newtown and the HVCEO to evaluate:

- Existing configuration of driveways, intersections, and other access points along the roadways,
- Existing development served by those accessways and zoning rules that govern future land use,
- Locations of planned and programmed development sites – places where new driveways may be needed in the future,
- Traffic flow and operations, and
- Automobile, pedestrian, and bicycle accident data – where is safety a problem now?

The resulting plan will identify opportunities to enhance existing access patterns as well as identify optimal locations for future access points along these roadways. Your input to this process is encouraged to help develop a plan that reflects the interests of the community. Once finalized, the plan will include recommendations for changes to the Town of Newtown's Zoning Regulations, as they pertain to access and a [curb-cut plan](#) to be used as a reference guide for future driveway activities.

Why is this study needed?

Routes 6 and 25 and SR 816 (Church Hill Road) are vital arterial roadways serving as primary access routes into and through Newtown. Steady growth in Newtown in recent years and in the region means Routes 6 and 25 and Church Hill Road have been experiencing growing traffic volumes leading to pockets or stretches of congestion. Growth in development and population in Newtown along with growth in traffic can lead to higher accident potential on the roads not only for cars and trucks, but for pedestrians and bicyclists as well. It can also mean trouble spots for getting into and out of traffic along the road and choke points where traffic slows down.

Understanding the direct relationship between land use and the transportation system is fundamental to this study. Access management planning is a pro-active way to help address the issues of safety and mobility and may help delay the need for roadway improvements to deal with traffic and access problems.

What is access management?

Access management is the process of balancing the often competing needs of motor vehicle mobility, land access, and community character. It manages access to land development while simultaneously preserving the safe and efficient flow of traffic, including bicyclists and pedestrians, on the roadway system.

The primary focus of access management is the location and design of access drives within the context of the travel corridor. Effective access management includes a comprehensive package of both design plans to guide future access changes and local planning programs and development regulations to provide safe and efficient access by future development onto the roadway system. Access management can provide the following benefits for Routes 6 and 25 and Church Hill Road. It can:

- Help maintain the capacity of the roadways relative to the functions they are expected to serve;
- Enhance safety by reducing vehicle conflict points (places where vehicles can cross paths) and other conditions that induce accidents;
- Enhance the accessibility of commercial sites improving economic activity with more logical and clear access to businesses;
- Identify opportunities resulting from access management recommendations to enhance the visual character of roadway corridors.

Newtown has a goal of maintaining the current width and configuration of Route 25 as a contributing factor to sustaining community character. The access management plan being developed as part of this study will contribute to and be supportive of that goal.

What is a curb-cut plan?

A Curb-Cut Plan is a recommended layout for access points along a roadway. It is presented in a similar fashion to a site plan for future development. Generally, a Curb-Cut Plan is created for roadway segments that require improved access design and/or is in an area where future development pressures are likely to increase. However, a Curb-Cut Plan also recognizes that opportunities to improve existing inefficient or hazardous access arrangements will only occur at the time that a change in use or change in intensity of use is proposed for a currently developed parcel or parcels.

How will the study be conducted?

The consultant team will be working very closely with Town and HVCEO staff throughout the duration of the study. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has also been formed for this study. Members of the TAC include Town staff and representatives from key boards and commissions, local business associations, and/or representative property owners within the study corridors.

How can I get involved?

Please.....Join the dialogue about access management in Newtown!!

The study team recently held a day-long community workshop to get public input on access management issues in the studied roadway corridors and to develop a draft of the curb-cut plan.

The workshop was held as an open house on Wednesday, June 24, 2009 from 12:30 to 8:00 pm at the Booth Public Library Meeting Room on Main Street in Newtown. Community members stopped in and shared their thoughts about access on key roadways.

The workshop agenda provided an opportunity for the general public to come by, and provide input as the study team worked on mapping out preliminary curb cut plan concepts, looking at analysis of the following sections of the study area:

- Route 6 – Bethel Town Line to Currituck Road
- Main Street – Currituck Road to Glover Avenue
- S. Main Street – Glover Avenue to Monroe Town Line
- Churchill Rd from the Flag Pole to Washington St. in Sandy Hook Center

The workshop ended with a presentation of the compiled draft curb-cut plan concepts where questions and comments were welcomed!



Next Meeting:

The September TAC meeting is open to the public and you are invited to attend:

Date: Wednesday, September 16, 2009

Time: 10:00 AM

Place: Town of Newtown Offices - Land Use Agency Meeting Room, 31 Pecks Lane, Newtown, CT

How can I get more information?

This website will be updated periodically with the latest project information. Check back regularly to make sure you stay informed!

Also, you are welcome to contact George Benson at the Newtown Land Use Office (203-270-4276) or Dave Hannon at HVCEO (203-775-6256 x308) for more information.