

**Railyard Enterprise Project (REP)
Scoping/Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study
Steering Committee #1 Meeting Notes**

DATE: Tuesday, January 29, 2013
TIME: 6:00-7:30PM
PLACE: Burlington Department of Public Works, 645 Pine Street
PRESENT: Please See Attached

1) Welcome & Introductions

Michele Boomhower of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) and Peter Owens of Burlington's Community & Economic Development Office (CEDO) welcomed Steering Committee members and introductions were made. Michele explained that her organization administers all federal transportation planning funds in Chittenden County. CCRPC will facilitate this process with Eleni Churchill as the project manager and Bob Chamberlin of Resource Systems Group (RSG) as the manager of the consultant team. The project will follow the Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) process that will expedite the necessary environmental review.

2) Public Comment Period: There were no comments.

3) Project Development Process and Scoping/PEL Studies

A. VTrans Project Development Process: Eleni described the process, explaining that its duration is four to six years, depending on environmental and right-of-way issues. She summarized it as follows:

Project Development Process

- Problem Identification and Authorization to Proceed
- Project Definition: Scoping/Conceptual Design/Environmental Review and Permits (National Environmental Policy Act, NEPA)
- Design: Preliminary & Semi-Final Project Plans
- Right-of-Way Acquisition
- Final and Contract Plans
- Construction

B. Scoping Process: Eleni shared a flow chart (see attached).

C. FHWA's Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL): Eleni explained this new process helps to streamline the environmental review of a transportation project once the scoping process is complete. Chris Jolly of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) explained that the time savings is achieved by bringing forward the alternatives identified in the scoping process to the

environmental review. The PEL process requires frequent communications with the general public and Resource Agencies (Army Corp., Environmental Protection Agency, Agency of Natural Resources, etc.) throughout the process. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/everydaycounts/>.

4) Steering Committee Roles & Responsibilities

Peter reviewed the draft document (see attachment). He highlighted some of the roles of the committee, especially to disseminate information back to the community that members represent and bring their feedback to Steering Committee meetings.

5) Study Scope of Work and Timeline

A. Project Background

Bob Chamberlin of RSG provided a history of the project. In 2010, the Waterfront South Access Project developed alternatives in the study area to promote economic development, improve truck access to the Vermont Railway rail yard, and to advance City land use goals. The Railyard Enterprise Project (REP) will work with stakeholders and the public to assess current and future conditions; develop a Purpose & Need Statement; develop and evaluate alternatives; and select a preferred alternative. There is strong City support for the Railyard Enterprise Project and the City is working closely with federal, state, and regional representatives to advance this project.

B. Study Team

CCRPC staff will manage the study with assistance from Burlington's Community & Economic Development Office (CEDO) and the Public Works Department (DPW). CCRPC has hired a consultant team, consisting of:

- RSG (project management/multimodal transportation planning, analysis, design)
- VHB (stormwater management)
- Dlandstudio (landscape architecture, multimodal design, innovative stormwater management)
- Rail consultant
- UVM Consulting Archaeology Program (historic/arch resource assessment)
- Vermont Survey
- Third Sector Associates (manage public outreach in close cooperation with the City)

C. Scope of Work

Bob described the project as interesting and complex and he indicated that there is great opportunity to solve problems with the help of everyone serving on the Steering Committee. Bob described the six specific tasks under the scope of work:

Task 1: Project Start-Up, Data Gathering (Feb-April)

Task 2: Local Concerns Meeting/Purpose and Need Statement/Coordination with Resource Agencies (March-April)

Task 3: Alternatives Development (April-June)

Task 4: Identify Constraints; Evaluate Alternatives (May-August)

Task 5: Alternatives Presentations (September)

Task 6: Draft & Final Scoping Report (September-October)

There was discussion of funding for the study and beyond. The study is being funded with federal dollars through the CCRPC with the City providing match funding. Chris Cole of VTrans explained that in order for a project to be funded, it must be included in three documents: the Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) of the State and CCRPC, the State budget, and the State Capital Program. The REP is included in the Capital Program for FY14 as part of the Appropriations Bill that is before the Legislature now. It will be added to the TIPs after approval by the Legislature. The Capital Program assures funding to complete this year's tasks, but not for construction. REP may appear as a "candidate" project for future funding. Once the REP is "on the books" VTrans can spend money to advance the project. How quickly the project advances depends upon the prioritization system. This is a critical project for the Agency—VTrans will continue to support it and move it forward. Chris explained that it is premature to discuss construction funding because the project is still an unknown. Likely, it will be funded with federal, state, and city funds and perhaps private funds as well.

Chris Jolly cautioned that there is no guarantee that the preferred alternative chosen by the City will be the one that will succeed after the environmental review process. However, by involving the resources agencies early in the process, it should eliminate surprises.

There was discussion of the importance of the Purpose & Need Statement as a guide throughout the project. The development of the Statement will be done in coordination with resource agencies, the Steering Committee, and the public. Dave Wulfson of Vermont Railway feels the REP is an important project for the Railroad and the City. He suggested that whoever drafts the Statement engage the railroad early because there is no eminent domain on railroad property. Vermont Railway is committed to being involved in this project and seeing it move forward.

Bob reviewed the project schedule and noted that at least one additional public meeting will be added under Task 4, because Chris Jolly suggested additional public input for the evaluation/screening of alternatives.

6) Next Steps & Public Meeting

The first public meeting will be held: Thursday, March 7, 2013 at 7PM in Contois Auditorium, Burlington City Hall. Eleni asked that the Steering Committee members inform their constituencies about this meeting. She explained that the meeting will include presentation of existing conditions and discussion of various issues in the study area. The major goal of the meeting is to listen to the public's concerns. The project team will be meeting with the Resource Agencies on April 10th to introduce the project.

The next Steering Committee, likely to be held at the end of March, will provide an opportunity to discuss the draft Purpose & Need (P&N) Statement. A draft statement will be developed by the project team and sent to the Steering Committee for review and comment. The draft P&N will also be discussed during the April 10th meeting with the Resource Agencies. The P&N Statement will be finalized with input from the Steering Committee and Resource Agencies. Eleni is available to talk with Steering Committee members who want to learn more about the development of the statement. Chris Cole noted that a project must have community support to advance to construction. The Purpose & Need Statement and strong community involvement are critical to success.

Neil Mickenberg is disheartened by the four to six year timeline. He had hoped this project would provide some relief for the King Street community from the Champlain Parkway. He asked if the project could be bifurcated to separate the more complex parts of the project to allow for smaller parts to move more quickly. Chris Cole responded in the negative, due to the complex resources issues. The Champlain Parkway is not linked to REP. VTrans supports the Champlain Parkway as designed. Peter suggested that REP stands on its own merits regardless of the Champlain Parkway. The group needs to focus on REP and take advantage of the opportunity. Michael Monte suggested that it is possible that inexpensive elements of the projects could be funded by the City and move more quickly than the overall project.

Chris Cole discussed the potential funding sources for REP. There are project elements that will not be eligible for federal funding and it will be up to the City to decide how to move them forward. The City will have to determine its level of commitment to elements that the State will not pay. The rail yard access road is eligible for federal funds and the State has made a commitment to Vermont Railway to be made whole.

There was discussion about warning of Steering Committee meetings. CEDO and CCRPC, with the help of FHWA, will draft a public involvement plan to share with the Steering Committee. A website is in development.

There was discussion about communications between the Steering Committee and the staff/consultant team. Eleni asked that communications be sent to both she and Bob Chamberlin (contact information below). She welcomes the committee's comments, questions, and concerns via email or phone.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25PM.

Contact Information:

Robert Chamberlin, RSG
Consultant Team Manager
robert.chamberlin@rsginc.com
802-383-0118 x317

Eleni Churchill
CCRPC Project Manager
echurchill@ccrpcvt.org
802-846-4490 x11

Upcoming Meetings:

Railyard Enterprise Project (REP) Public Meeting:
Thursday, March 7, 2013 at 7PM in Contois Auditorium, Burlington City Hall

ATTENDEES

Members Present

First	Last	Organization
Amy	Bell	VTrans
Meredith	Birkett	CCTA
Michele	Boomhower	CCRPC
Julie	Campoli	Burlington Resident
Steve	Goodkind	Burlington DPW
Chris	Jolly	FHWA
Joan	Shannon	City Council
Mary Anne	Michaels	VT Railway
Neil	Mickenberg	Burlington Resident
Ryan	Mitofsky	Ward 5 NPA
Michael	Monte	Champlain Housing Trust
Andy	Montroll	CCRPC Board
Peter	Owens	CEDO
Matt	Mahoney	King St. Neighborhood Redev. Corp.
Joe	Segale	VTrans Policy & Planning
Chapin	Spencer	Local Motion
Sandrine	Thibault	Planning & Zoning (For David White)

Others Present

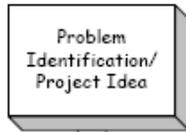
First	Last	Organization
Albright	Dan	CCRPC
Baldwin	Norm	DPW
Churchill	Eleni	CCRPC
Chamberlin	Bob	RSG
Cole	Chris	VTrans
Currier Phillips	Kasey	
Dunkiel	Brian	Attorney
Green	Jennifer	CEDO
Merriman- Shapiro	Kirsten	CEDO
Meyerhoff	Diane	Third Sector Associates
Wulfson	David	Vermont Railway

The Scoping Process as Part of the Life of a Project

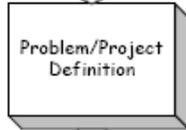
Steps 2-4 are Considered Scoping (Problem Definition through Preferred Alternative Selected)

The Life of a Project: From Concept to Reality

Typical Stages in the Development and Funding of Transportation Projects



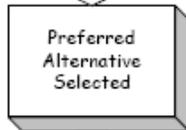
Problem Identification/Project Idea – The process starts when a particular transportation problem is identified or a new idea is put forward. This step can be initiated by members of the public, local elected officials, a private business, a community group, or a public agency. The CCMPO also often identifies problems and projects through its ongoing regional planning process.



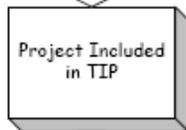
Problem/Project Defined – The problem or project idea is brought to the CCMPO by local officials for definition and discussion (development of “purpose and need”).



Alternatives Studied – As part of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the CCMPO studies the problem/project idea and examines alternatives through our Technical Assistance and/or Scoping and Project Definition process. In some cases, depending on the scale and complexity of the project, the CCMPO can develop a “quick fix” to resolve the problem quickly.



Preferred Alternative Selected – Working with affected community and the public, the CCMPO facilitates the selection of a preferred alternative, which flows from the study process, for implementation.



Project Included in TIP – Once local and regional consensus is reached on the best alternative for the project, it moves to consideration for prioritization and inclusion by the CCMPO in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).



Project Implementation – Once the CCMPO votes to include the project in the TIP for funding, the Governor (through VTrans) and federal agencies must approve it. After these approvals, it is added to the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and the Statewide Capital Program for funding, engineering, design, and construction.

**DRAFT OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR THE
BURLINGTON RAILYARD ENTERPRISE PROJECT (REP) STEERING COMMITTEE
FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE**

January 24, 2013

REP Steering Committee Purpose: To review and discuss key information, data (traffic, environmental, etc.) and alternatives for the Railyard Enterprise Project area and make recommendations relative to a preferred alternative to the Burlington City Council (via the Transportation, Energy, and Utilities Committee – TEUC). Active Steering Committee involvement and input will help define an acceptable and implementable alternative for the City.

I. Duties and Responsibilities

- A. Members of the REP Steering Committee are expected to: learn about the issues relevant to the project; disseminate this information to the community they represent; advise the Project Team of their opinions and those of their community in a timely manner; encourage early and broad community participation; and promote and affirm the outreach process for this effort. ***It is the responsibility of the committee member to regularly report to the organization or constituency to which s/he represents and to present to the Steering Committee the views of his or her constituency.***
- B. All participants are requested to respectfully listen to the opinions of others in an effort to ensure a constructive discussion and a successful project outcome.
- C. Steering Committee members will be expected to participate in scheduled public meetings and encourage others to attend and share their opinions at the meeting or by communicating with the Project Team. All Steering Committee meetings will have a public comment period.
- D. We understand that members of the Committee have many personal and professional commitments aside from this one. However, we ask that members make every possible effort to attend the meetings consistently. Anyone who misses more than two meetings in a row will find it difficult to participate in the work of the committee effectively.
- E. The Project Team, consisting of staff from the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC), Community & Economic Development Office (CEDO), Public Works Department (DPW), and Resource System Group (Consultants) commits to the following responsibilities: to schedule Steering Committee meetings on a regular basis that will allow the participants to consider issues and offer timely input; to consider and respond to this input and concerns; to provide understandable and accurate data and project information; to provide timely notice of meetings, with agendas; and to record and distribute accurate summaries of the discussions.

II. Membership

A. Steering Committee members will be invited to participate as follows:

- City Councilor (1);
- Representatives of the City of Burlington Public Works, CEDO, and Planning & Zoning (3);
- Business Liaison (1);
- Representatives of the Neighborhood/Ward 5 NPA (1);
- Local Motion (1);
- Chittenden County Transportation Authority (CCTA) (1);
- Representative of King Street Revitalization (1);

- Representative of the Affordable Housing Community (1);
- Representative of the General Public (2);
- Representatives of the Regional Planning Commission Board and Staff (2)
- Representative of the Vermont Railway (1);
- Representative of the Federal Highway Administration (1);
- Representatives of the Vermont Agency of Transportation (3)

B. The public is welcome to attend the committee meetings as observers. A 10-minute public comment period will be set aside at each meeting for comments or questions from observers.

III. Project Management and Committee Staffing

Overall project management will be provided by CCRPC staff. Professional analysis and technical assistance will be provided by a consultant team led by Resource Systems Group (RSG). Third Sector Associates will assist with Steering Committee and public/community outreach. Committee staffing and meeting facilitation will be provided by CCRPC staff with assistance from Burlington's CEDO, DPW, and the consultant team.

IV. Consensus

The REP Steering Committee will seek to achieve consensus on proposals or alternatives; in the absence of a consensus, the opinions of the parties will be recorded in a written summary and taken into consideration by the Project Team. The opinions of the community are an important element in the process of developing alternatives, but the City, who must ultimately approve a preferred alternative, has to follow guidelines relating to feasibility, level of technical difficulty, environmental laws and regulations, and state and federal funding guidelines. The Project Team values the contributions and opinions of the community and the individual participants, but reminds the Committee that the City retains final decision making authority with regard to the project.

V. Duration

The Steering Committee will continue to function until a preferred alternative is presented to the Burlington City Council, anticipated in the fall of 2013.

VI. Meetings

A. The REP Steering Committee shall meet 4-6 times through the duration of the project as determined by the project work and schedule.

B. All Steering Committee meetings will be open to the public. Meeting dates, agendas, and notes will be posted on the project's website when the site is available (early February 2013).

The Project Team appreciates the time and effort that individuals commit to this kind of project and thank you for representing your community and working to enhance the planning process.