

**Railyard Enterprise Project (REP)
Scoping/Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study
Steering Committee #4 Meeting Notes**

DATE: Tuesday, July 9, 2013
TIME: 6:00-8:00 PM
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) welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

2) Public Comment Period: There were no comments.

3) REP-Related Initiatives

3A. Area Wide Planning Grant (AWP) (Nick Warner, CEDO)

Nick explained that the City received an AWP grant from the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA). The funds provide for consultant and CEDO staff time to assess and determine clean-up plans for distressed areas in the REP study area. The first task is to collect existing data, identify gaps in data, and fill those gaps with the help of environmental consultants. The information will help the community to make educated decisions about the future of the REP area and the appropriate level of redevelopment. The AWP also gives the City priority for other types of remediation funding. Nick and Jennifer Green will interact with the REP regularly.

3B. Brownfield Economic Revitalization Alliance (BERA) (Trish Coppolino, VT DEC)

Trish explained that the BERA process will bring together the VT Agency of Commerce, VTrans, and DEC to facilitate and expedite brownfield assessment and remediation in the REP study area.

3C. Global Green Site Investigation, June 25-27 (Peter Owens, CEDO)

Peter explained that a national consulting team, the Global Green Team, came to Burlington to provide technical assistance for LEED neighborhood design in the REP area and the South End. Some of these ideas were incorporated into the alternatives and screening criteria for REP. Peter will distribute the Team's report when it becomes available.

3D. Phase II Site Investigation for VT Railway Parcel (former Havey Property, Trish Coppolino)

Trish explained that the CCRPC is funding the planning work and DEC will fund the investigation work.

4) Project Status (Bob Chamberlin, RSG, All)

4A. Purpose & Need. The Purpose & Need has been finalized (see attached).

4B. *Landowner Outreach*. Meetings were held with: Curtis Lumber (June 10); VT Railway (June 19); Global Green (June 25-27); Adams (June 27); Bent Partnership (July 1); Albee (July 3); Havey (July 8)

4C. *Level of Analysis for the REP*. Bob described the stages of the REP Scoping/PEL Study:

Stage 1 - Planning (Underway)

Purpose & Need Statement

Development of a Range of Schematic/Preliminary Alternatives (10-20+)

Qualitative Screening of Preliminary Alternatives

Narrow Range of Preliminary Alternatives to a Range of Viable Alternatives

Stage 2 – Planning (Next phase of this project)

Multimodal Design Criteria

Development of Conceptual Plans for Viable Alternatives

Quantitative Evaluation of Viable Alternatives: Resource Evaluation; Railyard Impacts; Stormwater and Utility impacts; Traffic impacts; Cost estimate

Recommended Alternative or Range of Alternatives

Stage 3 - Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (Not part of this project)

Field surveys (environmental, topography and ROW)

3D Alternative Design Plans

In-Depth Environmental Review

Phase II Site Assessments

Historic/Archaeology

Environmental Justice

Preferred Alternative

Stage 4 - Preliminary Engineering & Construction

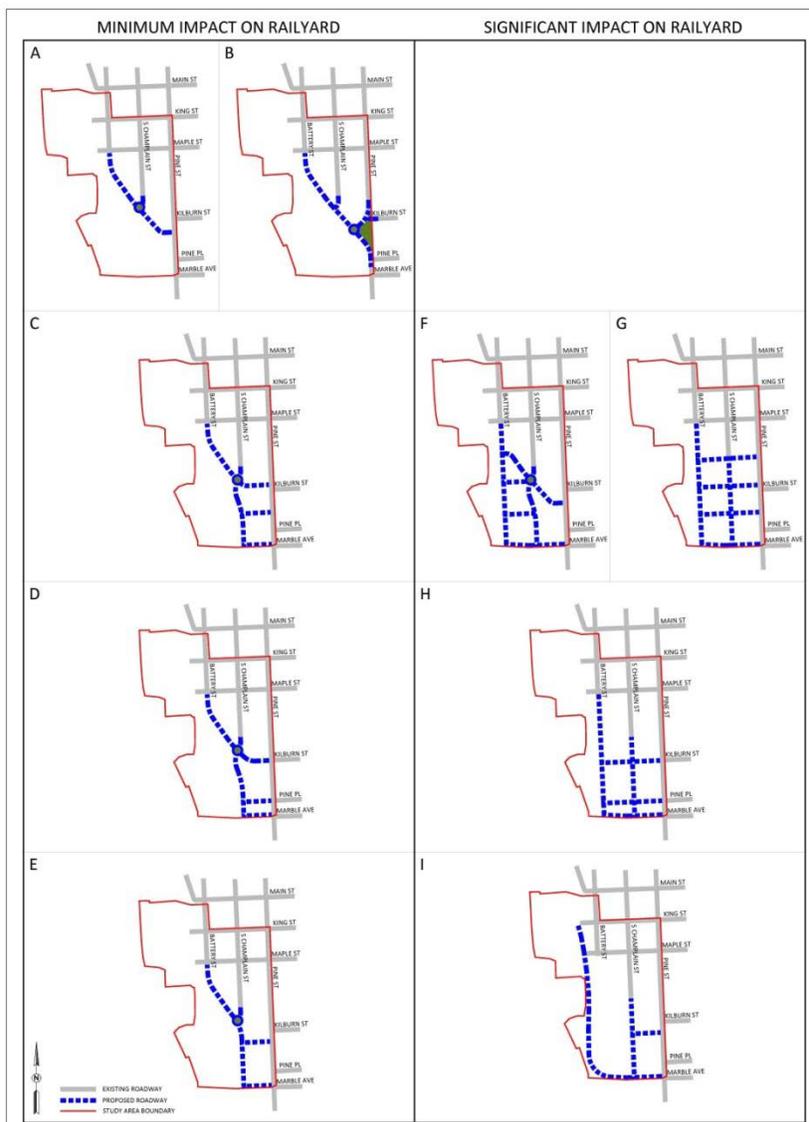
Rob Sikora of FHWA noted that a streamlined EIS process is now available through MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act*). This Steering Committee will be involved in stages one and two; the EIS process will be a new process. VTrans, not the CCRPC, will oversee the EIS with guidance from FHWA. The City may manage the EIS process through a cooperative agreement with VTrans.

5) Presentation and Discussion of Revised Alternatives

Bob Chamberlin noted that tonight’s meeting is designed to obtain the Steering Committee’s input on preliminary street alignment alternatives and to determine how best to narrow down the list to a smaller number of viable alternatives.

Bob explained that the preliminary alternatives are based on the City’s complete streets guidelines. For tonight’s discussion, there are two items that will be analyzed in the near future – separate bicycle/pedestrian accommodations and intersection controls (traffic signals, stop signs, roundabouts).

The alternatives have been narrowed from thirteen to nine and are described by four “families” of alternatives that impact the Railyard differently: Spur Alternatives (A & B); Hybrid & Grid Streets, 400’ Historic Block Length (C, F, & G); Hybrid & Grid Streets, Aligned with Existing Streets (D & H); and Hybrid & Grid Streets, Avoid Impacts to Existing Buildings (E & I). Bob described the project base map (see below) and discussed the alternatives.



Alternative A: Even though a “star” denotes access to the Railyard from Pine Street, Eleni asked that a curb cut and access road to the Railyard be added to be consistent with other alternatives (this comment also applies for Alternative B). Bob will make the graphics more clear. Brian Dunkiel asked that the committee take time at its next meeting to better understand railway operations in order to better evaluate the alternatives. Bob will do so. There was discussion of the cost and environmental issues surrounding possible railway relocation.

Alternative B: The committee asked that the green space be removed from this alternative since it’s not depicted in other alternatives. The committee asked that there should be consistency at the depiction of intersections for each alternative. Since intersection controls have not been determined yet, the roundabout at South Champlain intersection should be removed (this applies to all alternatives).

Alternative C: There was concern that this alternative crosses through the Curtis Lumber building. Even if the alternative moves to the south to align with Kilburn Street, the proposed street will still conflict with the existing Curtis Lumber building footprint. Leave alternative as is and add the Railyard access from Pine Street.

Alternative D: Amy Bell of VTrans felt that cross streets at Pine and Marble were too close together. It makes more sense to align with Marble only.

Alternative E: The committee asked that another version of this alternative be created that shows traffic going directly to Battery without forcing a left turn (roadway running around the old Street Department building).

Alternatives F through I: These alternatives include significant impacts to railway infrastructure, something that is not supported by VTrans due to the cost and environmental impacts. There was discussion about retaining only one of these alternatives or carrying all four through the preliminary evaluation. It was decided to evaluate all four preliminary alternatives.

Rob Sikora provided history of the Southern Connector project and Railyard relocation study. Railyard relocation involves not only moving the railyard but having a place to move it to. A viable option has never been found, but Rob believes that alternative(s) that require relocating part of the Railyard operations (e.g., switching yard) should still be analyzed. Further, Rob provided a preliminary reaction that Alternatives A and Alternative B as depicted (without additional grid streets) do not meet the project's Purpose and Need that focuses on economic development in the area and he also mentioned the similarity of these alternatives to the rejected Southern Connector's "spur" alternative. Brian suggested that the REP's Purpose & Need is different from the Southern Connector's Purpose & Need and Michael Monte suggested that these alternatives offer significant economic development value by providing a new roadway and therefore new development opportunities.

Since time was short, Bob offered to revise the alternatives based on the discussion and distribute them to the committee along with the screening criteria. Once the alternatives are evaluated using the screening criteria, they will be reduced to a smaller number that will undergo detailed evaluation. The Committee will receive this information via email and we will likely meet again in September.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 PM.

*More information about Map-21 is available at: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/>

Notes Revised: July 22, 2013

ATTENDEES**Members Present**

First	Last	Organization
Amy	Bell	VTrans
Meredith	Birkett	CCTA
Michele	Boomhower	CCRPC
Chris	Cole	VTrans
Mary Anne	Michaels	Vermont Railway
Neil	Mickenberg	Burlington Resident
Michael	Monte	Champlain Housing Trust
Peter	Owens	CEDO
Chapin	Spencer	Local Motion

Others Present

First	Last	Organization
Dan	Albrecht	CCRPC
Norm	Baldwin	DPW
Eleni	Churchill	CCRPC
Bob	Chamberlin	RSG
Trish	Coppolino	VT DEC
Brian	Dunkiel	Attorney
Alan	Hunt	Burlington Resident
Chip	Mason	Ward 5 City Councilor
Diane	Meyerhoff	Third Sector Associates
Rob	Sikora	FHWA
Nick	Warner	CEDO

Purpose and Need of the Railyard Enterprise Project

Purpose

The purpose of the Railyard Enterprise Project is to develop a network of multimodal transportation infrastructure improvements, which incorporate the principles of Complete Streets, and to: 1) support economic development in the area; 2) improve Livability of the surrounding neighborhoods; 3) enhance multimodal travel connectivity between the Pine Street corridor and the Burlington Waterfront South area; and 4) improve intermodal connections to the Burlington Railyard, a National Highway System (NHS)-designated intermodal facility.

Need

1) Develop supporting infrastructure to be consistent with the long term vision of planBTV (Downtown and Waterfront part of the municipal plan) associated with the Railyard Enterprise Project area, that supports economic development in the area and enhances Railyard operations.

There is a need for a new street network and related infrastructure to support economic development in the area. PlanBTV has identified the Railyard Enterprise Project area as prime for infill, mixed use development to increase economic activity and to provide accessibility to underutilized lands adjacent to the Railyard.

2) Improve Livability and connectivity in the Railyard Enterprise Project area. There is a need to improve the Livability of residential areas and emerging mixed-use districts in the Railyard Enterprise Project area. Livability can be enhanced by dispersing traffic and reducing vehicle queues at neighborhood intersections, including the intersections of Pine Street with King and Maple Streets. Additional transportation connections will help improve travel conditions for all users in the Railyard Enterprise Project area.

3) Enhance multimodal travel connections and choices in the Railyard Enterprise Project area. There is a need for additional multimodal connections in the Railyard Enterprise Project area to support transit system performance, enhance bicycle and pedestrian connectivity and access and facilitate travel from existing neighborhoods to the Waterfront and Lake Champlain. There is also a need to create safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle connections from Pine Street neighborhoods between Maple Street and Lakeside Avenue to the Burlington Bike Path/Lake Champlain and improve access from the King Street neighborhood.

4) Improve connectivity and access between nearby streets and the Burlington Railyard, a NHS-designated intermodal facility, while reducing the impacts of freight operations on adjacent neighborhoods. There is a need to improve connections to the Railyard in a way that enhances its operations while also reducing the impact of freight operations on adjacent neighborhoods. PlanBTV recognizes the importance of the Burlington Railyard to the City's economy and environment.