

**Railyard Enterprise Project (REP)
Scoping/Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study
Steering Committee #3 Meeting Notes**

DATE: Wednesday, June 12, 2013
TIME: 6:00-7:30 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. Bob Chamberlin of RSG 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.

2) Public Comment Period: There were no comments.

3) Project Status

Bob explained that we are currently working on Task 3:

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

Task 2: Local Concerns Mtg./Purpose & Need/Coord. with Resource Agencies (Complete)

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)

The study team met with the Resource Agencies today for a second time. This group, hosted by VTrans, includes both federal and state-level agencies. There will be one more meeting with this group to keep them abreast of progress.

The second public meeting, held on May 22nd, was attended by about forty people. Ideas were generated on large maps and the design team used this information to formalize the alternatives that will be discussed tonight.

4) Finalize Draft Purpose & Need Statement (Draft is attached to this document)

Bob reviewed the 7th draft of the Purpose & Need Statement. Michael Monte of CHT asked if "Livability" (with a capital "L") had a specific meaning. Indeed, it does, according to FHWA:

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/livability/>

The study team would like to finalize the statement and asked that committee members send final comments in the next week.

5) Presentation and Discussion of Transportation Alternatives

Bob presented some background on the preliminary alternatives:

- **Focus First on New Street Alignments**
 - Shape of the Streets - Grid and/or Spur (diagonal alignment)
 - Where the Streets Connect - South Champlain Street and/or Battery Street
 - Impact on Railyard (can be minimal, moderate, significant)
- **City of Burlington Complete Streets Guidelines**
 - 60 foot right-of-way (ROW)
 - On-street bicycle lanes
 - Sidewalks on both sides
- **Alternatives Include New Intersections with City Streets-Intersection Control** (i.e. traffic signal, stop sign, roundabout) **Not Yet Determined**
- **Modal Alternatives Are Not Yet Fully Developed.** Focus is on street design.
- **Alternatives Need to be Far-Ranging at this Stage**
 - Alternatives will be rejected according to how well they address the Purpose & Need Statement
 - Ongoing Meetings with Key Stakeholders including VT Railway and other private landowners

Brian Dunkiel asked that when this information is distributed to the public, some context be added. It appears to be focused on new street alignments, which is not in the spirit of the Purpose & Need. The project team will not post PowerPoint presentations on the website until conferring with the Steering Committee on this point.

Bob described five “families” of alternatives that impact the railyard differently:

- Grid Streets-Connect to South Champlain Street Only-Minimal Impact on Railyard
- Grid Streets-Connect to Battery Street-Moderate Impact on Railyard
- Grid Streets-Connect to Battery Street-Significant Impact on Railyard
- Hybrid Streets (Grid and Spur)-Connect to Battery Street-Moderate Impact on Railyard
- Spur Streets-Connect to Battery Street-Moderate Impact on Railyard

He reviewed each family and possible alternatives via maps.

6) Discussion of Screening Criteria for Alternatives

Bob described the possible screening criteria associated with the Purpose & Need:

- Impact on Railyard operations (positive, neutral, adverse) (Need #4)
- Impact on truck traffic through neighborhoods and/or Railyard access improved (positive, neutral, adverse) (Need #2,#4)
- New street frontage (feet)(Need #1)
- New multimodal roadway links connecting existing neighborhoods with the Waterfront (y/n) (Need #2)
- Impact on transit network (positive, neutral, adverse) (Need #3)

He offered a series of criteria related to resource impacts, including: streams, shoreline, floodplains, wetlands, wetland buffers, threatened/endangered species, hazardous wastes, historic, archeological, public parks/lands, right-of-way, land use, and estimated cost.

The group discussed a number of concerns, including:

- How to “match up” a new 60 foot street right-of-way with the older street widths.
- The current Champlain Parkway includes a 10 foot wide shared use path.
- How to measure and evaluate “livability.” Chris Jolly of FHWA offered to talk with his counterparts.

- How to measure economic development opportunity and whether or not street frontage is an appropriate proxy. PlanBTV may offer some additional measurement options.
- Add utility impacts under resources.
- Title 6, equity impacts should be included in the criteria. This will be done when we narrow the number of alternatives, but a preliminary screen can be done now.
- The Legislature has funded the planning and some preliminary design for REP
- Impacts to other landowners, like CSWD and parks, will be included under right-of-way impacts.
- The existing bikepath should be added to the maps.
- Could we make a connection to Marble Avenue?
- Truck traffic isn't the only issue regarding livability. For the "consistency with the Purpose & Need" please revise slide to say: "Impact on truck **and other traffic** through neighborhoods..."

There was discussion about how well the alternatives addressed bike/pedestrian connectivity, something noted in the Purpose & Need Statement. Bob did not present all the bike/ped alternatives tonight, but will put together another map that overlays paths with road alternatives. **He will distribute this information to the committee.** Due to the concerns that new facilities may not be built to make new bike/ped connections, the group agreed to update the Purpose & Need by removing "new" from item number 3:

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 **new** 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.

Bob will update the screening criteria and distribute it to the committee.

7) Next Steps

- Revisions to Alternatives/Revised Screening Criteria and SC #4 (July)
- Evaluation of Alternatives (June – September)
- Resource Coordination and SC #5 Meetings – Viable Alternatives Evaluation (September)
- Alternatives Presentations (2) - Public Meeting #3 and Burlington City Council (October/November)
- Initial/Final Scoping Reports (December)
- NEPA Documentation, 2014

The group agreed to meet one time over the summer to review the shared use path alternatives, the updated screening criteria, and the revised the alternatives based on tonight's discussion. The next meeting will describe the process for narrowing down the alternatives and discuss the alternatives that will move forward. We are planning to have 3-5 alternatives to move forward to the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). At the end of the EIS, there will be one preferred alternative, selected by the Burlington City Council (a member of the Council sits on the Steering Committee).

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Upcoming Meetings:

- REP Steering Committee Meeting #4: July 9th, 6:00 PM, Burlington DPW

ATTENDEES

Members Present

First	Last	Organization
Amy	Bell	VTrans
Meredith	Birkett	CCTA
Michele	Boomhower	CCRPC
Rodger	Brassard	Ward 5 NPA
Julie	Campoli	Burlington Resident
Chris	Cole	VTrans
Chris	Jolly	FHWA
Matt	Mahoney	King St. Neighborhood Redev. Corp.
Mary Anne	Michaels	Vermont Railway
Neil	Mickenberg	Burlington Resident
Michael	Monte	Champlain Housing Trust
Andy	Montroll	CCRPC Board
Peter	Owens	CEDO
Chapin	Spencer	Local Motion

Others Present

First	Last	Organization
Eleni	Churchill	CCRPC
Bob	Chamberlin	RSG
Brian	Dunkiel	Attorney
Kirsten	Merriman-Shapiro	CEDO
Diane	Meyerhoff	Third Sector Associates

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Purpose and Need of 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 new 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.