FINAL SCOPING REPORT:

ESSEX JUNCTION TRAIN STATION ACCESS AND CIRCULATION STUDY

4.6.2016

PREPARED FOR:
VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION, VERMONT
AND THE CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL
PLANNING COMMISSION

SUBMITTED BY:
RSG

IN COOPERATION WITH:

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VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION, VERMONT AND THE CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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The preparation of this report has been financed in part through grant[s] from the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, under the State Planning and Research Program, Section 505 [or Metropolitan Planning Program, Section 104(f)] of Title 23, U.S. Code, as well as matching funds provided by Chittenden County's 18 municipalities and the Vermont Agency of Transportation. The contents of this report do not necessarily reflect the official views or policy of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) and Village of Essex Junction (Village) retained RSG, Scott+Partners Architects (SPA) and University of Vermont Consulting Archaeology Program (UVMCAP) to conduct a Scoping Study for access and circulation improvements related to the Amtrak Train Station in Essex Junction, Vermont. The scoping process involves the documentation of relevant existing conditions and explores improvement alternatives in concert with a public outreach process.

For this scoping study, the conventional transportation scoping process was augmented with considerations of improvements to the train station. As such, two parallel and related sets of alternatives were developed and evaluated within the scoping study -- alternatives for transportation circulation and access, and alternatives for the train station.

1.1 | BACKGROUND

This Scoping Study is an extension of work completed by the Village in 2012 that considered train station architectural improvements and platform upgrades as important community development priorities.

In 2012, the Village worked with several University of Vermont (UVM) senior engineering students to study viable options for rehabilitation of the train station and adjacent platform and bus stop areas. The students worked with the Village civil engineer and resident (Rick Hamlin of D.L Hamlin Consulting Engineers), and a structural engineer (also a Village resident, Tim Dall of Dubois & King), and a local architect (John Alden of SPA). The project, referred to as the UVM Capstone Study, included a public meeting held on February 18, 2012 to obtain comments and ideas at the beginning point of the project.

The Capstone study identified several deficiencies with the existing station and surrounding area. The station is small and provides minimal shelter from the elements. The existing station is only open for a few hours per day. Bathroom facilities, which are small and lack the capacity to accommodate multiple users, are available only when the station is open. The study identified several additional needs including, better bus boarding area, improved accessibility and aesthetics.

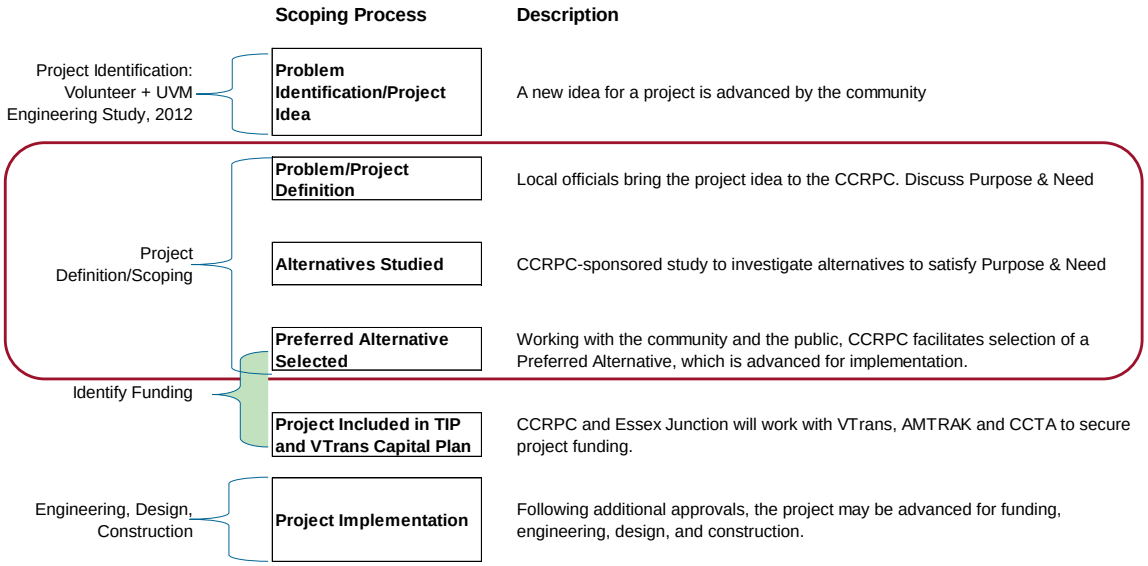
Recommendations developed by the project were presented to the Village Trustees on May 8, 2012. Recommendations included constructing and new platform, improved bus waiting and loading areas, and a new roof structure.

1.2 | SCOPING

Figure 1 shows the typical steps of a Scoping study. For the Essex Junction Train Station study, the three stages of scoping encompassed by the red outline are conducted:

1. Problem Definition
2. Alternatives Development
3. Selection of Preferred Alternative

FIGURE 1: SCOPING PROCESS



This scoping study report consists of the following sections:

1. Existing Conditions, which includes an identification of train station and circulation/access deficiencies (i.e. Problem Definition in Figure 1);
2. Project Purpose and Need, a statement of the deficiencies the alternatives should be designed to address;
3. Development of Project Alternatives;
4. Selection of Preferred Alternative.

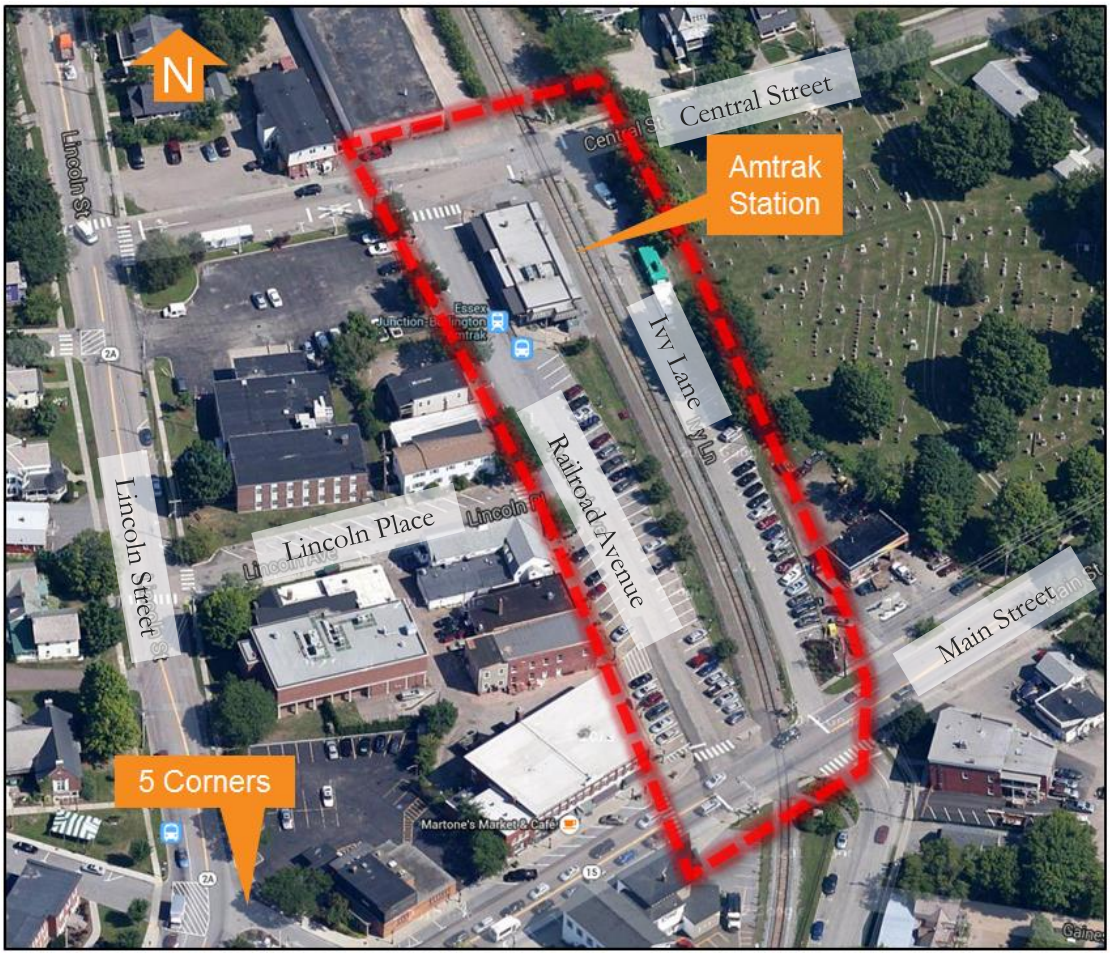
The scoping process also includes one or more public meetings for information and input. For this scoping project, the following meetings were held:

1. Local Concerns Meeting, April 2, 2015
2. Alternatives Presentation Meeting #1, October 27, 2015
3. Alternatives Presentation Meeting #2, January 26, 2016

2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

This section details the existing conditions of the site, building, transportation access and circulation, and natural or cultural resources within the study area, shown in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2: PROJECT STUDY AREA



2.1 | LOCAL CONCERNS

As discussed above, RSG and SPA conducted a Local Concerns Meeting on April 2, 2015 to solicit input and concerns from the public, elected officials, business community, railroad representatives, state agencies, and other stakeholders. The Local Concerns meeting was held at a regularly scheduled Village Planning Commission meeting.

Key highlights from the public comment period of the Local Concerns meeting are:

- The planned multi-use path along the tracks from Central Street to Grove Street was discussed. The purpose of the path is to discourage people from walking on the train tracks.
- A resident pointed out that the station area is under-utilized and it has potential to be turned into a vibrant space. The streetscape could be improved with plantings to help slow traffic. Parking at the federal building is not fully used and the building is not fully occupied. There

may be an opportunity to get the building fully occupied in the future. Parking needs to be available for the merchants and patrons.

- There was discussion about whether a sidewalk should be constructed by the parking spaces along the railroad track but there was concern about having more hardscape in that area and that the spaces were primarily used by patrons of the adjacent businesses and not by commuters.
- It was noted that the platform is on the trackside of a fence so riders have to walk back to the train station to access cars parked along the tracks. One suggested solution was to construct a break in the fence to allow access to the platform from the parking area. More lighting along the platform would be beneficial as well.
- A resident commented that this site would be an good location for an electric vehicle charging station.
- A resident asked about bike racks under the canopy to accommodate people commuting on the train in the future and then using their bike to get to work. Meredith Birkett, representing CCTA, said CCTA has secure bike lockers with electronic access in place in Winooski and downtown Burlington now. The same could be possible in Essex Junction.
- It was stated that the Essex Economic Development Commission sees upgrade of the train station as an economic development priority for the community. The scoping study is one of the steps necessary to get the project into the state's five-year transportation plan. Other observations included:
  - Great American Stations Project shows how to collaborate to improve train stations. Information on the project is available online.
  - Drivers do not always stop for people in crosswalks so pedestrian signals may be necessary at the crosswalk to the station.
  - McClure Building is now a mini-storage facility, but the use could change over time so the space should be considered in any long-range plans for the area.
  - Enforcement should be done with cars parked all day in spaces meant for short-term use.
  - Locating Five Corners Farmers Market at the train station could be beneficial.

The Local Concerns Meeting Notes are in Appendix A.

2.2 | RELEVANT STUDIES AND FUTURE PLANS

UVM CAPSTONE STUDY

As discussed above the Village of Essex Junction worked with several University of Vermont (UVM) senior engineering students in March 2012 to study viable options for rehabilitation of the train station and adjacent platform and bus stop areas. The project, referred to as the UVM Capstone Study, included a public meeting held on February 18, 2012 to obtain comments and ideas at the beginning point of the project.

The station is small and provides minimal shelter from the elements. The existing station is only open for a few hours per day. Bathroom facilities, which are small and lack the capacity to

accommodate multiple users, are available only on a limited basis. The Capstone study addressed several perceived needs:

- better bathroom facilities,
- improved bus boarding areas,
- safer grounds,
- accessibility for people with disabilities, and
- improved building aesthetics.

In addition to the issues listed above, the UVM Capstone study investigated many of the basic challenges of design and construction adjacent to a working train line. The overall station and platform design must adhere to strict guidelines for the trains and relate to the size, length, and height of a train car. Required clearances from the track centerline create the framework for establishing platform length and proximity to the track, roof edge height and overhang.

Recommendations developed by the project were presented to the Village Trustees on May 8, 2012. Key recommendations are:

1. An new ADA compliant train platform;
2. Revised bus waiting and loading areas;
3. A new roof structure in sympathy with previous (historic) station designs, to encompass the existing building and new platform area.

The recommended UVM Capstone design is based on a raised train platform meeting Amtrak's passenger rail service criteria for a 2-car length platform and height and proximity to the tracks. Due to freight traffic, which also uses this rail line, neither the platform nor any other construction element (roof overhang) may be placed closer to the tracks than 8.5 feet from the track centerline.

The section below discusses alternatives considered by the Capstone Study for the train station and platform area.

Alternative 1: No Build

Under the no build alternative, the existing operation at the Essex Junction train station would remain unchanged. There would continue to be inadequate protection from the weather, inadequate interior space for train passengers (i.e. waiting areas, benches, restroom accommodations), and deficient pedestrian accommodations leading to the station from adjacent areas, and from existing and planned pedestrian facilities. The overall appearance of the station building is not consistent with the architectural vernacular of the historic Essex Junction downtown, which disconnects the building from the downtown mixed-use area and provides no visual context to identify the train station/transportation hub.

Alternative 2: New Waiting Area and Roof Canopy

Alternative 2 would leave the existing train station largely unchanged with the exception of adding a glass enclosed waiting area with bathrooms to the southern end of the station building. The additional interior space is sized to meet existing and increasing demand for an enclosed waiting area and basic amenities. To accommodate periods of limited staffing the new enclosure will be predominantly glass to improve visibility and safety.

The dominant feature of the proposed station upgrade is a large, open-trussed roof canopy sized to cover the existing flat roofed station building and the loading areas on both sides. The canopy height accommodates existing condensers and related equipment on the roof of the existing building and there are functional monitors to provide venting. The monitors also provide daylight to areas below. The roof length is a function of covering the existing building and providing cover for a minimum of two rail cars in length. The width of the canopy provides cover for both train and bus boarding areas.

The proposed roof is double pitched to recall the rooflines of classic train stations throughout the north east and efficiently provide shelter over a wide area. A clock tower has been placed in the middle to complete the imagery and provide both a civic centerpiece and functional necessity for any traveler.

BOSTON-SPRINGFIELD-MONTREAL TRAIN SERVICE

Plans for future improvements to the railway and service to the Essex Junction station (often referred to as the Burlington station) include improvements to the capacity for train speed, and a resurrection and expansion of the Vermonter passenger service from Montreal, QC to Springfield and Boston, MA. (Currently the service's northern terminus is St Albans.). The status of the plans for these improvements is described from several sources:

> *The State of Vermont, with the participation of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and State of Connecticut, is conducting the Boston-Montreal High-Speed Rail Corridor Alternative Alignment Feasibility and Planning Study (BMHSR) to identify upgrades and improvements along the Boston to Montreal corridor, via Springfield, MA, and White River Junction, VT. The plan will study the implementation of intercity passenger rail service along this routing through the application of capacity, speed, reliability, and safety upgrades to the Inland Route between Boston and Springfield, MA, the Knowledge Corridor between Springfield, MA and the Massachusetts/Vermont border, the New England Central Railroad (NECR) mainline between the Massachusetts/Vermont border and the US/Canada border, and the Canadian National (CN) line between the US/Canada border and Montreal, QC.*[1]
>
> *The Massachusetts Department of Transportation and the Vermont Agency of Transportation, in collaboration with the Connecticut Department of Transportation, are conducting a study to examine the opportunities and impacts of more frequent and higher speed intercity passenger rail service on two major rail corridors known as the Inland Route and the Boston to Montreal Route. The study of these two rail corridors has been designated the Northern New England Intercity Rail Initiative.*

[1] http://rail.vermont.gov/sites/railroads/files/documents/Boston-Montreal%20HSR%20Study%20Overview.pdf

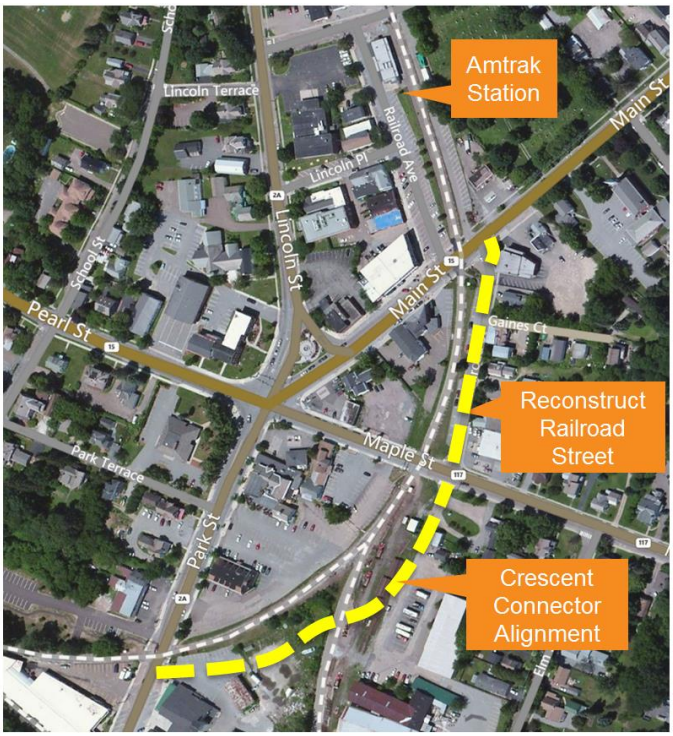
The study, which includes the entirety of the 470-mile corridor, will evaluate ridership potential, identify potential environmental effects, and create service development plans for both corridors. [2]

A review of the website for the Northern New England Intercity Rail Initiative (NNEIRI) (http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/northernnewenglandrail/Home.aspx) indicates that they have completed their Alternatives Analysis and Purpose and Need Statement. As of the writing of this scoping report, the NNEIRI is within an Environmental Assessment process. When the Environmental Assessment is completed in draft form, it will be the basis for additional public comment prior to the development of Service Development Plans.

CRESCENT CONNECTOR

The village is currently planning for a new street connection project (see Figure 3) connecting VT2A to VT15. Railroad Street is to be reconstructed as part of the project. The project's final design is underway and currently within the Right of Way acquisition phase. Construction is scheduled for 2017.

FIGURE 3. CRESCENT CONNECTOR PROJECT



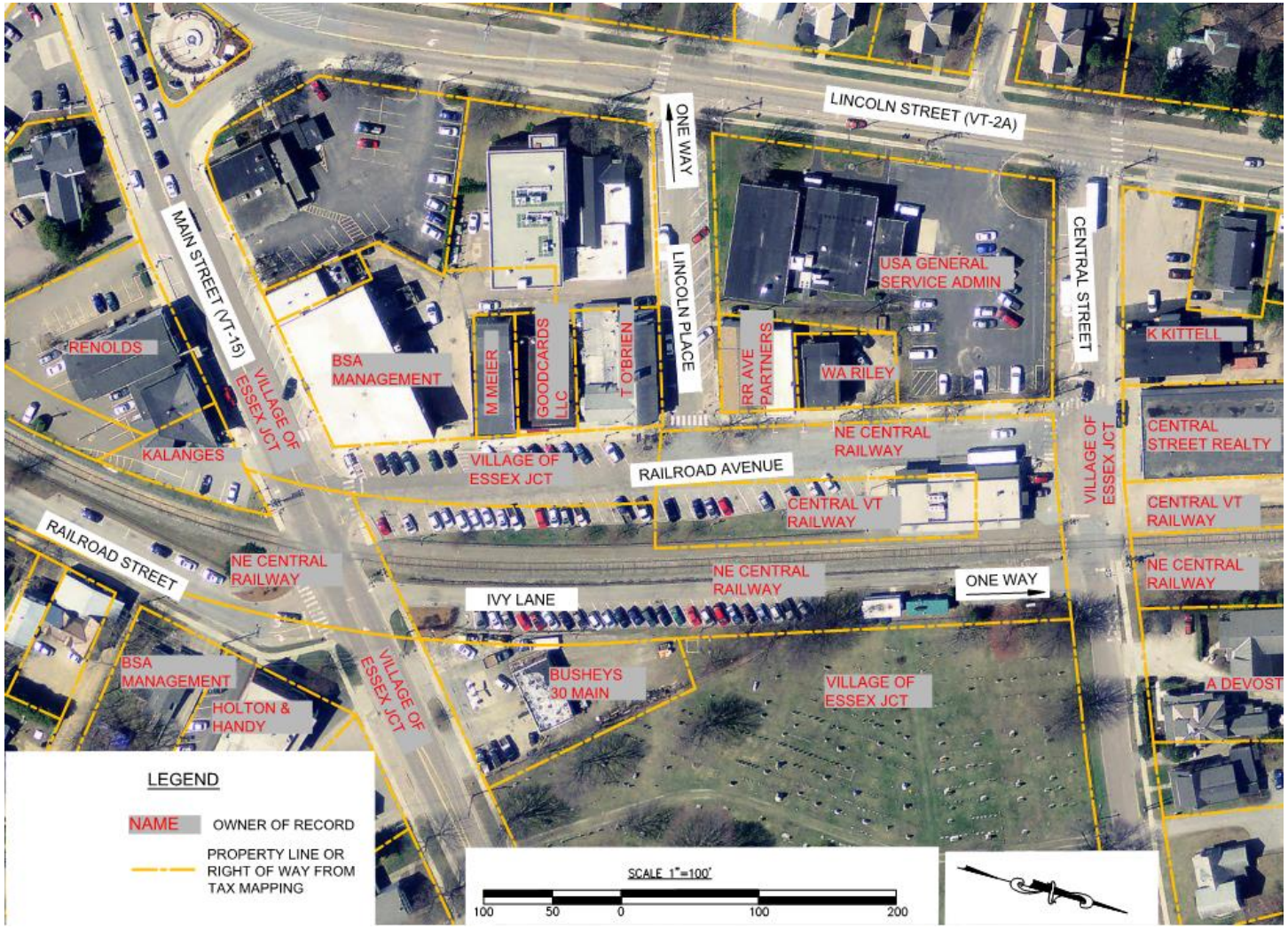
2.3 | SITE DETAILS

The site surrounding the station is owned by Central Vermont Railway and New England Central Railroad (see boundary configuration in Figure 4). An existing conditions site plan developed for the UVM Capstone Project is provided in the Appendix B. A map of public utilities (water, sewer, Stormwater) is provided in Appendix C.

[2] http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/northernnewenglandrail/Home.aspx

The station area also serves as a transit hub for the Chittenden County Transit Authority (CCTA). It is the principal bus depot connecting Burlington and Essex, Vermont's two most populous communities, making this location a multi-modal transportation hub.

FIGURE 4. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES AND OWNERSHIP



2.4 | STATION AND ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

The existing Essex Junction train station was constructed in 1957 for the Central Vermont Railroad. It is currently owned by Genesee & Wyoming, a freight rail company. The station is a single story contemporary building.

The station serves the Amtrak Vermonter line and provides daily service between Washington, D.C. and St. Albans, Vermont, and reports the highest passenger activity of all rail stations in the state. The main room in the station operates as a waiting area for Amtrak riders. There are two tenants in the building, besides the rail station waiting area (#1, Figure 5). NECR uses area #2 for backup rail operations, and the Sprint Corp. uses area #3 for fiber optic switching equipment.

FIGURE 5. EXISTING STATION FLOOR PLAN

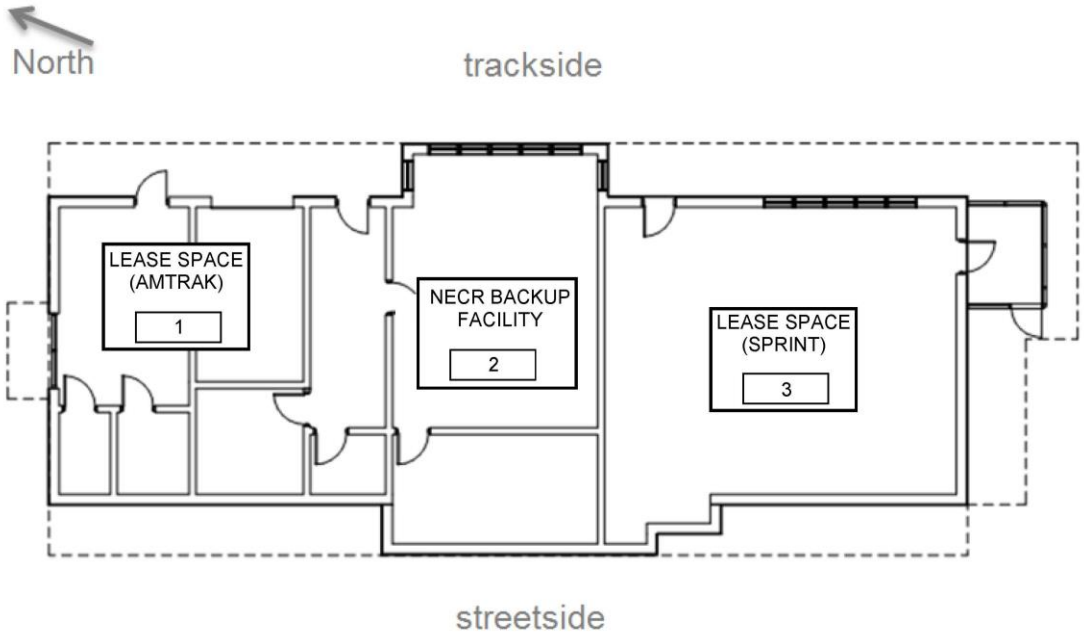


FIGURE 6. STATION EXTERIOR FROM NE (TRACKSIDE)

FIGURE 7. STATION EXTERIOR FROM SW (STREETSIDE)

2.5 | TRANSPORTATION SERVICES AND CONDITIONS

EXISTING AMTRAK TRAIN SERVICE

Passenger service is provided by the Amtrak Vermonter, traveling southbound in the morning (scheduled 9:27 AM arrival), having originated in St. Albans, Vermont, and returning northbound in the evening (scheduled 8:17 PM arrival), having originated in Washington, D.C.

Table 1 shows available passenger use records for this station.

TABLE 1. AMTRAK BOARDINGS AND ALIGHTINGS

FY2014		
On/Boarding	Off/Alighting	Total
10,706	11,177	21,883

Average Daily		
29	31	60

RSG field observations and findings include the following:

- Discussions with the station steward reveal that on some days boardings can be much higher (150-200), for example when UVM semester start/ends.
- Very few people ever get off in morning (southbound from St Albans), and few get on in evening.
- RSG observations (early April) indicate that some days ridership can be much lower (10-15 boarding).

CCTA BUS SERVICE

Tables 2-4 summarize the CCTA service timetable, number of daily stops (bus arrivals) and average bus boardings and alightings at this stop. Figure 8 shows a map of the bus routes, as well as the shelters and waiting area at the station.

TABLE 2. CCTA SERVICE BY ROUTE AND DAY

	First AM Stop - Weekday	Last PM Stop - Weekday	First AM Stop - Saturday	Last PM Stop - Saturday
#2 Essex Junction Route	6:00 AM	10:15 PM	6:40 AM	8:00 PM
#4 Essex Center Route	6:00 AM	6:38 PM	NA	NA
#2A Williston-Essex Route	7:10 AM	7:20 PM	7:10 AM	7:10 PM

TABLE 3. NUMBER OF CCTA BUS ARRIVALS BY ROUTE AND DAY

	Weekday	Saturday
#2 Essex Junction Route	47	23
#4 Essex Center Route	18	0
#2A Williston-Essex Route	17	13
TOTAL	**82**	**36**

The station serves three CCTA bus routes and provides service that coordinates with train departures and arrivals. CCTA serves about 220 boardings and 180 alightings per day in this location.

FIGURE 8. TRANSIT MAP

TABLE 4. CCTA BOARDING AND ALIGHTING BY ROUTE AND DAY

	Average Weekday		Average Saturday	
	Boarding	Alighting	Boarding	Alighting
#2 Essex Junction Route	133	108	50	39
#4 Essex Center Route	38	36	NA	NA
#2A Williston-Essex Route	48	33	14	13
TOTAL	**219**	**177**	**64**	**52**

CCTA records show they spent about $60,000 to refurbish the existing passenger waiting area (added glass windbreaks, seating, lighting, and painted) in 2011.[3] CCTA does not use the train station building; a bus shelter is located immediately adjacent to the station.

A problem with the current bus stop location (on the western of the Train Station building) is the width of the roadway at the bus stop. With buses stopped and stacked along the curb, the northbound travel lane is obstructed.

PARKING

The available public parking spaces in the project area are shown in Figure 9. Parking usage during passenger train arrival times was surveyed in late March of 2015, finding that about half the spaces were used in the morning (40% before the train, 55% after), and only 20% in the evening (20% before the train, 15% after). Detailed data are provided in Appendix D.

The UVM Capstone study focus was on the balance of bus stacking vs. merchant and short-term train station parking along Railroad Ave. Other critical parking needs include long-term train station parking, of which there are currently four signed spaces and four unsigned spaces on Ivy Lane. The balance of Ivy Lane is available for municipal parking and is generally filled on a daily basis. With a rise in train or bus activity, or an increase in village density, additional parking may be desired. Public comments received throughout the project, including from Amtrak representatives, reinforced the growing need for long-term parking to meet the needs of rail passengers.

[3] M. Birkett, CCTA

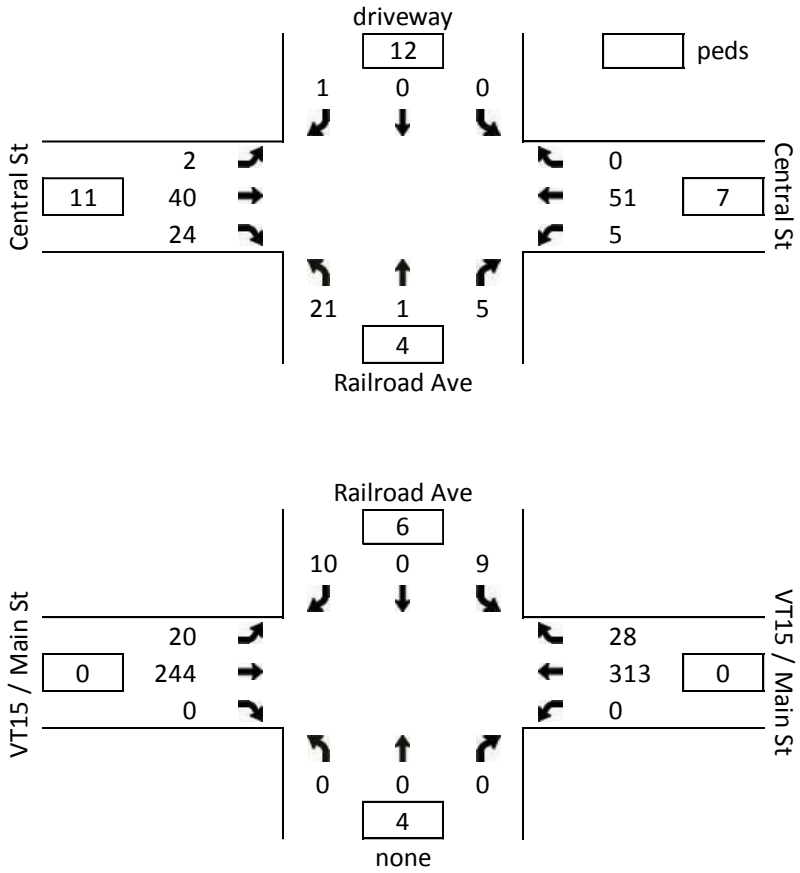
FIGURE 9. PARKING MAP

VEHICLE TRAFFIC

Turning movement counts were collected at the intersections at either end of Railroad Avenue during the hour[4] encompassing the southbound train stop (9:27 AM). These counts are summarized in Figure 10. Observations during the hour surrounding the northbound train stop (8:17 PM) reveal that volumes are substantially lower than the AM train arrival period.

No congestion effects (queues, delay) were observed at any study intersections in the periods studied. As the project area is adjacent to the Five Corners intersection, which experiences chronic congestion during morning (7:15-8:15 AM) and evening (4:30-5:30 PM) peak hours. Congestion on the streets within the study area was not observed by RSG to be adverse during the hour surrounding passenger train arrivals.

FIGURE 10. HOURLY INTERSECTION TURNING TRAFFIC VOLUMES DURING AM TRAIN SERVICE



No traffic was observed in the morning period using Ivy Lane (either entering at Main Street, or exiting at Central Street).

[4] 9 to 10 am

OTHER MODES

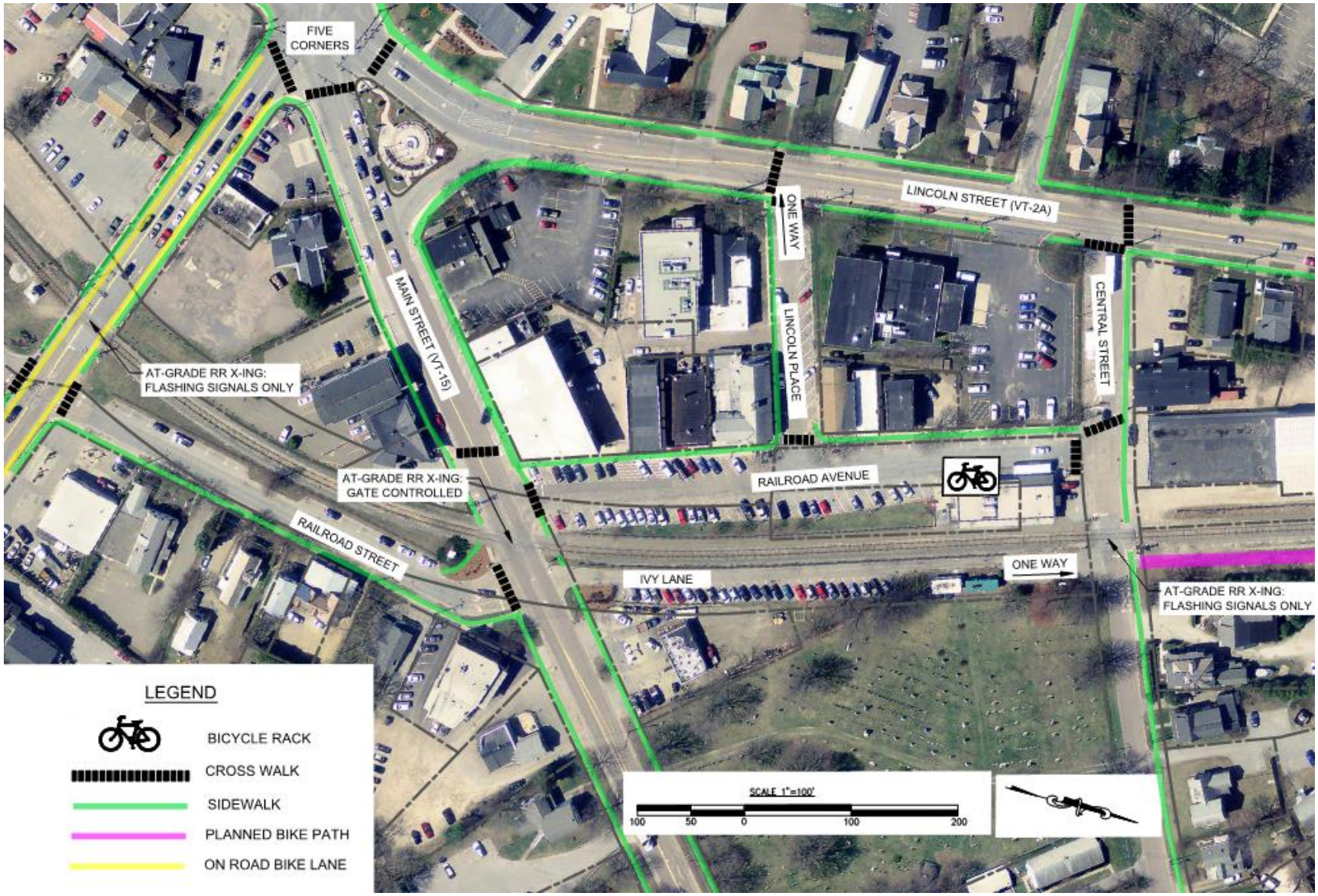
Bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the surrounding area (sidewalks, paths, bike lanes, etc.) are shown in Figure 11. A future multi-use path will be constructed parrallel to the railroad tracks between North Street and Central Street.

Noted pedestrian deficiencies include a lack of a sidewalk along the parking aisle on the easterly sideline of Railroad Avenue (south of the Amtrak station). The lack of a safe pedestrian sidewalk in this location leads to disorganized and unsafe pedestrian movement to and from the vehicles parked in this area, particularly during nighttime periods.

It was also noted in the Local Concerns meeting that the fence separating the train platform from the parking area on Railroad Avenue has no breaks in it, which would allow for more convenient access to the station platform from parked vehicles. NECR is, however, opposed to creating a break in the fence out of concern that it will attract illegal, dangerous pedestrian crossings of the rail tracks aligned with a fence break for pedestrians.

Generally, taxis are present only for brief periods based on arriving passenger train service. Central Avenue and the paved area at the north end of the station have traditionally accommodated the taxis.

FIGURE 11. BIKE PED FACILITY MAP



2.6 | NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

HISTORIC & ARCHEOLOGICAL

The University of Vermont Consulting Archeology Program (UVM CAP) prepared an Archeological Resource Assessment and Historic Properties Review to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and its amendments. UVM CAP conducted its review according to standards set forth in 36 CFR 800, the regulations established by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to implement Section 106. Review consists of identifying and evaluating historic resources on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places that have the potential to be affected by project work. The Historic Resources report is attached as Appendix E. The Archaeological Site Inspection report is attached as Appendix F.

Key findings of the historic review are:

1. The downtown Essex Junction Commercial Historic District was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2004. It includes nine contributing buildings, six of which line the western side of Railroad Avenue along the westerly sideline of the project area.
2. The current Amtrak station was constructed in 1957, replacing a railroad station built on the same site in 1862. The building is not part of the Downtown Essex Junction Commercial Historic District, and this review finds that it does not appear individually eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.
3. Although project plans are not yet available for review, upgrades to the existing Amtrak train station and improvements to parking and traffic circulation around the train station can probably take place without adversely affecting the National Register-Listed Downtown Essex Junction Commercial Historic District. The Amtrak station lies outside of the boundaries of the District, so renovations to the building will have no direct impact on the District and indirect impacts can likely be avoided as long as upgrades do not create a building that is out of scale or character with the District. Parking and traffic circulation components of the project should aim to stay within existing right-of-way limits.
4. Possible project elements that could have the potential to affect historic resources would be the addition of any new lighting, signage, traffic calming measures, signalized crosswalks, etc.; such elements should be as compatible as possible and locations should minimize impact to resources. Once developed, a review of project plans will be necessary to determine specific project effects on the standing historic resources identified. Once plans are developed, early coordination with the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation is recommended.

The archaeological assessment, consisting of a field inspection and background research, determined that the proposed project area does not contain any areas of sensitivity for precontact Native American sites or historic period Euroamerican sites. The entire area has been heavily disturbed, thus destroying any soils that may have contained precontact Native American sites. In addition, all historic structures depicted in the historic maps are still occupied and therefore there is no chance that a historic period Euroamerican site will be disturbed by the proposed project. No additional archaeological work is recommended.

NATURAL RESOURCES

- Wetlands, streams and watercourses – The VT Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) DEC database shows none in or near the project area.
- Rare, threatened or endangered species – the VT ANR DEC Natural Heritage database shows no sites of this type in or nearby the project area.
- Section 106[5] and Section 4(f)[6] Properties – this would include historic properties as reported in Section 7.1
- Section 6(f) Land and Water Conservation Fund sites (LWCF) – these include properties such as parks or recreation areas, which have received funding through this program. None was found in the project area.
- Stormwater – Stormwater from the project area is handled through a system of surface inlets and underground conveyances such as catchbasins and storm sewers. This system is managed as part of an MS4[7] system. The catchment area is within the Indian Brook watershed. The Stormwater Collection system is shown on the Public Utility Map in Appendix D.

HAZARDOUS WASTE SITES

Two nearby hazardous waste sites have been identified through the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation database:

- Winston Prouty Federal Building, Lincoln Place (VTDEC Site #992728) –Underground storage tank removed. Priority: SMAC - Site Management Activities Completed. Status: Minimal contamination found. Laboratory result clarification indicated no additional work needed.
- Howard Bank, 4 Main St. (VTDEC Site #951821) Underground storage tank leak. Priority: SMAC - Site Management Activities Completed. Status: No further action warranted, site closed.

These site locations are indicated in Figure 12.

[5] National Historic Preservation Act – applies to all properties on or eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places

[6] US DOT Act applies to public parks, waterfowl and wildlife refuges and significant historic sites

[7] Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System. MS4 designation requires the Village to file a five year Stormwater Management Plan (SWP) that responds to six "Minimum Control Measures.": Public Education and Outreach, Public Participation/Involvement, Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination, Construction Site, Runoff Control, Post-Construction Runoff Control, and Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping.

FIGURE 12. NEARBY HAZARDOUS WASTE SITES

3.0 PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

Based on the opportunities and deficiencies identified in the Existing Conditions investigation, and based on input at the Local Concerns meeting, the following Purpose and Need statement has been developed for this project:

Purpose:

The purpose of the Essex Junction Train Station project is to upgrade the train station building and the adjacent areas to accommodate the existing station uses, provide a safe and functional waiting area for train and bus riders, to support economic development, to improve pedestrian, bus, and vehicular circulation in the surrounding area and to achieve greater architectural harmony with currently designated downtown historic structures.

Need:

- The current station is small and is only open a few hours each day. It provides minimal shelter for rail and bus patrons.
- Bus stop areas are inadequate to meet current demand for buses. Buses frequently block the travel way.

- Bus stop accommodations for patrons are minimal and lack adequate protection from the weather.
- The existing bathroom within the Amtrak Station is small, cannot accommodate multiple users, and is only available for limited times.
- Public safety in the immediate area of the existing station is a concern for local residents. Safety issues are exacerbated by the poor appearance and condition of the existing station, poor lighting conditions and undefined circulation patterns.
- There is a desire for better pedestrian accommodations in the areas proximate to the train station, to improve access and safety. Public parking and vehicle circulation and taxi waiting areas are poorly marked, lacking adequate signage, consistent widths, and designation of the various uses.

4.0 DEVELOPMENT OF PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

The existing conditions assessment and Purpose and Need Statement identify a number of issues and deficiencies, some related to the train station building, and others related to the transportation system serving the train station. Accordingly, transportation alternatives and train station alternatives have been developed and are discussed below.

Train station and transportation (access and circulation) alternatives were initially presented at a public meeting held by the Village Trustees on October 27, 2015. Based on input at that meeting, additional refinements to both the train station and access/circulation alternatives were developed. A second public meeting (the third of the project overall) was held on January 26, 2016. The meeting notes for both meetings are in Appendix G.

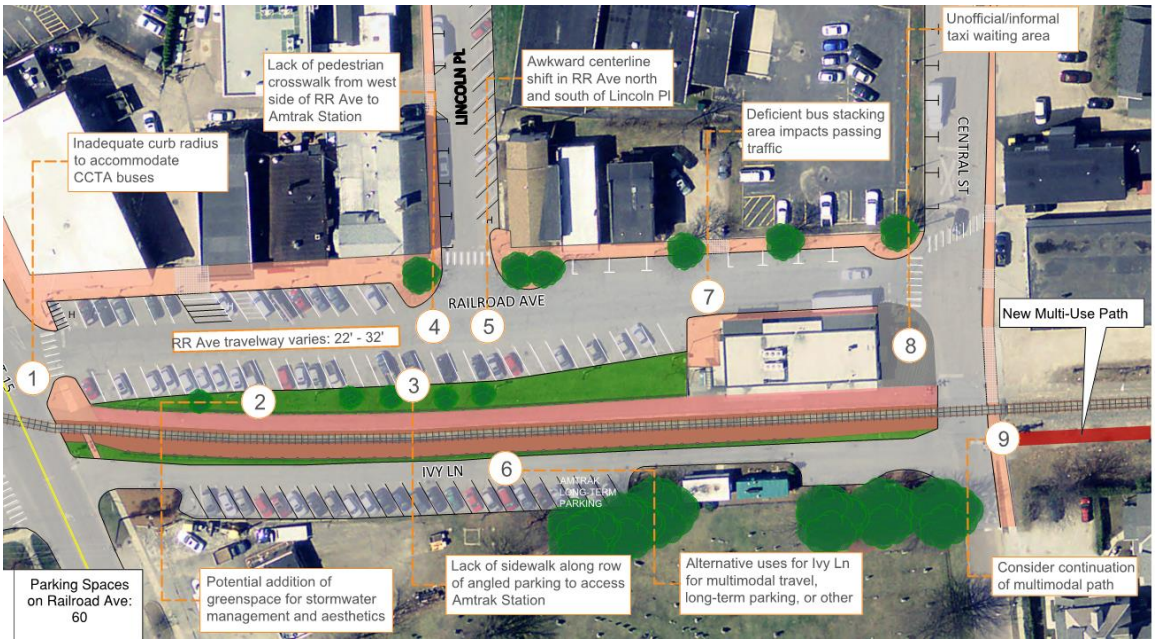
4.1 | TRANSPORTATION ISSUES AND DEFICIENCIES

Based on the existing conditions assessment and the Purpose and Need statement, considerations for developing transportation alternatives included the following:

- Provide a pedestrian crosswalk from the west side of Railroad Avenue to the Amtrak Station.
- Provide pedestrian accommodations to serve the angled parking spaces along the east side of Railroad Avenue to access the Amtrak Station.
- Consider CCTA bus dwelling and access needs. One identified need is to improve the curbline geometry at the southeast corner of the Main Street/Railroad Avenue intersection to enable CCTA buses to execute a southbound right turn from Main Street (VT 15) onto Railroad Avenue, which is currently difficult to accomplish.
- Maintain the parking spaces serving existing commercial uses, and consider potential changes to accommodate a taxi stand and long-term (i.e. all day and/or multi-day) parking.
- Consider alternative uses for Ivy Lane for multimodal travel, parking, or other.
- Consider continuation of the multimodal path that terminates at Central Street immediately east of the railroad right-of-way.
- Evaluate the inconsistent width of Railroad Avenue north and south of Lincoln Place, and consider appropriate lane widths for the multimodal use of Railroad Avenue.

- Consider the potential addition of greenspace for stormwater management and aesthetics.

FIGURE 13: EXISTING CONDITIONS WITH KEY ACCESS/CIRCULATION DEFICIENCIES HIGHLIGHTED



The following sections provide additional information on the access and circulation issues identified above.

PROVIDE A PEDESTRIAN CROSSWALK ACROSS RAILROAD AVENUE

The best location for this crosswalk would be at the existing bulb-out on the south side of Lincoln Place. If it were located on the north side of Lincoln Place, the crosswalk would crowd the area where CCTA buses dwell.

SIDEWALK ALONG EASTERLY SIDELINE OF RAILROAD AVENUE TO PROVIDE SAFE WALKING ACCESS TO THE TRAIN STATION

To accommodate a sidewalk in this area, additional space would need to be obtained by narrowing the existing green space, or by shifting the road alignment to allow for a new sidewalk. The sidewalk would preferably be 6 feet wide to accommodate pedestrians with luggage.

CCTA BUS ACCESS AND DWELLING ISSUES

As discussed earlier, the station serves three CCTA bus routes and provides service that coordinates with train departures and arrivals. CCTA serves about 220 boardings and 180 alightings per day in this location.

The most significant issue with the current bus stop location (on the western side of the train station building) is the width of the roadway at the bus stop, which accommodates two drive lanes and one parallel parking lane. When buses are stopped along the curb, one of the drive lanes is obstructed leaving only one remaining drive lane for two directions of travel.

In addition, while there currently are no times when three buses are scheduled to be at the train station at the same time, it may be possible in the future. Alternatives have considered dedicated space for two or three buses on Railroad Avenue, acknowledging that additional bus dwelling area would reduce general parking.

Another bus access issue relates to the curbline geometry at the southeast corner of Railroad Avenue (Figure 14). Under existing conditions it is difficult for CCTA buses to make a right turn onto Railroad Avenue without intruding into the opposing travel lane. This right turn maneuver is not necessary under current bus routing, but it may be important in the future.

FIGURE 14: CURBLINE GEOMETRY, NORTHEAST CORNER OF MAIN STREET/RAILROAD AVENUE

FIGURE 15: NORTHWEST CORNER OF MAIN STREET/RAILROAD AVENUE

PARKING CONSIDERATIONS

Maintaining parking along both sides of Railroad Avenue is important to adjacent businesses. Parking occupancy counts conducted for the Existing Conditions assessment indicated relatively high availability in the time surrounding Amtrak train arrivals and departures (i.e. 8:17AM to 9:37AM and 7:45PM to 8:45PM). The Existing Conditions assessment also identified available parking on Lincoln Place, which is very accessible to the Amtrak Station and to the commercial buildings along the westerly sideline of Railroad Avenue.

A final consideration relates to a taxi stand. There is no designated taxi area currently, though taxis have informally used the open hardscape area immediately north of the station (south and just off of Central Street)

ALTERNATIVE USES FOR IVY LANE

Ivy Lane is owned by Central Vermont Railway and New England Central Railroad. Ivy Lane has angled parking and no sidewalk. At the northern end of Ivy Lane, a generator reduces the travel lane width to 10 feet or less. For the remainder of Ivy Lane, where angle parking is provided, the travel lane is approximately 13 feet, which is appropriate for one-way travel adjacent to angle parking.

It is not possible to continue the multi-use path directly south of Central Street along Ivy Lane, or add a sidewalk to Ivy Lane as a continuation of the multi-use path, without prohibiting vehicular access on Ivy Lane due to the limited right of way width. These options are not considered in the Alternatives presented below.

Other uses for Ivy Lane could be to expand long-term parking and possibly provide for a taxi stand.

CONTINUATION OF THE MULTI-USE PATH

Under the current design, the multi-use path terminates at Central Street. Assuming that Ivy Lane cannot provide a further continuation of the multi-use path, as described above, the imperative becomes accommodating a safe crossing of Central Street. In the alternatives proposed below, the concept is to bring path users along the northerly sideline of Central Street to cross at two places: 1) directly to the train station; and, 2) on the existing crosswalk that access the western sidewalk on Railroad Avenue.

The Essex Economic Development Commission expressed concern that drivers do not always stop for people in crosswalk so a pedestrian signal (e.g. rapid flashing pedestrian beacon) may be considered at the crosswalks across Central Avenue and possibly Railroad Avenue.

RAILROAD AVENUE ALIGNMENT AND TRAVEL LANE WIDTHS

Currently the travel way width varies by a foot or two on Railroad Avenue south of Lincoln Place, but there is much greater variability north of Lincoln Place (26-34 feet, approximately). Introducing improvements associated with the proposed train station and bus bays will create more consistency north of Lincoln Place.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Lincoln Place is currently the location of the 5 Corners Farmers Market on Fridays 3:30 to 7:30pm, end of May to beginning of October. A plaza-type area adjacent to the train station could be considered as an alternative location for the Farmers Market in the future, as suggested by the Essex Economic Development Commission. The Lincoln Place location is currently sufficient for the market's needs.

4.2 | TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT ALTERNATIVES

To address the issues and opportunities discussed above, the project team developed four alternatives, two of which maintain two-way travel flow on Railroad Avenue, and two of which convert Railroad Avenue to one-way flow using Ivy Lane as the southbound leg of the pair.

Each circulation alternative – one-way and two-way – in turn had two options: 1) maintain angled parking, or 2) replace angle parking with parallel parking on Railroad Avenue south of Lincoln Place. The purpose of introducing parallel parking in this street segment was to create a greater alignment of the south and north blocks of Lincoln Place. However, these options resulted in a loss of over 35 parking spaces along Railroad Avenue and were dismissed from further consideration.

Three alternatives are shown in Figure 16, Figure 17, and Figure 18. These alternatives include the following improvements compared to existing conditions:

1. Accommodation of up to three CCTA buses for curbside dwelling adjacent to train station;
2. Construct a new six-foot-wide sidewalk along the easterly sideline of Railroad Avenue;
3. Increase the green space width adjacent to the parking aisle and new sidewalk on the easterly sideline of Railroad Avenue;
4. Construct a new crosswalk and curb extensions on Railroad Avenue south of Lincoln Place;
5. Increase in plaza/sidewalk space;

6. Modification of the curb radius at the northeast corner of the Main Street/Railroad Avenue intersection to facilitate CCTA bus right turns from Main Street;
7. Accommodate future electric vehicle (EV) charging station;
8. Designate a taxi waiting area.

FIGURE 16: ALTERNATIVE 2 - TWO-WAY CIRCULATION ALTERNATIVE

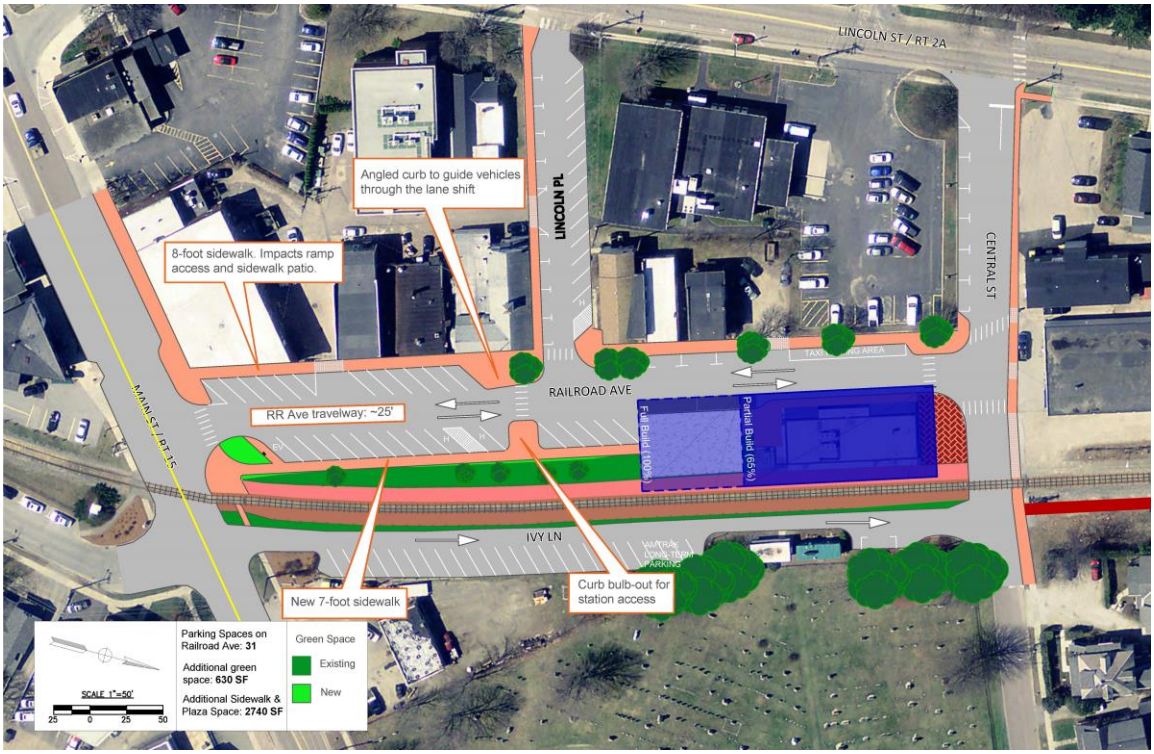
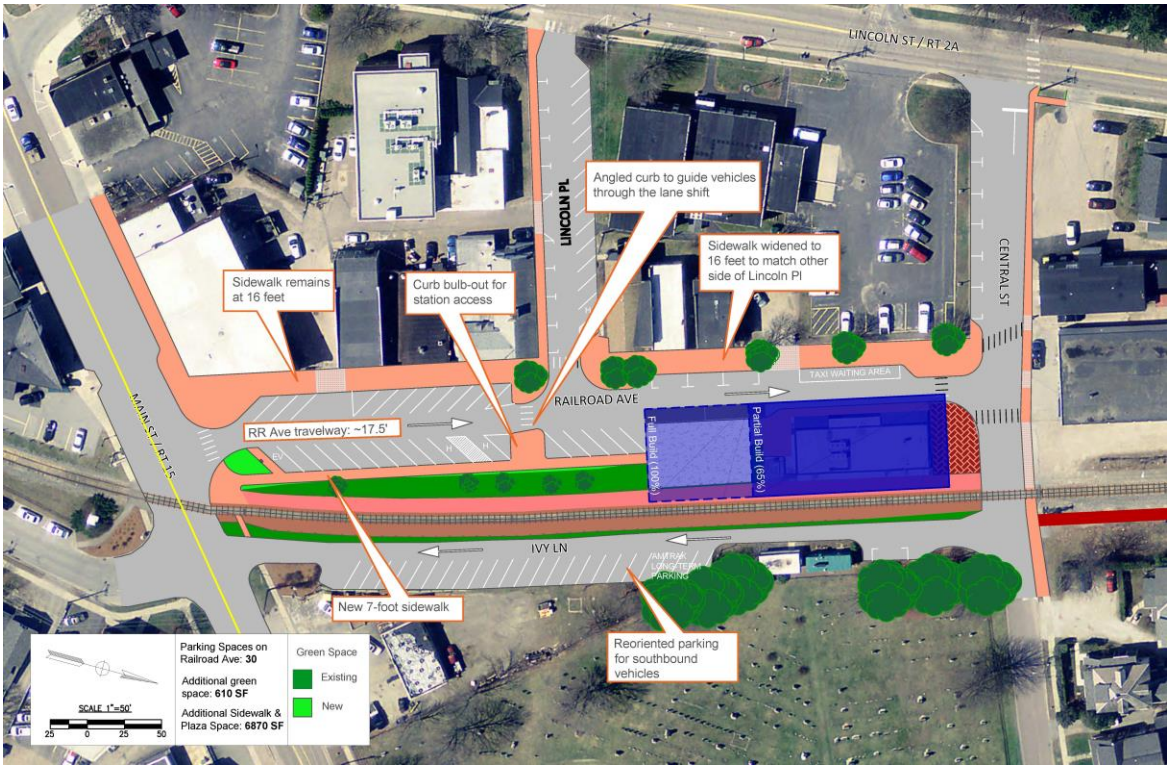


FIGURE 17: ALTERNATIVE 3 - ONE-WAY CIRCULATION ALTERNATIVE



With two-way circulation, the existing lane widths would be sufficient and would be enhanced by new striping. The southern portion of the sidewalk along the westerly sideline would, however, be narrowed to 8' (from 16') be consistent with the north section, reducing the inefficiency of the centerline shift.

With one-way circulation, Railroad Avenue south of Lincoln Place would need a 20-foot travel way to accommodate parking maneuvers from angled parking on both sides of the street. North of Lincoln Place, there will be extra width to the travel lanes which will facilitate bus maneuvering into and out from the pull-off area.

Alternatives 2 and 3 incorporate a larger pedestrian plaza under the railroad station canopy. The plaza provides a comfortable pedestrian circulation area and is large enough for small public gatherings. However, the plaza eliminates several parking spaces proximate to the rail station. In the course of reviewing the alternatives with the project team and with the public, Alternative 4 was developed. Alternative 4 accommodates two buses curbside while eliminating the plaza area, thereby preserving more on-street parking (Figure 18).

FIGURE 18: ALTERNATIVE 4 - ONE-WAY CIRCULATION ALTERNATIVE WITHOUT PLAZA

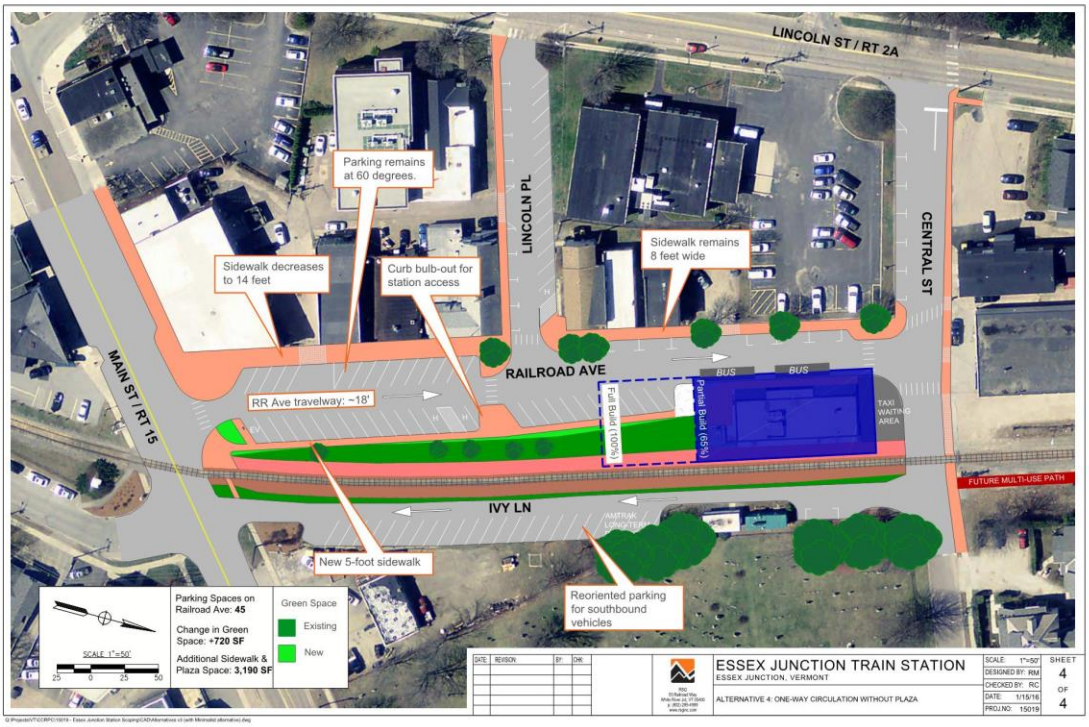


Figure 19 provides an evaluation of each Alternative relative to the No Build, for Cost, Engineering, Environmental Resource, and Local/Regional Issues. It is not anticipated that any permits will be required by the improvements recommended in either Alternative.

FIGURE 19: EVALUATION OF TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

	Improvement:	No Build	Alternative 2 - Two-Way Circulation	Alternative 3 - One Way Circulation	Alternative 4 - One Way Circulation
COST	Conceptual Cost Estimate	-	$214000 - 271000	$226000 - 287000	$182000 - 231000
	Properties Affected	-	NECR Rail Station Property	NECR Rail Station Property and Ivy Lane	
ENGINEERING	Typical Section (total road width)	22' -28' + parking	25' + parking	17.5' + parking	17.5' + parking
	Alignment/Geometric Changes		addition of curb bulbouts by pedestrian cross-walk		
		-	+5420 SF in additional pedestrian areas	+6540 SF in additional pedestrian areas	+3190 SF in additional pedestrian areas
	Bike/Ped Impacts	-	+	++	++
	Greenspace	-	- 1130 square feet	- 1280 square feet	+ 720 square feet
	Right of Way Impacts	-	necessitates agreements with NECR for station re-design and Ivy Lane usage.		
	Traffic Impacts	-	negligible	introduction of one way circulation	introduction of one way circulation
	CCTA Impacts	-	++	++	+
	Parking Impacts on Railroad Avenue	-	-29 spaces	-30 spaces	-15 spaces

4.3 | AMTRAK STATION ALTERNATIVES

The existing Essex Junction train station was constructed in 1957 for the Central Vermont Railroad. It is currently owned by Genesee & Wyoming, a freight rail company. The station is a single story contemporary building.

The station serves the Amtrak Vermonter line and provides daily service between Washington, D.C. and St. Albans, Vermont, and reports the highest passenger activity of all rail stations in the state. The main room in the station operates as a waiting area for Amtrak riders. There are two tenants in the building, besides the rail station waiting area (#1, Figure 5). NECR uses area #2 for backup rail operations, and the Sprint Corp. uses area #3 for fiber optic switching equipment.

The Village of Essex Junction has identified upgrades to the Amtrak Station as an important community development priority. As discussed in section 2.0 above, in 2012 the Village worked with several UVM engineering students to study viable options for rehabilitation of the train station and adjacent platform and bus stop areas.

The Capstone study identified the following perceived needs:

- better bathroom facilities,
- improved bus boarding areas,
- safer grounds,
- accessibility for people with disabilities, and
- improved building aesthetics.

In addition to the needs listed above, the UVM Capstone study investigated many of the basic challenges of design and construction adjacent to a working train line. The overall station and platform design must adhere to strict guidelines for the trains and relate to the size, length, and height of a train car. Required clearances from the track centerline create the framework for establishing platform length and proximity to the track, roof edge height and overhang.

Recommendations developed by the project were presented to the Village Trustees on May 8, 2012. Key recommendations were:

1. Construct a new ADA compliant train platform;
2. Revised bus waiting and loading areas;
3. A new roof structure harmonious with historic station designs, to encompass the existing building and new platform area.

The recommended UVM Capstone design is based on a raised train platform meeting Amtrak's passenger rail service criteria for a 2-car length platform and height and proximity to the tracks. Due to freight traffic, which also uses this rail line, neither the platform nor any other construction element (roof overhang) may be placed closer to the tracks than 8.5 feet from the track centerline.

The section below discusses alternatives considered by the Capstone Study for the train station and platform area. A third alternative, called the "Partial Build" is also discussed below.

Alternative 1: No Build

Under the no build alternative, the existing operation at the Essex Junction train station would remain unchanged. There would continue to be inadequate protection from the weather, inadequate interior space for train passengers (i.e. waiting areas, benches, restroom accommodations), and deficient pedestrian accommodations leading to the station from adjacent areas, and from existing and planned pedestrian facilities. The overall appearance of the station building is not consistent with the architectural vernacular of the historic Essex Junction downtown, which disconnects the building from the downtown mixed-use area and provides no visual context to identify the train station/transportation hub.

Alternative 2: Full Build: New Waiting Area and Roof Canopy

Alternative 2 would leave the existing train station largely unchanged with the exception of adding a glass enclosed waiting area with bathrooms to the southern end of the station building. The additional interior space is sized to meet existing and increasing demand for an enclosed waiting area and basic amenities. To accommodate periods of limited staffing the new enclosure will be predominantly glass to improve visibility and safety.

FIGURE 20: ALTERNATIVE 2 (FULL BUILD) SITE PLAN

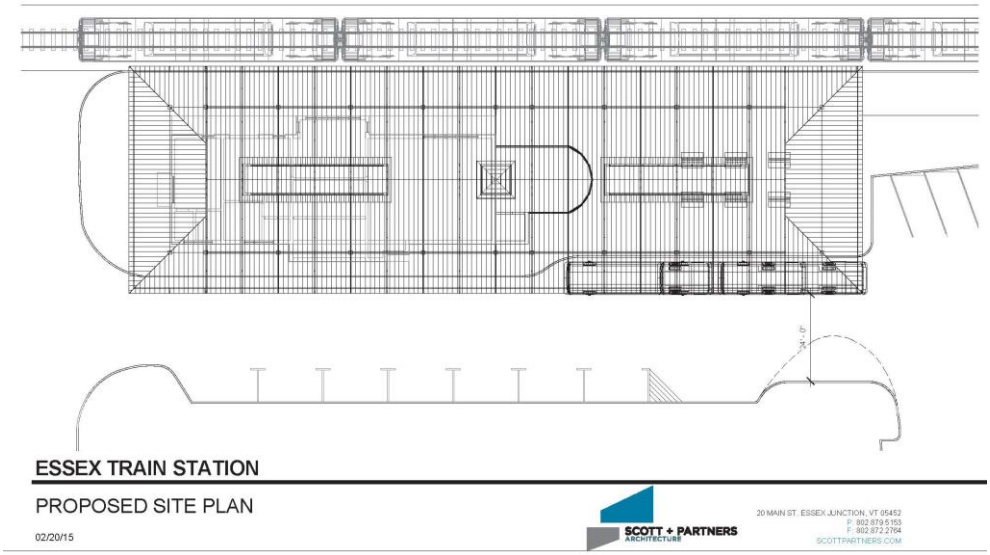


FIGURE 21: ALTERNATIVE 2 (FULL BUILD), PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

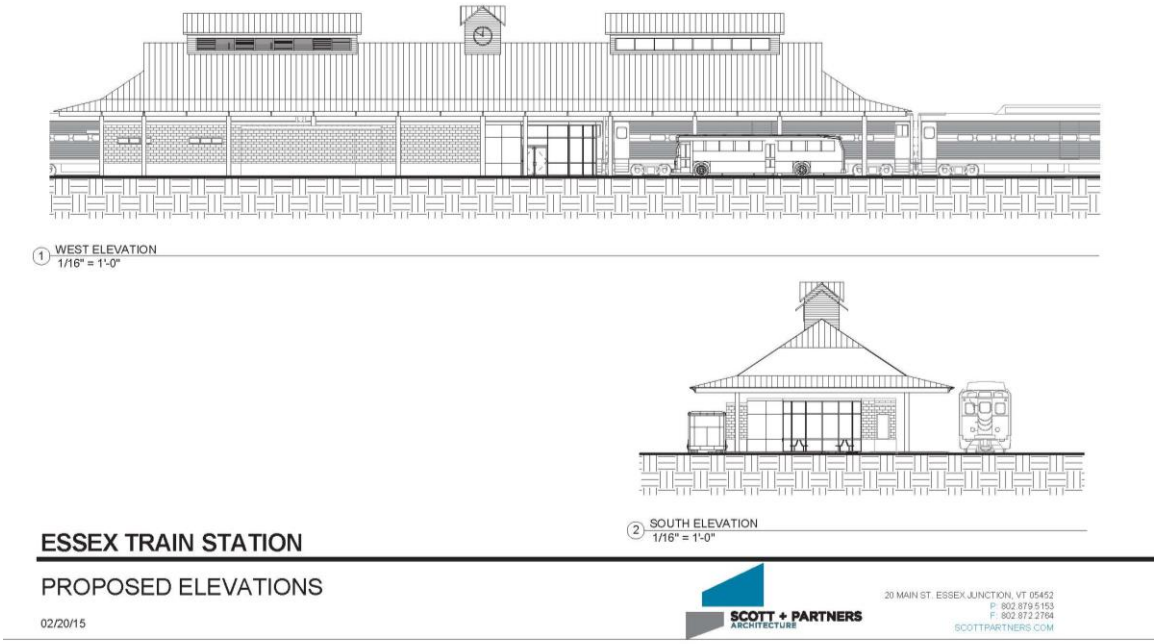
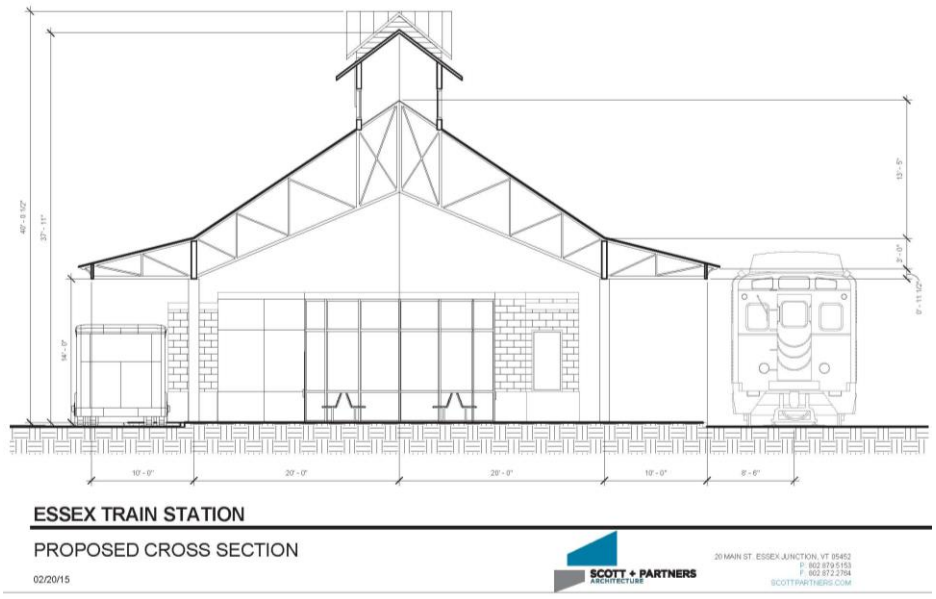


FIGURE 22: ALTERNATIVE 2 (FULL BUILD), PROPOSED CROSS-SECTION



The dominant feature of the proposed station upgrade is a large, open-trussed roof canopy sized to cover the existing flat roofed station building and the loading areas on both sides. The canopy height accommodates existing condensers and related equipment on the roof of the existing building and there are functional monitors to provide venting. The monitors also provide daylight to areas below. The roof length is a function of covering the existing building and providing cover for a minimum of two rail cars in length. The width of the canopy provides cover for both train and bus boarding areas.

FIGURE 23: ALTERNATIVE 2 (FULL BUILD) EXTERIOR PERSPECTIVE

The proposed roof is double pitched to recall the rooflines of classic train stations throughout the north east and efficiently provide shelter over a wide area. A clock tower has been placed in the middle to complete the imagery and provide both a civic centerpiece and functional necessity for any traveler.

Alternative 3: Partial Build: New Waiting Area and Roof Canopy

In the event that full funding is not available, a partial build option is possible. This option would construct the new waiting space and bathrooms with approximately 65% of the full build roof structure. The southern end of the roof covering the open waiting area could be added at a later date as funding becomes available. Functional areas that would be affected by this plan include the elevated train platform, bus loading area, and the loss of a multi-purpose outdoor covered area. The station as a whole would be somewhat less dominant as a municipal structure due to the reduction in size and functionality.

FIGURE 24: ALTERNATIVE 3 (PARTIAL BUILD), SITE PLAN

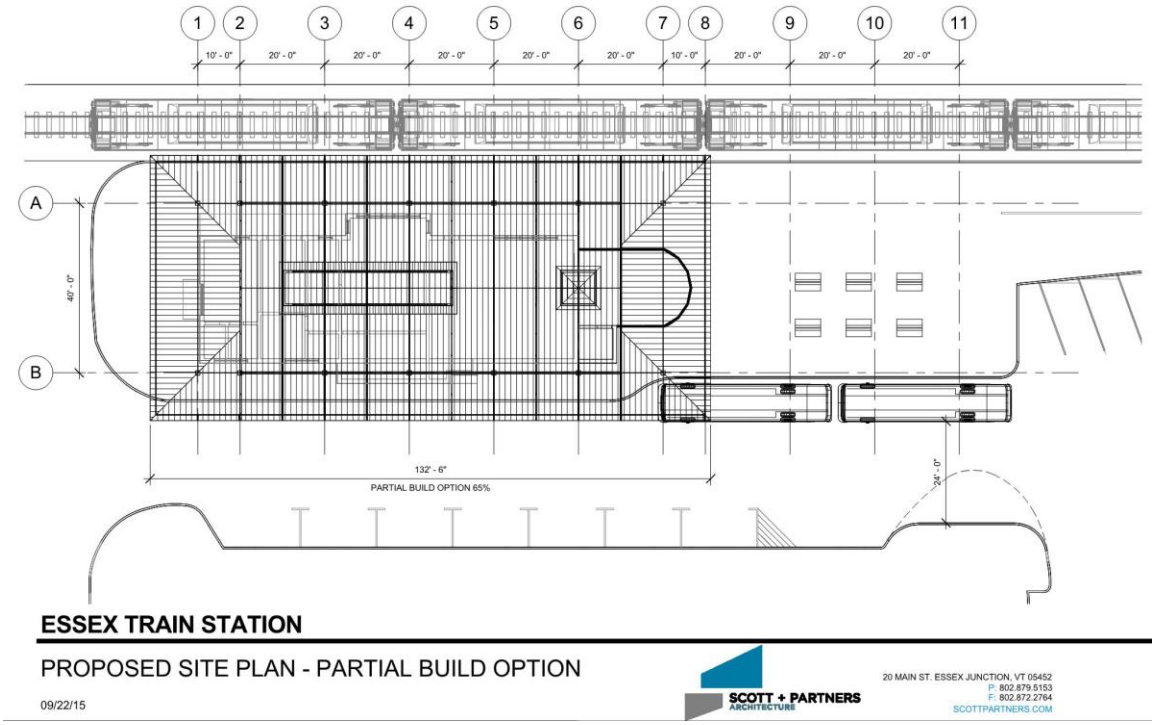


FIGURE 25: ALTERNATIVE 3 (PARTIAL BUILD), PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

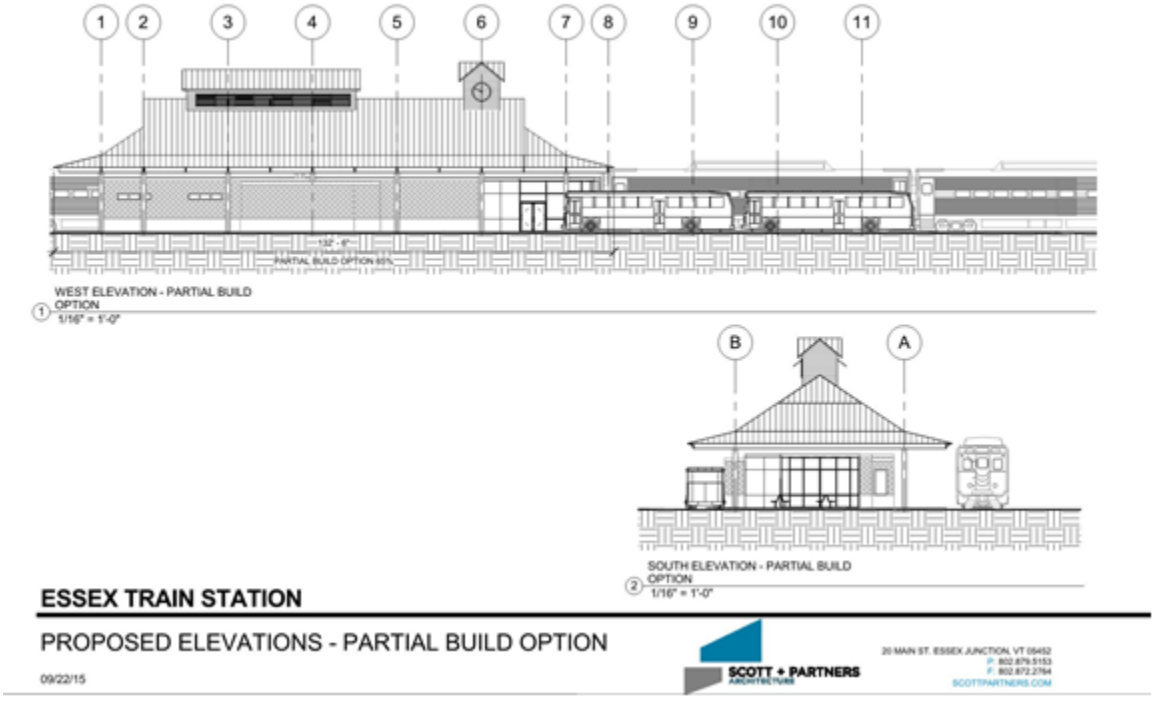


FIGURE 26: ALTERNATIVE 3 (PARTIAL BUILD) EXTERIOR PERSPECTIVE

FIGURE 27: ALTERNATIVE 3 (PARTIAL BUILD), EXTERIOR PERSPECTIVE

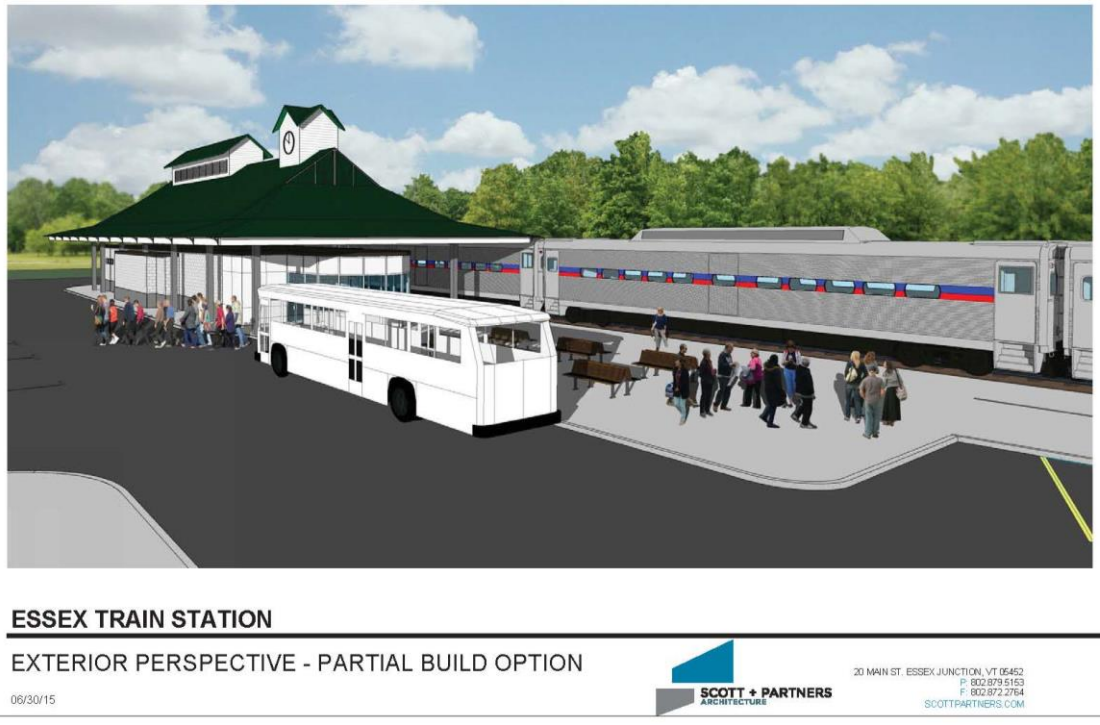


FIGURE 28: ALTERNATIVE 3 (PARTIAL BUILD), INTERIOR

Alternative 4: Partial Build: Roof Canopy with Minimal Plaza Extensions

A final train station alternative was developed to minimize the extension of the pedestrian plaza and thereby to minimize the loss of on street parking. Alternative 4 brings the bus dwelling area close to where it is at present. This option only works if one way circulation is implemented, to avoid a key existing deficiency, which is bus incursion into the northbound travel lane.

Perspectives for Alternative 4 are provided in Figure 29 and Figure 30. Not shown in these figures is the sidewalk proposed as a core improvement along the easterly sideline of Railroad Avenue.

FIGURE 29: TRAIN STATION ALTERNATIVE 4 PARTIAL BUILD PERSPECTIVE 1

FIGURE 30: TRAIN STATION ALTERNATIVE 4 PARTIAL BUILD PERSPECTIVE 2

Figure 31 provides an evaluation of the 4 train station alternatives. Qualitative rankings ("+" and "++") were made using professional architectural judgment with regard to how each alternative addressed specific elements of the Purpose and Need.

FIGURE 31: EVALUATION OF TRAIN STATION ALTERNATIVES

	Train Station Improvement Alternative:	No Build	Alternative 2 - New Waiting Area and Roof Canopy (Two-Way Traffic)		Alternative 3 - New Waiting Area and Roof Canopy (One Way Traffic)		Alternative 4 - Partial Build, New Waiting Area and Roof Canopy (One-Way Traffic)
			Full Build w/Plaza	Partial Build w/Plaza	Full Build w/Plaza	Partial Build w/Plaza	Partial Build, no Plaza
COST	Cost Estimate	$0	$1.35 million	$1.15 million	$1.35 million	$1.15 million	$1.10 million
Purpose and Need	Current Station is Small, Minimal Shelter	0	++	++	++	++	++
	Existing bathroom is small, available limited times.	0	++	++	++	++	++
	Bus stop areas inadequate	0	++	++	++	++	++
	Desire for better pedestrian accommodations	0	++	+	++	+	+

5.0 PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

At the January 26, 2016 meeting of the Village Trustees, the Trustees selected Alternative 4 as their Preferred Alternative.

The Village has options for advancing the study:

1. Apply for a Local Transportation Facilities grant to VTrans to develop the access and circulation improvements described in Alternative 4.
2. The Village, in collaboration with the CCRPC, can work with VTrans to determine potential sources of funding for the rail station canopy. As the station plan includes a multimodal (rail, transit) component, FTA funds may be accessed.
3. Develop a new scope of work, to be funded through the CCRPC Unified Planning Work Program, to evaluate the closure of Main Street at the periphery of the study area. This new study would include a traffic circulation analysis incorporating impacts from the Crescent Connector and the one way circulation alternative (Alternative 4) from this study.

With regard to financing the proposed rail station improvements, there are some discretionary spending programs administered by the Federal Railroad Administration, which could be accessed with assistance from VTrans. In addition Amtrak has a station rehabilitation program where funds are targeted on priority station rebuilding projects.

The important thing for any of these federal funding sources is that a good benefit-cost analysis is conducted. Not only is this a requirement for most grant applications, it actually helps with the project design. It would be a good idea to link the proposed station improvements to current and future conditions (i.e. high historic growth rate in station use, plans to extend the Vermonter to Montreal, possible addition of more train frequencies, etc.)

APPENDIX A. MEETING MINUTES

Essex Junction Train Station Access and Scoping Study

Public Meeting at Essex Junction Planning Commission

April 2, 2015

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Nistico (Chairman); John Alden, Diane Clemens, Andrew Boutin, Amber Thibeault, Nick Meyer

ADMINISTRATION: Robin Pierce, Essex Junction Development Director

OTHERS PRESENT: Christine Forde (CCRPC), Bob Chamberlin (RSG), Greg Morgan (Essex Economic Development Commission), Meredith Birkett (CCTA), Janet Botula, Al Villa (Amtrak), Jason Starr (Essex Reporter)

Bob Chamberlin introduced the consultant team consisting of RSG, a transportation planning and engineering company, and Scott + Partners, an architectural firm.

Bob identified that the purpose of the meeting is to generate ideas, concerns and opportunities for making improvements in the area to develop alternatives.

Bob reviewed existing conditions related to transportation elements in the project area consisting of circulation and access for all modes of travel and noted the following points.

- Previous studies of the train station are the foundation for the current study.
- Railroad Avenue is the main access to the train station.
- RSG inventoried the number of parking spaces and how it is utilized. Some of the spaces were heavily used while other areas had available spaces.
- RSG evaluated bus circulation. Three routes serve the station and there are two bus shelters. Bus service is timed with the arrival of the train.
- Pedestrian and bike amenities were evaluated. There are no designated bike lanes. There is a bike rack at the station.
- There is no electric car charging station.

Bob reviewed the scoping process which is a formal process recommended by VTrans for defining a project that goes into design. The first part, project identification, was largely completed by the Village's 2012 Study of the Train Station. We are now engaged in the process called project scoping which defines the project further, gathers data, gathers concerns from the public, develops alternatives involving transportation and the station, and evaluates them to come up with a preferred alternative. The process will also identify potential funding sources.

John Alden provided background on the train station portion of this project. A 2012 UVM student project was a chance for the community to further the development of ideas that have been around for a long time regarding improvements to the train station. The station is privately owned and has seen no upgrades in recent years other than paint. Bus amenities at the station site have seen some upgrades in the past few years as have the tracks. A small portion of the existing building is taken up by the train station and the rest is leased space.

There are issues with circulation of buses and taxis during train arrival times and pinch points exist. There are eight parking spaces for Amtrak, four of which are designated with signage. Parking could be an issue in the future if train service increases.

The plan was developed with UVM students and included community driven ideas and input from New England Central Railroad. It proposes a large roof structure that would soar over the top of the existing building and create an overhang to protect train and bus boarding areas. Design elements of the station are consistent with historic train station designs. The plan includes modification of bus stop areas to reduce interference with through traffic and possible modification of bus waiting areas. It also includes a new glass enclosed lobby with a bathroom to serve bus and train riders. The existing train station is only open a few hours a day and has only 21 seats available. The design would not preclude future construction of an elevated platform for ADA compliance.

The Village's intent with this project is to create a community hub and provide an opportunity for community to gather in this space.

The meeting was opened to questions and comments from the Planning Commission and Public.

COMMENTS

Al Villa, Amtrak Station Manager, said there is a lift at the station to help passengers onto the train who are disabled.

David Nistico asked if CCTA will relocate the seating on the side of the building by the bus stop. John Alden answered that the waiting area will be moved under the roof canopy. Meredith Birkett, CCTA, said the bus company spent $60,000 to create the enclosed existing passenger waiting area that and CCTA would like to keep what is there at the least or better.

Mr. Nistico asked about bike racks under the canopy to accommodate people commuting on the train in the future and then using their bike to get to work. Meredith Birkett said CCTA has secure bike lockers with electronic access in place in Winooski and downtown Burlington now. The same could be possible in Essex Junction.

There was discussion of the high traffic volume in the area (vehicles, pedestrians, buses, bicyclists) in the morning and afternoon each day, especially during the school year. Traffic volume would be an issue if bus and train usage were to increase.

The planned multi-use path along the tracks from Central Street to Grove Street was discussed. The purpose of the path is to discourage people from walking on the train tracks. Al Villa noted it is a federal offense to trespass on railroad tracks. The railroad company has posted signs which unfortunately are ignored by trespassers.

Nick Meyer pointed out the station area is under-utilized and it has potential to be turned into a vibrant space. The streetscape could be improved with plantings to help slow traffic. Parking at the federal building is not fully used and the building is not fully occupied. There may be an opportunity to get the building fully occupied in the future. Parking needs to be available for the merchants and patrons.

There was discussion about whether a sidewalk should be constructed by the parking spaces along the railroad track but there was concern about having more hardscape in that area and that the spaces were primarily by patrons of the adjacent businesses and not by commuters.

It was noted that the platform is on the track side of a fence so riders have to walk back to the train station to access cars parked along the tracks. One suggested solution was to construct a break in the fence to allow access to the platform from the parking area. Al Villa said more lighting along the platform would be beneficial as well.

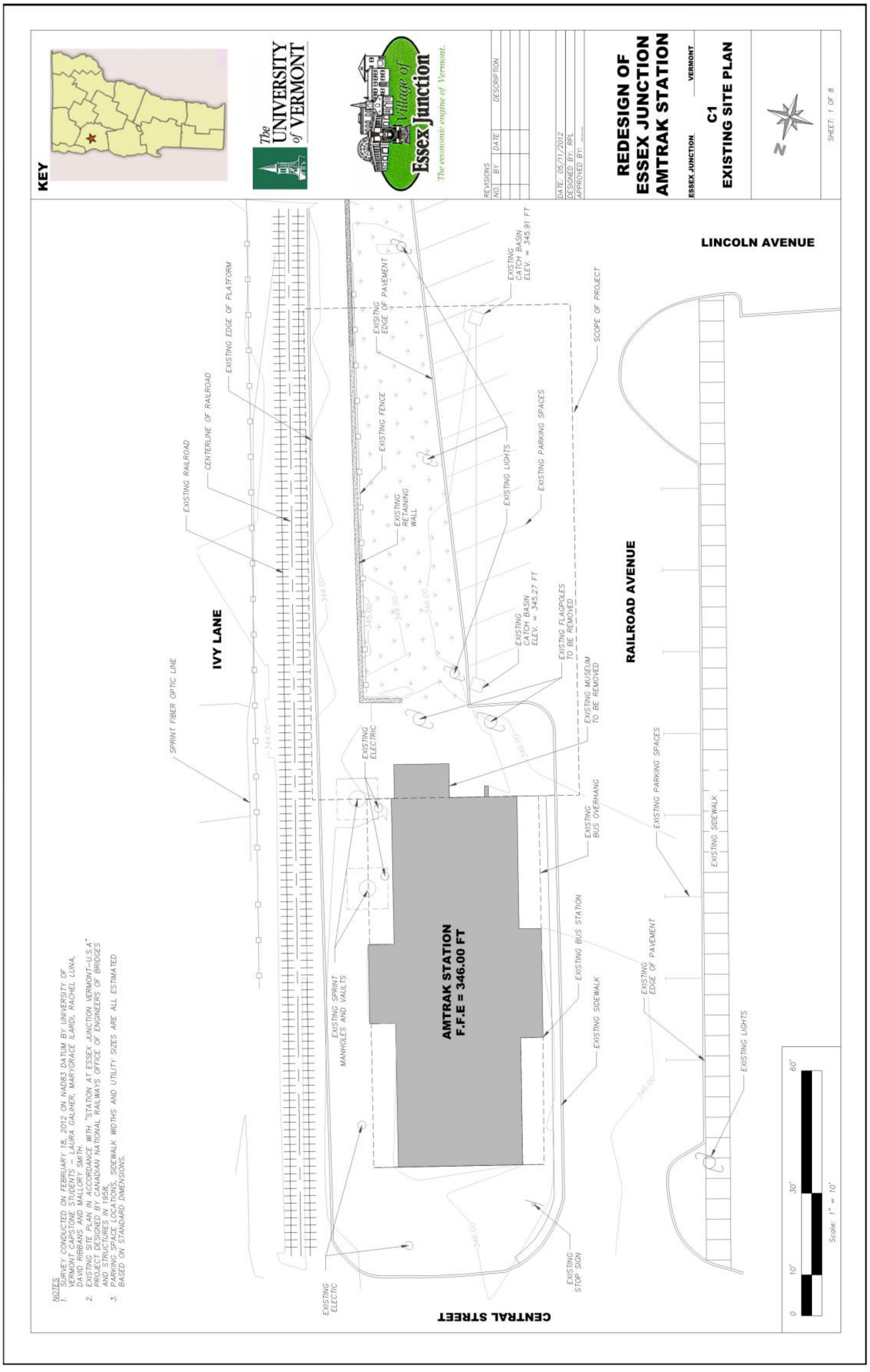
Greg Morgan stated the Essex Economic Development Commission sees upgrade of the train station as an economic development priority for the community. The scoping study is one of the steps necessary to get the project into the state's five year transportation plan. According to Brian Searles, former State Secretary of Transportation, the station is Vermont's busiest station, but the building looks like a bunker and is an embarrassment to the state. Mr. Morgan pointed out the following;

- Trains can be a tremendous economic benefit to the community.
- Great American Stations Project shows how to collaborate to improve train stations. Information on the project is available online.
- Drivers do not always stop for people in crosswalks so pedestrian signals may be necessary at the crosswalk to the station.
- McClure Building is now a mini-storage facility, but the use could change over time so the space should be considered in any long range plans for the area.
- Enforcement should be done with cars parked all day in spaces meant for short term use.
- Locating Five Corners Farmers Market at the train station could be beneficial.

There were no further comments.

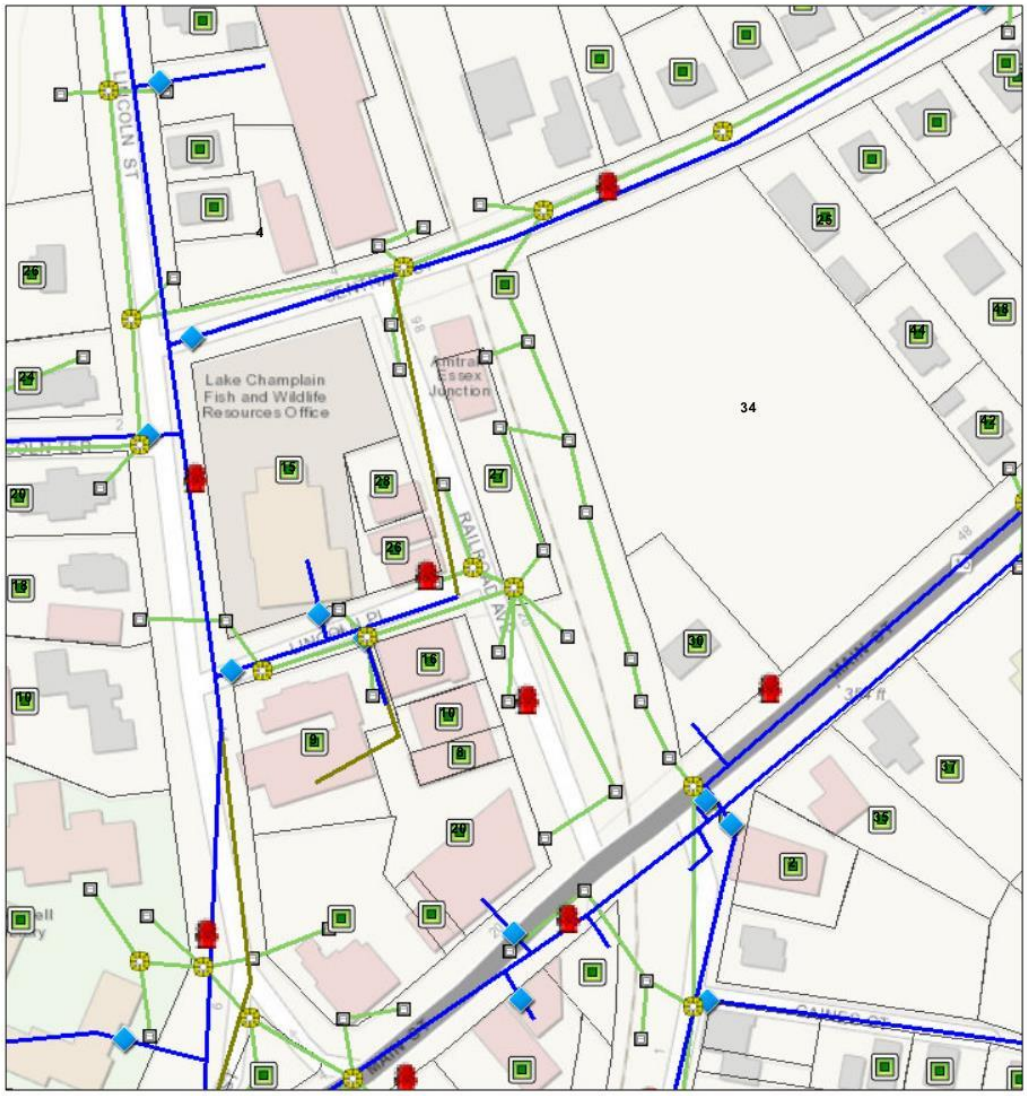
MOTION by Nick Meyer, SECOND by Diane Clemens, that the Village Planning Commission supports the scoping study for the Amtrak train station moving forward. VOTING: unanimous (6-0); motion carried.

APPENDIX B. EXISTING CONDITIONS SITE PLAN


KEY
The UNIVERSITY of VERMONT
Village of Essex Junction
The economic engine of Vermont.
REVISIONS
NO. BY DATE DESCRIPTION
DATE: 05/11/2012
DESIGNED BY: RPL
APPROVED BY:
REDESIGN OF ESSEX JUNCTION AMTRAK STATION
ESSEX JUNCTION VERMONT
C1
EXISTING SITE PLAN
SHEET: 1 OF 8
LINCOLN AVENUE
RAILROAD AVENUE
IVY LANE
CENTRAL STREET
AMTRAK STATION
F.F.E = 346.00 FT
EXISTING EDGE OF PLATFORM
CENTERLINE OF RAILROAD
EXISTING RAILROAD
SPRINT FIBER OPTIC LINE
EXISTING EDGE OF PAVEMENT
EXISTING FENCE
EXISTING RETAINING WALL
EXISTING CATCH BASIN ELEV. = 345.91 FT
SCOPE OF PROJECT
EXISTING PARKING SPACES
EXISTING LIGHTS
EXISTING CATCH BASIN ELEV. = 345.27 FT
EXISTING FLAGPOLES TO BE REMOVED
EXISTING MUSEUM TO BE REMOVED
EXISTING ELECTRIC
EXISTING BUS OVERHANG
EXISTING SIDEWALK
EXISTING SPRINT MANHOLES AND VAULTS
EXISTING BUS STATION
EXISTING STOP SIGN
NOTES
1. SURVEY CONDUCTED ON FEBRUARY 18, 2012 ON NAD83 DATUM BY UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT CAPSTONE STUDENTS - LAURA GALIHER, MARYGRACE ILARDI, RACHEL LUNA, DAVID RIBBANS AND MALLORY SMITH.
2. EXISTING SITE PLAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH "STATION AT ESSEX JUNCTION VERMONT-U.S.A" PROJECT DESIGNED BY CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS OFFICE OF ENGINEERS OF BRIDGES AND STRUCTURES IN 1958.
3. PARKING SPACE LOCATIONS, SIDEWALK WIDTHS AND UTILITY SIZES ARE ALL ESTIMATED BASED ON STANDARD DIMENSIONS.
0 10' 30' 60'
Scale: 1" = 10'

APPENDIX C. PUBLIC UTILITY MAP

Essex Junction Public Works



APPENDIX D. PARKING OCCUPANCY DATA

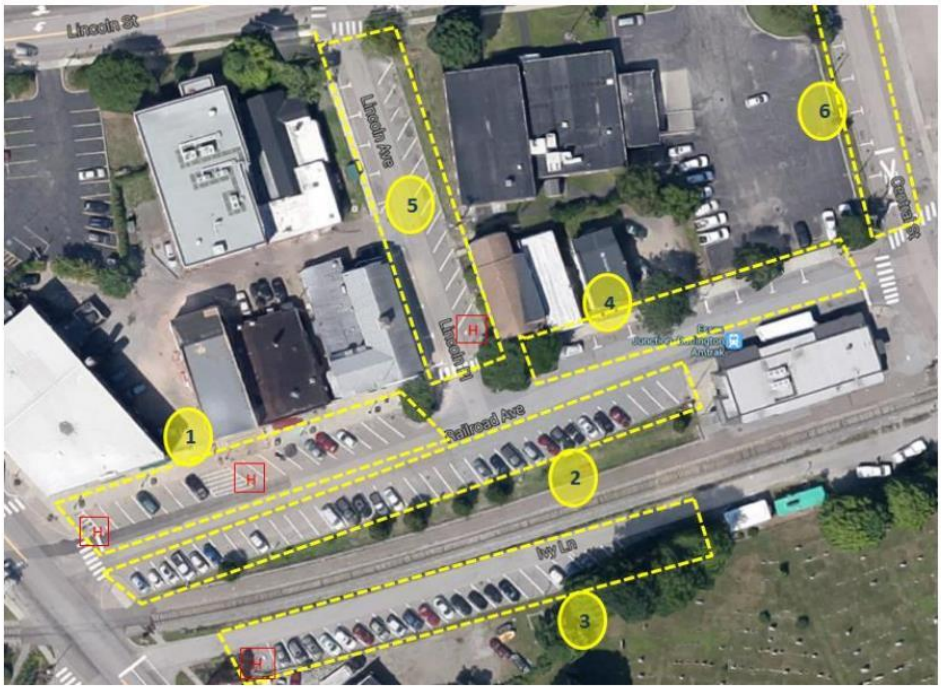
AMTRAK Station Access and Circulation Scoping Study

Parking use data

9:27 AM departure					
Morning		spaces occupied			
parking area	available spaces	8:17 AM	8:47 AM	9:07 AM	9:37 AM
1	16	12	10	10	10
2	37	21	10	32	27
3	25	8	19	13	13
4	7	0	0	2	5
5	23	6	5	7	9
6*	9	3	1	0	1
	117	50	45	64	65
		43%	38%	55%	56%

8:17 PM departure					
Evening		spaces occupied			
parking area	available spaces	7:45 PM	8:00 PM	8:15 PM	8:45 PM
1	16	5	5	7	7
2	37	8	8	10	9
3	25	1	0	0	0
4	7	0	0	1	0
5	23	8	7	5	2
6*	9	2	2	1	0
	117	24	22	24	18
		21%	19%	21%	15%

*includes three unmarked spaces on the north side of central street



APPENDIX E. ESSEX TRAIN STATION HISTORIC REVIEW

HISTORIC RESOURCES REVIEW FOR THE ESSEX JUNCTION TRAIN STATION ACCESS AND CIRCULATION STUDY, ESSEX JUNCTION, CHITTENDEN COUNTY, VERMONT

View southeast ca. 1963 of the Essex Junction railroad station (Bent).

Submitted by:
Catherine A. Quinn
Consulting Archaeology Program
University of Vermont
111 Delehanty Hall
180 Colchester Avenue
Burlington, VT 05405
UVM CAP Report No. 858

May 2015

HISTORIC RESOURCES REVIEW FOR THE ESSEX JUNCTION TRAIN STATION ACCESS AND CIRCULATION STUDY, ESSEX JUNCTION, CHITTENDEN COUNTY, VERMONT

Prepared for:
Joseph Wildey
Resource Systems Group, Inc.
55 Railroad Row
White River Junction, VT 05001

Submitted by:
Catherine A. Quinn
Consulting Archaeology Program
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111 Delehanty Hall
180 Colchester Avenue
Burlington, VT 05405
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May 2015

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Figure 17. National Register of Historic Places map of the Downtown Essex Junction Commercial Historic District with the Essex Junction Train Station project area added in red (note: building #9 no longer exists). 13

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Figure 21. View southwest of building NR #7 along west side of Railroad Avenue. 15

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Figure 25. Plan showing existing conditions for the Amtrak station (provided by RSG). 18

Figure 26. View southeast of Amtrak station; note glassed-in bus waiting area on west side of building and changes to door/window openings (see Figure 24). 19

Figure 27. View northeast of Amtrak station; note glassed-in bus waiting area on west side of building, and overhang and small enclosed area on south side. 19

Figure 28. View northwest of Amtrak station; note overhang and small enclosed area on south side. 20

Figure 29. View southwest of Amtrak station. 20

Figure 30. View northwest of McClure Access Moving and Mini Storage building. 21

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INTRODUCTION

This historic resources review of the proposed Essex Junction Train Station Access and Circulation Study, located in the Village of Essex Junction, Chittenden County, Vermont, was conducted by 36 CFR 61 qualified Historic Preservation Specialist Catherine A. Quinn of the UVM Consulting Archaeology Program, in order to assist Resource Systems Group, Inc. (RSG) and the Village of Essex Junction with compliance under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and its amendments. The project was reviewed according to standards set forth in 36 CFR 800, the regulations established by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to implement Section 106. Review consists of identifying and evaluating historic resources on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places that have the potential to be affected by project work. Research for this report included a search of historic photograph and postcard collections, town histories, historic maps, current and historic images on Google Earth, the National Register of Historic Places Nomination forms, and the State of Vermont Division for Historic Preservation (VDHP) Historic Sites & Structures Survey. A site visit and visual inspection of the project area was conducted on April 16, 2015; all current photographs were taken during the site visit.

PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The proposed Essex Junction Train Station Access and Circulation Study project area is located along Railroad Avenue and Ivy Lane, between Main Street and Central Street, just northeast of the Five Corners intersection in the downtown portion of Essex Junction (Figure 1). The project area is bounded on the east by a cemetery, on the west by the western edge of Railroad Avenue, at the north by the northern side of Central Street, and to the south by the intersection of Main Street and Railroad Avenue (Figures 2 – 11). The project area includes a section of New England Central rail line, which has an at grade platform alongside its western edge (Figures 12 and 13). The project proposes to upgrade the existing Amtrak train station and improve parking and traffic circulation around the train station (Figures 14 – 16). The project is in the planning phase, so plans are not yet available for review; as a result, this review identifies historic resources and general potential effects.

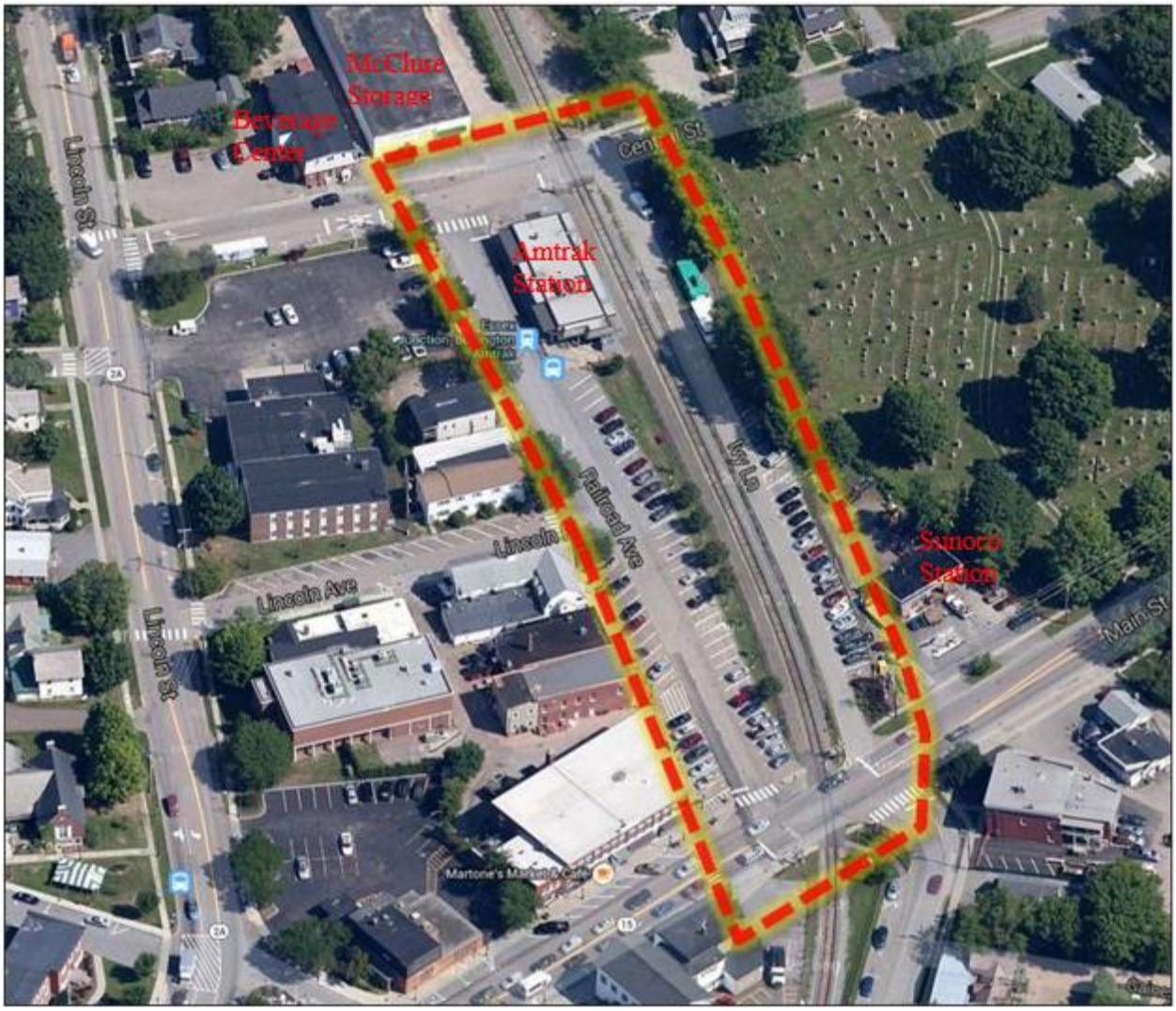

Figure 1. Image showing the location of the Essex Junction Train Station Access and Circulation Study project area, Village of Essex Junction, Chittenden County, Vermont (north at top of image; provided by RSG, building names added).

Figure 2. View southwest at the intersection of Main Street and Railroad Avenue in the southern portion of the project area.

Figure 3. View southeast at the intersection of Main Street and Railroad Avenue in the southern portion of the project area.

Figure 4. View northeast at the intersection of Main Street (right) and Ivy Lane (foreground) in the southern portion of the project area.

Figure 5. View south along Railroad Avenue toward Main Street.

Figure 6. View north along Railroad Avenue toward Central Street.

Figure 7. View south along Railroad Avenue from north end of project area; Central Street in foreground.

Figure 8. View west at Central Street/Railroad Avenue intersection; Ivy Lane in foreground and Railroad Avenue at left center.

Figure 9. View northeast at Central Street/Railroad Avenue intersection; Railroad Avenue in right foreground and Central Street at center.

Figure 10. View east at Central Street/Ivy Lane intersection; Central Street in foreground and Ivy Lane at center beyond railroad tracks.

Figure 11. View south along Ivy Lane (at left), with railroad tracks at center, from Central Street.

Figure 12. View northwest of New England Central railroad tracks.

Figure 13. View of platform along west side of New England Central railroad tracks.

Figure 14. Existing conditions Transit Map, Essex Junction Train Station Project study area, Village of Essex Junction, Chittenden County, Vermont (provided by RSG).

Figure 15. Existing conditions Bicycle/Pedestrian Map, Essex Junction Train Station Project study area, Village of Essex Junction, Chittenden County, Vermont (provided by RSG).

Figure 16. Existing conditions Parking Map, Essex Junction Train Station Project area, Village of Essex Junction, Chittenden County, Vermont (provided by RSG).

HISTORIC RESOURCES

Downtown Essex Junction Commercial Historic District

Description: The Essex Junction Train Station Access and Circulation Study project area lies partially within and adjacent to the majority of the buildings that make up the National Register-Listed Downtown Essex Junction Commercial Historic District (Figure 17; NPS). The Downtown Essex Junction Commercial Historic District was added to the National Register of Historic Places (NR) on November 1, 2004. It includes nine contributing buildings (originally 10 contributing buildings, building #9 no longer exists), six of which line the western side of Railroad Avenue along the project area's western boundary (NR #s 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7), and two buildings that sit at the southern corners of the project area (NR #s 11 and 12) (see Figure 17; Figures 18 – 23). The District buildings date between ca. 1894 and 1930 (Table 1). All of the structures represent the commercial interests of the local business community and are excellent examples of late nineteenth to early twentieth-century commercial building design and technology.

Table 1. Summary of Downtown Essex Junction Commercial Historic District buildings.

NR #	ADDRESS	DATE BUILT	HISTORIC NAME/ORIGINAL USE
1	28 Railroad Avenue	ca. 1910	Stone Block; shoe repair shop with residence above
2	26 Railroad Avenue	ca. 1930	A&P Grocery Store
4	16-18-20 Railroad Avenue	ca. 1905	Moses Fisher Livery Stable
5	10-12 Railroad Avenue	ca. 1920	Bassett Bakery
6	8 Railroad Avenue	ca. 1905	Douglas Block; furniture, undertaker
7	12-22 Main Street, 2-4 Railroad Avenue	1894	Brownell Block; commercial block
8	8-10 Main Street	1898	Brownell & Nichols Block; post office
11	11-17 Main Street	ca. 1898	Essex Publishing Company
12	2 Railroad Street	1899	Fletcher Block/Yandow Block; grocer, meat market with apartment above

Significance

Areas of significance for the District include architecture, commerce, transportation, events, and, community planning and development, and the District is nominated under Criteria A and C. All of the buildings included in the District have associations with commercial enterprises in the village. Although some of the buildings lack individual distinction, collectively they convey the history of the commercial development of Essex Junction with their historic context relating to the development of transportation routes, commerce and industry and the associated development of the community. Despite the recent loss of one of its buildings, this commercial core is still a definable and distinguishable entity where the site and buildings retain their integrity of setting, location, association and feeling. As a group, the buildings have a strong integrity of design, materials and workmanship and remain as significant contributing resources to the Downtown Essex Junction Commercial Historic District.

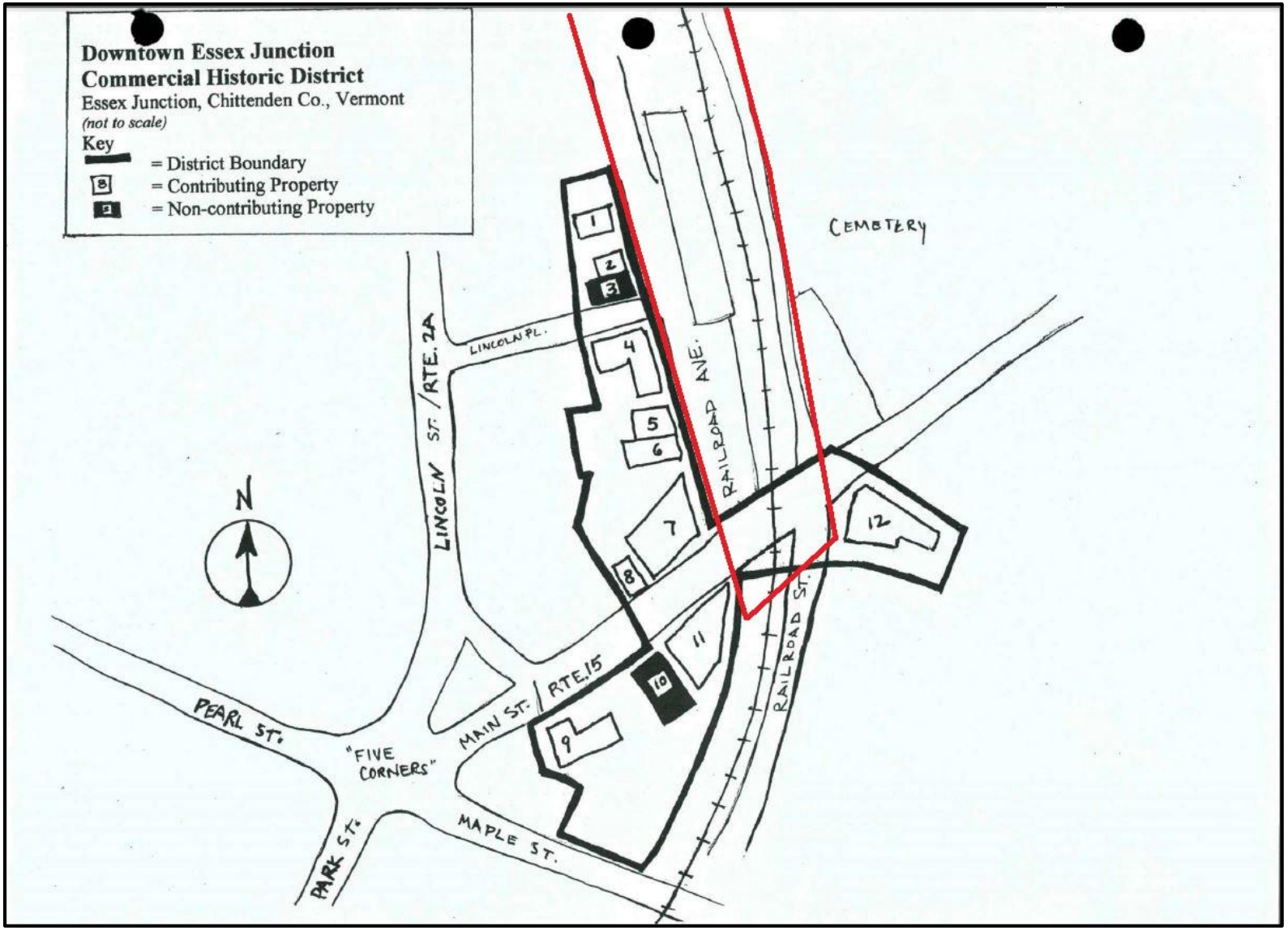

Figure 17. National Register of Historic Places map of the Downtown Essex Junction Commercial Historic District with the Essex Junction Train Station project area added in red (note: building #9 no longer exists).

Figure 18. View northwest of buildings along west side of Railroad Avenue; NR #1 at right and NR #2 at center (building at left, NR #3, is non-contributing).

Figure 19. View southwest of building NR #4 along west side of Railroad Avenue at the intersection of Railroad Avenue and Lincoln Place (Railroad Avenue in foreground).

Figure 20. View southwest of buildings along west side of Railroad Avenue; NR #5 at center with low roof and NR #6 to left.

Figure 21. View southwest of building NR #7 along west side of Railroad Avenue.

Figure 22. View southwest of buildings along south side of Main Street; NR #11 at left (building at right, NR #10, is non-contributing).

Figure 23. View east of building NR #12 along south side of Main Street.

ADDITIONAL PROJECT AREA RESOURCES

Four additional buildings adjacent to the project area that have the potential to be affected by project work were reviewed to assess possible significance. Each building is described below.

Amtrak Station

The current Amtrak station, which also currently serves as a bus station, was constructed in 1957, replacing a railroad station built on the same site in 1862 (Bent:100) (see Figure 1; Figure 24 – 29). Modifications that have taken place since its construction include glassed-in overhangs on the building's west side that serve as bus station waiting areas and numerous changes to window and door openings. The south end of the building has also likely been altered with a small addition and overhanging canopy roof. The building is not part of the Downtown Essex Junction Commercial Historic District and it does not appear individually eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NR), and this review does not recommend inclusion on the NR.

Figure 24. View southeast ca. 1963 of the Essex Junction railroad station (Bent).

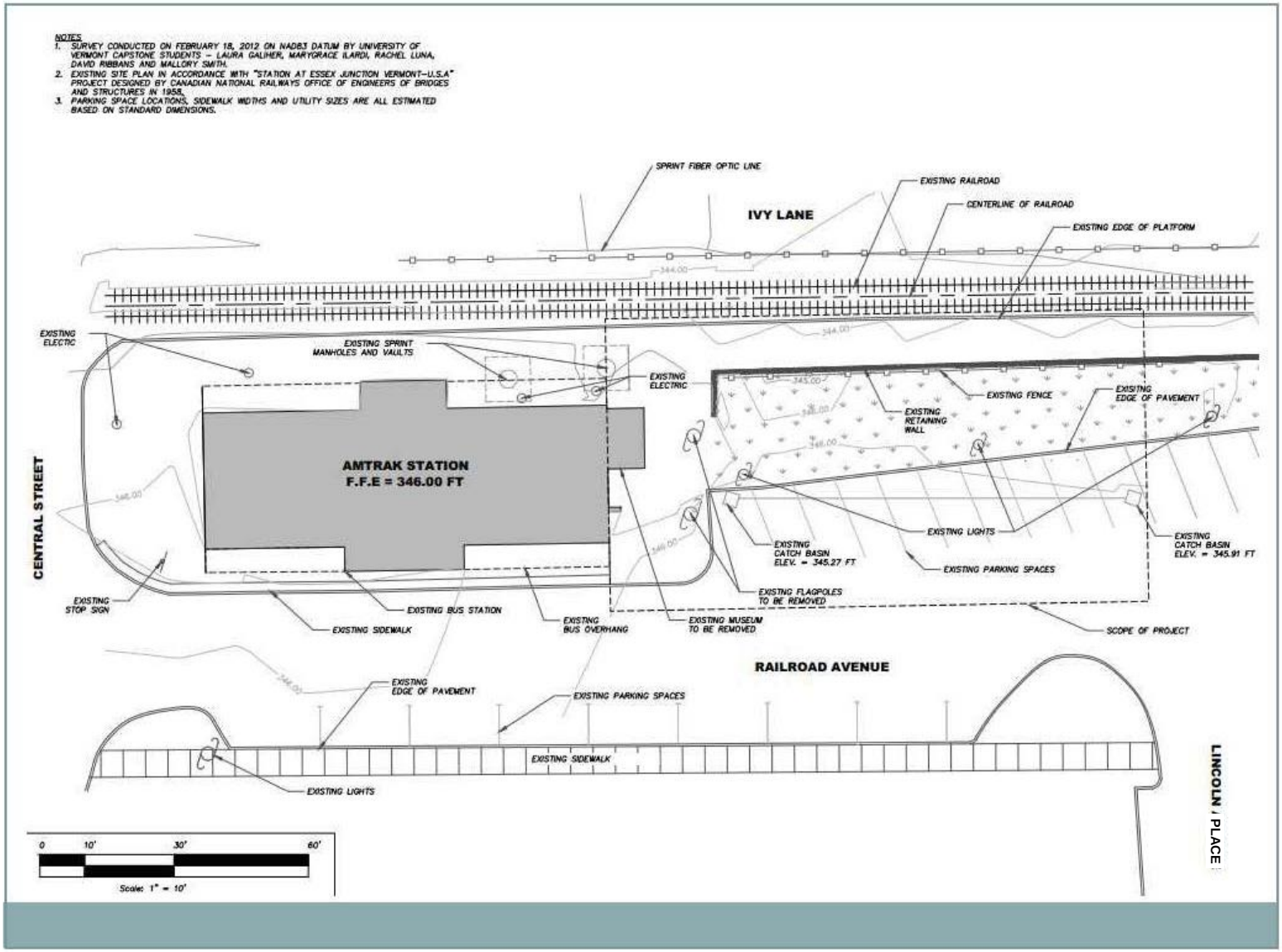

Figure 25. Plan showing existing conditions for the Amtrak station (provided by RSG).

Figure 26. View southeast of Amtrak station; note glassed-in bus waiting area on west side of building and changes to door/window openings (see Figure 24).

Figure 27. View northeast of Amtrak station; note glassed-in bus waiting area on west side of building, and overhang and small enclosed area on south side.

Figure 28. View northwest of Amtrak station; note overhang and small enclosed area on south side.

Figure 29. View southwest of Amtrak station.

McClure Access Moving and Mini Storage

McClure Access Moving and Mini Storage is a concrete block building located along the north side of Central Street, at the northern terminus of Railroad Avenue (see Figure 1; Figure 30). This structure appears to be a different building than the one that is mapped at this location in 1944 (Sanborn 1944), but has likely been in place here since at least 1999 (Google Earth Historical Imagery). A long, pre-fabricated metal wing is attached to the northern side of the building. The building is not part of the Downtown Essex Junction Commercial Historic District and it does not appear individually eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NR), and this review does not recommend inclusion on the NR.

Figure 30. View northwest of McClure Access Moving and Mini Storage building.

Beverage/Bottle Redemption Center

A beverage/bottle redemption center building is located along the north side of Central Street, just to the west of the northern terminus of Railroad Avenue (see Figure 1; Figure 31). This structure is a different building than the one that is mapped at this location in 1944, when a bowling alley occupied the site (Sanborn 1944), but has likely been in place here since at least 1999 (Google Earth Historical Imagery). The building is not part of the Downtown Essex Junction Commercial Historic District and it does not appear individually eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NR), and this review does not recommend inclusion on the NR.

Figure 31. View northwest of beverage/bottle redemption center.

Sunoco Gas Station

The Sunoco Station at the corner of Main Street and Ivy Lane, may be the same building that was constructed as a Texaco Station ca. 1960 (see Figure 1; Figure 32) (Bent:100). The building retains some of the typical characteristics and design elements of the "metal clad box" type service station that was utilized by Texaco in the mid-20th century, including the openings, metal cladding and the three stripes near the roof line of the building (Figure 33) (Liebs:104-105). None of the openings retain their original plate glass windows or multi-paned glass doors (one opening has been infilled with brick and a stove pipe), and no Texaco signs, or the trade-mark stars, remain at the building. The building is not part of the Downtown Essex Junction Commercial Historic District and it does not appear individually eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NR), and this review does not recommend inclusion on the NR.

Figure 32. View northeast of Sunoco Station at corner of Main Street and Ivy Lane; Ivy Lane in foreground.

Figure 33. Texaco advertisement from 1955 showing the metal clad box type service station (Life Magazine 1955).

POTENTIAL EFFECTS

Although project plans are not yet available for review, upgrades to the existing Amtrak train station and improvements to parking and traffic circulation around the train station can probably take place without adversely affecting the National Register-Listed Downtown Essex Junction Commercial Historic District. The Amtrak station lies outside of the boundaries of the District, so renovations to the building will have no direct impact on the District and indirect impacts can likely be avoided as long as upgrades do not create a building that is out of scale or character with the District. Parking and traffic circulation components of the project should aim to stay within existing Right of Way limits. Possible project elements that could have the potential to affect historic resources would be the addition of any new lighting, signage, traffic calming measures, signalized crosswalks, etc.; such elements should, when applicable, be as compatible as possible (for example any new lighting fixtures) and locations should minimize impact to resources (for example, avoid placing large poles, etc. directly in front of historic buildings). Once developed, a review of project plans will be necessary to determine specific project effects on the standing historic resources identified. Once plans are developed, early coordination with the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation is recommended.

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APPENDIX F. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE INSPECTION

Archaeological Site Inspection for the proposed Essex Junction Train Station Project, Essex Junction, Chittenden County, Vermont

Submitted to:

Joseph Wildey
Proposal Coordinator
Resource Systems Group
55 Railroad Row
White River Junction, VT 05001

Submitted by:

Charles Knight, Ph.D.

University of Vermont
Consulting Archaeology Program
111 Delehanty Hall
180 Colchester Ave.
Burlington, VT 05405

Report No. 860

April 30, 2015

Archaeological Site Inspection for the proposed Essex Junction Train Station Project, Essex Junction, Chittenden County, Vermont

Project Description

The Village of Essex Junction, with assistance from Resource Systems Group, proposes the Essex Junction Train Station Project, Essex Junction, Chittenden County, Vermont (Figure 1).) The proposed project will upgrade the existing train station and improve parking and traffic circulation around the train station in Essex Junction, Vermont.

The University of Vermont Consulting Archaeology Program (UVM CAP) conducted an Archaeological Resources Assessment (ARA) of the proposed project area and identified no portion of the proposed project area as sensitive for precontact Native American or historic Euroamerican archaeological sites (Figure 3).

Study Goal

The goal of an ARA (or "review") is to identify portions of a specific project's APE that have the potential for containing precontact and/or historic sites. An ARA is to be accomplished through a "background search" and a "field inspection" of the project area. For this study, reference materials were reviewed following established guidelines. Resources examined included the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) files; the Historic Sites and Structures Survey; and the USGS master archaeological maps that accompany the Vermont Archaeological Inventory (VAI). Relevant town histories and nineteenth-century maps also were consulted. Based on the background research, general contexts were derived for precontact and historic resources in the study area.

Archaeological Site Potential

No known precontact Native American archaeological sites are known from within, or adjacent to the proposed project area. The closest known precontact archaeological site is VT-CH-49, which represents the recovery of a single slate projectile point found by an individual somewhere in the Village of Essex Junction, thus the exact location of its recovery is not known. Beyond this single artifact find of questionable provenience, several archaeological sites are known 700 m to the south adjacent to the confluence of an unnamed tributary of the Winooski River and the Winooski River. Considering the historic development in the general area of Essex Junction, little intact soils may exist which would allow for the identification of precontact Native American archaeological sites.

In regard to historic period resources, both the historic 1857 Wallings map (Figure 3) and the 1871 Beers map (Figure 4) depict the railroad tracks and station in basically the same spot as they are in today. Although the train station has been rebuilt, it was done so on the same footprint as the original station. The historic structures depicted in both maps on Railroad Ave and Route 15 are still there and still occupied. Therefore, no buildings are depicted adjacent to the project parcel that are not still in use.

Desk Review

As part of the desk review, the UVM CAP utilized the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation's (VDHP) predictive model for identifying precontact Native American archaeological sites. The Essex Junction Train Station Project scores 0 on the Predictive Model, due to the fact that it is not located within 180 m of any of the environmental variables that are considered archaeologically sensitive. In addition to the paper-based predictive model, the desk review uses a Geographical Information System (GIS) developed jointly by the UVM CAP, and its consultant Earth Analytic, Inc., which operationalizes the paper-based model. It does this by applying the VDHP's sensitivity criteria to all lands within the State of Vermont. In these maps, archaeological sensitivity is depicted by the presence of one or more overlapping factors, or types of archaeological sensitivity (i.e. proximity to water, etc.). The Essex Junction Train Station Project crosses areas that contain five sensitivity factors, which are: Kame Terrace and Level Terrain (see Figure 1).

Field Inspection

A field inspection of the project area was carried out on April 29, 2015 by Charles Knight, Assistant Director of the UVM CAP. Knight inspected the entire project area, as well as the neighboring cemetery to the east. The entire project area has been heavily disturbed by historic construction, which includes the construction of the existing railroad tracks, station and associated parking (see Figure 2). However, the Essex Junction Cemetery to the east may contain intact soils along its western border with the proposed project area. Therefore, the cemetery was inspected for the potential existence of unmarked graves that might extend westward into the Area of Potential Effects (APE) of the proposed project. Grave stone at close proximity to the western boundary of the cemetery would be one indicator of potential graves extending westward. The field inspection determined that there is considerable space between the western limit of the headstones and the project area (Figure 5a). In the northwest corner of the cemetery however, several grave stone were located within 2 m of the western boundary (Figure 5b). However, the orientation of the head stones indicates that the graves are aligned to the east, and their relatively recent dates of interment in the middle of the Twentieth century indicates that it is very unlikely that they extend outside the limits of the cemetery. As a result, there is little to no chance unmarked burials exist underneath the project's APE. The area to the immediate west of the cemetery has been heavily disturbed by the construction of buildings associated with the train station and parking (Figure 6). Beyond the cemetery, the area has been developed by various iterations of parking and train station access, and thus has been thoroughly disturbed.

Conclusions

The Village of Essex Junction proposes the Essex Junction Train Station Project, Essex Junction, Chittenden County, Vermont. The UVM CAP conducted an Archaeological Resources Assessment of the proposed Area of Potential Effects and identified no areas of either precontact Native American or historic period Euroamerican archaeological sensitivity. The entire area has been heavily disturbed, thus destroying any soils that may have contained precontact Native American sites. The modern train station sits atop the exact location of the historic train station and all the adjacent historic buildings are still occupied. Therefore, no historic period archaeological sites are expected in the project area. The Essex Junction Cemetery to the east

contains intact soils and dates at least until the middle of the 1800s. Nonetheless, no portion of the cemetery was impacted by the construction of the train station. In fact, historic maps indicate that the cemetery grew in size to the west in the later part of the 1800s, abutting the railroad property limits. Therefore there is no chance that unmarked graves exist within the proposed project area. In general, the proposed project will not disturb areas of archaeological sensitivity and no additional archaeological work is recommended.

Thank you for working with us on this project. Please let me know if you have any questions or comments.

Charles Knight, Ph.D.
Assistant Director

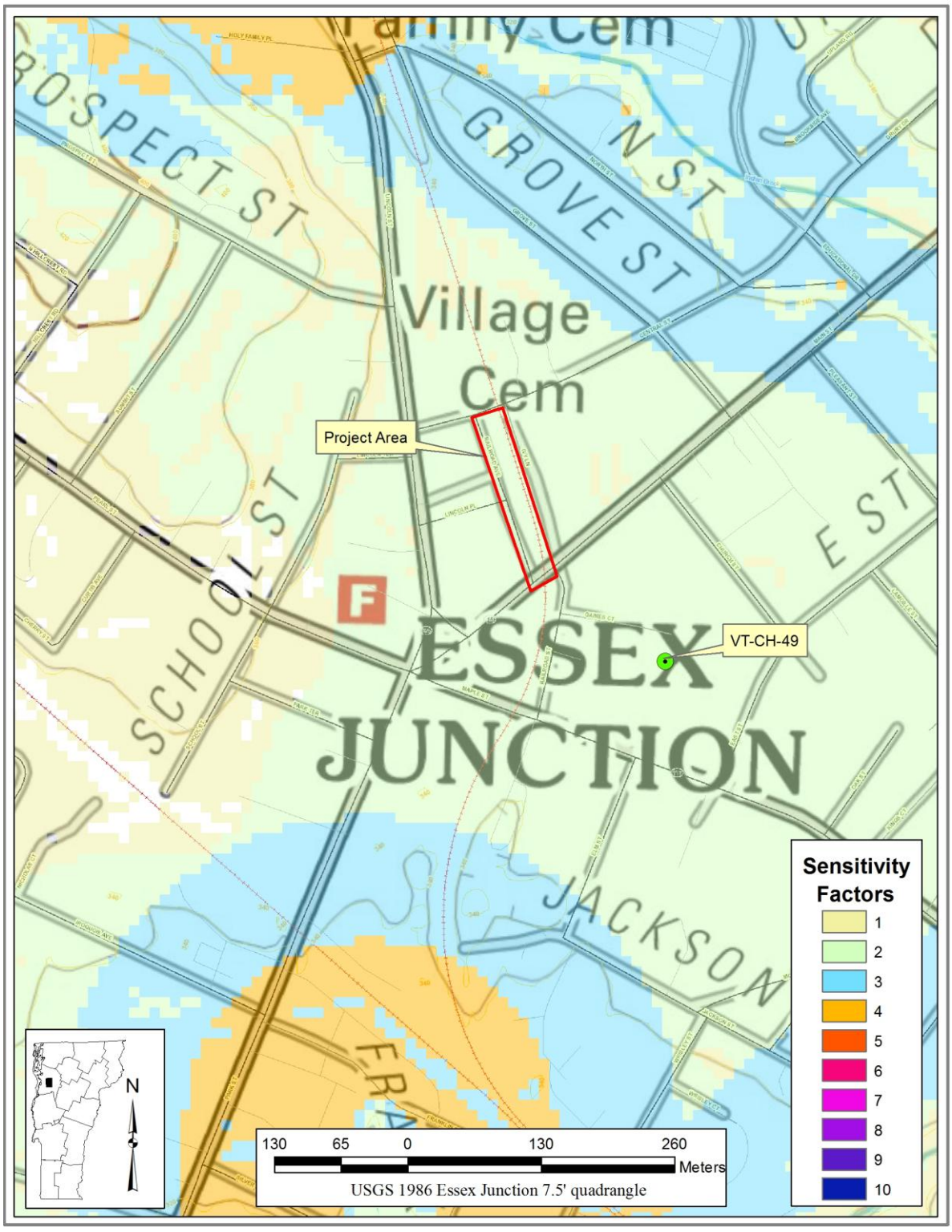


Figure 1. Map showing the location of the proposed Essex Junction Train Station Project, in relation to archaeological sensitivity factors, Essex Junction, Chittenden County, Vermont.

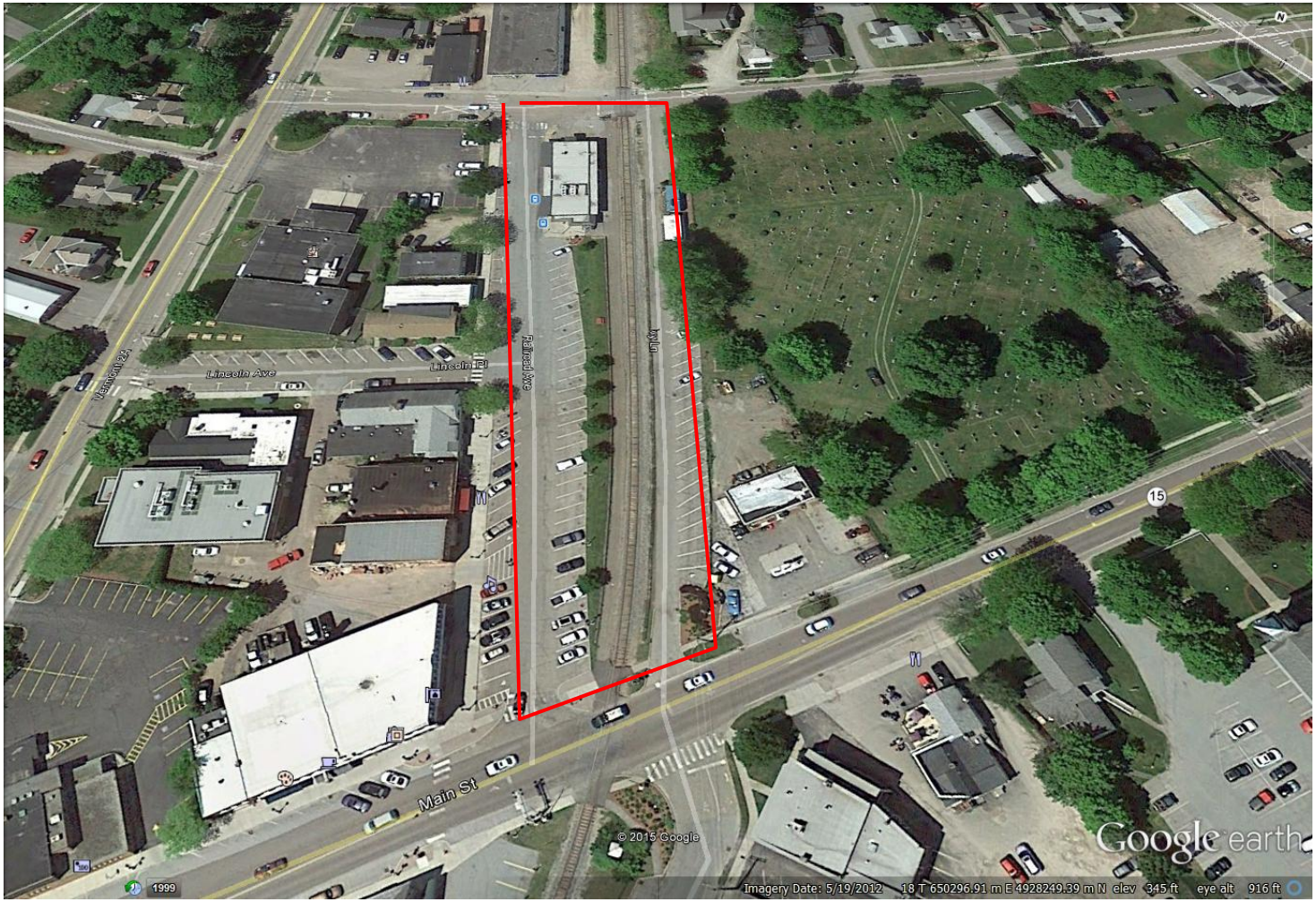


Figure 2. 2012 oblique Google Earth image looking north at the project area of the proposed Essex Junction Train Station Project, Essex Junction, Chittenden County, Vermont

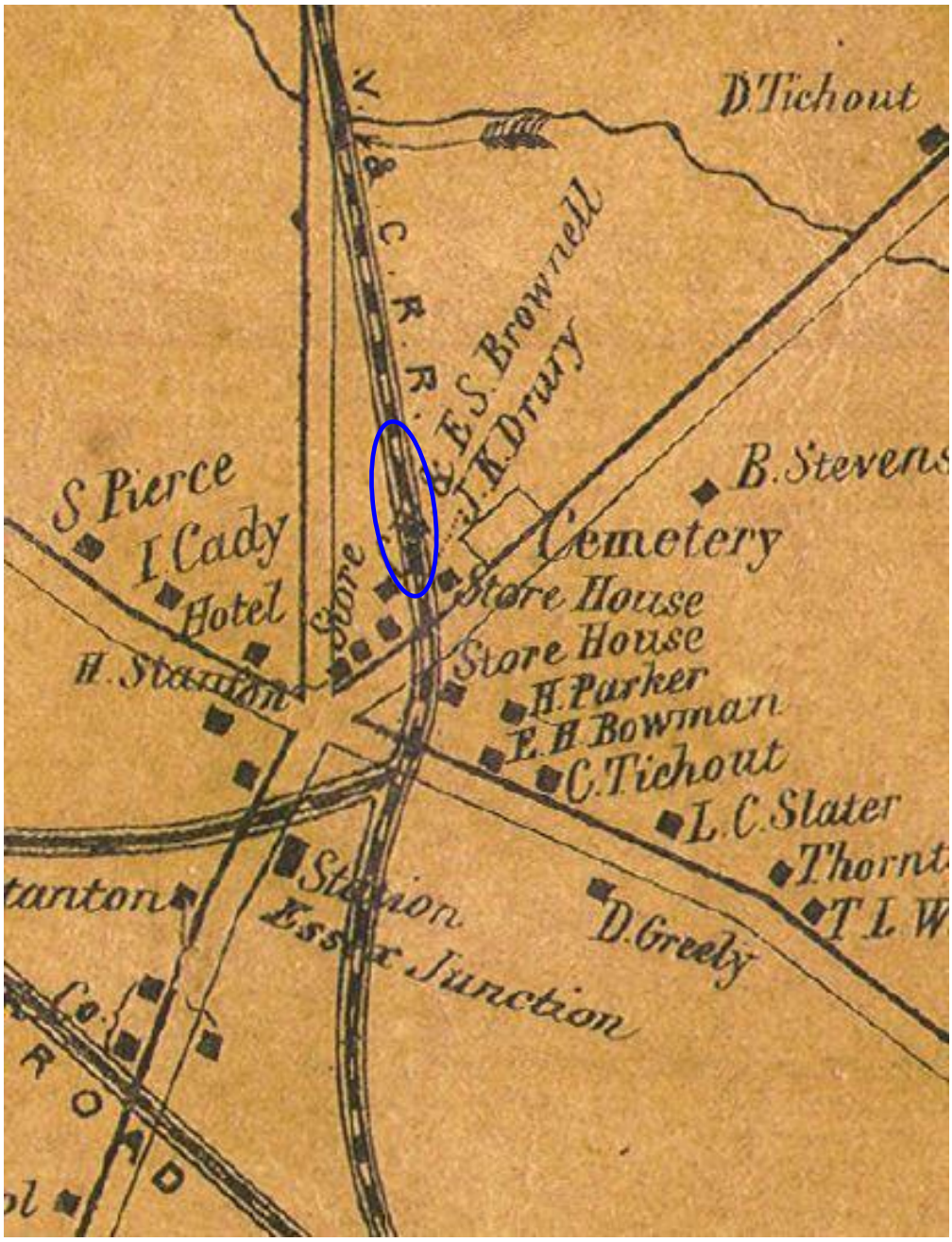


Figure 3. Historic 1857 Walling's map showing the location of the proposed Essex Junction Train Station Project, Essex Junction, Chittenden County, Vermont.

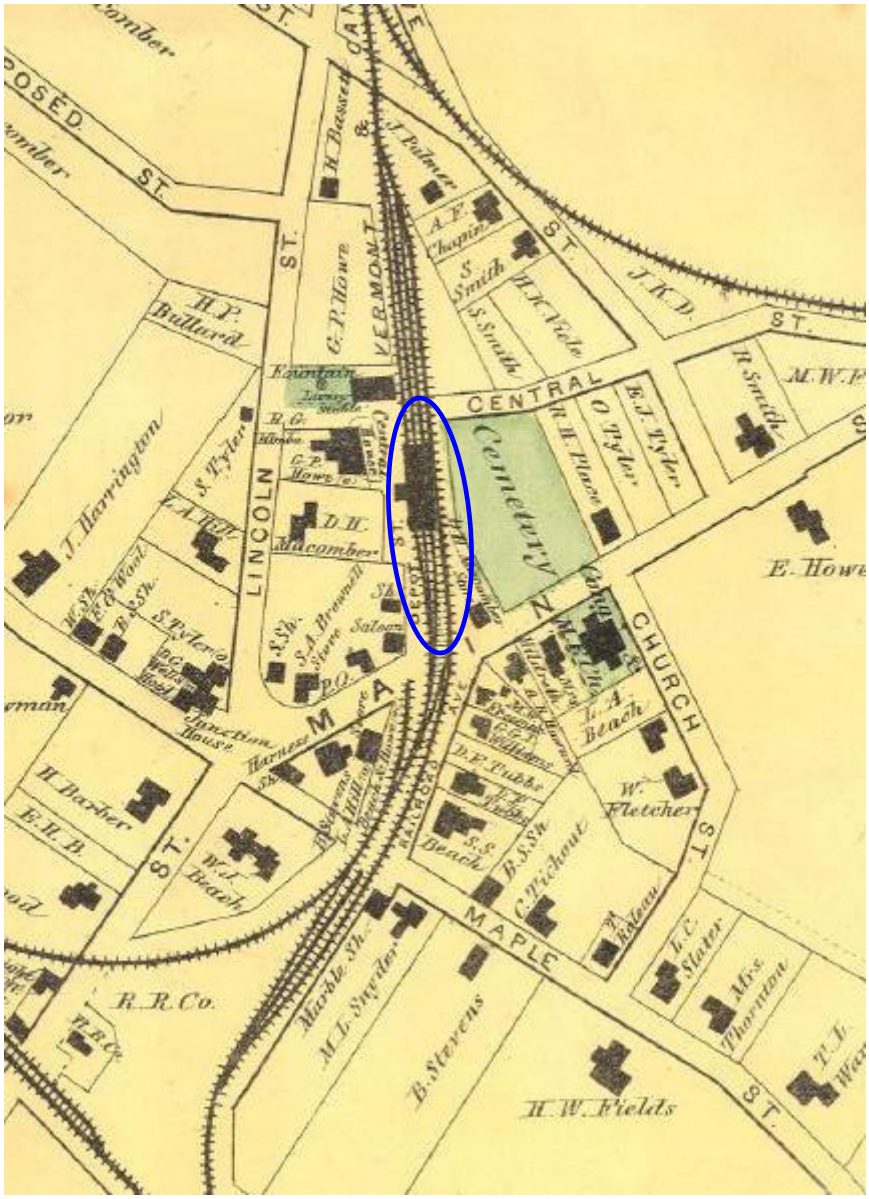
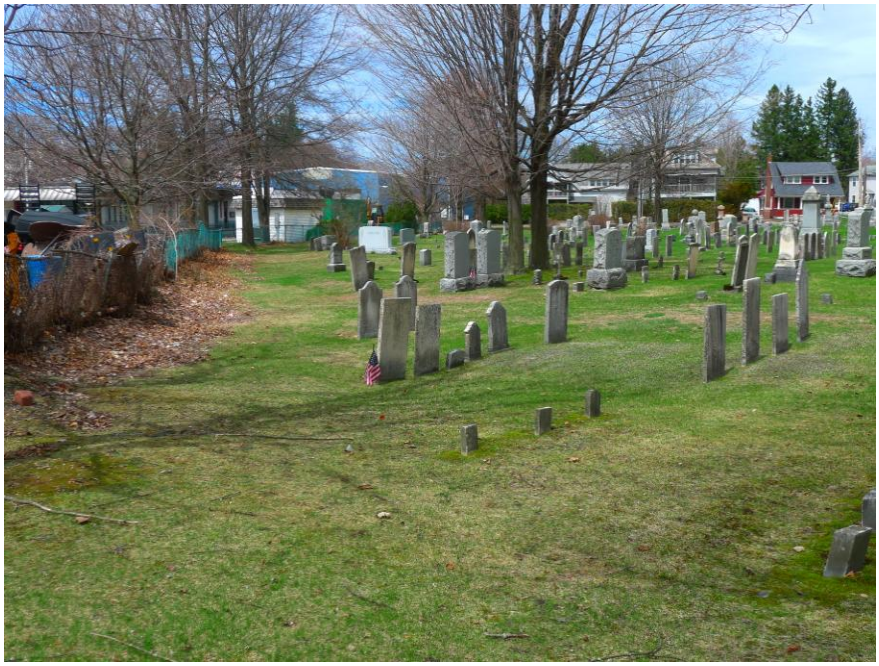


Figure 4. Historic 1869 Beer's atlas showing the location of the proposed Essex Junction Train Station Project, Essex Junction, Chittenden County, Vermont.



a

b

Figure 5. Photo looking north at the western edge of the Essex Junction Cemetery (a) and north into the northwest corner showing gravestone near western edge (b) of the cemetery, Essex Junction, Chittenden County, Vermont

a

b

Figure 6. Photo looking south along the eastern edge of the project APE (a) and north at the boundary between the project APE and the Essex junction Cemetery (b) for the proposed Essex Junction Train Station Project, Essex Junction, Chittenden County, Vermont.

APPENDIX G. VILLAGE TRUSTEE MEETING NOTES, OCTOBER 27, 2015 AND JANUARY 26, 2016

TRUSTEES MEETING NOTICE & AGENDA
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2015 at 6:30 PM
LINCOLN HALL MEETING ROOM, 2 LINCOLN STREET

1. **CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO FLAG** [6:30 PM]
2. **AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**
3. **GUESTS, PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS**
   a. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda
   b. Presentation of Alternatives: Essex Junction Train Station Access and Circulation Study – Robert Chamberlin of RSG, Inc.
4. **OLD BUSINESS**
   a. Heart and Soul Proposal – Lori Houghton/Pat Scheidel
5. **NEW BUSINESS**
   a. Winter Operations Plan – Dennis Lutz and Rick Jones
   b. GPS Tracking Systems for Selected Vehicles – Dennis Lutz and Rick Jones
   c. Grant Application for Electric Car Charging Station – Darby Mayville
   d. Appointment to CCRPC Clean Water Advisory Committee – Pat Scheidel
6. **MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S REPORT**
   a. Trustees meeting schedule
7. **TRUSTEES' COMMENTS & CONCERNS/READING FILE**
   a. Board Member Comments
   b. Minutes from Other Boards/Committees:
      - Capital Program Review Committee 10/6/15
      - Tree Advisory Committee 10/6/15
      - Planning Commission 10/15/15
   c. Noise Monitoring Reports for Champlain Valley Fair Events
   d. CSWD FYE 15 Annual Report
   e. Letter from the Chair of the CSWD Board of Commissioners
8. **CONSENT AGENDA**
   a. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting 10/13/15
   b. Expense Warrant #16013 dated 10/16/15 in the amount of $212,164.57
   c. Expense Warrant #16014 dated 10/22/15 in the amount of $611,059.22
9. **ADJOURN**

Meetings of the Trustees are accessible to people with disabilities. For information on accessibility or this agenda, call the Village Manager's office at 878-6944.

VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF MEETING
October 27, 2015

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: Dan Kerin, Lori Houghton, Elaine Sopchak. (George Tyler and Andrew Brown were absent.)

ADMINISTRATION: Patrick Scheidel, Municipal Manager; Rick Jones, Public Works Superintendent; Robin Pierce, Development Director; Darby Mayville, Community Relations Assistant.

OTHERS PRESENT: Greg Morgan, Christine Forde, Mark Burney, James Melone, Colin Flanders, Jaye O'Connell, Susan Olson, Aaron Olson, Isaak Olson, Peter Olson, Tom Shearer, John Alden, Bob Chamberlin, Dennis Lutz.

[Note: Minutes reflect the order of the published agenda.]

1. CALL TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

In the absence of Village President, George Tyler, Dan Kerin called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

Add:

- Information on Heart & Soul proposal and agreement under Old Business.
- Vote to go forward with Heart & Soul proposal by Essex Selectboard.
- Memo on joint meeting with Trustees and Selectboard under Manager's Report.
- Letter to Linda Costello under Manager's Report.

MOTION by Lori Houghton, SECOND by Elaine Sopchak, to accept the agenda as amended. VOTING: unanimous (3-0); motion carried.

3. GUESTS, PRESENTATIONS, PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda

2. Presentation: Alternatives from Essex Junction Train Station Access & Circulation Study

Bob Chamberlin, RSG, Christine Forde, RPC, and John Alden, Scott + Partners, presented alternative solutions relative to the train station access and circulation. After the project scoping is done the project will be included in the TIP and VTrans capital program then to implementation. The project scope covers the condition of the building, parking, bike/ped access, public safety in the area, bus waiting area, and passenger waiting area. The following building alternatives were reviewed:

- Alternative #1 – No Build (make no change to existing conditions). There is no cost for Alternative #1, but the alternative does not provide an effective solution.
- Alternative #2 – Full Build that includes:

  - Roof spanning over the top of the existing train station building and extending over the bus wait area and the platform for train access. The roof will have mechanical louvers, skylights, and a clock. There is opportunity for benches under the roofed area.
  - Glass enclosed heated and air conditioned interior wait area with bathroom facility. The waiting area functions separately from the original train station building.
  - Modification of the curbing on Railroad Avenue for better traffic flow.
  - Roofed taxi waiting area.
  - Security/surveillance as part of the rebuild.
  - Cost of Alternative #2 is $1.34 million. Alternate #2 best addresses needs.
- Alternative #3 – Partial Build that includes:
  - New waiting area and roof with overhang over waiting area only (i.e. bus and train loading platform are not covered with the roof canopy).
  - Cost of Alterative #3 is $1.1 million. Alternative #3 does not address needs as effectively as Alternative #2.

The following transportation needs were reviewed:

- The radius of the curb at the intersection of Central St./Railroad Ave. needs to be changed to accommodate right turns by buses onto Railroad Avenue.
- More green space is needed in the area.
- Sidewalk is needed on the train station side of the road.
- Pedestrian crossing on Railroad Avenue is needed.
- Alternative uses for Ivy Lane should be considered to add more value to the village.
- Bus stacking in the travel way is not convenient or safe and needs to be addressed.
- Possible traffic circulation solutions include a) no change to existing conditions, b) two-way circulation on Railroad Avenue, c) one-way circulation on Railroad Avenue and Ivy Lane.
  - With the two-way and one-way circulation models:
    - Angled parking remains
    - Two CCTA buses can be stacked
    - Six foot wide sidewalk on the train station side of the road is added
    - Green space is increased
    - Crosswalk is added
    - Plaza space is added
    - Curb radius for bus turning is changed
    - Electric car charge station can be added
    - Taxi waiting area is added.
- With the two-way circulation model approximately 30 parking spaces are lost due to bus stacking area, bump-out on the street, curb radius reduction, and taxi waiting area. There are 60 spaces currently on Railroad Ave.
- With the one-way circulation model the travel lane is narrowed on Railroad Avenue. Ivy Lane circulation is in a clockwise direction. The sidewalk remains at 16' wide on the Brownell Block side of Railroad Ave. There is a 7' wide sidewalk

on the station side, green space, and bump-outs. The same number of parking spaces are lost due to bus stacking.

- With the two-way traffic flow scenario the cost to change the curbing, build sidewalks and crosswalks is approximately $200,000. The cost with one-way traffic flow is slightly higher because more sidewalk will be built.
- Negotiation with the railroad is necessary for any changes on Ivy Lane.
- One-way traffic flow is safety for pedestrians, but even the new two-way flow scenario is safer than current conditions.
- There are some right-of-way and traffic impacts that must be resolved, and the interaction of Ivy Lane with the crescent connector should be considered.

COMMENTS

There were questions/comments as follows:

- The shed for the handicap ramp to the train will remain though there can be discussion of a different location.
- The existing train station can be repainted or remain as is. The railroad does not object to the canopy over the building. In fact, New England Central Railroad is happy with the proposal.
- Amtrak has a federal directive to elevate the ramp for passenger access to the train. It is not known when this will be done.
- To get buses out of the travel lane on Railroad Avenue some angled parking will be lost (four or five spaces).
- There will be access to the original building for maintenance, but not for the general public.
- The village will own and maintain the new structure. The village does not own the train station.
- There is the possibility of incorporating a coffee shop to draw people to the area. Having more people in the area will help with surveillance.
- Cars parking in available spaces all day is an issue. The railroad designated a couple long term parking spaces for Amtrak passengers, but there is no signage or regulation in place to prevent others from parking long term.
- Observation of the area showed a number of parking spaces open during the day and that better use of Ivy Lane for parking is needed.
- According to a former Amtrak stationmaster there may be up to a dozen Amtrak passengers parking their cars overnight on Ivy Lane.
- There is a safety factor with buses parked in the travel lane on Railroad Ave. which forces drivers to pull into parking spaces to avoid oncoming traffic.
- Some parking spaces are temporarily lost to snow piles until Public Works removes the piles.
- Twenty-two (22) parking spaces associated with the proposed crescent connector road are closer to Park Street than Railroad Avenue.
- There is concern about incorporating a road that the village leases and does not own (Ivy Lane) into the plan.

- According to a former Amtrak stationmaster people have inadvertently turned onto the railroad tracks while trying to park on Ivy Lane. Extending the fence on Ivy Lane to Central Street would differentiate the tracks.
- A median strip likely cannot be added on Railroad Avenue because the road width is not the same for the entire length of the street.
- The turn radius must be large enough to accommodate large fire apparatus.
- Looking at traffic flow for the entire quadrant (i.e. Railroad Avenue, Ivy Lane, crescent connector) would be most advantageous.
- Consideration should be given to Lincoln Place and Central Street with regard to aesthetics, pedestrians, and parking. Lincoln Place has parking that is not highly used during the day. One possibility is to make Lincoln Place two-way flow and change the parking to parallel spaces. The area could be made more appealing for parking by adding lights and sidewalk though this work is not part of the current study (request could be made to Regional Planning to expand the study).
- Amtrak service to Montreal may return which will increase traffic and parking needs in the area. Lincoln Place could be part of the parking inventory. Improvements can be made.
- The proposed canopy over the station will extend to cover the waiting space for train and bus patrons. There will also be benches. The train station has had internal improvements over the years, but the building footprint has not changed. The train station portion occupies one corner of the building. Other tenants occupy the remainder of the building.
- There has been discussion of closing the portion of Main Street from Railroad Avenue to Five Corners at some point which could be a consideration on which alternative is best.
- A decision could be made on the train station project separate from the transportation alternative so more information can be gathered on transportation issues.
- Piecemeal planning is not desirable. A plan for the bigger picture is needed.
- Any improvements to the area to increase the safety and aesthetics of the area are welcomed.
- An analysis and assessment of existing parking throughout the downtown area should be done as well as a holistic look at public parking for the next 10-15 years.

The Trustees want input from all members before choosing an alternative. Staff will research the impact of traffic flow on Railroad Avenue and Ivy Lane relative to the crescent connector. One-way flow appears to help with AM traffic and two-way flow appears to help with PM traffic. Staff will post information on the train station and traffic circulation alternatives on the website.

MOTION by Elaine Sopchak, SECOND by Lori Houghton, to table action on the train station access and circulation study until the November 10, 2015 Trustees meeting. VOTING: unanimous (3-0); motion carried.

4. OLD BUSINESS

1. Heart and Soul Proposal
Lori Houghton reported there is potential for grant money from Orton which would be used for communication (calendar), to hire an expert in public engagement, training public officials, and creating a public communications guide. Essex Selectboard endorsed the proposal to create a public engagement protocol.

MOTION by Elaine Sopchak, SEOCND by Lori Houghton, to approve the Heart & Soul proposal.

DISCUSSION: Elaine Sopchak noted the current proposal is for $4,000, but the total request is $12,150 to cover the calendar and the expert to continue the Heart & Soul process for a period of time. No town or village money is involved. There were no further comments.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carried.

5. NEW BUSINESS

1. Winter Operations Plan
Dennis Lutz and Rick Jones reviewed the draft Public Works Winter Operations Plan. There is a manual for internal use and a manual for the public. The plan outlines current practices for winter operations by the town and village. At some point as consolidation moves forward there should be one contact number for the public rather than a number for the town and a number for the village. Comments on the draft manual are welcome. The plan will be adopted by both the Selectboard and the Trustees and used as a training document by Public Works and to answer questions from the public on policies and the operation of Public Works in the maintenance of the municipalities.

Lori Houghton mentioned the number of sidewalk miles plowed in the village needs to be included in the plan and communications to the schools should include roads, sidewalks, and weather. How damage to yards by the sidewalk plow is handled should also be documented. A table of contents/index in the document for easy reference would be helpful.

The suggested changes to the document will be incorporated. The manual will be posted as "draft" on the webpage for comments.

MOTION by Lori Houghton, SECOND by Elaine Sopchak, to request staff to post the draft Winter Operations Plan on the website and move the plan to the next Trustees meeting for adoption. VOTING: unanimous (3-0); motion carried.

2. GPS Tracking System for Selected Vehicles
Dennis Lutz reported the police vehicles have GPS systems and the proposal is to install the systems in public works trucks. The system is not expensive to install, but there is a monthly cost per vehicle over the three year contract term. Eighteen public works vehicles (10 in the town and 8 in the village) will have the equipment. The cost will be covered by the town budget through July 2016 and then the village will pay the cost for village vehicles for the subsequent years of the contract. The system will help optimize routes and salt application as well as provide a history of activity of the vehicle to help

with program maintenance. Having the GPS system in the vehicles will provide total coverage because there are some areas without cell service. With the system Police Dispatch will know where all police cars and public works vehicles are at any time. A hierarchy system of access to information will be established. The extent of public access to the information needs to be determined.

MOTION by Dan Kerin, SECOND by Lori Houghton, to approve the request to install GPS tracking systems (Auto Vehicle Locators – AVL) on selected vehicles and to enter into a three year contract with Fleetmatics to install and run such systems on selected village equipment, and further the town will pay the cost for the current year and then the village will pay the cost for village vehicles for the remaining two years on the contract ($35 per vehicle per month for eight vehicles or $3,360). VOTING: unanimous (3-0); motion carried.

3. Grant Application for Electric Car Charging Station
Darby Mayville reported a state grant is available to cover 75% of the cost of a Level 2 electric car charging station in the Village Office parking lot. There will be a designated parking space by the fire station which can only be used by an electric car. Users of the charging station will pay for the charge. Total cost to install is $6,600. The village portion is $1,650 plus $15 per month to have the station networked. There is money in the Matching Grant Fund to cover costs. Having a charge station is a unique feature for the village and will bring publicity and possibly new clients to village businesses.

MOTION by Elaine Sopchak, SECOND by Lori Houghton, to authorize staff to submit the grant application for an electric vehicle charging station, and further, that the Trustees sign the attached resolution and approve $1,650 in matching grant funds. VOTING: unanimous (3-0); motion carried.

4. Appointment to CCRPC Clean Water Advisory Committee
MOTION by Dan Kerin, SECOND by Elaine Sopchak, to appoint the following individuals to the CCRPC Clean Water Advisory Committee:

- **Chelsea Mandigo, village representative**
- **Jim Jutras, alternate**

VOTING: unanimous (3-0); motion carried.

6. MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Meeting Schedule – Regular Trustees Meetings @ 6:30 PM

- November 10, 2015
- November 24, 2015
- December 8, 2015
- December 22, 2015
- January 12, 2016
- January 26, 2016
- February 9, 2016
- February 23, 2016

*Special Events/Meetings

- November 17, 2015 – Joint meeting with Selectboard to discuss winter operation plan, future use of Lincoln Hall, and consolidated highway department
- December 11, 2015 @ 6 PM – Tree Lighting Ceremony and Train Hop

2. Correspondence with Linda Costello
Pat Scheidel said Ms. Costello's letter was sent to Police Chief LaRose for more speed enforcement in the area. Unfortunately the standards are not met for crosswalks. Staff will investigate the liability to the village if crosswalks and lights are installed when the warrants are not met. Also, staff will contact CCTA about moving the bus stop to the other side of Pearl Street.

3. St. Albans Visit
Staff is working on a date for the visit to St. Albans.

7. TRUSTEES COMMENTS/CONCERNS & READING FILE

1. Board Member Comments
None.
2. Reading File

- Minutes
  - Capital Program Review Committee 10/6/15
  - Tree Advisory Committee 10/6/15
  - Planning Commission 10/15/15
- Noise Monitoring Reports for Champlain Valley Fair Events
- CSWD FYE15 Annual Report
- Letter from Chair of CSWD Board of Commissioners

8. CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION by Lori Houghton, SECOND by Elaine Sopchak, to approve the consent agenda as follows:

1. **Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting 10/13/15.**
2. **Expense Warrant #16013 dated 10/16/15 in the amount of $212,164.57.**
3. **Expense Warrant #16014 dated 10/22/15 in the amount of $611,059.22.**

VOTING: unanimous (3-0); motion carried.

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Elaine Sopchak, SECOND by Lori Houghton, to adjourn the meeting.
VOTING: unanimous (3-0); motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 PM.

RScty: M.E.Riordan smh

TRUSTEES MEETING NOTICE & AGENDA
TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2016 at 6:30 PM
LINCOLN HALL MEETING ROOM, 2 LINCOLN STREET

1. **CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO FLAG** [6:30 PM]
2. **AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**
3. **APPROVE AGENDA**
4. **GUESTS, PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS**
   a. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda
   b. Public Hearing on FYE 17 Proposed Budgets and Capital Programs
   c. Train Station Access and Circulation Study – Christine Forde, CCRPC, Bob Chamberlin, RSG, and John Alden, Scott + Partners
5. **OLD BUSINESS**
   a. None
6. **NEW BUSINESS**
   a. 2015 Draft Annual Report Dedication and Covers – George Tyler
   b. * Real Estate Opportunities – George Tyler
7. **MANAGER'S REPORT**
   a. Trustees meeting schedule
8. **TRUSTEES' COMMENTS & CONCERNS/READING FILE**
   a. Board Member Comments
   b. Minutes from Other Boards/Committees:
      - Capital Program Review Committee 1/5/16
      - Tree Advisory Committee 1/5/16
      - Bike/Walk Advisory Committee 1/11/16
   c. Grant Award Letter from VTrans for Brickyard Road Stormwater Improvement Project
   d. Grant Award Letter from Hoehl Family Foundation for Senior Center
   e. Email from Swanton Wind Opposition re: Rutland Town Resolution
9. **CONSENT AGENDA**
   a. Minutes of Previous Meeting 1/12/16
   b. Expense Warrant #16026 dated 1/15/16 in the amount of $42,594.05
   c. FYE 16 Budget Status Report through December 2015
   d. CCSU Request to Close Streets for Stream of Lights Parade 2/12/16
   e. CCRPC Application FYE 17 UPWP for Main Street Closure Scoping Study
   f. Letter of Support to Vermont Energy Investment Corporation
10. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**
    a. *Real Estate Opportunities
11. **ADJOURN**

VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF MEETING
January 26, 2016

BOARD OF TRUSTEES:	George Tyler (Village President); Dan Kerin, Elaine Sopchak, Andrew Brown, Lori Houghton.
ADMINISTRATION:	Patrick Scheidel, Municipal Manager; Lauren Morrisseau, Assistant Manager & Finance Director; Robin Pierce, Development Director.
OTHERS PRESENT:	Wayne Beebe, John Alden, Al Villa, John Gaworecki, Greg & Toni Morgan, Fran Kinghorn, Jaye O'Connell, Christine Forde, Bob Chamberlin, Roxanne Meuse, James Melone.

[Note: Minutes reflect the order of the published agenda.]

1. CALL TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Village President, George Tyler called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. AGENDA CHANGES/APPROVAL

Add:

- Memo on Ad Hoc Governance Committee to Manager's Report
- Information on Winooski housing code to Manager's Report

MOTION by Dan Kerin, SECOND by Lori Houghton, to accept the agenda as amended. VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

3. GUESTS, PRESENTATIONS, PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda

John Gaworecki, caretaker of the Amtrak train station, requested more parking spaces on Ivy Lane for Amtrak passengers. Mr. Gaworecki explained the recent incident involving an Amtrak passenger who parked his car on Ivy Lane with an Amtrak parking permit in a parking space not designated as Amtrak parking and the car was towed. The cost to retrieve the car was $305. No one was aware the village had reserved spaces or a parking policy on Ivy Lane. Mr. Gaworecki said he is planning to pay the fine himself in order to maintain an Amtrak customer and a friend of Essex Junction. Mr. Gaworecki also mentioned a junk car was parked on Ivy Lane for a couple of months without consequence.

Jim Melone, former train station caretaker, said it is time for Essex Junction to rise and shine for Amtrak passengers coming to the village and ensure they have a pleasant experience. At one time the village had a pamphlet listing stores and restaurants to visit while in the village. Regarding parking, the number of Amtrak passengers leaving their car overnight while taking the train is increasing. Adding a clause to the parking regulations that says Amtrak passengers with a parking permit are allowed to park on Ivy

Lane should rectify the problem. Mr. Melone recalled when Ivy Lane was built Amtrak had parking spaces and people applied for a permit for the remaining spaces.

The Trustees will add discussion of parking on Ivy Lane to a future agenda.

2. Public Hearing: FYE17 Proposed Budgets and Capital Programs
The public hearing was opened at 7:55 PM. Lauren Morrisseau gave a presentation on the proposed FYE17 budgets and capital programs. The following was highlighted:

- Proposed FYE17 General Fund Budget is $3,953,074 (4% increase due to salaries, salt, paving, insurance, debt service, capital contributions).
- Proposed FYE17 enterprise fund budgets (Water, Waste Water, Sanitation) total $10,016,169 (5.6% increase).
- Proposed FYE17 Capital Funds (General Fund Capital Reserve, Rolling Stock, Water Capital, Waste Water Capital, Sanitation Capital) total $703,499. Capital projects include the water line on Railroad Avenue, meter upgrades to radio reads, server replacement in the Village Office, engineering the Hillcrest sidewalk, South Street pump station repairs/maintenance, digester cleaning at the treatment plant, capital planning (20 year), and waste water return activated sludge pump. Rolling stock purchases include a pickup truck, compressor, and payment on the fire truck note.
- With the Town of Essex contributing 100% of the Street Department Budget, the village tax rate will decrease from $0.2366 to $0.2269 (one cent decrease).
- The combined services initiative with the town has saved money.

George Tyler commented the proposed budget maintains present service levels. The budget and the one cent shaved off the tax rate to be designated for a village improvement project will be voted as two separate items at annual meeting. There has been much discussion on encouraging public engagement and giving the public opportunity to comment. The public hearing on the proposed budget was advertised and yet there are only two citizens in attendance.

There were no further comments.

MOTION by Elaine Sopchak, SECOND by Dan Kerin, to close the public hearing on the proposed FYE17 budgets and capital programs. VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

The hearing was closed at 8:10 PM.

3. Train Station Access and Circulation Study
Christine Forde, CCRPC, Bob Chamberlin, RSG, and John Booth, Scott + Partners, held the third public meeting on the train station project being funded with federal transportation planning funds. The following was highlighted:

- The project encompasses the train station building and surrounding transportation issues.

- Several alternatives were studied for both the train station building design and transportation alternatives.
- The recommendation is for a partial building canopy (no plaza) over the train station and a one-way traffic circulation pattern. The recommendation is the lowest cost, addresses key access and circulation deficiencies, results in the least loss of parking, and maximizes green space. The station canopy can be expanded at some point in the future if desired.

There was discussion of the loss of parking with all the alternatives and the interaction of one-way traffic circulation when the crescent connector is built and if Main Street becomes a pedestrian mall from Brownell Block to Five Corners. There was mention of the current problem with buses waiting by the train station in the travel lane and taxicabs parking by the station.

MOTION by George Tyler, SECOND by Lori Houghton, to approve Alternative #4 of the Train Station Access and Circulation Study with the caveat that the waiting area for taxicabs is not ideal and if further study is done this situation will be reviewed.

DISCUSSION: Elaine Sopchak suggested the Police Chief update the Trustees on enforcement of parking by the train station and provide an opinion on traffic flow and parking in the village. There were no further comments.

VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

4. OLD BUSINESS

None.

5. NEW BUSINESS

1. Draft 2015 Annual Report Dedication and Cover

The Trustees concurred with the 2015 Annual Report dedication to Pat Scheidel. Staff will be asked to find pictures of the annual block party and farmers market for inclusion in the report if possible (perhaps removing one or two pictures of the Lincoln Hall restoration work).

2. Real Estate Opportunities

Discussed in Executive Session

6. MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Meeting Schedule – Regular Trustees Meetings @ 6:30 PM

- February 9, 2016
- February 23, 2016
- March 8, 2016
- March 22, 2016
- April 12, 2016

*Special Events/Meetings

- February 16, 2016 @ 7 PM – Joint Meeting with Selectboard, Prudential Committee, and Trustees at EJRP Maple Street
- April 6, 2016 @ 6 PM – Annual Community Supper
- April 6, 2016 @ 7 PM – Annual Meeting
- April 12, 2016 – Australian Ballot Voting, 7 AM – 7 PM

2. Ad Hoc Committee
The purpose and mission of the ad hoc governance committee are decided so the interviews for members can be held. Elaine Sopchak mentioned the commitment of the committee members will be closer to a year, not two months.

3. Housing Code
Winooski Fire Chief offered to discuss the Winooski housing code with the Trustees. The Trustees will add the topic to a future agenda.

3. Town Budget & Meeting
Essex Selectboard held a public hearing and approved the proposed town budget of $13,182,890 (4.73% increase). The highway tax was decreased by one cent due to the $200,000 transfer of funds from the village into the Highway Budget for paving work. He "Public to be Heard" article will continue at annual meeting. The 2016 Town Plan will be on the ballot. There are two incumbents seeking re-election to the Selectboard and two individuals running for the two year unexpired term. The annual town dinner before town meeting will begin at 6:30 PM. Free childcare and bus service to the meeting will be provided.

7. TRUSTEES COMMENTS/CONCERNS & READING FILE

1. Board Member Comments
   - Elaine Sopchak suggested the Trustees discuss the Rutland Town resolution on renewable energy projects. The village needs to have a voice in these matters and may want to adopt a similar resolution. Following further discussion there was agreement to invite the state legislators to the next meeting to discuss the matter.
   - Lori Houghton announced the village received an Orton Foundation grant for $11,800 for public engagement, community report card, and co-working space. An additional $2,500 will be received with a progress report.
   - George Tyler reported on the Vermont Neighborhood Designation received by the village that exempts some development in the village from Act 250 review.
   - George Tyler explained the letter to Vermont Energy Investment Corporation in support of the "Smart Growth" grant. There is no commitment by the village.

2. Reading File
   - Minutes
     - Capital Program Review Committee 1/5/16
     - Bike/Walk Advisory Committee 1/11/16
     - Tree Advisory Committee 1/5/16
   - Grant Award Letter from VTrans for Brickyard Road Storm Water Improvement Project
   - Grant Award Letter from Hoehl Family Foundation for Senior Center

- Email from Swanton Wind Opposition re: Rutland Town Resolution

8. CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION by Andrew Brown, SECOND by Dan Kerin, to approve the consent agenda as follows:

1. **Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting 1/12/16.**
2. **Expense Warrant #16026 dated 1/15/16 in the amount of $42,594.05.**
3. **FYE16 Budget Status Report through December 2015.**
4. **CCSU Request to Close Streets for Stream of Lights Parade 2/12/16.**
5. **CCRPC Application FYE17 UPWP for Main Street Closure Scoping Study.**
6. **Letter of Support to Vermont Energy Investment Corporation.**

VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION and/or ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by George Tyler, SECOND by Lori Houghton, pursuant to the Open Meeting Law and 1VSA313(a)(2) to go into Executive Session to discuss real estate opportunities where premature public knowledge would place the Village of Essex Junction at a substantial disadvantage, and to invite the Municipal Manager and Assistant Manager to attend. VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

Executive Session was convened at 8:50 PM and adjourned at 9 PM. No action was taken following Executive Session.

With no further business and without objection the meeting was adjourned at 9 PM.

RScty: M.E.Riordan