

**Railyard Enterprise Project (REP)
Scoping/Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study
Steering Committee #5 Meeting Notes (Corrected 12-23-13)**
<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/transportation/scoping/railyard-enterprise-project/>

DATE: Wednesday, December 11, 2013
TIME: 6:00-8:00 PM
PLACE: Burlington Department of Public Works, 645 Pine Street
PRESENT: Please See Attached

1) Welcome & Introductions

Michele Boomhower of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

2) Public Comment Period: There were no comments.

3) Study Status & REP-Related Initiatives

Bob Chamberlin of RSG explained that there are seven alternatives that met the initial screening criteria. The alternatives represent a full range of alternatives for further study and consideration.

Bob encouraged the committee to review the street design guideline memo that was distributed prior to the meeting (available on the website). A traffic model is being developed to evaluate the traffic flow of the alternatives. Results will be available for discussion at the next steering committee meeting.

An archeological assessment has been prepared by the consultant team. Bob highlighted one area from the assessment – the former Havey Property (now owned by Vermont Railway). This area is referred to as the “North Slip” as it was once a canal used by barges. It is considered an archeological “area of interest” and will likely need to be assessed further.

Bob reported that the Brownfield Economic Revitalization Alliance (BERA) is researching deed restrictions and assessing hazardous waste issues. A Phase II site assessment is underway for the former Havey property, now owned by VT Railway. As part of this assessment a monitoring well layout has been established. When the wells are drilled an archaeologist will need to be present for evaluation. The Area Wide Planning Grant (AWP), managed by CEDO, is managing and coordinating resources.

4) Review of Phase 2 Alternatives

Bob reported that the Purpose & Need Statement is finalized and will be used to analyze the alternatives. Bob reviewed each of the seven alternatives.

Neil Mickenberg, a Burlington resident, believes that Alternatives C1 and C2 do nothing but add traffic to the King Street neighborhood; they are inconsistent with the Purpose & Need in terms of “increasing livability.” He would like to see these removed from consideration. If the Purpose & Need doesn’t clearly exclude these alternatives, it should be amended. Ilona Blanchard, a resident of South Champlain Street, expressed her concern with these two alternatives as well. She noted that the neighborhood has a concentration of affordable family housing and a playground; adding additional traffic will not improve livability.

Michael Monte of CHT supports keeping all the alternatives and choosing the best solution when additional information is available. Bob explained that RSG is evaluating the alternatives and will have a complete assessment for the next meeting. Julie Campoli, a Burlington resident, noted that although these alternatives have high neighborhood impacts, they have a lot of economic development opportunities.

5) Discussion of Railyard Operations

Mark Colgan and Dan Stein of VHB made a presentation about railyard operations (the presentation is available at: <http://www.ccrpcvt.org/transportation/scoping/railyard-enterprise-project/>)

The railway operates on track owned by the State of Vermont. The track is leased, operated, and maintained by Vermont Railway. The Burlington rail yard is two miles long, stretching from Home Avenue to College Street and encompasses about 47 acres. The yard operates 24 hours a day and handles about 50-60 rail cars daily and 27,000 cars annually. There are 50 employees in Burlington. Commodities include ballast (crushed stone) and other aggregate, calcium chloride, and clay slurry. There is storage of commodities on site. Although Amtrak passenger service is not available now, it may be in the future. If Amtrak is to serve Burlington, there will likely be an additional track needed, possibly adjacent to the main line track between King and College Streets.

Chris Jolly of FHWA asked about the Purpose & Need Statement regarding “improve access to the railyard.” Mark responded that access improvements can’t be quantified until the study’s impacts to the railyard are understood. VHB will be assessing railyard access as part of the overall Phase 2 assessment to be presented at the next meeting.

There was discussion of truck traffic, truck routes, and unused rail sidings. The committee asked Bob and Eleni to gather the following data:

- Average number of trucks accessing the railyard
- Origins-Destinations and routes of trucks accessing the railyard
- Identify rail yard operations (such as storing commodities on-site) that could be consolidated with operations outside the yard – are there locations for commodities to be stored other than the rail yard?

6) Discussion of Evaluation Criteria

Bob outlined the evaluation criteria for the alternatives:

- Resource and Other Impacts: Historic, archeological, right-of-way, hazardous waste sites/brownfields, railyard, utilities, wetlands, rare species, floodplain, water resources, town/regional plans, environmental justice
- Traffic Performance: Level of Service (LOS) Analysis

- Estimated Costs
- Do the alternatives meet the study's Purpose & Need? To what degree do the alternatives promote economic development, enhance multimodal transportation, support Livability in adjacent neighborhoods, and improve access to the railyard?

7) Next Steps

- Evaluation of Phase 2 Alternatives (December/January)
- Steering Committee Meeting #6 (January/February)
- Alternatives Presentation (February/March)
- City Commissions and City Council Presentations (March/April)
- Initial/Final Scoping Reports (Spring 2014)
- EIS (2014-2015)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 PM.

ATTENDEES - Members Present

First	Last	Organization
Amy	Bell	VTrans (via phone)
Meredith	Birkett	CCTA
Michele	Boomhower	CCRPC
Rodger	Brassard	Ward 5 NPA (5:30)
Julie	Campoli	Burlington Resident
Chris	Jolly	FHWA
Mahoney	Matt	King St. Neighborhood Redev. Corp.
Mary Anne	Michaels	Vermont Railway
Neil	Mickenberg	Burlington Resident
Michael	Monte	Champlain Housing Trust
Peter	Owens	CEDO (6:45)
Joan	Shannon	City Council (6:30)
Chapin	Spencer	Burlington DPW
Jason	VanDriesche	Local Motion
David	White	Burlington Planning & Zoning

ATTENDEES - Others Present

First	Last	Organization
Norm	Baldwin	Burlington DPW
Ilona	Blanchard	Burlington Resident
Bob	Chamberlin	RSG
Eleni	Churchill	CCRPC
Brian	Dunkiel	Attorney
Mark	Colgan	VHB
Alan	Hunt	Burlington Resident
Kirsten	Merriman-Shapiro	CEDO
Diane	Meyerhoff	Third Sector Associates
Dan	Stein	VHB
Sandrine	Thibault	Burlington Planning & Zoning