

**Railyard Enterprise Project (REP)
Scoping/Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study
Steering Committee #8 Meeting Notes**

<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/transportation/scoping/railyard-enterprise-project/>

DATE: October 29, 2015
TIME: 6:00-8:00 PM
PLACE: Burlington Department of Public Works, 645 Pine Street
PRESENT: Please See Attached

1) Welcome, Introductions, Changes to the Agenda

Eleni Churchill of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) welcomed everyone and introductions were made. There were no changes to the agenda.

2) Public Comment Period: There were no comments.

3) Brief Presentation: Seeking New Location

Tom Longstreth of Resource (formerly ReCycle North) is facing the final three-year lease at 266 Pine Street and is looking for a new Burlington location to bring all their stores and programs under one roof. There is discussion of redeveloping 339 Pine Street (old DPW Building) but ReSource is on a tight timeframe to raise funds and build. Tom would like to have a better idea of the REP timeline and how REP might impact that site. Chapin Spencer of DPW and Peter Owens of CEDO will continue to work with Tom on relocation.

4) Updates Since the Last Meeting

Eleni reviewed the seven Phase 2 alternatives and briefly discussed the evaluation criteria used to analyze these alternatives. She indicated that the objective of this meeting is to review results of the Phase 2 alternatives evaluation and for the committee to make a recommendation to the Burlington City Council to advance a set of alternatives into the Environmental Permitting (NEPA) process.

5) Evaluation of Phase II Alternatives

Bob Chamberlin of RSG reviewed results of the Phase 2 alternatives evaluation. The presentation and meeting materials are available at: <http://www.ccrpcvt.org/transportation/scoping/railyard-enterprise-project/>. Bob reviewed in detail the Phase 2 Evaluation Criteria:

Evaluation Criteria – Cost Estimates

- Based on street sections described in the Design Criteria memo
- Complete Street Sections – assumed cost sharing and FAU status
- Slow Street Sections – assumed to be City-funded
- Mitigation of Railyard Impacts: Include provisions for: Mobilization/Demobilization; Traffic Control; Demolition; Stormwater Treatment; Final Engineering; Construction Management; Environmental Oversight; Contingency
- Right-of-Way (ROW) Acquisition

Evaluation Criteria – Transportation System Impacts

- Bicycle/Pedestrian Mobility: Additional linear feet of sidewalks, multi-use paths; Additional street crossings
- Railyard Impacts - Evaluated by VTrans and VRS: Impacts to switching operations; Impact to commercial operations; right-of-way
- Traffic Impact (2018 and 2035): Vehicle Mobility Index; Diversion of Traffic from Pine Street
- Transit Service: Evaluated by CCTA

Evaluation Criteria – Environment/Resources

- Agricultural Lands
- Archaeological Resources: Evaluated by VTrans
- Historic Resources: Evaluated by VTrans
- Floodplain
- Pervious Areas (increase from the No Build)
- Public Lands
- Rare, Threatened, Endangered Species
- Wetlands
- Hazardous Waste Sites
- Utility Impacts
- Right-of-Way (ROW) Impacts: Full and partial takings (excluding railyard)

Evaluation Criteria – Local and Regional Issues

- Satisfies Purpose and Need
- Economic Benefits: Based on assumed build-out of area by 2035 (developed by CEDO and City Planning & Zoning)
- Conformance to PlanBTV (2014) and ECOS (2013)
- Environmental Justice

There was discussion of using criteria more nuanced than Yes/No for items like conformance with existing plans, since it's rarely as clean cut as a Yes/No. For the case where an alternative was judged not to be consistent with local and regional plans, a short explanation of why it isn't consistent should be provided. There was discussion about the timing of completing federally-funded roadways versus locally-funded roadways and the level of local and state commitment that is required to move forward with construction. Jason VanDriesche of Local Motion reviewed the scoring for bicycle and pedestrian movement and provided input to the Stakeholder Team.

There was discussion about the quantitative assignment of positive(s) and negative(s), when the differences among alternatives are not that great. The committee is concerned that this simplification skews the results and makes greater distinctions between alternatives than what really exists. This makes it very difficult to choose one alternative over another.

There was discussion about which grid-streets are eligible for federal funding. Michele Boomhower of VTrans noted that the federal NEPA process will determine the final alignment for which federal funds will be invested. The process may include additional alternatives (than the ones recommended through this PEL/scoping project) and it will culminate in a Record of Decision (ROD) that defines a preferred alternative and identifies which segments will be eligible for federal funding. Although the nuance of the alternatives' scoring is important, the next part of the process will bring more refinement and ongoing dialogue. Through the Act 250 process, and through the recently enacted Act 245, we may have developer participation in

needed infrastructure. There are lots of variables to be considered; this process is part of a continuum. Michele urged the committee to think high-level and communicate the need to move forward to the City Council.

Chris Jolly of FHWA noted that the committee's work allowed us to move forward by paring down the alternatives in advance of the NEPA document. There will be lot more detail available regarding costs and impacts in the next phase of work. All the work that has been done to date will become part of the final NEPA document.

6) Recommendation: Proposed Phase 2 Alternatives to Recommend to the City Council to Advance into NEPA Process

Eleni explained that the Stakeholder Group (VTrans, FHWA, City, CCRPC) recommends the Steering Committee choose the following alternatives to recommend to the City Council to advance to the NEPA process:

- Alternative 1B – Scored the highest, along with 1A, but due to subtle alignment differences that minimize some property impacts, is preferred over 1A.
- Alternative 2 – Scored second highest, along with 5A and 5B, offering an expanded area for possible development over 1 A/1 B, but with higher resource impacts.
- Alternative 5B – Scored second highest along with 5A and 2. It was preferred over 5A due to better facilitation of through traffic traveling between Battery Street and Pine Street.

Eleni explained that these Alternatives 1B, 2 and 5B represent a wide range of alternatives with varying benefits and impacts (historic & archeological resources, railyard, private properties, etc.) that will be further analyzed during the NEPA process. The committee discussed the alternatives, with Michael Monte of CHT supporting Alternative 3. Jason VanDriesche noted that the three alternatives chosen by the Stakeholder Group are good for walking and bicycling. Chris Jolly asked if it is possible, under Alternative 5, to avoid both the railyard horn track and the Independent Block. Eleni responded that it was unlikely. Jim Lockridge of King Street Neighborhood Redevelopment likes Alternative 3, but also likes Alternative 2 if the grid street that impacts the Street Department building was removed. Neil Mickenberg supports moving the recommended alternatives forward. Chris Jolly believes these are reasonable alternatives to move forward.

Joan Shannon, City Councilor, has concerns with Alternative 5 and she asked if it's possible to avoid removing the house at Maple Street. Eleni responded that this alternative is the only one that has minimum impacts to the railyard but unfortunately it impacts private property. There was additional discussion of Alternatives 5A and 5B. Jason Adams of Adams Real Properties believes 5A and 5B are unreasonable as owner of the Independent Block property. The former cold storage section of the building is currently being converted to office use. Alternatives 5A and 5B will cause the removal of that part of the building (i.e. the former cold storage area), but will also remove 90 percent of the parking. There will be a significant cost to acquire the Independent Block and the house at Maple Street.

The reiterated their concerns with Alternative 5 (A &B), namely the economic impact of taking local businesses and a house. In the next phase of the project, they request that impacts to these structures are minimized while also mitigating the impacts to the railyard.

Eleni reported that in a meeting with Dave Wulfson, of Vermont Railway, he expressed concerns with Alternatives 1B and 2 but likes 5B.

NEIL MICKENBERG MADE A MOTION, DULY SECONDED BY JASON VANDRIESCHE, TO RECOMMEND TO THE BURLINGTON CITY COUNCIL THAT ALTERNATIVES 1B, 2, AND 5B ADVANCE INTO THE NEPA PROCESS, WITH THE CAVEAT THAT ALTERNATIVE 5B MUST CONSIDER THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TAKING AN OFFICE BUILDING AND A HOUSE WHILE AT THE SAME TIME MINIMIZING THE IMPACTS TO THE RAILYARD. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY WITH THREE ABSTENTIONS FROM AMY BELL, MICHELE BOOMHOWER, AND CHRIS JOLLY.

7) Next Steps

- City Council Transportation, Energy, Utilities Committee (TEUC) Briefing, November 4
- Public Works Commission Briefing, November 18
- Public Meeting, late November/early December
- Resource Agency Group (EPA, Corp of Engineers, ANR, etc.)
- City Council Meeting – Selection of Alternatives to Advance into NEPA, December 21?
- Final Steering Committee Meeting? The group decided not to meet unless necessary.
- Draft and Final PEL/Scoping Report, January/February

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 PM.

ATTENDEES - Members Present

First	Last	Organization
Amy	Bell	VTrans
David	Armstrong	CCTA
Michele	Boomhower	VTrans
Chris	Jolly	FHWA
Jim	Lockridge	King Street Neighborhood Redev. Corp.
Neil	Mickenberg	Burlington Resident
Michael	Monte	CHT
Peter	Owens	CEDO
Joan	Shannon	City Council
Chapin	Spencer	Burlington DPW
Meagan	Tuttle	Burlington Planning & Zoning
Jason	VanDriesche	Local Motion

ATTENDEES - Others Present

First	Last	Organization
Jason	Adams	Adams Real Properties, LLC
Ilona	Blanchard	Burlington Resident
Adam	Brooks	SEABA
Bob	Chamberlin	RSG

Eleni	Churchill	CCRPC
Trish	Coppolino	ANR
Brian	Dunkiel	City of Burlington
Steve	Goodkind	Burlington Resident
Allen	Hunt	Burlington Resident
Tom	Longstreth	ReSource
Roxanne	Meuse	RSG
Kirsten	Merriman-Shapiro	CEDO
Diane	Meyerhoff	Third Sector Associates
Solveig	Overby	DPW Commissioner