

**Railyard Enterprise Project (REP)
Supplemental Scoping Study
Steering Committee #1 Meeting Notes**

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

DATE: January 5, 2017
TIME: 6:00-7:30 PM
PLACE: Burlington Department of Public Works, 645 Pine Street
PRESENT: Please See Attached

1) Welcome, Introductions, Changes to the Agenda

At 6:10PM, Eleni Churchill of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) welcomed everyone and introductions were made. Eleni noted that the final report from the earlier phase of the project, the Scoping/PEL, is now available on the website: <http://www.ccrpcvt.org/transportation/scoping/railyard-enterprise-project/>. Tonight, is the first meeting of the Supplemental Scoping Phase of the REP. All members of the initial REP Scoping/PEL Steering Committee agreed to participate in the committee for this Supplemental Scoping, with the exception of Julie Campoli, a Burlington resident, who opted not to continue serving on the Steering Committee. There were no changes to the agenda.

2) Public Comment Period: Allan Hunt offered the following comments: I've lived on Maple Street in the study area for 10 years and owned property in the area for longer. Thank you for doing this project; this is an important project for the residents. According to the census, we have residents in the area with the lowest income in Vermont. Refugees and low income people in subsidized housing generally don't have a voice and don't come to these meetings. It's difficult to get people engaged. We knew there is currently a problem with traffic and that the problem would get worse when the parkway is built. What worries me most is that there are a lot more kids in the neighborhood and they are not always aware of the implications of traffic. Whatever we can do to decrease traffic in the neighborhood is important.

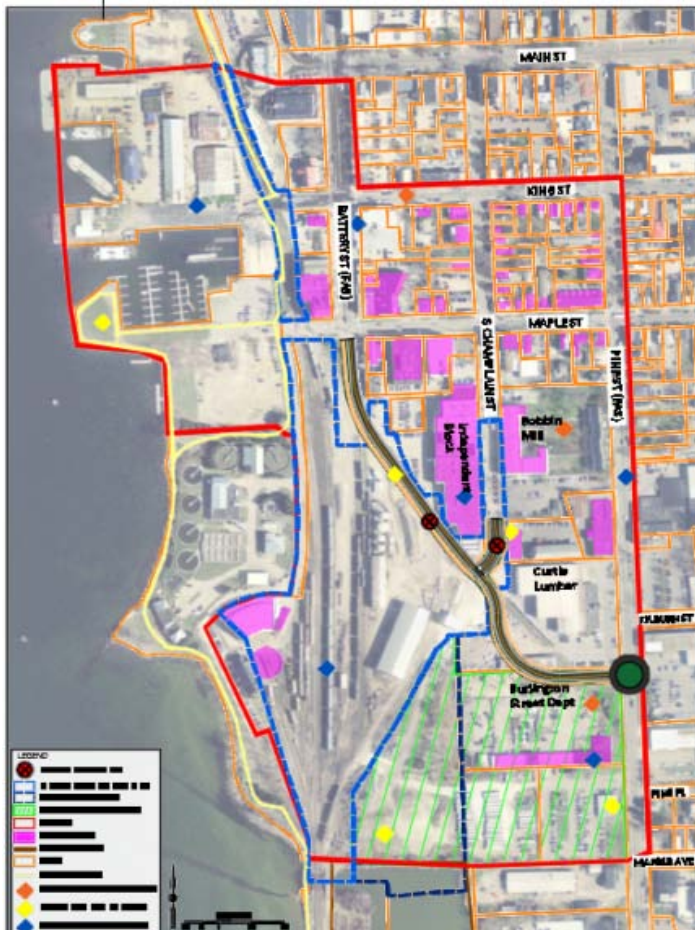
3) Status of the Project

The Railyard Enterprise Statement Purpose & Need statement remains the same:
The purpose of the Railyard Enterprise Project (REP) is to develop a network of multimodal transportation infrastructure improvements in the Pine Street and Battery Street area, and to:

1. Support economic development in the area;
2. Improve livability of the surrounding neighborhoods;
3. Enhance multimodal travel connectivity between the Pine Street corridor and Battery Street in the Burlington Waterfront South area; and
4. Improve intermodal connections to the Burlington Railyard, a NHS designated intermodal facility, while reducing the impacts of freight operations on adjacent neighborhoods.

The first Phase of the REP, the Scoping/PEL Phase, was substantially completed when the City Council passed a resolution on December 21, 2015 to advance three roadway alternatives into the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. As the final Scoping/PEL report was being finalized, VTrans, City and CCRPC staff discussed options to expedite the process and final delivery/construction of the REP. They proposed exploring the feasibility of using state and local funding only so that the project wouldn't go through a long and costly NEPA process, with an uncertain final outcome. Chapin Spencer of DPW further explained that the REP area is complicated, it has an adjacent Superfund site, historic/archaeological sites and a historic district, and other environmental issues we need to address. The question is can the roadway be built faster and less expensively with solely state and local funding. The City Council approved exploring this feasibility and moving forward with the Supplemental Scoping work at their November 28, 2016 meeting. The REP Steering Committee was reconvened to oversee this Supplemental Scoping (second) phase of the REP.

Eleni briefly reviewed Alternative 1B:



4) Scope of Work

Jonathan Slason, RSG Project Manager, described the scope of work as refining Alternative 1B. He noted that the roundabout is not finalized for the intersection of Pine Street and the “new street.” The bulk of this effort is to understand the constraints of fitting a new roadway in this very narrow corridor. The study team will look at multimodal demands, reducing traffic in the Maple/King neighborhood, and environmental constraints. A field survey is underway to identify possible impacts to adjacent properties including the railyard and private properties. Chris Jolly of FHWA asked if the right-of-way for individual parcels available. Jonathan replied

that the VSA is doing a boundary study that will provide more clarity than any GIS layer available now. Results will be available the week of January 9th.

4A) Tasks

- Task 1 Field Data Collection with surveys, cultural and historic issues, utilities (completed)
- Task 2 City Council Endorsement (completed) & Start Phase 2 (today)
- Task 3 Develop Preliminary 1B Alignments with cross-sections, railyard options including crossing track, moving track, etc., create an evaluation matrix, City and VTrans agreement to move forward with a specific 1B alignment with local and state funding
- Task 4* Alt 1B Conceptual Plans (not contracted yet)
- Task 5* Final Reporting and Presentations (not contracted yet)

*Tasks 4 and 5 will be determined based on the outcome of Task 3.

4B) Schedule

Schedule

Tasks	Dec 16	Jan 17	Feb	March	April	May - Sept	Oct - Nov
Task 1: Field Data Collection							
Task 2: City Council Endorsement & Start REP Phase 2							
Task 3: Develop three Preliminary 1B Alignments; Meetings with Steering Committee, Stakeholders and City Council.							
Task 4: Alt 1B Conceptual Plans							
Task 5: Final Reporting and Presentations							

Note: See attached detailed schedule



The next Steering Committee meeting will be in April where evaluation results of different 1B alignments will be presented and discussed and where the committee will either identify a 1B alignment to recommend to the City Council for advancement into Task 4 or recommend advancing the REP into NEPA.

4C) Top Identified Key Risks

- Hydraulic issues at Superfund area
- Stormwater
- Roundhouse location
- Managing hazardous soils during construction
- Historic nature of entire Independent Block
- Flexibility within Railyard

5) Process Moving Forward & Next Steps

- Task 1 Field investigations continue
- Task 3 Alternative 1B alignment planning work starts, including:
- Initiate cross-section development with options including minimal width through railyard and/or structures
- Evaluate 1B alignments based on previously developed criteria/methodology
- Meet with stakeholders/technical people (April), Steering Committee (late April/early May) to review 1B evaluation results
- Steering Committee recommends next steps for the City's and VTrans' consideration
 - Recommend a specific 1B alignment for further evaluation in Task 4 of the supplemental scoping work; OR
 - Recommend that federal funding should be used for the REP implementation. Advance REP Alts 1B, 2, and 5B into NEPA.
- VTrans and City Council makes decision (May/June 2017)

Discussion

Jim Lockridge of the King Street Neighborhood Revitalization Corp. asked when the Steering Committee, public, and the creative community will consider amenities such as benches, exhibits, and bus shelters. He would like to consider external funding for these items. Jonathan replied that this phase will not get into that level of design; rather we'll look at an alignment for the roadway with a cross section that will identify opportunities for amenities. Chapin sees this roadway as a key connection. Once a viable route is found, we'll determine the space available for amenities.

Joan Shannon of the City Council is concerned about the left-turn onto the new street from Pine. She's concerned that a "hard" left may dissuade vehicles from taking the new route. She wants to make sure to steer traffic off of Pine Street to protect the established neighborhoods. Mary Anne Michaels of Vermont Railway echoed this concern and especially wants to keep pedestrians off the new street because people and trains don't mix well.

Allan Hunt asked about the impact of new federal and state administrations on the fate of this project. Chris Jolly doesn't see much change in terms of annual funding although new regulations are more difficult to predict. There is a discussion of increased investment for infrastructure. Meagan Tuttle of Planning & Zoning noted that new funding mechanisms will take years to put in place.

Chris Jolly noted that even though the roadway might move forward with state and local funds it is logical to add it to the federal aid system and depending on the classification of the new road (arterial vs collector) there could be design requirements that need to be followed. He asked that FHWA be made aware of the proposed classification and design so everyone can work together.

Michele Boomhower of VTrans explained that the new Governor has expressed an interest in not raising taxes. VTrans is seeing reduced revenues from gas taxes and registrations that will force a roll back of the 2017 budget and a constrained 2018 budget. This project is a few years out so it's too early to say how the state transportation funding levels will impact this project. There are 2-4 years of legacy projects like Champlain Parkway on the books now.

Michael Monte of the Champlain Housing Trust asked when the committee will review the Pine and “New Street” Intersection more closely. Jonathan responded that an “operational analysis” of the intersection will be presented and discussed at the next Steering Committee meeting. This will include an analysis of the roundabout versus a signalized intersection.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15PM.

ATTENDEES - Members Present

First	Last	Organization
David	Allerton	DPW
Amy	Bell	VTrans
Michele	Boomhower	VTrans
Chris	Jolly	FHWA
Jim	Lockridge	King Street Neighborhood Revitalization Corp.
Noelle	Mackay	CEDO
Mary Anne	Michaels	VT Railway
Michael	Monte	CHT
Joan	Shannon	City Council
Chapin	Spencer	Burlington DPW
Meagan	Tuttle	Burlington Planning & Zoning

ATTENDEES - Others Present

First	Last	Organization
Eleni	Churchill	CCRPC
Marshall	Distel	CCRPC
Allen	Hunt	Burlington Resident
Kirsten	Merriman-Shapiro	CEDO
Diane	Meyerhoff	Third Sector Associates
Sue	Scribner	VTrans
Jonathan	Slason	RSG
Mark	Smith	RSG