

## Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting No. 1

CCRPC Colchester/Riverside/Barret/Mill Scoping Study / 195311163

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Date/Time: January 14, 2016 / 5:30  
Place: CCRPC Offices, 110 W. Canal Street, Suite 202, Winooski, VT  
Next Meeting: TBD  
Attendees: Jason Charest (CCRPC), Peter Wernsdorfer (Winooski Public Works), Alexander Sampson (Winooski Public Works), Sharon Bushor (Ward 1 City Councilor), Jason Van Driesche (Local Motion), Amy Bell (VTrans), Sandy Thibault (CATMA, Hill Institutions), Kelly Stoddard Poor (AARP), Nicole Losch (Burlington DPW), Meagan Tuttle (Burlington P&Z), Eleni Churchill (CCRPC), Diane Meyerhoff (Third Sector Associates), Greg Edwards (Stantec), Nora Varhue (Stantec), Wayne Senville (Ward 1 NPA Representative), Linda Letourneau (Redstone - Chace Mill Property Manager)  
Absentees: Thad Luther (Stantec), David Armstrong (CCTA), Diane Meyerhoff (Third Sector Associates), Kelly Stoddard Poor (AARP)  
Distribution: Distribution List

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### **PAC Colchester Avenue/Riverside Avenue Intersection Improvement Study Meeting:**

#### **1) Welcome & Introductions**

##### Welcome & Introductions

##### Meeting Purpose

Review project background, scope, process, and timeline and solicit input.



Jason Charest from the CCRPC introduces the Colchester Avenue/Riverside Avenue project and defines "scoping study". Scoping studies vary from general studies of the area to detailed planning. The Colchester/Riverside Avenue will focus on the details of the intersection and determine a preferred alternative.

#### **2) Presentation Overview**

## PAC Colchester Avenue/Riverside Avenue Intersection Improvement Study Meeting:

### Presentation Overview

- Discuss background, project area, current initiatives, and existing conditions
- Review study team
- Discuss PAC roles and responsibilities.
- Outline project development process
- Review tasks and timeline.
- Public Participation & Outreach
- Discuss next steps and local concerns public meeting
- Comments and questions

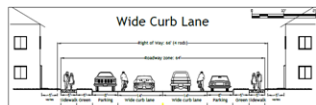


Greg Edwards from Stantec briefly outlines the structure of the presentation.

### 3) Project Background

#### Project Background

- Colchester Ave Corridor Plan
  - Complete street corridor
  - Gateway to Burlington
  - Safety, Bicycle/Pedestrian Access, Transit, Streetscape, Traffic Congestion



#### Project Background

- Colchester Ave Corridor Plan Concept
  - Consolidates intersection
  - Removes Mill Street from signal
  - Creates pocket park



Greg introduces the 2011 Colchester Corridor Plan. The purpose of the 2011 study was to improve the community by introducing complete streets. Study focused on pedestrian safety and traffic congestion. Greg briefly explains one concept for Colchester Avenue that came from the study. This concept included on-street parking, two wider lanes and a green strip in the middle. This concept is similar to the existing conditions of Colchester Avenue. The plan indicated a potential improvement to the Colchester/Riverside/Barrett/Mill intersection would be simplified to one four-way signalized intersection, eliminating the Mill Street signal and creating a pocket park. From this project it was determined that the Colchester Avenue and Riverside Avenue intersection deserved an independent scoping study.

### 4) Current Initiatives

## **PAC Colchester Avenue/Riverside Avenue Intersection Improvement Study Meeting:**

### Current Initiatives

- Concurrent study of a bicyclist and pedestrian bridge over the Winooski River upstream/east of the existing bridge
- On-going Walk Bike Plan BTV
  - Interactive map
  - Draft Bikeway Network Map
  - Draft Walk Plan
- Grove Street Housing Mitigation – Pedestrian signals
- Brisson Mill Street building redevelopment



Greg outlines the current initiatives in and around the project area: The Pedestrian Bridge Feasibility Study, the Walk Bike Plan BTV, the Grove Street Mitigation Project Ped Signal, and the development of the Brisson Property.

Nicole Losch of Burlington DPW updates that a revised draft of the Walk Bike Plan BTV will be available by next week or so.

Greg further explains that the Grove Street Housing Mitigation Project is planned by the City sometime this year. This project is to provide pedestrian signals at all existing crosswalks aside from Mill St and requires several conduits under the road.

Sharon Bushor from the City Council raises concern about going ahead with the pedestrian signals. She addresses that it might be an idea to hold off and utilize the money more effectively. She addresses the various safety concerns for pedestrians and specifically children going to school in the area. We should wait to see the impacts of this project before establishing new pedestrian signaling. It would be a shame to have to rip out all the new signals after spending the money and time on them.

### **5) Project Area/Existing Conditions**

## **PAC Colchester Avenue/Riverside Avenue Intersection Improvement Study Meeting:**

### [Project Area/ Existing Conditions](#)

- Existing utilities
- Existing ROW, properties and owners
- Existing operations - pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles, transit



Greg brings up the existing base map of the project area with marked utilities. Greg explains that utility information and traffic information for this area was gathered by contacting the suppliers and VTrans. Stantec reached out to CCTA to gather information and an understanding of the bus routes in this area as well.

Jason Van Driesche of Local Motion brings up recent pedestrian fatality in the area. Greg goes on to say that this intersection has been identified as a high crash location.

Jason C. explains that VTrans has created a map of the crashes in the area which displays the quantity, type and location of the crashes.

Jason V. shows interest in obtaining a copy of the base map and Greg informs that a website for the project will be created and from there you can access available data.

Jason V. reports that the mouth of Barrett was the most recent death at the intersection but shares that it is crossing across Colchester Avenue that is the most challenging.

Sharon also brings up that adding pedestrian signals to this area may impact delays at the intersection.

Greg explains that traffic counts in this area have been collected but yet to be processed. Stantec's plan is to make a model and evaluate multiple alternatives to see what is most effective.

Sharon asks about project area. She goes on to explain that Colchester Avenue is one lane and is not striped but due to structure of road two lanes naturally form northbound between Barrett and Mill Streets. Jason V. adds asking how far past the Winooski bridge will be considered.

### **PAC Colchester Avenue/Riverside Avenue Intersection Improvement Study Meeting:**

Greg addresses Sharon's question clarifying that one and two lanes will be considered on Colchester Avenue approach and Stantec will analyze which ones benefit the intersection. Currently the project area goes a couple hundred feet back on each leg of the intersection. Jason C. adds that two lanes will be investigated and the project area will extend further back if necessary.

Eleni Churchill of the CCRPC explains that an outline of the study area exists and will be available.

Linda Letourneau, Property manager of the Chace Mill asks for clarification on the number of lanes on Colchester Avenue between Barrett Street and Mill Street.

Jason C. confirms that it operates as two.

Greg addresses Jason V.'s question and confirms that the traffic in the Winooski traffic circulator will be considered in the scope of the project. Currently Stantec has a model of the circulator to analyze how the circulator will affect the project.

Discussion begins about traffic at the Winooski circle. Eleni informs the group that the bridge sees 30,000 cars a day. Jason C. adds that the CCRPC looked at narrowing the circulator to one lane exiting from Winooski southbound over the bridge and it was not favorable. One lane entering the circulator northbound has yet to be considered.

Discussion begins about Mill Street. Linda explains that Mill Street is a dead-end street with a parking lot. Linda closes the gates at the back entrance due to traffic trying to cut through the parking lot. The back entrance is in the Chace Mill's private ROW.

Topic changes to traffic signaling. Greg informs that a traffic graphic is to come. Sharon shares her concern about not signaling traffic onto Mill Street. Future plans should acknowledge that people live and work down Mill Street.

Greg continues to explain base map. He notes the path along Riverside Avenue and the sidewalks provided everywhere except one side of Barrett Street and on Mill Street. He points out transit stops in the area. Discussion about the transit stop that was discontinued on Colchester Avenue's hill begins. (Correction: transit stops exist on both sides of Colchester Avenue at Barrett Street. The discontinued stop was on Riverside Avenue northbound at Barrett Street.) Another stop is provided further up the hill near Chase Street.

Greg explains that Stantec has survey requested for this area. This will

### **PAC Colchester Avenue/Riverside Avenue Intersection Improvement Study Meeting:**

allow Stantec to determine how alternatives will impact the existing conditions.

This further solicits discussion about a previous alternative that arose during the corridor study. Eleni explains that she has those alternatives and will send them out. Nothing is off the table at this point and alternatives new and old will be considered.

### **6) Project Study Team**

#### Project Study Team

- CCPRC – Manage study and direct team
- City of Burlington – Study review and input
- Stantec – Project management, transportation planning, analysis and design
- GPI – Transportation planning/landscape architecture and public facilitation
- Third Sector – Public outreach and engagement



Greg introduces project team.

### **7) PAC Roles and responsibilities**

#### PAC Roles and Responsibilities

- Attend and participate in at least 3 PAC meetings
- Review and comment on distributed materials
- Provide guidance, insight, and feedback throughout
- Update representing entities on study progress
- Indicate preferences for improvements



Greg explains that there will be at least three meetings in which feedback is encouraged.

Sharon shares that she cares about people in Ward 1 and people

**Design with community in mind**

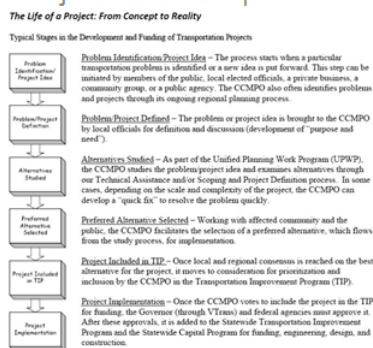
## PAC Colchester Avenue/Riverside Avenue Intersection Improvement Study Meeting:

commuting through Ward 1. A project involving people and helping a larger group will produce the best results. A healthy give and take project development process is the best approach.

Eleni echoes that finding a solution that can be implemented as soon as possible to provide a safe intersection to those who use it is a priority.

### 8) Project Development Process

#### Project Development Process



Greg generally outlines project process.

### 9) Study Tasks and Timeline

#### Study Tasks and Timeline

- Task 1: Data gathering ,existing conditions analysis, field survey; **January**
- Task 2: Local concerns public meeting, purpose and need; **February**
- Task 3: Alternatives development, PAC meeting, public workshop; **March – June**
- Task 4: Alternative evaluation, draft scoping report, PAC meeting ; **July- September**
- Task 5: Alternative presentation, final report; **October - December**



Public meeting is to come in February or March. This meeting will not have alternatives but will be more like an open discussion. Jason C. adds

### **PAC Colchester Avenue/Riverside Avenue Intersection Improvement Study Meeting:**

that we will have more existing conditions information to share at that time.

Sharon acknowledges the importance of having a meeting to see people's concerns from both Winooski and Burlington. Jason C. agrees and adds that the first meeting's purpose is to do that and also to hear people's ideas for the intersection.

Sandy Thibault from CATMA adds that she has surveys from students about their experience with CATMA. Surveying users of the intersection could be a great resource. Jason V. adds that he has a pretty responsive list of people interested in the pedestrian/walking community. He presents the idea of a 3-4 question survey to receive specific feedback. Sharon adds that she performed a survey in a past project of people's needs for the street and found the information very helpful.

Discussion begins about date of public meeting. It is agreed that the meeting should avoid spring break as well as Town Meeting Day week. Greg will ask Dianne Meyerhoff about the week of February 15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>. If this does not go through an alternate date would be the second week in March.

Greg explains that following the public meeting, general sketches will be brought back to the group for feedback. A public workshop will then be held in which concepts for the intersection can be introduced. These concepts will not be conclusive but just ideas. The alternative will then be finalized and a report will be drafted to be reviewed and finalized.

Jason V. addresses the importance of thinking of both short and long term solutions. He specifically brings up the example of the Prospect and Pearl Street intersection. This project was relatively inexpensive and fast. He wants the project to consider immediate fixes that may not be a permanent solution but would greatly increase the safety of the intersection.

The group agrees on this.

### **10) Next Steps and public meeting**



## **PAC Colchester Avenue/Riverside Avenue Intersection Improvement Study Meeting:**

### Public Participation & Outreach

- 3 Public Meetings
  - Local Concerns, Alternatives Workshop, City Council Presentation
- Presentations to Ward 1 NPA, Public Works Commission, Transportation Energy & Utilities Commission (TEUC)
- Front Porch Forum
- Direct Mailings/Post Cards
- Project contact list & website
- Advisory Committee
- Contact us



Jason C. explains that a comment section will be set up on the project's website to solicit comments and feedback. Sharon agrees that this is a good idea. This process will allow feedback from not just those who live in the district but those who commute through it and are unable to attend a public meeting.

Eleni adds that passing out postcards at intersection could be one method utilized. Sharon adds that they handed out postcards at the hospital. This gave a better picture about how commuters felt about the intersection. They also did a follow up survey to see how everyone liked the pilot project. Making a website survey is brought up again.

Linda addresses the idea of surveying those who work in the Chace Mill. Idea of having a building wide meeting about the project is brought up. Linda agrees that that could happen. She explains that people are always asking where the public transit stops are and there are a lot of bike commuters in the building. She agreed that people would like to be informed and have the chance to respond to changes in the intersection.

Jason V. brings up the idea of making a weather resistant sign with a comment box. He offers to help put the sign together.

Sandy adds that CATMA has the resources to survey and would be happy to promote the project and solicit feedback.

### **11) Next Steps and Public Meeting**

## **PAC Colchester Avenue/Riverside Avenue Intersection Improvement Study Meeting:**

### Next steps and Public Meeting

- Data gathering ,existing conditions analysis, field survey; **January/February**
- Local Concerns Public Meeting - **Late February/Early March?**
  - Location?



Sharon addresses that she would like to hear more about the alternatives considered in the past. She adds the idea of providing pamphlets to educate those about the history of the intersection.

Eleni will go through her files to find the alternatives and concepts from the corridor study to share.

Sandy Thibault adds that her predecessor at CATMA was involved in the Colchester Avenue Corridor Study. CATMA facilitated this Task Force in 2006 and she has access to the files and final report to share. She will look into obtaining files.

Sharon believes previous alternatives might be doable and could be used as a pilot project to see how traffic adjusts. She adds that at the public meeting you don't want to focus too much on the history of the project. It is better to bring up the previous concerns and let the discussion develop from there.

Jason V. addresses that this intersection project has a lot of constraints making it difficult to solve every problem. He thinks it would be productive to focus the discussion around specific problems with the intersection. By focusing on the problems we can come up with solutions and talk about the pros and cons of each proposal.

Wayne Senville from Ward 1 brings up the idea of having the meeting right at the intersection. This method was used during the Walk Bike BTV project and was successful.

The idea of turning the intersection into a traffic circle is brought up. Nicole explains that a roundabout specialist, Mark Johnson, has been to this intersection and has provided feedback. Eleni adds that the roundabout is still a possibility for this intersection but it would be very difficult. At this location it would need to be a two lane roundabout and

**PAC Colchester Avenue/Riverside Avenue Intersection Improvement Study Meeting:**

space is a huge limitation. Sharon adds that two lane roundabouts are especially dangerous for pedestrians. Eleni agrees and confirms that the two lane roundabout alternative was dropped. Greg concludes that the idea will be revisited and he will reach out to Mark Johnson for input.

Amy adds that we should focus on short term solutions for the intersection. There is no guarantee when money for this project will be available. She emphasizes to look at a short term solution because it might be 10-15 years until money is available.

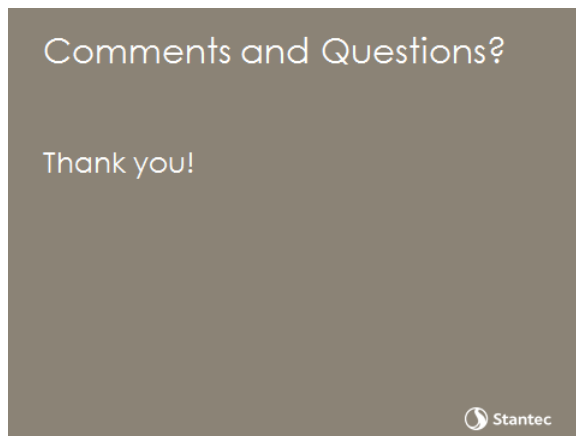
Greg agrees and adds that he likes the idea of breaking down the issues and hearing the public's challenges. From the public meeting he hopes to prioritize the important issues.

Linda adds that it could be helpful to get truck drivers comments.

Wayne asks if the Grove Streets impact study is available. Jason C. clarifies that we have the traffic impact study and it will be considered in the project. He adds that there is another impact study from Riverside Avenue's Handy parcel that will also be considered.

Eleni echoes that everything will be sent out.

Meeting adjourns with promise of the website to be finished soon with all the data available. The next meeting will be the public meeting with date and time to be announced.



The meeting adjourned at 6:50

The foregoing is considered to be a true and accurate record of all items discussed. If any discrepancies or inconsistencies are noted, please contact the writer immediately.

**Stantec Consulting Services Inc.**



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Nora Varhue, E.I.T.  
Engineering Designer, Transportation  
Phone: 802-864-0223  
Fax: Sender's Fax  
nora.varhue@stantec.com

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