



Place: Colchester Town Office, 781 Blakeley Road

Date: January 19, 2017

Notes Taken by: Diane Meyerhoff, Third  
Sector Associates

## Meeting Notes

Project #: 57917.00

Re: **Malletts Bay Stormwater Management & Transportation  
Scoping Project  
Public Meeting #1 Notes**

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After an Open House from 6:30 to 7:00 PM, Eleni Churchill of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) welcomed everyone. She explained that this project is unique in that it will integrate both stormwater and transportation planning. Eleni introduced David Saladino of VHB.

### 1) Overview

David explained that this project will incorporate three scoping reports: stormwater management, enhancing bicycle/pedestrian access along West Lakeshore Drive, and improving safety and operations at the intersection of Lakeshore Drive and Blakely Road. The work will include identifying issues, developing and analyzing possible alternatives, and finally selecting a preferred alternative for each of the scoping studies. The project will be completed by the fall.

Bryan Osborne, the Colchester Director of Public Works, welcomed the public and members of the Legislature, Selectboard, Planning Commission, Conservation Commission, and the Storm Water Advisory Committee. The Malletts Bay Initiative (MBI) has had extensive public outreach that can be summarized in the following five goals for the Bay:

- Improved water quality
- Improved recreational, cultural, and educational opportunities for all ages
- Welcoming, small-scale, yet vibrant infill and redevelopment
- A safe and efficient transportation system for all users
- A four-season destination for both residents and tourists

The MBI work has culminated in a list of nine implementation projects. Some projects are completed, some are underway. The three highlighted projects are part of this current effort:

- **Malletts Bay Stormwater System**
- Malletts Bay Sewer System
- Re-Zoning to include Low Impact Development Standards
- Community Center
- Blakely Road/Laker Lane Intersection
- **Blakely Road/East Lakeshore Drive/West Lakeshore Drive Intersection**
- West Lakeshore Drive/Prim Road Intersection
- **West Lakeshore Drive Pedestrian Improvements**
- Route 127 By-Pass Road

Amy Macrellis of Stone Environmental discussed stormwater management. The team will focus on town-owned infrastructure and property, which generally means roadways and rights-of-way. We want to coordinate strategically with and anticipate projects along the lakeshore (and beyond), where stormwater

improvements can be coordinated with other infrastructure improvements. We know where existing stormwater management infrastructure is located, the general location of existing drainage and erosion problems, and environmental constraints. We want to hear from residents about issues they are experiencing. Amy explained that improvements must “meet” or “exceed” state stormwater standards for water quality. She showed examples of green infrastructure.

Evan Detrick of VHB discussed bicycle and pedestrian facilities along a mile-long stretch of West Lakeshore Drive (between the Prim Road and Blakely Road intersections). There is an existing sidewalk adjacent to the road in some places, offset with a green strip in others, and there are no facilities for bicyclists. There are some crosswalks to access the Lake, and some very narrow sidewalk “pinch points” (such as by the large oak tree). There is a steep bank adjacent to the Lake. There have been discussions of a new shared use path and on-road bike lanes over the years.

David Saladino discussed the Lakeshore Drive and Blakely Road intersection and summarized existing traffic volumes, queuing, and level of service data. There was discussion of higher traffic volumes on Blakely Road in the PM as opposed to the AM. It may be due to gridlock in Winooski, school and daycare access, and people going to boats and camps in the summer. David reviewed recent crash data at the intersection and noted that there were no bicycle or pedestrian related crashes at the intersection during the period 2011-2015. The Bayside Parks Master Plan suggested a pedestrian tunnel/underpass to allow pedestrians to more safely access the Lake. This underpass will be considered in the alternatives analysis.

## **2) Comprehensive Stormwater Plan (Discussion facilitated by Amy Macrellis)**

In response to a question, Amy talked about eliminating runoff. The goal is to reduce as much volume as possible heading to the Lake, and where that’s not feasible, to treat the runoff before it reaches the Lake. There are more opportunities to reduce runoff where soils allow infiltration and land is publicly owned.

There was discussion about how to measure effectiveness of the stormwater management plan. Scientists can model scenarios and determine what percent of runoff from impervious roadways will infiltrate into the soils. That can then be monitored and evaluated. There is some long-term baseline monitoring by the state and beach monitoring by the town. There isn’t a plan to monitor before and after effectiveness at this point, but we can use existing data collection for assessment of progress over time.

There was discussion about clean water legislation and policy at the federal and state level and how they might impact the bay. The Town has been forward-looking about managing runoff and finding ways to pay for improvements. There may be expanded future opportunities for funding. Colchester also has a local options tax in place that may contribute to specific projects as authorized locally.

In response to a question about septic systems and the Bay, Bryan Osborne discussed the proposed Malletts Bay Sewer Project that the Town is developing with Fire District No. 2. The discharges of surface runoff versus on-site septic pose different challenges. On-site septic provides a small but consistent volume over time that is rich in nutrients and pathogens, which ideally are treated and filtered out by leach fields and soil. Stormwater, however, is only a problem when it rains; then pollutants including sediment, nutrients, oil, and metals, are carried by water that runs off of impervious surfaces.

The Shore Acres area has primarily clays soils. If the soils are permeable, one could install check dams in roadside swales to slow the water down. If not, one can excavate and install gravel/sand filtering material and an underdrain to both filter and carry runoff that reaches the ditch.

Bryan Osborne discussed the Lake Champlain Phosphorus Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) and the anticipated requirement that we reduce phosphorus levels in the lake. The Town will be looking for cost effective ways to do that.

There was discussion about houses directly on the Lake and how they manage wastewater. East Lakeshore Drive is difficult due to dense development and space constraints. The Planning Commission and Planning Office have developed new zoning rules that significantly reduced the future allowance for impervious surfaces compared to the old zoning, and added a requirement for stormwater management.

Tom Berry complimented the town on their work with septic and stormwater. Stormwater should be the focus since septic is a very small phosphorous loader. On Smith Creek, the problems began twenty years ago when the school added new paved surfaces. Make sure that other elements of the MBI work do not make the situation worse more quickly than we can fix it. In terms of the intersection issues, we shouldn't redesign the intersection for the busiest day in the summer. Small improvements can be done but don't overdesign it. As for the bike path, go wide and make sure it connects to the network. David Saladino noted that engineers typically design roadways and intersections to the 30<sup>th</sup> highest hour of traffic. We can look at changing that due to the seasonality of the traffic.

### **3) Bicycle & Pedestrian Improvements on W. Lakeshore Drive (Discussion facilitated by Evan Detrick)**

If we build more bike/ped facilities, we will increase impervious surface but we are aware of it and will mitigate it. The following comments were made:

- It should be a recreation path and not a sidewalk. The bikes need to be out of the road and take the path. Make it pretty with rain gardens. It needs to be safer. The intersection is the best it can be – pedestrians are safe crossing now and it should stay that way.
- Is there an ordinance that prohibits bikes from riding on the sidewalk? [NO]
- Riding a bicycle on a five-foot sidewalk at 25 MPH is dangerous for other users. A fast bicyclist can't coexist with those strolling for an evening walk.
- Burlington's path accommodates all. Put a bell on your bike.
- The bike traffic here is not just local traffic. This is part of the Lake Champlain Bikeway, which should be considered in your baseline information. Some people like to ride on the road and some don't. There are people from all over using this road. There will continue to be bicyclists in the road no matter what we do with the path. You can't ignore the need to improve the safety of the road's shoulders.
- I will take the sidewalk if I'm outbound on a bike, but if I'm inbound I have to cross the road twice – that creates more risk than staying on the road.
- Vehicles exiting their driveways can't see bicyclists riding on the sidewalk. A shared path or bike lane in the road is safer.
- Access management – Mazza's Store driveway is a nightmare and there are many driveways like that in this area.
- Has a pervious surface been used for multiuse paths? Yes; but these surfaces have additional maintenance needs because they fill with sand and sediment. It needs to be vacuumed to keep it pervious.
- Why not encourage "Share the Road" in this one-mile stretch?
- There are challenges to having a path along the lake side of the road (parking, steep slopes, etc.) It's an option that will be examined for feasibility and cost.
- I ride on the sidewalk and the dip in the road (by Moorings Marina) is very dangerous. People store their boats there. You have to look carefully as cars exit.
- Could the recreation path be a variable width? Yes, but ideally you want a consistent width for long stretches.

- Is there any more traffic calming that could be done in this corridor? The Town has a traffic calming policy that requires a warrant analysis based on speeds, etc. This road doesn't meet those warrants. But, we shouldn't take any options off the table. If we conclude that traffic calming measures are needed we'll look at them.

#### **4) Lakeshore Drive/Blakely Road Intersection (Discussion facilitated by David Saladino)**

The consultant team will look at three ideas: 1) adjusting the signal software to improve efficiency; 2) building a roundabout; and 3) closing off East Lakeshore Drive and rerouting the road to tie into Blakely Road at Laker Lane. Also, the "do nothing" scenario will be evaluated. The following comments were made:

- We may have to wait a little longer at the intersection but we need to look at the bigger picture of climate change, etc. We can wait; we don't need more impervious surfaces. It shouldn't be about cars moving faster and unimpeded.
- I'm concerned about pedestrians in a roundabout.
- Malletts Bay, the park, and beach are the showplace of the bay. It's hard to cross the street to access it. It would be great to close off East Lakeshore Drive.
- The roundabout really throws me. Look at Winooski. Can it accommodate trucks? Now, you can pretty much sail through – except for short periods. Something that dramatic isn't needed. We haven't had pedestrian accidents there.
- Did traffic increase here due to the Winooski traffic circle? People avoid Winooski now. I like traffic circles – when they work, they work really well (not like Winooski).
- I live in a town with two roundabouts. Once people got used to them, traffic went real good-trucks and snow plows too. There may be other opportunities.
- Different summer and winter signal timing may be necessary.
- Consider rerouting road away from the Lake to create a more conventional intersection further away.

#### **5) Next Steps**

- Watershed Delineation & Develop Alternatives
- Public Input on Alternatives (~May 2017)
- Identify Preferred Alternative
- Selectboard Approval (~July 2017)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45PM.

**Participants**

John	Abry
Sarita	Austin
Rachel	Beauregard
Tom	Berry
Doug	Booth
Marlene	Booth
Bruce	Bourgeors
Cassie	Bourgeors
Rep. Patrick	Brennan
Theresa	Carroll
Lee	Cordner
Brian	Costello
Martin	Courcelle
Scott	Crocker

Bruce	Deming
Charly	Dickerson
Bill	Eakin
Moe	Germain
Meghan	Gilbert
Lisa	Halvorson
Holly	Kreiner
Jeff	Lefebvre
Pam	Loranger
Sen. Dick	Mazza
Peter	Mongeon
Tom	Mulcahy
Carrie	Neuschel
Dave	Peter

Tim	Potvin
Roberta	Pratt
Tom	Raub
Georgene	Raub
Mark	Saba
Richard	Saganich
Kristy	Spenger
Jeff	Spenger
Evan	Stewart
Ray	Trahan
Cindy	Turcotte
Lew	Wetzel
Dave	Youlen

**Town of Colchester**

Dawn Francis, Sarah Hadd, Kevin McAleer, Bryan Osborne, Warner Rackley

**CCRPC**

Eleni Churchill, Marshall Distel

**Consultant Team**

Evan Detrick (VHB)  
Wayne Elliott (A+E Engineers)  
Amy Macrellis (Stone Environmental)  
David Saladino (VHB)  
Diane Meyerhoff (Third Sector)

## Meeting Evaluation & Comment Form

### Malletts Bay Initiative: Stormwater & Transportation Project

### January 19, 2017, Colchester Town Offices

**1. How did you hear about the Meeting? (Check all that apply)**

a) Email from Friend/Colleague	3	g) Colchester Sun Advertisement	0
b) Email from Sponsors	3	h) Colchester Sun Article	0
c) Email from Other	0	i) Website(s)	1
d) Flyer/Poster	0	j) Social Media (Facebook, etc.)	1
e) Mailed Postcard	10	k) Other (please describe)	
f) Front Porch Forum	2		

**2. Please rate the following aspects of the meeting:**

Aspect	Fantastic	Very Good	Good	OK	Poor	Terrible
Open House	2	9	1	2	0	0
Welcome & Presentation	2	10	2	1	0	0
Quality of the Overall Discussion	6	5	3	1	0	0
Physical facilities for this event	4	6	3	2	0	0
Amount of time allowed for input	5	6	3	1	0	0
Overall value of this event to you	5	6	4	0	0	0

**3. Anything else you'd like to share with us? (Feel free to use the back side)**

- Great presentation.
- Will the presentation materials from today be posted on the town website?
- Excellent information. Well organized.
- No unintended consequences, please!
- Great public input. Great job by the Town on these initiatives
- Thanks so much for keeping us informed and taking our input
- Thanks for keeping me in the loop!
- Intersection's lights, lanes a first. Roundabout very last resort, lose too much green space
- Very good start. Blog on website.
- Sediment is the biggest pollution source for MB
- Great job!

Additional Written Comment Received:

1. Widen sidewalk. Bikes and pedestrians can cohabitate.
2. Reinstall swales
3. Install catch runoff ponds – bottom of dip, south of moorings; near state access
4. Install real swales along Shore Acres Drive, re-crown street
5. Put a roundabout at Bayshore intersection
6. Add sediment runoff dams on moorings stream
7. Outlaw Canadian geese and muskrats