

Advisory Committee Meeting #1 Meeting Notes

Wednesday, January 30, 2019, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

CCRPC, 110 W. Canal St., Suite 202, Winooski, VT 05404

The presentation is available online at: <http://bit.ly/east-allen-scoping>

1) Welcome, Introductions, Changes to the Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 1PM by Jason Charest of the CCRPC and introductions were made. There were no changes to the agenda. David Saladino, VHB Project Manager, described the study and encouraged the committee to look holistically at current conditions along the corridor, including development pressures and missing infrastructure. The study will prioritize improvements so the City and State can determine needed investments over time. Erica Quallen of VHB reviewed the project’s goal statement: “Identify and prioritize transportation **improvements** along East Allen Street from the Circulator to Roland Court which will foster a **vibrant** and **welcoming gateway** to downtown Winooski by enhancing **mobility** and improving **safety** for all modes of travel.”

2) Review of Scope and Schedule

Erica reviewed the schedule:

Local Concerns Public Meeting	February 14, 2019
Alternatives Assessment	February – April 2019
Project Team Meeting #2	May 2019
Advisory Committee Meeting #2	May 2019
Alternatives Presentation Public Meeting	June 2019
VTrans Presentation	June 2019
Project Team Meeting #3	July 2019
Draft Scoping Report	August 2019
City Council Presentation	September 2019
Final Scoping Report	October 2019

3) Project Background & Existing Conditions

Erica described the project area as East Allen Street (VT 15) from the Circulator to the Exit 15 Interstate 89 Interchange. It encompasses five intersections and one Interstate interchange. Annual average daily traffic (AADT) varies from 14,000 to 19,000 vehicles per day. This study will build upon two previous studies, [Gateways District Form Based Code](#) (2015) and the [Winooski Transportation Master Plan](#) (2017).

Nate Dagesse noted that he has projects in the planning stages, but no pending development applications. John Audy of the Fire Department mentioned that they expect changes at the Highland Industrial Park.

3a) Traffic & Safety: There are three VTrans High Crash Intersections on East Allen Street at East Street/Abenaki Way, East Spring Street, and at the Interstate Exit 15 northbound off-ramp. There have been 302 total crashes in the corridor including 10 bicycle or pedestrian crashes and one fatal crash. Fifty-four of those crashes resulted in injuries. This aligns with the experience of the emergency responders on the committee.

3b) Bikes & Pedestrians: Erica reviewed the bike and pedestrian facilities along the corridor. Committee members have serious concerns about the safety of crosswalks and the limited availability of crossing East Allen Street. There are reports of the crossing beacons activating when no one is in the crosswalk. Safety concerns exist at the existing flashing beacon due to a four-lane crossing and a continued lack of visibility to vehicles.

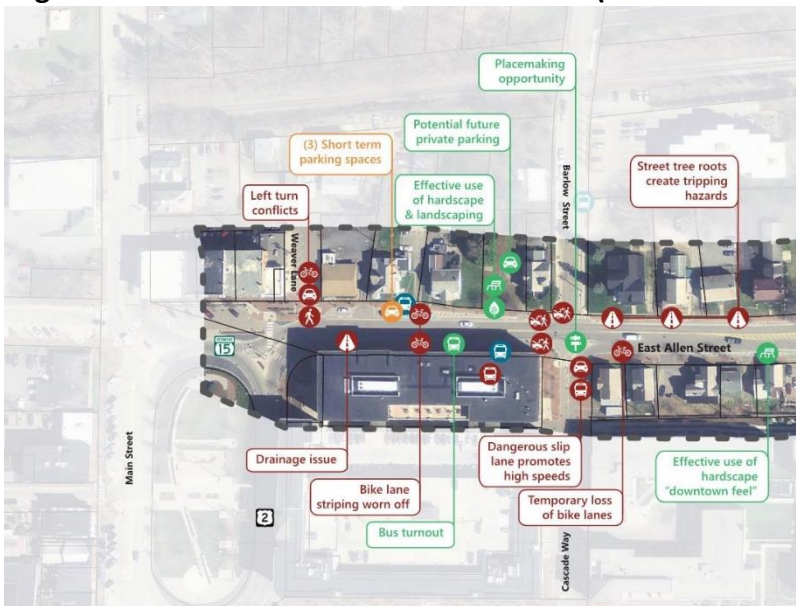
Nate Dagesse has 39-units of affordable housing that will be fully leased soon. He would like to see the “road diet” remain (it’s under a temporary permit to facilitate construction) past the construction phase. Erica noted that these studies often provide a list of short and long-term improvements. There was a discussion of slowing speeding traffic and whether or not crashes are happening more often coming down the hill rather than up the hill. The group would like to see the Casavant Park entrance highlighted and more accessible by foot. There was a discussion of the importance of on-street parking in the areas where there is commercial/retail.

3c) Purpose & Need Statement: Please see end of document.

4) Issues & Opportunities

Erica discussed three themes: Mobility, Safety, and Placemaking for the corridor segments. All issues and opportunities fall into one of these categories.

Segment 1: Circulator to West of East Street (Downtown Core)



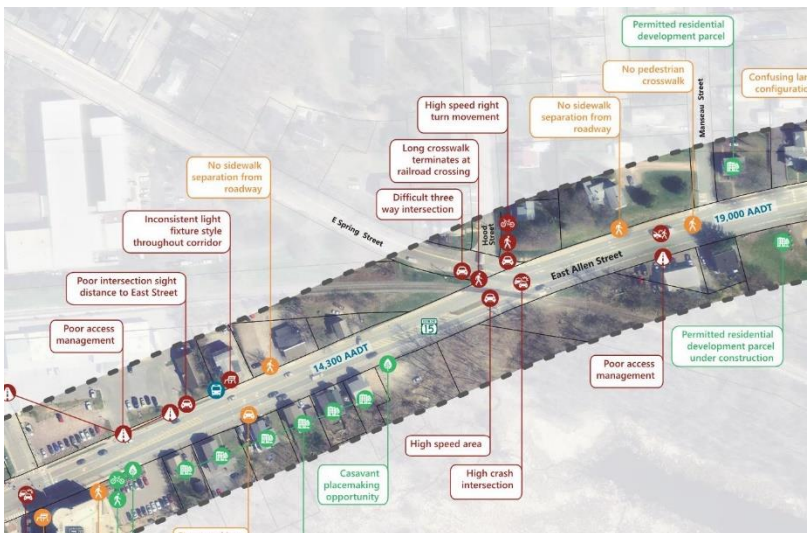
The group discussed the slip lane on Barlow Street and traffic exiting the parking garage. The slip lane also impedes safe navigation by cyclists. It was encouraged to investigate the need for the slip lane from a sight distance perspective.

Segment 2: West of East Street to E. Spring Street



Vehicles cut through Abenaki Way to the Circulator but the volumes remain relatively low. The Abenaki Way and East Spring intersection is a high crash location – the group wondered if this was due to speeds and/or issues of sun blindness. There is a long gap in bus service along this section and limited opportunity for pedestrians to cross. There is a bond vote to take place on Town Meeting Day for a new parking garage on Abenaki Way. VTans recently analyzed vehicle crash patterns at East Street and Abenaki Way and produced recommendations to reduce crash frequencies.

Segment 3: East Spring Street Intersection



The crosswalk at E. Spring is dangerous due to the length of the crossing and high speeds of turning vehicles. The Transportation Master Plan recommends a “T” intersection for E. Spring but a new configuration would result in additional railroad crossing. It’s possible that Hood Street could be closed off at Spring St. Bike lanes are poorly marked and are adjacent to high-speed vehicles. Emergency responders have a difficult time navigating this intersection as do vehicles, partly due to the weaving traffic pattern on East Allen. Permitting is temporary for the lane closure and crosswalk near Manseau and a crosswalk

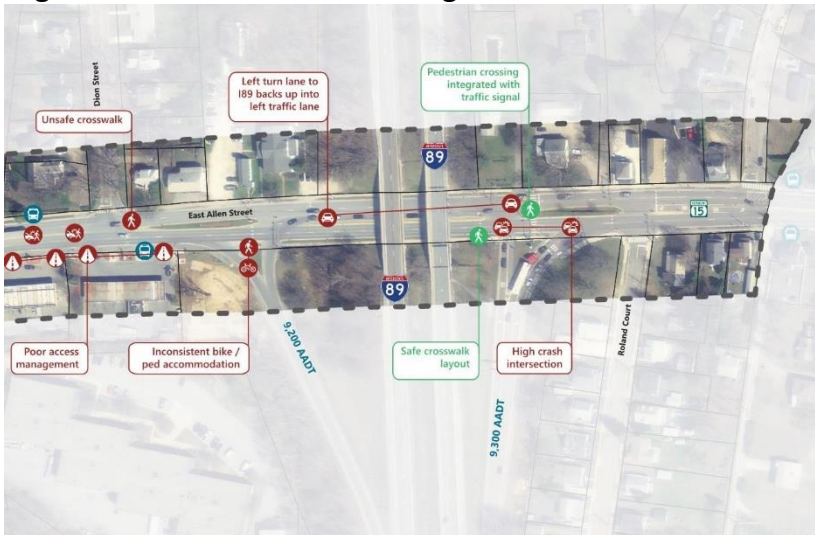
with four lanes of traffic with no median would not be recommended without a HAWK signal similar to what is across VT 15 at the Fanny Allen Campus in Colchester. Nate has conceptual designs for a building on the west side of Manseau at the corner with East Allen. It will have 50 units of housing, 100-120 parking spaces, and 10,000 square feet of retail.

Segment 4: E Spring Street to I-89 ON Ramp



The original approvals for Great Cedars (senior housing) prohibited left turns out of the driveway. A loop on Dion Street was supposed to be followed, but it was later determined that it would create issues with Interstate access. There is no enforcement or signage of the left-turn prohibition. The owners of the Highland Industrial Park have difficulty leasing their space due to the single entrance/egress from the property.

Segment 5: I-89 Exit 15 Interchange



This segment is difficult for bicyclists due to confusing vehicle patterns. Sidewalks are narrow, in poor condition, and close to high-speed traffic. Traffic signal visibility is an issue for eastbound vehicles coming out of the underpass. Emergency responders noted there have been very serious crashes at this location in the past.

5) Next Steps

- Public Engagement: Public Meeting on February 14, 2018, 6:30PM, Winooski City Hall
- Incorporate comments on Purpose & Need Statement
- Finishing Existing Conditions Report
- Development of Alternatives

6) Other Concerns

Winooski DPW encourages streetscape enhancements to consider snow removal and storage. If we decrease pervious surfaces, the City can receive phosphorous Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) credits. The City cannot afford improvements like those on Main Street, but they can make progress over time (unless a new funding source is identified). Amy Bell of VTrans asked that the consultants review the bridge inspection reports for the Interstate underpass.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45PM.

East Allen Scoping Study – Purpose & Need Statement

The purpose of the East Allen Street Scoping Study is to identify and prioritize improvements along East Allen Street from the Circulator to Roland Court which will foster a vibrant and welcoming gateway to downtown Winooski by enhancing mobility and improving safety for all modes of transportation. These improvements are intended to maximize gateway development and redevelopment opportunities as prescribed by the Winooski Gateway Corridors Form Based Code, and enhance aesthetics, parking, and pedestrian scale accommodations along the corridor.

The need for this project is driven by deficiencies in the current transportation infrastructure and a need for comprehensive corridor planning. These needs are further articulated below:

- **Limited Pedestrian Accommodations:** The 2015 Winooski Gateways Corridors Study specified the need for enhanced pedestrian accommodations and limited building setback along East Allen Street. This streetscape design is present in the Downtown Core but does not exist along the rest of the corridor. The corridor also lacks pedestrian scale amenities such as trees and pedestrian scale lighting. Between 2012 and 2017, eight crashes were reported involving pedestrians along this corridor. Some of these pedestrian crashes are likely attributable to missing pedestrian accommodations and auto-oriented nature of the corridor.
- **Lack of Bicycle Accommodations:** East Allen Street is shown as a High Priority and High Feasibility corridor in the CCRPC's Active Transportation Plan. The existing bike facilities along this corridor are disconnected and lack clear designation from motorists. Between 2014 and 2017, there were three bicycle crashes, all of which resulted in injuries.
- **Existing Safety Issues:** There are three High Crash Location Intersections along the East Allen Street Corridor. These include the intersections of East Allen Street and the Winooski Circulator, East Allen Street and Dion Street, and East Allen Street and the I-89 Northbound Off Ramp. At these three intersections, there were 92 crashes between 2012 and 2016.
- **Limited Transit Accommodations:** Three Green Mountain Transit routes currently operate on East Allen Street (#2 Essex, #9 Riverside/Winooski, and #36 Jefferson Commuter). There are five bus stops along this corridor which provide limited amenities for transit users. The lack of shelters, lighting, and seating diminish the experience for existing users and do not promote transit use by new riders.
- **Existing Operational Issues:** Numerous dangerous and operationally inadequate intersections are present along this corridor. Long queues are present at the Exit 15 interchange and Circulator entrance, especially during weekday peak hours. These intersections, along with the intersection with East Spring Street, experience operational issues that impact the efficacy of other intersections up and down stream along the corridor.

Attendance

Advisory Committee Members

John	Audy	Winooski Fire Dept.
Amy	Bell	VTrans
Ashley	Bishop	VTrans
Abby	Bleything	Planning Commissioner
Maya	Boucher	Great Cedars/Summit Mgmt.
Nate	Dagesse	Developer
Tom	Getz	Summit Mgmt.
Rick	Hebert	Winooski Police Dept.
Taylor	Sisson	VTrans
Allegra	Williams	Local Motion

Project Team & Staff

Jason	Charest	CCRPC
Eleni	Churchill	CCRPC
Ryan	Lambert	City of Winooski
Diane	Meyerhoff	Third Sector Assoc.
Erica	Quallen	VHB
John	Rauscher	City of Winooski
David	Saladino	VHB
Sai	Sarepalli	CCRPC
Karen	Sentoff	VHB
Lucy	Thayer	VHB
Eric	Vorwald	City of Winooski

Study Contacts:

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