

Advisory Committee Meeting #2 Meeting Notes

Monday, April 29, 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 1:10PM by Jason Charest of the CCRPC and introductions were made. There were no changes to the agenda. David Saladino, VHB Project Manager, provided an overview of the meeting with a goal of preparing the conceptual design alternatives for presentation to the public in June.

2) Scope, Schedule, and Progress to Date

Advisory Committee Meeting #1	January 30, 2019
Local Concerns Public Meeting	February 14
Alternatives Assessment	February – April
Project Team Meeting #2	March 7
Evaluation of Alternatives	April- June
Advisory Committee Meeting #2	April 29
Alternatives Presentation Public Meeting (Joint PC and DPW Commissions)	June 13 (TENTATIVE)
VTrans Presentation	June
Project Team Meeting #3	July
Advisory Committee Meeting #3	July
Draft Scoping Report	August
City Council Presentation	September
Final Scoping Report	October

3) Project Purpose & Need

David Saladino of VHB reviewed the project’s purpose and 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 project need is driven by deficiencies in the current transportation infrastructure and comprehensive corridor planning, including: limited pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, balance of accommodations for all modes, existing safety issues, limited transit accommodations, and existing operational issues.

4) Issues & Opportunities: Focus Areas

Erica Quallen of VHB suggested seven focus areas for improvements: Streetscape, Wayfinding, and Crosswalks; Barlow/Cascade Intersection; East Spring Street/East Allen Street Intersection; East Street/Abenaki Way Intersection; Casavant Natural Area; 4-lane Section between approx. Hood and Dion Streets; and Exit 15 Interstate 89 Interchange.

5) Streetscape Concepts

Erica described three streetscape concepts along the corridor.

Streetscape Concept #1: Circulator to East Street/Abenaki Way

Maintain the current look and feel with some clean up, new bus stop shelters, replace trees as needed.

Streetscape Concept #2: East Street/Abenaki Way to E. Spring Street

Install pedestrian scale lighting, improve bus shelters, renovate sidewalks, replace trees as needed.

Streetscape Concept #3: East Spring to Interchange

This is a balance among the road diet, bike facilities, and parking. Improve bus shelters, install pedestrian scale lighting.

6) Baseline Improvements

Erica described a series of baseline improvements. At the East Street/Abenaki Way intersection, signals would be optimized to reduce the current vehicle and pedestrian delay. In the Casavant Natural Area, improve placemaking with a new parklet, signage, and reconfigured parking. For the Interstate interchange, add a second westbound left turn lane onto the Interstate to reduce queuing. VHB will evaluate the necessary length for merging on the on-ramp. Eleni Churchill (CCRPC) and Ashley Bishop (VTrans) asked that the truck movements be examined for the proposed additional westbound turn lane for any conflicts between two trucks simultaneously turning left onto the Interstate on-ramp and the interaction between queued vehicles on VT-15 and left turning trucks off of the Interstate off-ramp.

7) Draft Alternative Concepts and Evaluation

FOCUS AREA #1: 4-Lane Roadway Section

ALTERNATIVE 1: Road Diet with Bike Lane and Parking (Existing Curb Line)

This alternative, a road diet, tries to balance on-street parking and bike facilities. Abby Bleything of the Winooski Planning Commission asked why the bike lanes are on the downhill rather than the uphill. Erica responded this is a result of the need for parking on the uphill (south) side of the street for businesses; the curb-to-curb space is tight. There was discussion of a gateway treatment in this section.

ALTERNATIVE 2: Road Diet with Shifted Southern Curb Line

During peak hour, 10-12 percent of vehicles are trucks in this segment. Northbound left turning trucks (from the Exit 15 off-ramp) will likely need to take two lanes to turn left off the Interstate and there is concern that the queues will be long. It was requested that VHB confirm that this truck movement is possible in the proposed configuration. Abby asked if there is an opportunity to reduce curb cuts at the two gas stations. Amy Bell from VTrans suggested speaking with the owners about their future plans and if there is an opportunity to combine a driveway. Jason asked if a bulb-out could be placed on the south side of the mid-block crosswalk east of Manseau Street to shorten the crosswalk and eliminate the expansion into two lanes from occurring through the crosswalk. A raised crosswalk would reduce speed but there are noise impacts and plowing issues. Perhaps consider raising the entire intersection. There was discussion of a signal at Dion and Manseau, but in the past, it hasn't been supported by the public. Sai Sarepalli of CCRPC suggested closing one end of Dion Street or allowing only right turn movements and signaling Manseau Street for better traffic flow and pedestrian access.

FOCUS AREA #2 East Allen Street/East Spring Street

ALTERNATIVE 1: Signalized Intersection

The reconfigured crosswalks and proposed signal equipment locations would need to be negotiated with NECR/Genesee & Wyoming.

ALTERNATIVE 2: E. Spring Street Realignment

The new roadway crossing would need to be negotiated with NECR; there are also large right-of-way needs. This alternative cannot move forward without knowing if NECR would consider the new crossing. The City should talk with NECR prior to the public meeting so as not to raise public expectations if NECR is unwilling to work with us.

ALTERNATIVE 3: Roundabout

A significant retaining wall is required due to the slope; this alternative is very expensive. Although this alternative isn't viable, it needed to be considered. It will not be presented to the public unless needed. It was suggested that railroad impacts and constructability be added to the alternatives evaluation matrix.

ALTERNATIVE 4: E. Spring Street: One-Way Westbound

East Spring Street westbound to Barlow would become one-way. In the eastbound direction, it is expected that half of the traffic will go to Manseau/Dion/LaFountain and the rest through the Circulator. Trucks would be forced to the Circulator and a signal would be added at Manseau. This alternative moves traffic into the neighborhood. The City does not support this alternative; it will be dropped and not presented to the public.

FOCUS AREA #3: E. Allen Street/Barlow Street/Cascade Way

ALTERNATIVE 1: Merge Lane Removal (Slip lane from Cascade Way to E. Allen Street)

The removal of the merge lane frees 12 feet of pavement. There are numerous opportunities for parking, bike lanes, etc. Jon Rauscher of Winooski DPW suggested a stormwater rain garden and safer pedestrian crossing. Nate Dagesse would like to see on-street parking. Ryan Lambert of Winooski DPW asked if the bus stop at VSAC could be swapped to the slip lane and add parking at the bus stop area instead (safer for bicyclists). Erica will look at the options and present to the project team before the public presentation.

ALTERNATIVE 2: Two-Way Stop-Controlled Intersection

A two-way stop-controlled intersection will allow for all turning movements to be made at this intersection. This requires the removal the existing small splitter island and will allow for the stop bar and crosswalk to be moved to the north. Similar options to Alternative 1 will be examined for the treatments in the newly freed up 12 feet of pavement.

8) Evaluation Matrix

Erica reviewed the evaluation matrix (available at <http://bit.ly/east-allen-scoping>). It will be updated prior to the public meeting.

9) Next Steps

Finalize Alternatives Evaluation	May
Alternatives Presentation	June 13 (TENTATIVE)
Selection of Preferred Suite of Improvements	September
Scoping Report	October

The City will try to schedule discussions with NECR and gas station owners to help narrow down the alternatives prior to the public presentation.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00PM.

Attendance

Advisory Committee Members

Amy	Bell	VTrans
Ashley	Bishop	VTrans
Abby	Bleything	Planning Commissioner
Nate	Dagesse	Local Developer
Devin	Mason	GMT
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
Jon	Rauscher	City of Winooski
David	Saladino	VHB
Sai	Sarepalli	CCRPC
Eric	Vorwald	City of Winooski

Study Contacts:

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