

March 25, 2008

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
BUREAU OF HIGHWAY DESIGN**

CONFERENCE REPORT

PROJECT: WALPOLE-CHARLESTOWN 14747
Reconstruct NH-12 from Main Street in North Walpole north to NH 12A in
Charlestown

DATE OF CONFERENCE: March 12, 2008

LOCATION OF CONFERENCE: Charlestown Town Hall

ATTENDED BY: **Project Lead Team**

Nate Miller, Upper Valley Lake Sunapee RPC
Donald Lyford – NHDOT Project Manager (PAC Member)
Bill Oldenburg – NHDOT Right-of-Way Administrator
John Evans – NHDOT Bureau of Environment (PAC member)
C.R. Willeke – NHDOT Preliminary Design Engineer

Project Advisory Committee

Fred Poisson, Charlestown Planning Board
William Sullivan, Charlestown Economic Development Authority
Aare Ilves, Charlestown Citizen Representative
(Absent) Debra Livingston, Fall Mountain Regional School District
Jon LeClair, Charlestown Selectboard
Richard Holmes, Charlestown Conservation Commission
Bruce Putnam, Charlestown Business Rep & Highway Advisory Board
(Absent) Robert Beaudry, Charlestown Business Representative
Albert St. Pierre, Charlestown Citizen Representative
David Edkins, Charlestown Planning and Zoning Administrator
Eric Lutz, UVLSRPC Commissioner (Charlestown)
Keith Weed, Charlestown Highway Superintendent
Ed Smith, Charlestown Police Chief
Sharon Francis, Connecticut River Joint Commissions
J.B. Mack, SWRPC (formerly Tim Garceau)
(Absent) Christine Walker, UVLSRPC
Patrick Kiniry, North Walpole Village Commissioners
Jim Terrell, Walpole Selectboard Designee
(Absent) Jeff Miller, Walpole Planning Board
(Absent) Marcia Galloway, Walpole Conservation Commission
(Absent) Donald Lennon, Walpole Business Representative
(Absent) Ken Alton, TransCanada Corporation
(Future member) Mike Lawyer, New England Central Railroad

See Attached List for General Public and Press

SUBJECT: Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #3 Minutes**NOTES ON CONFERENCE:**

On March 12th, 2008 approximately 30 people gathered at the Town Hall in Charlestown for a meeting facilitated by the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) and the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (UVLSRPC). The intent was for PAC members to combine the previously developed problem statements about the NH 12 corridor into one comprehensive problem statement that all could agree on. The comprehensive problem statement will be used to help develop a future vision statement for the NH 12 corridor.

Introduction

Donald Lyford, project manager for the NHDOT, welcomed everyone and began with NHDOT staff introductions. Don asked the committee members to introduce themselves. After audience introductions, Don handed the meeting over to Bill Oldenburg to provide a brief presentation on the overall process of the project.

Bill Oldenburg presented a condensed version of the CSS slide show that was presented at the previous meeting in December. He stressed the definition of CSS: “A collaborative interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility.” Bill mentioned that community input is being sought to make sure the NHDOT is headed in the right direction with respect to project goals. He mentioned that the Department is seeking committee support for future alternatives as they are developed and seeking help with identifying infeasible alternatives as well. Bill stated that the NHDOT does not want to ruin the community or what is of value to the community when constructing the NH 12 improvements.

Bill went on to review the results of the previous “Place Making” workshop held last December. Place Making is used to look at an existing place and define what is good and bad about that place. Bill briefly summarized the results for the place-making workshop and then handed the meeting over to Nate Miller to talk about the “Problem Statement.”

Nate presented and read out loud the 5 problem statements that were developed by the PAC members and the general public at the previous place-making workshop. He mentioned that tonight, the groups main goal was to combine these 5 problem statements into one comprehensive problem statement. Nate then presented and read out loud his own draft problem statement that combined the five previous statements and asked the PAC members to comment on his draft statement. Bill Oldenburg used a laptop computer to make changes to the draft problem statement as PAC members made suggestions. The Problem Statement was projected onto a screen and PAC members could watch as the edits were being made. The PAC members provided many good comments and a comprehensive Problem Statement was developed (see below). The major theme of the discussion involved the order in which the problems were mentioned in the statement relative to the importance of the problem. There was a general consensus that the narrow width of the road was the biggest problem and that the closeness of the river and railroad are unique constraints to this project that limit inexpensive solutions to the width problem. The combined problem statement reads as follows:

Problem Statement

“Route 12, the only highway between North Walpole and Charlestown, is too narrow, without shoulders and adequate guardrails. The highway's location, squeezed between the Connecticut River and the active New England Central rail line, and the roadway's aging infrastructure present serious and unique safety concerns. The instability of the bank of the Connecticut River is a serious and immediate safety and environmental concern that threatens the roadway itself and the regional economy. Poor pavement condition and lack of sufficient roadway drainage cause hazardous and unsafe driving conditions. The combination of these factors hinders the ability of vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians to safely and efficiently travel the corridor, and detracts from residents' ability to access the river and enjoy the scenic beauty of the Connecticut River Valley.”

After the group discussion, Bill Oldenburg briefly discussed low cost improvements. He mentioned that the Department would look at potential guardrail upgrades; however the Department's standard guardrail is wider than the existing guardrail that is currently in place on

NH 12. Because the existing roadway is narrow, upgrading with wider guardrail would not be desirable. Bill mentioned that the Department would evaluate the potential use of a narrow, modern, cable guardrail as an alternative.

Bill mentioned that the signing for Fall Mountain School would be reviewed by the Bureau of Traffic to see if additional signing could be installed near the intersection of NH 12 and NH 12A.

Bill and Nate both requested committee members to work on draft vision statements prior to the next meeting.

A PAC member asked if anyone from the New England Central Railroad would be joining the committee. Don Lyford indicated that Mike Lawyer from the railroad would hopefully be joining the PAC soon.

A committee member mentioned that they have seen a bald eagle near the project area.

The next meeting was scheduled for:

Wednesday,
April 9th, 2008
Starting @ 6:00 pm
Silsby Library / Municipal Building
Charlestown NH

Submitted by,

C.R. Willeke, PE
Preliminary Design Engineer

Attachment: Sign In Sheet

cc: D. Lyford
W. Oldenburg
J. Evans
W. Lambert - Traffic
D. Graham – District #4
Nate Miller – UVLSRPC
J.B. Mack – SWRPC
PAC Members

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