

**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 approximately 3 miles to NH 12A in Charlestown

**DATE OF CONFERENCE:** June 24, 2009

**LOCATION OF CONFERENCE:** Charlestown Silsby Library/Municipal Building

**ATTENDED BY:** **Project Lead Team**

Nate Miller, Upper Valley Lake Sunapee RPC  
Michael Dugas – NHDOT Chief of Preliminary Design  
C.R. Willeke – NHDOT Preliminary Design Engineer

**Project Advisory Committee**

Donald Lyford – NHDOT Project Manager  
Jon Evans – NHDOT Bureau of Environment  
Fred Poisson, Charlestown Citizen Representative & Abutter  
(Absent) William Sullivan, Charlestown Economic Development Authority  
(Absent) Aare Ilves, Charlestown Citizen Representative  
(Absent) Jane Stansbery, Fall Mountain School District (for Debra Livingston)  
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  
(Absent) Eric Lutz, UVLSPRC Commissioner (Charlestown)  
Keith Weed, Charlestown Highway Superintendent  
(Absent) Ed Smith, Charlestown Police Chief  
Sharon Francis, Connecticut River Joint Commissions  
(Absent) 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  
Donald Lennon, Walpole Business Representative & Abutter  
Ken Alton, TransCanada Corporation  
(Absent) James Dahlke, New England Central Railroad  
(Absent) Douglas Ring, Charlestown Planning Board

**Citizens & Officials**

Charlie Lennon (Business Abutter)  
Jordan Davis, Eagle Times Newspaper  
Loren A. Reed, Charlestown Resident  
Barbara O'Brien, North Walpole Commissioner  
Cheryl Mayberry, North Walpole Commissioner  
Edward Hasselmann, North Walpole Fire Department  
Steve Neill, Charlestown Selectman  
A. Wilcox, Charlestown Resident (Parcel #22)  
Darlene Boniface, Charlestown Resident (Parcel #21)  
Roger Thibodeau, Twin State Engineering, Charlestown

**SUBJECT: Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #8 Minutes**

**NOTES ON CONFERENCE:**

On June 24, 2009 approximately 30 people gathered at the Silsby Library 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 of the meeting was to:

- Update the PAC on the feedback received at the recent Public Informational Meeting held on April 29, 2009,
- Update the PAC on the feedback received at the recent Natural Resource Meeting held on May 20, 2009
- Discuss a potential new alternative that combines elements of previously developed Options #2 and #3, and
- Begin screening alternatives using the previously developed screening criteria.

**Introduction**

Donald Lyford, project manager for the NHDOT, welcomed everyone and asked the participants to introduce themselves. After audience introductions and a review of the agenda, Don mentioned the feedback received at the 4/29/09 Public Informational Meeting.

**Public Informational Meeting Summary**

Don Lyford mentioned that a number of North Walpole residents attended the meeting with concerns about the options that would relocate NH 12 onto Main Street. Issues such as existing drainage, traffic speeds, property impacts, side road connections, emergency response, and traffic volumes were mentioned. Other comments included the life span of the retaining walls for option #5, access for residents in the Meany's cove area, potential disruptions to Len-Tex business operations, the ability to obtain permits for impacting in the Connecticut River system, and lowering the speed limit on NH 12.

**Natural Resource Meeting Summary**

Jon Evans discussed the recent Natural Resource meeting held in Concord on May 20, 2009. Jon mentioned that after describing the project and difficult constraints to the resource agencies, the agencies agreed to at least consider some impacts to the Connecticut River system if they can be limited and do not extend along the entire length of the corridor.

**Potential New Alternative – Option #32**

C.R. Willeke presented a conceptual alternative that would combine elements of two previous options (Option #3 and Option #2) to reduce impacts to the Connecticut River and reduce large impacts to the steep hillside to the east. This option would avoid impacts to the Connecticut River in the southern section of the project by shifting the railroad to the east and re-aligning the highway to approximately where the railroad tracks sit today. The easterly shift of the highway is proposed to occur north of the Len Tex property to avoid impacts to the Len Tex building and parking lot. Some spot impacts to the Connecticut River may be necessary in this area to avoid Len Tex business operations. Shifting the railroad easterly would have impacts to the hillside (slope cuts in the 40 to 60 foot range) but not as large as the approximately 150 ft slope cuts that would be required if the railroad were to be relocated in the middle and northern segments of the project.

In the middle segment of the project, the highway would shift back to near the existing alignment. This would maintain the driveway connections to the residents near Meany's Cove and avoid the large hill to the east of the tracks. In order to provide for roadway shoulders and an improved ditch line between the highway and the existing railroad in this area, the centerline would be shifted approximately 4 to 6 feet to the west (closer to the residents along Meany's Cove). The centerline alignment would continue approximately 4 to 6 feet west of the existing centerline as it proceeds north with impacts to the cove and the Connecticut River until shifting back on line to go under the NH 12A overpass. C.R. asked the PAC for comments about this potential option and/or suggestions for variations to this option.

Albert St. Pierre (Charlestown Citizen Representative) and Donald Lennon (Walpole Business Representative and Business Abutter) indicated support for continued evaluation of option #32.

Sharon Francis (Connecticut River Joint Commissions) expressed concern for impacts to Meany's Cove and the Connecticut River in the northern segment. Don Lyford indicated that special slope treatments similar to the recent riverbank restoration at Fort #4 and / or retaining walls could be evaluated to minimize the impacts to the river system along the middle and northern segments.

Fred Poisson (Charlestown Citizen Representative & Abutter) suggested shifting the railroad to the east in the northern segment once the topography flattens near the existing 1930's abandoned underpass. An easterly shift in this area (similar to option #3) would avoid or limit fills into the Connecticut River at the northern end of the project and is physically possible with the flatter terrain. Don Lyford agreed that this option would be reviewed by the NHDOT.

Albert St. Pierre (Charlestown Citizen Representative) suggested utilizing the very northern segment of option #4 that realigns NH 12 and connects to NH 12A near the NH 12A Overpass Bridge. However, rather than continuing NH 12 onto the overpass bridge, the alignment would stay west of the bridge. NH 12 would need to be elevated to meet the elevation of NH 12A near the overpass bridge and then come back down to near its existing elevation to minimize impacts to the river. The advantage of this option is that it avoids having to fit the desired wider typical section (12 ft lanes, 4 ft shoulders and improved ditch lines) beneath the NH 12A overpass bridge where the bridge piers and the railroad constrain the available width. Don Lyford agreed that this option would be reviewed by the NHDOT.

Nate Miller asked the PAC if they concurred that Option #32 and the modifications suggested are viable options to be further reviewed by NHDOT and screened by the PAC. The PAC agreed.

### **Review of Screening Criteria and Option #1 Draft Screening**

Nate Miller presented the screening criteria previously developed by the PAC during meeting #5 on June 20, 2008 and asked for concurrence and/or comments prior to beginning the screening of alternatives. Donald Lennon (Walpole Business Representative and Business Abutter) mentioned that additional screening criteria should be included that reflect an alternative's impact on residential communities, quality of life, and business operations. Patrick Kiniry (North Walpole Village Commissioner) noted that, at the time the screening criteria were developed, the alternatives did not extend south through the Len Tex property and into the Main Street area. C.R. Willeke mentioned that another NHDOT project in Meredith has some criteria similar to what Mr. Lennon is suggesting and some of these criteria could be presented to the PAC for inclusion into this project. Don Lyford stated the NHDOT and UVLSRPC would add some criteria for review at the next PAC meeting.

Nate Miller suggested using the time remaining to screen "Alternative #1 – Do Nothing" as practice and preparation for when the screening criteria are finalized. The PAC agreed and screened Alternative #1 with the current draft screening criteria. The results of the screening will be posted on the project web site once the screening criteria are finalized and the screening is complete. After the practice screening, some members of the PAC felt that "Alternative #1 – Do Nothing" was a "Reasonable Alternative" however, most members agreed that it was an "Unreasonable Alternative".

The next PAC Meeting was scheduled for:

Wednesday, July 22, 2009  
Starting @ **6:00** pm  
Charlestown Silsby Library/Municipal Building

Submitted by,

C.R. Willeke, P.E.  
Preliminary Design Engineer  
New Hampshire DOT

cc: D. Lyford  
M. Dugas  
J. Evans  
W. Cass  
D. Graham – District #4  
W. Lambert – Traffic Bureau  
Nate Miller – UVLSRPC  
J.B. Mack – SWRPC  
PAC Members