

**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 South Charlestown

**DATE OF PUBLIC MEETING:** January 13, 2010

**LOCATION OF PUBLIC MEETING:** North Walpole School, North Walpole, NH

**ATTENDED BY:** **NHDOT and UVLSRPC**  
Nate Miller, Upper Valley Lake Sunapee RPC  
Donald Lyford – NHDOT Project Manager (PAC Member)  
Michael Dugas – NHDOT Chief of Preliminary Design  
Jon Evans – NHDOT Bureau of Environment (PAC member)  
C.R. Willeke – NHDOT Preliminary Design Engineer  
Douglas Graham – NHDOT District #4 Principal Engineer

See attached sign-in sheets for general public and project advisory committee members

**SUBJECT:** **Public Informational Meeting #2**

**NOTES ON PUBLIC MEETING:**

On January 13, 2010 approximately 60 people gathered at the North Walpole School 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 review the project's Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) process that utilizes a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) to evaluate and screen various alternatives in order to select a "preferred alternative" for roadway reconstruction. After a description of the CSS process and roadway reconstruction options, public comments were solicited to get feedback from the general public on the preferred alternative.

The slideshow presentation used for this January 13, 2010 Public Informational Meeting can be seen at the project's web site via the following link:

<http://www.nh.gov/dot/projects/walpole14747/index.htm>

**Introduction**

Donald Lyford, project manager for the NHDOT, welcomed everyone and introduced the project team and Doug Graham from District #4. Mr. Lyford then turned the meeting over to Nate Miller from the UVLSRPC.

**Review of Project Development Process**

Nate Miller began the slide show presentation describing the Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) process for the project. Nate gave an overview of how the CSS process started, the limits of the project, and the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) team members. Nate went on to describe the CSS philosophy, the CSS process steps, the development of the project's Problem Statement and Vision Statement, and the screening criteria that were developed to evaluate project alternatives.

Nate Miller briefly described the following 9 alternatives that the PAC asked the NHDOT to review as possible alternatives for roadway reconstruction:

- Option #1 – Maintain Existing Condition
- Option #2 – Hold Railroad as Control and Widen Westerly Toward River,
- Option #3 – Hold River as Control and Widen Easterly Toward Railroad,
- Option #4 – New Highway East of Railroad,
  - #4A – The Other Side of the Tracks,
  - #4B – Hillside Alternative,
  - #4C – Hillside Alternative with new Bridge back to Church Street
- Option #5 – Online Alternative with Geotechnical Measures
- Option #322 – Hybrid with Railroad Relocation in the South
  - Component #322A – NH 12 / NH 12A Intersection Reconfiguration
- Option #323 – Hybrid with RR Relocation in the South and North
  - Component #323A – NH 12 / NH 12A Intersection Reconfiguration

Nate indicated that the NHDOT is looking for comments at the end of tonight's meeting to get feedback from the general public relative to the options presented. He then turned the meeting over to C.R. Willeke to describe the existing conditions, preliminary design concepts, and the PAC committee's preferred alternative.

### **Review of Existing Conditions and Preliminary Engineering**

C.R. Willeke continued the slide show describing the existing conditions and problems associated with NH 12. He highlighted the proximity of the scenic Connecticut River and active New England Central Railroad, the outdated cable guardrail, the narrow pavement and lack of paved shoulders, the slope stability areas of concern, the numerous ledge outcrops adjacent to the highway, and the lack of bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. C.R. mentioned that the NHDOT has developed engineered concepts for the alternatives requested by the PAC. Using slides and typical cross sections, C.R. explained the preliminary designs, estimated costs, and the major pros and cons for each of the 9 alternatives.

C.R. noted that after the last public informational meeting in April of 2009 several hybrid alternatives were developed. C.R. described the hybrid alternatives in relation to the 3 major sections of the project:

- The southern segment,
- The middle segment, and
- The northern segment

The naming convention for the hybrid alternatives relates to the options used in each segment. The first number "3" is for the southern segment which utilizes an alignment similar to previous option #3 that proposes to relocate the railroad tracks easterly to make room for the roadway improvements. The second number "2" is for the middle segment and utilizes an alignment similar to previous option #2 that impacts the Meany's Cove area including Parcel #'s 15, 16, and 17 to make room for the roadway improvements. The third number is for the northern segment and can be either a "2" (from option #2, impact the river) or a "3" (from option #3, move the tracks) depending on the option being proposed. Both proposed hybrid alternatives (#322 and #323) are the same in the southern and middle segments. C.R. then turned the meeting over to Jon Evans to describe the roles of the NHDOT's Bureau of Environment.

Jon Evans gave a brief overview of the roles and responsibilities of the Bureau of Environment, which include evaluating the project's impact on the environment, coordinating with other agencies and organizations, preparing environmental

documentation, and obtaining environmental permits. Jon also mentioned Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the ability for interested people to request to become a 'consulting party' to the project. Jon then turned the meeting over to Nate Miller to summarize the PAC committee's screening results.

Nate Miller highlighted the major items in the screening criteria:

- Access
- Aesthetics
- Economic Vitality
- Environmental Issues
- Implementation
- Mobility
- Quality of Life, and
- Safety

Nate explained that the PAC answered a series of questions for each of the screening criteria for all of the nine alternatives. The PAC reached consensus when answering all of the screening criteria questions. At the end of each screening exercise, an alternative was determined to be "reasonable" or "unreasonable" by the PAC. The No Build Alternative (Option #1) and the On Existing Alignment Alternative (Option #5) were evaluated by the PAC; however, they were determined "unreasonable" as they were considered to be either infeasible or did not meet the project purpose and need.

The following is a list of "Reasonable" alternatives as determined by the PAC:

- Option #3 – River as Control – Impact Railroad
- Option #322 – Hybrid with Railroad Relocation in the Southern Segment
- Component #322A – NH 12 / NH 12A Intersection Reconfiguration
- Option #323 – Hybrid with Railroad Relocation in the Southern and Northern Segment
- Component #323A – NH 12 / NH 12A Intersection Reconfiguration

After all of the alternatives were screened, the PAC came to a consensus that Alternative #323 was their "preferred alternative".

Nate Miller ended the formal presentation with a slide indicating the next steps and funding for the project:

- Review design with railroad company and develop environmental documentation
- Conduct formal public hearing (2010)
- Final Design and Permitting (2010 / 2011)
- Initial Construction begins (2012)
- Current construction funds are approximately \$13 million

### **Public Questions and Comments:**

- A North Walpole resident asked if the project limits could be extend southerly to include widening and improving the Church Street area?

C.R. Willeke indicated that District #4 crews and Walpole town crews reclaimed and paved the roadway, as well as rebuilt the sidewalk and curbing along Church Street in 2005. He also indicated that the original project limits for the current project were only in Charlestown. However, after looking at the issues associated with the proximity of the Connecticut River in Walpole near the Charlestown town line, the project was extended southerly down to the Main

Street intersection. Due to the relatively recent improvements to Church Street and the lack of its proximity to the Connecticut River, the project would not likely get extended south of Main Street to include the Church Street area.

- A North Walpole resident expressed concern for the continued instability of the slopes along the Connecticut River in North Walpole near the area of the prior slope failure that occurred in 1996. They suggested that the NHDOT extend slope stabilization measures such as riprap with vegetation further south of the current project limits.

C.R. Willeke indicated that one of the PAC members, Ken Alton, represents Trans Canada, the operator of the dams along the Connecticut River. Ken had previously indicated that Trans Canada had installed slope stabilization measures in the area of the 1996 slope failure that were designed to collect sediment and help stabilize the slope. Ken had also indicated that the mats seemed to be working. C.R. indicated that the NHDOT would not likely get involved in additional slope stabilization measures in the area of the 1996 slope failure or areas further south because this work would be outside of the highway right-of-way.

- A North Walpole resident expressed concern with the slopes near NH 12 north of the Len Tex buildings within the project limits. He asked if moving the roadway easterly in this area would be enough if the river washes out the slope in this area?

C.R. Willeke indicated that the easterly shift in the highway proposed for preferred alternative #323 accounts for a potential slope failure, and was based on input from NHDOT geotechnical engineers. A more detailed slope assessment will be performed as the project moves forward to make sure an appropriate buffer exists between the new highway and the Connecticut River.

- Don Provencher asked why the proposed shoulders are only 4 ft wide? He indicated that bicyclists would not feel as comfortable or safe using a 4 ft shoulder compared to a wider shoulder.

Don Lyford indicated that the NHDOT tries to achieve a balance between highway widths and property impacts. A wider shoulder, perhaps 8 or 10 feet wide, would be more comfortable for bicyclists but would have additional impacts to abutters and significantly increase project costs due to the difficult project constraints. However, as we proceed with the design of this project we will see if there are areas where wider shoulders could be included.

- Ed Hasselman, North Walpole Fire Chief, commented that wider shoulders would be beneficial for emergency response.
- Aare Ilves, Charlestown resident and PAC member commented that the project should provide sections of wider shoulder where possible for breakdowns, as well as for scenic pull offs.
- Mr. Seavey, Parcel #14 located at the south end of Meany's Cove on the west side of NH 12, indicated that his septic system is located between his home and NH 12. He expressed concern about the road possibly moving closer to his property.

C.R. Willeke indicated that the highway is transitioning from its easterly shift back to near the existing alignment near parcel 14, and that the proposed

roadway is actually slightly further east than the existing road near his house and driveway.

- J.B. Mack, South West Regional Planning Commission, asked about the cost of the project and budget available. He also asked if any railroad funding was available.

C.R. Willeke indicated that cost estimate for preferred alternative #323 is in the range of \$15 million to \$20 million dollars. There is currently \$13 million dollars available for construction. Don Lyford mentioned that the project could be built in phases with railroad relocation likely to be the first phase. The NHDOT is not aware of any separate railroad funding but will keep an eye out for any potential railroad stimulus funding.

- Jan Lambert asked about the environmental documentation for the project and the public hearing process and timeline.

Don Lyford indicated that Jon Evans is currently working on the environmental documentation and that the Department of Environmental Services may require a formal public hearing in addition to or in combination with the NHDOT's public hearing. Don Lyford indicated that NHDOT public hearings are recorded, and written testimony would also be accepted during the comment period, which is usually ten days in length following the public hearing.

Submitted by,

C.R. Willeke, P.E.  
Preliminary Design Engineer

Attachment – 1/13/10 Sign In Sheet

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

**14747 WALPOLE-CHARLESTOWN**  
**PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING # 2**  
**JANUARY 13<sup>TH</sup>, 2010 WEDNESDAY, 6:00 PM**

**SIGN IN SHEET**

**NAME ADDRESS OR AGENCY COMMENTS**

Sharon Francis	Connecticut River Joint Commissions	Thanks DOT.
Barbara E. Bivens	Commissioner North Walpole	
Jon Leclair	SELECTMAN CHARLESTOWN	
Sandy Knowles	11 Center North Walpole	
J.B. Mack	SWRPC	
PAT Kinney	northwalpole	NWVD - GOOD JOBS
Dave Edkins	Charleston	
Todd Lyles	Charleston	
DAVE MADDA	N. WALPOLE	
Charlie Lennon	Len-Tex Corp., N. Walpole	

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**SIGN IN SHEET**

NAME	ADDRESS OR AGENCY	COMMENTS
ERNEST MARY CHAMBERLAIN	956 N Hembek Rd CHARLESTOWN	
Tamera Conrad	P.O Box 144 Charlestown NH	
Darlene Bonifacio	125 Old State Rd Charlestown NH 03603	
Michael Augustowicz	11 11	
Curtis Congdon	33 Carpenter Hill Rd Walpole, NH 03608	
Marcia Galloway	447 Watkins Hill Rd Walpole NH 03608	WCC co-chair
LEO TALBOT	1114 MAIN ST N. WALPOLE	
Jim + Luci Byrne	2 Birch St N. Walpole, NH	
DONALD Provencher RENA Provencher	1058 MAIN ST. NORTH WALPOLE NH	
Lt. Michael J. Pagnette II	Walpole Police Dept. 4 Russell St. N. Walpole, NH. 03609	



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**SIGN IN SHEET**

NAME	ADDRESS OR AGENCY	COMMENTS
POWER	2 DUFFY N. WALPOLE	
Sd Hasselmann	NW Fire Dept.	
Steele Neil	Town Charlestown selectman	
Aare Ilves	Charlestown citizen	
Wilson	1 Killen St N. Walpole	
John Dagnoli	14 Maple Street N.W.	
William Baldasaro	10 ONE FIFTY LANE N.W.	
Kathy Baldasaro	" "	
Walter Habelzick	Oak St N.W.	
Dominic Saladyga	Po Box 573 Charlestown	



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NAME	ADDRESS OR AGENCY	COMMENTS
Fred Poisson	Sullivan St Charlestown	
Albert St. Pierre	Sunnyside Circle Charlestown N.H.	
Doug Graham	NH DOT - DISTRICT 4	
Jan Lambert	P.O. B 262 Char. 03603	
Eric Lutz	P O B 1004 Charlestown	
Pat + Daryl Royce	Summit St. Charlestown	
Louise Wetherby	Wetherby Road Charlestown	
DALE WOODWARD	FLAT 2T WALPOLE	Historical Society
Joanne Day	30 Gray Rd No. Walpole NH 03609	
HARRY + FRANCES SECTT	1030 MAIN ST No. WALPOLE	

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**NAME ADDRESS OR AGENCY COMMENTS**

Janece + Gilbert Gray	5 Duffy St. 03609 No. Walpole N.H.	Church St is too narrow
Doug & Kathy Gray	17 Gray Rd N. Walpole, NH	
Janet Kiniry	4 Maple St N. Walpole	
Cheryl Mayberry Commissioner Walpole	9 Spruce Street Walpole NH	Need better sand for presenters + wireless mikes for questions. Don needs a mike.
A. Pinkerton	5 Maple St. N. Walpole, 03608	Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1996 NY, NY 10113
Bethany Lasko blasko@eagletimes.com	Eagle times	<u>Truck</u> Traffic should be rerouted out of the southern portion of Church St.