

MEMORANDUM

TO: File

FROM: Christopher R. Bean, P.E.

DATE: February 12, 2001

RE: VTrans
Pittsford-Brandon NH 019-3(49)SC
CLD Reference No. 00-0219, 00-0248

SUBJECT: US Route 7 Upgrade Steering Committee Meeting, 02/12/01

LOCATION: Brandon Fire Station

ATTENDEES:

*Peg Flory	Town of Pittsford
*James O’Gorman	Town of Pittsford
*Hank Pelkey	Town of Pittsford
*Dan Peterson	VTrans, Project Manager
*Greg Riley	VTrans, Planning Coordinator
Roy M. Newton	<i>Brandon-Pittsford Reporter</i>
Mark Germanowski	Rutland Regional Planning Commission
Bob Wood	Representative, District R-2
Jason Stone	CLD
*Chris Bean	CLD

*Route 7 Upgrade Steering Committee Member

MEETING NOTES

1. Conceptual Plans Development

- Schedule

Chris Bean explained that conceptual plans for Project Segment 4 have been submitted. Plans for Project Segment 6 were provided to VTrans and the Towns on this date. CLD is requesting that comments on both Project Segments be provided by February 23, 2001, so revisions can be made in advance of the Comments Review Meeting, scheduled for March 7, 2001 (see below). Chris indicated that the plans for the remaining segments are forthcoming. Submittals for Project Segments 1 and 2 are targeted for mid- to late February. Richard Baker asked whether the plans for Segment 6 included a traffic signal at the intersection of US Route 7 with Carver and Union Streets. Chris responded that a signal is included, though it has not been fully designed at this point.

Dan Peterson suggested that before additional submittals are made (prior to the March 7 Comments Review Meeting), it may be beneficial to complete the reviews of Project Segments 4 and 6. Dan felt that many comments on these submittals would likely be applicable to subsequent submittals as well, and a savings in review time would be realized. It was agreed to delay the submittals for Segments 1 and 2.

Peg Flory asked if any Division of VTANR should be provided with conceptual plans. Dan Peterson said he would check to see if VTANR staff would like to review plans at this stage of the project.

Chris mentioned that construction cost estimates are included in the submittals. Costs are higher than originally anticipated. One of the causes for this is the shift from rubblization of the concrete roadbed to removal of the concrete with full-depth reconstruction. Other increases are due to increases in unit item costs, such as the per ton price of bituminous pavement. Chris mentioned that the improvements made by these projects would be in place for a long time before the project area is improved again. Chris noted that Dan Peterson has gone on record as stating that even if costs are somewhat higher than originally anticipated, funds should be spent to ensure the projects are "done right," and long-lasting improvements are made.

- **Montpelier Comment Review Meeting**

Comments on the Conceptual Plans will be reviewed on March 7, 2001, at VTrans - National Life Building in Montpelier, VT. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 10:00 AM. Members of the Steering Committees are welcome. It was noted, however, that the discussions are generally detail-oriented and focus on technical issues.

Roy Newton asked when the next opportunity for the general public to see the plans would be. As there is not another Public Informational Meeting scheduled, the Public Hearing will be the next formal opportunity for public input. It was noted that plans will be available for review at each Town Office and the public may provide comments through the Steering Committee at any time.

2, **Mailbox Locations in Pittsford Village**

Chris summarized the issue as follows. Presently mailboxes in Pittsford Village are located at the edge of the pavement. Curbing is either nonexistent or has become obscured/buried, and does not represent a barrier to mail delivery vehicles. In most locations there is at least ten feet of space between the boxes and the travelway. Adequate room exists for the mail delivery vehicle to pull over, out of the travelway, and make deliveries without impeding traffic flow. With the proposed typical in place, there will not be adequate room for the delivery vehicle to pull over, and allow vehicles to pass, without crossing over into the opposing travel lane. This situation is a safety concern for the public, as well as the mail delivery personnel.

Peg Flory stated that it is up to the Town of Pittsford to push for door-to-door mail delivery. She explained that it is hard to know what information the Postal Service requires to justify a change in modes of delivery, as it does not appear that guidelines exist. Peg indicated that perhaps the time has come to involve others in VT State Government in the Town's dealings with the Postal Service. Dan Peterson added that the Postal Service needs to be made aware of the safety issues involved. Richard Baker noted that in addition to the mail delivery vehicles, the owners of the mailboxes would also impede traffic flow when getting their mail.

Mailbox clusters were discussed as an option-to-door to door delivery. Peg Flory mentioned that based on input she has received, proposing mailbox clusters would result in increased opposition to the project. Door-to-door delivery, limited to properties fronting US Route 7 only, was suggested. Chris suggested that locating mailboxes at the back edge of the sidewalks or the right-of-way may be an option. This would require delivery vehicles to make regular stops where space allows and then deliver mail to the boxes on foot. This would require less time than door-to-door delivery, as it would not require walking all the way to the doors of residences.

Mike Balch stated that VTrans is not required to allow mailboxes within the State's right-of-way. He asked Dan whether VTrans would be willing to require their removal, and force door-to-door delivery. Dan responded that he was not aware of any instance where this has occurred, although it may have at some location. He added that he would rather the issue be worked out between the Town of Pittsford and the Postal Service, and again cited the safety issue as an incentive for the Postal Service to adopt door-to-door delivery.

3. **Archeology - Matrix of Design Alternatives**

CLD is developing design alternatives to avoid and/or minimize impacts to the Fort Vengeance Monument Site, which VTrans has determined to be National Register-eligible (see attached matrix). VTrans's archeological consultant (Louis Berger) will provide information relative to the depth of the archeological deposits in the area to assist in determining the level of impacts associated with the various alternatives.

Chris presented a roadway profile graphic and roadway plan of the Monument area, including the "Pomainville sag," and explained that the proposed northbound truck climbing lane contributes to impacts at the Monument Site. Some of the alternatives that would lessen impacts to the Monument Site involve shortening the climbing lane by beginning it approximately 0.3 mile further to the north. The climbing lane would then be about 0.5 miles in length. Chris explained the analysis that defines where the climbing lane is warranted, and noted it is based in part on the speed that trucks are traveling as they enter the proposed climbing lane. The analysis clearly shows that the area where the lane could be shortened is where the climbing lane is needed most, i.e., trucks would reach their slowest speed prior to the shortened lane, and would be accelerating as they reached the lane. The Steering Committee favored leaving the climbing lane as it is currently proposed, recognizing that it is the only climbing lane in the northbound direction, in the project area.

The proposed gravel parking area at the Monument Site was discussed. Chris explained that unless VT DHP changes its philosophy on the placement of fill within the Site's National

Register boundary, constructing the parking lot would require additional archeological resource recovery work, and add time and money costs to the project. It was the Steering Committee's preference to eliminate the parking lot from the project. It was noted that the driveway to the parking lot was within the proposed climbing lane. Northbound motorists would make the left turn maneuver into the drive from the high-speed lane. This is a safety concern, especially if motorists had to wait for a gap in southbound traffic before turning. Chris noted that the turning volumes would be very low, but the driveway location is certainly less than ideal.

4. **Other Issues**

• **Project Segment 3 - Alignment Issue, Broken-Back Curve**

Chris explained that a "broken-back curve" (two horizontal curves separated by a very short tangent section) exists in the existing alignment, between roadway design Stations 10+460 and 10+800. Chris explained the standard treatment would be to replace the two curves with one sweeping curve to eliminate the tangent section. Doing this would impact more land along the inside of the curve, but would also reduce impacts on an historic property located at roadway design Station 10+680, left. The Steering Committee favored eliminating the tangent section. CLD will implement this alignment revision.

• **Act 250 Coordination**

Peg Flory informed VTrans, CLD, and the Steering Committee that a bill before the Legislature would exempt roadway projects that did not extend beyond 50 feet from the existing centerline, from the Act 250 review process. It was not clear how the 50-foot distance should be measured. If the measurement were taken from the existing to the proposed centerline, the overall US Route 7 Improvements could probably be designed to meet the exemption requirements. Peg will look into how the 50-foot distance is measured.

5. **Next Meeting**

• **US 7 Upgrade Steering Committee**

Monday, March 19, 2001, from 4:00 to 7:00 PM, at the Pittsford Municipal Building.

CRB:cww

Attachment

cc: Lynn Saunders	Dan Peterson	Mark Blucher	Roy Newton
Michael Balch	Greg Riley	Mark Germanowski	Frank Farnsworth
Richard Baker	Dennis Benjamin	Susie Leonard	Virginia Russell
Dolores Furnari	Duncan Wilkie	Judith Kmileck	Sen. Gerry Gossens
Peg Flory	John Narowski	Chris Borstel	Harry McKinlay
James O'Gorman	Scott Newman	Gary Klinefelter	
Hank Pelkey	Alan Neveau	Kathleen Ryan	
C. Baird Morgan	Paul Tober	Ed Barna	

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