

MEMORANDUM

TO: File

FROM: Christopher R. Bean, P.E.

DATE: March 8, 2001

RE: VTrans
Pittsford and Brandon Bypass Scoping Studies
NH 019-3(49)SC
CLD Reference No. 00-0216

SUBJECT: Brandon Bypass Steering Committee Meeting

LOCATION: Lothrop Elementary School Gymnasium

ATTENDEES: In addition to those listed below, six members of the Hill and Hollow Alliance attended the meeting. Mike Balch (BBSC) was unable to attend.

Lynn Saunders	Brandon Selectboard	BBSC, PBSC
Richard Baker	Brandon Citizen	BBSC
Peg Flory	Pittsford Selectboard	BBSC, PBSC
Dolores Furnari	Brandon Chamber of Commerce	BBSC
James O'Gorman	Town of Pittsford	PBSC
Dan Peterson	VTrans Project Manager	BBSC, PBSC
Chris Bean	CLD Engineers Project Manager	BBSC, PBSC
Jason Stone	CLD Engineers Environmental Specialist	
Greg Riley	VTrans, Regional Planning	

BBSC **Brandon Bypass Steering Committee Member**
PBSC **Pittsford Bypass Steering Committee Member**

MEETING NOTES

1. **Introductions/Purpose of Meeting**

Chris Bean made general introductions of those present. Chris then explained that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss and/or receive input on the following issues:

- ?? February 7, 2001, Corps' Resource Agency Coordination Meeting Update
- ?? Consolidated Project Purpose and Need Statement
- ?? Consensus regarding access to the bypass highway
- ?? Conceptual Corridors developed to date
- ?? Conceptual Corridors Impact Matrix

2. **VTrans Project Manager**

Dan Peterson indicated that there has been no change in the project manager status. He will likely continue as VTrans Project Manager for the duration of the bypass studies.

3. **February 7, 2001, Corps' Resource Agency Coordination Meeting**

Chris summarized the input received from the Natural Resource agencies. He explained that initially, the agencies (VT ANR, in particular) were concerned that the project was moving ahead too quickly, and without sufficient Agency and/or Public oversight, review, and input. This concern was allayed once the purpose of the Scoping Studies, which is to assist FHWA in determining whether more detailed design and environmental studies should be pursued, was better explained. Once it was made clear that the Scoping Studies will not set true alignments, the Agencies were more comfortable with the Scoping Studies proceeding.

Lynn Saunders asked whether VT ANR should be added to the Steering Committee distribution lists, to keep that agency informed. It was decided to add VT ANR to the lists.

4. **Consolidated Project Purpose and Need Statement**

A consolidated version of the Purpose and Need Statements has been prepared to assist the Corps in the preparation of their Project Purpose and Need Statement, should the project(s) move ahead with more detailed (EIS level) study. Refer to the attached consolidated Purpose and Need Statement. Richard Baker noted that there is no mention of the effect of a Bypass on local traffic and access issues. The consolidated Purpose and Need Statement will be revised in this regard.

5. **Environmental Constraints Maps**

Chris Bean noted that environmental constraints maps have been provided to both Towns and Steering Committees, as well as the Natural Resource Agencies. Chris asked if anyone present had any comments on the constraints as mapped. Dave Martin and Chris Eddy (both of the Hill and Hollow Alliance) stated that the Bear Habitat and Deer Wintering Area constraints appear to be underrepresented based on their personal experiences. They asked how recent was the information used to create the mapping. It was explained that although the exact dates were not known at the time of the meeting, CLD used the most recent information available. It is believed that the information used is of sufficient accuracy for the purposes of the Scoping Studies.

6. **Hill and Hollow Alliance**

Dave Martin of the Hill and Hollow Alliance asked to read a short statement into the meeting record (see attachment). Essentially the Hill and Hollow Alliance supports the US Route 7 Upgrade Projects, as well as the continued study of limited Bypasses. The group is opposed to major relocations of US Route 7, especially to the east.

7. Conceptual Corridors

Chris began the discussion of the conceptual bypass corridors and explained that they are a first attempt to find locations for bypasses that appear to avoid and minimize impacts to the mapped resource constraints. CLD has been asked to consider short bypasses, east and west of US Route 7, around the Pittsford and Brandon Village areas only, as well as two long bypasses, one east and one west of US Route 7, around both villages. Therefore six conceptual corridors were presented on an acetate overlay.

Chris described the naming convention used for the conceptual corridors. For the short corridors, the first letter denotes the Town, the second letter denotes whether the corridor lies east or west of US Route 7, and the following numbers denote variations of corridors. For example, Corridor BE1 is a short corridor around the east side of Brandon Village. The long alternatives are similarly named. The first two letters refer to the Towns and the following letter denotes its location, either east or west of US Route 7. Peg Flory asked the lengths of the short Brandon corridors. BE1 is approximately 5 miles long and BW1 is approximately 2.6 miles long.

Chris explained that the corridors are 150 feet in width. This width was chosen as a conservative approximation of the impact footprint of a two-lane highway with shoulders and potentially with truck climbing lanes, if warranted. It was felt that using an approximation of the impact footprint, versus a given right-of-way width to be acquired, would provide a more accurate estimation of impacts. Without a climbing lane the highway pavement would be 40 feet wide (two 12-foot lanes, 8-foot shoulders). With a truck lane the pavement would be 44 feet wide (three 12-foot lanes, 4-foot shoulders). Roadway cut and fill slopes and drainage ditches and structures would account for the remainder of the impact footprint, though the exact extent of impacts will not be determined during this study. For this study, it is only necessary to obtain a reasonable estimation of impacts for the various conceptual corridors, to see whether any locations appear to be worthy of further consideration, given the current regulatory and permitting processes. It should be noted that an additional 50 feet was added to each side of the conceptual corridors for calculating impacts to resources that are recorded as "point data," to account for "near misses." For example, houses and other structures are recorded in the ArcView data layers simply as points. If a point were to be located just outside the 150-foot corridor, it would not be counted as an impact, though in reality the structure associated with the point would, in all likelihood, be impacted. This approach results in an overall corridor width of 250 feet with regard to "point data."

Chris asked whether there was consensus among the Steering Committee Members regarding access to the Bypass. Chris explained that with a limited access facility, access would only be provided at intersections with VT State Highways. No connection to local Town roads would be provided. Connections to State Highways would logically be via grade-separated interchanges, or possibly at-grade intersections. Design of such interchanges will not be performed as part of this study. It was unanimously agreed among the Steering Committee Members that for the purposes of this study, the bypass facility should be considered as a limited access facility. Chris mentioned that a limited access facility might meet with less resistance from the Natural Resource Agencies, as the opportunities for secondary impacts are limited. Lynn Saunders noted that development rights could be acquired along the State Highways, within a given distance of the Bypass, to further limit secondary impacts.

8. Impact Matrix

Jason Stone described the impact matrix prepared for the six conceptual corridors. The constraints listed are the same as those depicted on the constraints maps (see attachment). Generally, the long conceptual corridors impact resources to a greater degree than do the shorter corridors, with the possible exception of impacts to structures. Of the two long corridors, it appears that PBW would result in greater impacts to resource constraints of high sensitivity, such as wetlands, surface waters and floodplains. This alternative would, however, result in lesser impacts to prime farmland soils (two acres versus four acres with PBE), and possibly lesser impacts to historic structures. It should be noted that impacts to structures currently include all buildings. For instance, if a residence, a separate garage, and another outbuilding on one property were to be impacted, the impacted structures would be counted as three. Therefore, this approach has the potential to inflate the totals for actual impacts to residences. Impacts to structures will be looked at more closely and refined to provide more accurate totals.

With regard to the short corridors around Brandon Village, BE1 appears to impact resources to a greater degree than does BW1. BW1 does impact more historic structures (four versus one with BE1), and requires two railroad crossings (versus none with BE1). As stated above, impacts to structures, including historic structures, will be looked at more closely.

9. Conceptual Corridor Revisions

Chris asked whether the Steering Committee Members had any suggested revisions to the conceptual corridors. It was suggested that the northerly terminus of corridor BW1 be looked at more closely to determine whether a town-owned recreational field would be impacted. Richard Baker thought that Land and Water Conservation Funds might have been used in the area, on a property known as Estherbrook (sp?) field. It was suggested that the corridor could possibly be shifted to impact a house that is currently for sale, to avoid the field if necessary. Also with regard to corridor BW1, a house depicted as historic may, in fact, no longer have integrity, due to extensive recent revisions, and the location of the Waste Water Treatment Plant was brought up. These issues will be looked into, and the constraints maps will be revised as appropriate.

10. Next Meetings

The next **Bypass Steering Committee Meetings** have been scheduled for Monday, **April 23, 2001**, at the Brandon Masonic Hall, located at the intersection of Country Club Road and Park Street, in Brandon. The Brandon Bypass Steering Committee Meeting will start at 4:00 PM and run until 5:30 PM, and the Pittsford Bypass Steering Committee Meeting will begin at 6:00 PM and run until 7:30 PM.

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The project will be presented at the next **Corps Natural Resource Agency Meeting**, scheduled for Wednesday **April 11, 2001**, at the VTrans Headquarters in the National Life Building, Montpelier, VT. The time of the presentation is yet to be determined.

CRB:cww

Attachments

cc: Lynn Saunders	Brandon	Mark Blucher	RRPC
Peg Flory	Pittsford	Mark	RRPC
		Germanowski	
Richard Baker	Brandon	Susie Leonard	RRPC
Jim O’Gorman	Pittsford	Judith Kmileck	RRPC
Mike Balch	Brandon	Kathleen Ryan	Landscape Architect
Hank Pelkey	Pittsford	Gary A. Klinefelter	VSE
Dan Peterson	VTrans	Virginia Russell	State Transportation Board
Alan Neveau	VTrans	Jon Satz	Store Owner, Brandon
Scott Newman	VTrans	Sen. Gerry Gossens	State Senator
Duncan Wilkie	VTrans	Roy Newton	<i>Brandon-Pittsford Reporter</i>
Chris Borstel	Louis Berger Group	Ed Barna	<i>Rutland Herald</i>
Greg Riley	VTrans	Frank Farnsworth	<i>Otter Valley Press</i>
Dennis Benjamin	VTrans	Harry McKinley	Pittsford
John Narowski	VTrans		