

MEMORANDUM

TO: File

FROM: Jason A. Stone

DATE: April 23, 2001

RE: VTrans
Brandon Scoping Study
NH 019-3(49)SC
CLD Ref No. 00-0216

SUBJECT: Brandon Bypass Steering Committee Meeting

LOCATION: Brandon Masonic Hall

ATTENDEES: In addition to those listed below, nine members of the public attended the meeting.

Peg Flory	Pittsford Selectboard	PBSC, BBSC
Mike Balch	Brandon Town Manager	BBSC
Richard Baker	Brandon Citizen	BBSC
Dolores Furnari	Brandon Citizen	BBSC
Dan Peterson	VTrans Project Manager	PBSC, BBSC
Bob Woods	State Representative	
Greg Riley	VTrans, Regional Planning	
Chris Bean	CLD Engineers Project Manager	PBSC, BBSC
Jason Stone	CLD Engineers Environmental Specialist	

UNABLE TO ATTEND: Lynn Saunders - BBSC, PBSC

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:

- ?? The April 11, 2001, Corps Resource Agency Coordination Meeting
- ?? Revisions to the Environmental Constraints Mapping
- ?? Revisions to the Conceptual Corridors and Associated Changes in Structures Impacts
- ?? Consolidated Project Purpose and Need Statement
- ?? Determine the Dates and Locations for Upcoming Meetings

2. **April 11, 2001, Corps Resource Agency Coordination Meeting Update**

The purpose of this meeting was to provide the Resource Agencies an opportunity to provide VTrans and FHWA input, regarding the prudence of taking the Bypass Scoping Study process ahead and into the formal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process. Jason Stone summarized the discussions that took place. He explained that CLD provided the Resource Agencies with constraints mapping, impact matrices and acetate overlays depicting the conceptual corridors, prior to the meeting. He added that the Resource Agencies were asked to review the information, and to: provide input regarding the accuracy of the constraints mapping (macro-level); suggest possible revisions to the conceptual corridors; and to comment, from their respective agency's perspective, as to whether the level of resource impacts associated with the conceptual corridors would lead to the conclusion that an EIS would not be a prudent investment.

Resource Agency Comments From the April 11, 2001 Meeting

- ?? **Wetlands:** Peter Keibel (VTANR) provided information relative to Class I and II wetlands around Brandon Village indicating the GIS National Wetlands Inventory data layer CLD used was not complete. Peter indicated he would check with the VCGI staff and try to determine whether other inaccuracies exist. Others with familiarity with the project area suggested that much of the floodplain area west of US Route 7 is very likely to be Class II wetland. CLD has incorporated this information into the constraints mapping and updated the impact matrix accordingly.
- ?? **Ground-Truthing Constraints:** John Lepore (VTrans Environment) asked to what extent the constraints had been ground-truthed. Dan Peterson responded that there is neither time nor budget in this scoping study for such efforts. Dan added that for the purpose of this scoping study, which is only to determine whether more detailed studies should be conducted, information of planning-level accuracy is sufficient.
- ?? **Overall Permitability:** Peter Keibel qualified his next comment and stated that he would not speak for his agency, but in his personal opinion, the long bypasses would not be likely to withstand the regulatory and permitting processes. He felt that the short bypasses could conceivably succeed.
- ?? **USEPA Request for Additional Information:** Beth Alafat (USEPA) stated that she had not been made aware of conceptual corridors prior to the meeting. She added that her agency has not received sufficient information, and it would be inappropriate to provide comments. She stated she would like to see traffic information to support the projects' stated purpose and need, and that other measures (rail, Traffic Demand Management (TDM), Traffic Systems Management (TSM), etc.) must be evaluated before her agency will even begin to consider a bypass as a viable option. She reiterated her comments from the February 7, 2001 Resource Agency meeting that upgrade of the existing facility should be the first option. Chris Bean, Mike Balch, John Lepore and others responded that projects to upgrade the existing facility have already been studied, and are planned for construction in the next several years. A conclusion of the Upgrade Studies is that within the villages, there are sufficient natural and cultural resource constraints to preclude the

widening necessary to handle the projected future year traffic volumes. Bypasses are therefore necessary to provide the highway capacity required for the projected volumes. Of course, if the project moves forward into the EIS phase, detailed analyses of alternatives including TDM and TSM options, will be considered to ensure that bypasses are warranted. The EPA has been provided with a copy of the Scoping Report prepared for the Upgrade Projects.

- ?? **USACOE Project Manager:** Mike Adams indicated that he would serve as the ACOE Project Manager for these projects. He agreed with Peter Keibel, that the long bypass alternatives would not be likely to succeed.
- ?? **VTANR - Fish and Wildlife Division (Via e-mail):** Subsequent to the April 11, 2001, Resource Agency meeting, VTrans received input from Forrest Hammond of the VTANR Fish and Wildlife Division, essentially echoing the sentiments expressed by the other Agencies, that the shorter corridor alternatives appear to be more favorable than do the long alternatives around both villages.
- ?? **Consolidated Purpose and Need Statement:** The consolidated Purpose and Need Statement was provided to the Agencies, for their information.
- ?? **Summary:** Chris Bean noted that the Agencies did not give a clear indication that the study should move ahead, nor did they indicate that it should not. Chris and Dan Peterson both noted that the Bypass Scoping Study falls outside the normal coordination process, and therefore the agencies' unfamiliarity with this process may in part explain their reluctance to comment. Chris explained that the agency representatives may be thinking that commenting favorably would jeopardize their ability to be objective in the future. Mike Balch added that more consistent attendance and representation by the Agencies would be beneficial to the process.

3. **Revisions to the Environmental Constraints Mapping**

As indicated above, the wetlands data layer has been updated based on information provided by VTANR.

4. **Revisions to the Conceptual Corridors and Associated Reduction in Structures Impacts**

At the last Steering Committee Meeting, CLD committed to take a closer look at the Structures Impacts, as it was felt that the impacts were overestimated, and not a true indication of actual displacements. This analysis was done by superimposing the conceptual corridors over the aerial photograph data layer, and then determining whether affected structures were actually residences or some other type of building. A general reduction in impacted structures (residences) resulted.

The conceptual corridors were originally drawn onto the constraints map at a large scale. When conducting the above-described analysis, it was apparent that modifying the conceptual corridors could significantly reduce impacts to structures, especially where they match into US Route 7, and intersect other roadways. The revised conceptual corridors were presented to the Steering Committee and were generally accepted. The revised corridors were presented in an alignment format, with the bypasses intersecting existing US Route 7 at 90° T-intersections. When the revised corridors are

developed, making the bypasses or the existing US Route 7 the through route will be evaluated. CLD will make that change, and revise the impact matrix to reflect the modified corridors.

5. **Next Steps**

A **Joint Public Informational Meeting** has been tentatively scheduled for Monday, **May 21, 2001**, at 7:30 PM, at Otter Valley Union High School. The meeting date and location will be confirmed as soon as possible. The revised conceptual corridors and impact matrix, as well as preliminary Bypass Scoping Study conclusions, will be presented to the public.

The next **Brandon Bypass Steering Committee Meeting** has been tentatively scheduled for Monday, **July 23, 2001**. The location is yet to be determined. The meeting will start at 5 PM and run no later than 6:30 PM, to allow Steering Committee Members to attend the Selectmen's Meeting, which begins at 7:00 PM. A presentation will be made to the Selectmen, to update them on the status of the project.

It is anticipated that the next **Pittsford Bypass Steering Committee Meeting** will be scheduled to coincide with the date of the next Pittsford Selectmen's meeting. The meeting would be scheduled in a similar manner as the Brandon Meeting, to allow Steering Committee Members to attend both meetings. A presentation will be made to the Selectmen, to update them on the status of the project.

Another **Joint Public Informational Meeting** will be held in **August, 2001**, to present the final report documenting the findings of the Bypass Scoping Studies.

CLD anticipates completion of the Final Bypass Scoping Study Report in September, 2001.

JAS:cww

cc: Lynn Saunders	Brandon	Chris Slesar	VTrans
Peg Flory	Pittsford	John Narowski	VTrans
Richard Baker	Brandon	Mark Blucher	RRPC
Jim O'Gorman	Pittsford	Mark	RRPC
		Germanowski	
Mike Balch	Brandon	Susie Leonard	RRPC
Hank Pelkey	Pittsford	Judith Kmileck	RRPC
C. Baird Morgan	Pittsford	Kathleen Ryan	Landscape Architect
Dolores C. Furnari	Brandon	Gary A.	VSE
		Klinefelter	
Dan Peterson	VTrans	Virginia Russell	State Transportation Board
Alan Neveau	VTrans	Jon Satz	Store Owner, Brandon
Scott Newman	VTrans	Sen. Gerry	State Senator
		Gossens	
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