



Richmond Gateway Corridor SC Meeting Agenda

6pm, June 6, 2023 - Online

Allen Knowles
Jean Bressor
Gary Bressor
Amanda Froeschle
Joy Reap
Jeff Forward
Dan Mallach
Bryan Davis

1. Welcome

2. Alternative concepts update

Dan shared initial draft concepts for discussion:

- a. **No build alternative** – this is included in these studies as an option. No cost associated with it, but also doesn't accomplish the purpose and need of the project.
- b. **North Side Rt 2 alternative** – the most efficient route, with the greatest technical feasibility and lowest cost, but closest to Route 2 traffic.
 - i. Existing 5 ft sidewalk on western end of the village would extend out and become wider to 8 ft, 10 ft, 12ft TBD. Considerations of path width include cost, comfort of accommodations, etc.
 - ii. Some sort of protection or barrier between roadway and path at the cemetery where there isn't room for path separation, such as flexible posts. Considerations such as winter maintenance or removal, etc.
 - iii. Also need to consider culverts and gullies along roadway. Could extend culverts and/or use small bridges depending on particular site.
 - iv. At interchange path could go behind the bridge abutment. Remove slip lane at northbound ramp.
 - v. At wetland area on west side of interchange, consider a boardwalk to minimize impacts.
 - vi. Path continues on north side of River Road to Riverview Common neighborhood.

Discussion:

- How to improve crossing of Gov Peck? No traffic signal there, only stop sign. Slope creates a sight distance challenge.
- Discussion of shoulder width at cemetery from current repaving project and whether there might be extra room for additional paving.
- Recent court decision that State has 4 rod ROW following a lawsuit by residents. Unclear how far west the 4 rod width goes.
- There are some mature trees and old rock walls that could potentially be affected in the court decision.

- c. **Emerald Trail alternative** – this is based on the concept presented by Gary Bressor at the last meeting.
 - i. Path starts at existing sidewalk in village, stays on north side of Rt 2, goes around Carpenter property, could include protection or barrier between roadway and path at the cemetery where there isn't room for path separation, such as flexible posts. Could also consider different approaches at this location for this alternative. Continues west on land trust parcel with greater separation from the road, then returns closer to the road at residences until it wanders again just past The Crate Escape, behind the Mobil station, with a tunnel under the northbound ramp, continues behind the park and ride (but with direct access to it), traverses under the interstate (either tunnel or path behind abutment), then another tunnel under the on/off-ramp to access Gov Peck Rd and Riverview Common.

Discussion:

- Gary said he has presented his idea to various parties and has gotten generally positive feedback. Mobil owner is open to further discussion.
 - Jeff noted that Town has been considering extending sewer lines to Riverview Commons for a long time, and last night the Selectboard approved zoning amendments that would prevent certain types of developments that were controversial as part of the potential extension, which could move the sewer project forward. He asks if there's an opportunity for the Town to combine projects like sewer/water and path construction. He previously looked into projects that buried utilities under sidewalks, where they are less likely to fail.
 - Amanda asks what wifi service is like to Riverview Commons, and if there's an opportunity to run fiber to the neighborhood if utilities are upgraded and/or combined with a new path or sidewalk.
 - Amanda asks if we've discussed gravel versus paved path in terms of costs, maintenance, etc. Dan notes there is a cost difference but maintenance is also a factor, and is open to hearing preferences from the group.
 - Allen likes packed clay with gravel on top and notes that tree roots buckle asphalt. He cited some examples of clay/gravel paths that are in good shape but is unfamiliar with the maintenance requirements.
 - Dan will send this slide to Gary so that he can mark up and use on his upcoming outreach.
- d. **Over the River alternative** – through public outreach we heard a desire for a more scenic route, even if it was longer. Dan notes this could be combined with other alternative routes to create a Town loop.
 - i. This alternative looks at some path options at Gov Peck, such as push button activated flashers (rectangular rapid flashing beacons, RRFB). This concept shows a cantilevered sidewalk off the bridge over the railroad as well as a walk/bike bridge over the Winooski River.
 - ii. Dan asks the group about this concept. Jeff commented that it seems pretty expensive. He said there's more opportunity with Gary's idea than with this concept, and the potential price tag for this one may scuttle support for the

overall path concept between the village and park and ride. If a river bridge were possible, he would prefer it to be closer to the village.

- iii. Jean noted this doesn't get access to the park and ride.
- iv. Allen likes the vision of a bridge over the Winooski further east to access Volunteer Green but doesn't know if it could ever happen.

- e. **South Side Rt 2 alternative** – Dan asks if a south side alternative should be considered and shared with the community.
 - i. Jeff noted that VTrans is repaving Route 2 now and there will be pinch points that the State is unwilling to fix.
 - ii. Joy asked about connecting to the school. Dan noted that we've met with them and they are uncomfortable with a designated, developed new access to the school property. Our team continues to keep this opportunity in mind but is respectful of our school liaison's opinion. It seems there may be different opinions at different levels of the administration. Allen said he was part of the school focus group and echoed Dan's comments that that group was not supportive of a formal connection to the school
 - iii. Allen commented on the elevation changes as well as wetland issues on the south side alternative, which could make this challenging and expensive.
 - iv. Amanda visited the school recently and commented on the steep slopes around the property. She said there are mowed paths that go close to the land trust property, and also to the cemetery boundary. She recognizes the safety issue and is interested in the balance of security and access.
 - v. Joy asked for clarification of what we mean when we say "Willis Farm," which is the Reap property and not the land trust property/sledding hill.
- f. Evaluation matrix – Dan shared an initial draft of an evaluation matrix to help us consider and score different criteria and ultimately lead to a preferred alternative. Participants agreed this kind of tool would be helpful. Dan gave an example of a recent study in which the highest scored project was not selected as the preferred alternative, so scoring doesn't have to be the final indicator.

3. Next steps/timeline

- a. Continue developing alternative concepts
- b. Next public meeting (and survey #2?)
 - Jeff suggests sharing the initial concepts with the Transportation Committee (meets second and fourth Tuesday) and potentially the Selectboard (meets first and third Monday).
 - Transportation Committee meeting June 13 to get brief project update (from Allen), Dan to present initial concepts at their June 27 meeting.
 - Public alternatives meeting potentially Wed June 28. Check Town calendar for any conflicts.

4. Other discussion

- a. Discussion of developing potential planning level cost estimates as part of this project, as well as potential phasing to bring costs down.