6/28/18 – Route 29/215 New Baltimore Stakeholders meeting #1

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

The first local stakeholder meeting for the Route 29 Corridor in the New Baltimore area was held at Lord Fairfax Community College on June 28, 2018. Deputy Secretary of Transportation Quintin Elliot, Chief Engineer Garrett Moore, District Engineer John Lynch, Resident Engineer Mark Nesbit, VDOT Transportation Land Use Director for Prince William Richard Burke and Ben Davison from the Warrenton Residency represented VDOT. Greg Yates from the Commonwealth Transportation Board was in attendance. Approximately 60 residents and business owners attended along with Fauquier County Supervisors Holder Trumbo and Chris Granger and Fauquier County Planning Staff Holly Meade and Marie Pham.

John Lynch, District Engineer opened the meeting welcoming and thanking everyone for attending. He summarized the purpose of the meeting as to seek input and gain consensus for the Route 29 corridor through New Baltimore. He then introduced Quintin Elliot, Deputy Secretary of Transportation.

Deputy Secretary Elliot reiterated the purpose to seek input from citizens, start the dialogue to reach consensus and ensure we capture the issues and identify opportunities for moving forward identifying and considering as aspects toward the solution. Keep Secretary/Quinton involved

Chief Engineer Moore led an interactive discussion on issues and concerns the attendees had regarding the corridor. Mr. Moore committed to moving forward with establishing an Advisory Group serving as a conduit to the community. The makeup of the Advisory Group would be 10-12 members that would meet on a regular basis in order to develop a consensus on potential projects that could be considered for implementation along the corridor. The two funded Highway Safety Improvement Projects (HSIP) at Route 29 and Route 600 (Broad Run Church) and Route 29 and Route 215 (Vint Hill Road) are on hold. This funding may be transferred to other projects if the new projects meet the cost benefit for HSIP. Other opportunities for funding would be Revenue Sharing and SMART SCALE round 3.

A copy of the sign in sheet has been attached to these meeting notes along with the handwritten notes from several VDOT and County employees. Issues were also recorded on a white pad situated on an easel that are also attached. The comments provided by the meeting attendees are summarized below with any responses provided by Mr. Moore or others shown in italics.

After summary comments were complete, the audience began to ask questions of Mr. Moore. At some point, someone suggested to go around the room and give everyone the opportunity to speak. All comments have been summarized below, followed by the comments from the second session from 5:00pm to 7:00pm.
This project and corridor has an extensive history. Citizen requested that the previous comments be made available. *This would include the facilitated review stakeholders group from 2016, the September 2017 Citizen Information meeting, Delegate Guzman’s Town Hall, transcripts from the Six Year Improvement Program (SYIP) meetings in NOVA and Culpeper.*

Mr. Moore asked *What are the Issues?*

One citizen suggested we need to widen 29 to 6-8 lanes. *Let’s focus on core issues before we jump to solutions*

A citizen suggested that we develop separate groups such as residents and another one for businesses. *Mr. Moore was concerned that doing this we would not stay on the same page.*

Input regarding format including defining framework for discussions, including representatives from all stakeholders, defining the big issues and source of problem, interests and impacts on relative considerations (ie secondary roads).

**Constraints:**

- Historical, environmental, financial (priority projects)

**Stakeholders:**

- FAA
- VA Hospital

**High volume/limited sight distance/traffic lights – 215/29**

**Safety #1**

- 215/600 unsafe
- Local exit/entrance (access to business/residents)
- Throughput

**Big Meadow – Marshall to Warrenton**

- Reduce speed limits
- 17/Belvoir Road (Rt 704)
- Speeding issues – double speeding
- Blinking lights
- Fines

**ROUNDTABLE:**

**PWC resident:**

- Light timing
- Control traffic/can’t reduce
- Route 625 – Need light @ 215 (5 minute wait)

Keep lights (service drives would help)
Suffield Meadows:
   Michigan lefts – don’t like
   Take hills out – (Mr. Moore noted to do this efficiently northbound 29 would be shut down for 3 weeks minimum)

Pomps Farm HOA:
   Safety
   Traffic flow
   Historical
   Resident access (all)
   School bus/limited distribution
   Reduction of heavy thru trucks

   Traffic light provide breaks
   Safety/Budget
   Reduce speed

Remington Area on Route 29:
   Reduce speed limit
   Need lights for break
   Access @ Remington
   Noise

Fauquier Bank: (600 & Broad Run Church)
   Safe access for customers
   Ground hog day (we have been here before and nothing happens)

Suffield Meadows:
   Only have one exit onto 29
   100 residents + employees 55+ community (70-90 actual age)
   Speed limit 45-55 in area

New Warrenton Resident:
   Commutes to Chantilly
   Concerned with safety

Buckland Preservation an issue. Nothing has happened in 20 years.

29/215 – Michigan left (short term)
215/29 (avoids it)
605 (TTL blows thru signals)
Signal rebuild
Left lanes drops north of Rte 605/inadequate notice/signing
Brookside:
   Speed limit reduction
   Preferred Riley Road – signal
   Pull of old issues, read back
   Target funding/tax district
   Convenience
   Prioritize – 29/215 #1
   Cut down hill
   Route 215 line of sight
   29 toward Riley SB, limited sight line
   Special assessment

Vint Hill HOA
   Provided prepared comments
   Safety 29/215 NB sight lines
   Merge lane 215/29
   Left turn 29 – 215 needs extended
Old Bust Head/Vint Hill Businesses:
   1500 customers per week
   Lease buildings/tenants
   1. Safety #1 (lower speed/eliminate humps/increase thru put)
   2. Access
   3. Throughput
   4. Economic Development

Vint Hill HOA:
   Point Solutions vs Systemac Solutions

Battlefield Baptist Church:
   The sight lines (Safety)
   Mowing 215

Fauquier Supervisors:
   Will provide Guzman/Weibert feedback
   Economic Development/Safety – current situation impacting both
   Route 600 accident rate compares to 29/215
   Split phase needed
   Signal timing on 29 needs to have corridor check

   Property owner from Old Schoolhouse to car dealership.
   No breaks @Riley
Potential STAKEHOLDERS:

- Route 29 Business
- Vint Hill Business
- Brookside
- Vint Hill HOA
- Riley Road
- PWC
- Fauquier BOS
- Historical Rep
- FAA
- VA
- Schools
- Local Law Enforcement/Fire & Rescue
- Environmental (PEC)

ACTION ITEMS:

- Develop web site
- Feedback loop? Best way?
- Entire list
- Live streaming not practical

Issues – Interest – Solutions

- Timeframe for meetings? Monthly, time and place, need feedback.
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5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

The second meeting from 5-7 pm was a smaller group in which input/ discussions continued about the 29 corridor.

More information needed on the genesis for this. I have seen articles some safety some indicated dollars are allocated what is the driving force? 
*Funded Safety projects are on hold pending outcome of meetings. We recognize traffic growing and solutions are needed. Trying to identify interests feel we have to find a compromise solution. CTB picks program to fund*

Route 215 & and Route 600 at Route 29 – #1 & #2 crash rate in Culpeper District

Any root cause analysis done for why high crash rate?  
*Yes we look and evaluate and then classify each crash and summarize results.*

Is the general goal to widen 29?

*No. This section of 29 is so contentious people pulled away partly because land on adjacent sides partly because could not get to solution that meets needs.*

The study broke Route 29 in sections. Need to see entire picture which would impact other sections
Mid pm see backups on 29 @ SB side
Developer comes into County, needs to work with VDOT to get infrastructure prior to development.
Access to VH NB Brookside from 29SB; if no left turns looked like everyone goes down to 600 & make left
Emergency vehicle on 600 narrow 2 lane road & no shoulder
Turn lanes on 29 for 215 too short NBR & SBL
Thru-put & safety 2 different issues
4 lane on PWC side & in Fauquier talk about remove signal. Signal makes it possible to access 29
Cut hill down option not go forward.

*Earlier people talked about safety & access*

*It’s an option if can put a package together to compete well. To cut hills down, northbound 29 would need to be shut down for 3 weeks weather permitting.*

Access to Vint Hill/Brookside
Turn lanes of Vint Hill too short (will dual lanes work)
Reduce # lights in PWC
Eliminate hump
Don’t like R-cuts
Corridor Master Plan
Plan for traffic growth
R-cuts have great deal cost
Residents hate R-cut
As realtor have high impact on Vint Hill & Brookside
Brookside already took hit from power lane issue
Worry about property value of just for our homes but community not yet recovered from recession

Own property on 29 (Capital Sheds) & live in Suffield Meadows.
Hear of proposal to take crossover out at Suffield Meadows. There is no project to do that
Can save money over time and do it

R-Cut means loss of traffic ??? may improve flow but 1000 homes in Brookside and go out to left to get onto 29 little to pause the traffic. The U-turns would be signalized to create breaks. However, there’s limits on what will be accepted, all have to make compromises.

Need to plan for the increase traffic not react to it

Glad you recognize no one listen to what we said glad you’re willing to start from beginning

Anything earlier not talked about yet?
A lot of the same issues as earlier meeting.

Mentioned Michigan turn in paper. I live on Route 600 what’s Michigan turn?
This wasn’t popular option as you take a right to go north and u-turn to go south. We are starting over not here to push that option. They work well in some locations but obviously not popular here.

VDOT has in Gainesville fabulous ??? intersections get thru much better
Plan going forward?

Put together 10-12 stakeholders to represent interest meetings open to public
VDOT to create a website
Take comments and put summary out so people can respond to
Next month have advisory group meet to interests such as business needs access
Prior interests
Earlier brought up special tax district
Can’t do revenue unless public private partnership
Need to put it in a package that competes
Open to public

Who’s on stakeholder group?
Don’t know yet will finalize next meeting

What is the take-back from today’s meeting?
Talking today about the needs
  Safety
  Access
  Home values was new concern
  Homes on 29 get less value
  Trying to get out on 29 or even 605 hard

Home buyers more acceptable of bad view than noise
Done all you can do for signal timing?
29/600 from 55 to Vint Hill can only get 2 cars thru

605 & 29 are at times over capacity can try & sequence but only works for 4-5 signals
Has cameras but weather can mess up and minimal timing to keep 29 moving
When install signal cut capacity of intersection 50% it’s imperfect.
??? diverts traffic

Are there new proposals yet, no start from scratch

Cycle light 600 light 2 minutes
2 minutes is about max

600 & 215 bad intersection
Often taking Glenkirk up to Gainesville
Lot of people take Glenkirk to Gainesville to avoid 29
No plans to improve Glenkirk?
Lake Manassas put pressure on Rt. 29
Plans for 29 & 215 for hill?
No have less than $7 million in fund – left fund there

Stores where Outback/BP no access and have to go thru parking lot
There was a road planned behind it but residence behind it killed it

Request traffic light at 676 @ 29
If you put too many signals makes it hard to move & distract drivers (Freeman’s Ford)
Distract driving is a law issue VDOT can’t do anything about that

676 prime candidate for signal because 600 has virtually nothing to widen & improve without compact

Plan for 600 people coming 66 to 55 to 600 to avoid traffic?
Don’t have answer

Traffic takes alternate routes on all back roads
The data from WAZE and pull into timing?
Signal system on 29 uses actual data to set signal timing
Telephone Road
   Need traffic signal
   Snow Hill HOA
   County Development an issue
   605-215 tie in entire corridor (traffic)

29/600 traffic signal timing from X-street (too short)
LFFCC lights
@29 – left turn long wait (per Holder)

Broad Run Church/Vint Hill Road
   Site lines
   Sight lines @ Broad Run Church Road

Need to set stakeholder meeting time, location, frequency, website, stakeholders, meeting minutes
Route 29 New Baltimore Meeting  06/28/18

Name          Phone #                  Email

WENDY CAMPBELL     440-216-3660     duncan.wendy@comcast.net
Charles Wheeler  MHWDEC@AOL.com
Marilyn Wheeler
GEORGE EASTMENT    GEASTMENT092@gmail.com
Tim Schumaker     Schum@AOL.com
Lynn Lifton       540-216-3660     jennyjnike@gmail.com
Diane Reedar      301-642-9678     dreedar@Gmail.com
IDDEL ROSSO       540-270-0380     Don@touch1.com
Anne Barthaus    NPB0718@earthlink.net
NIC BURHANS
Bob Brown         540-427-7028     seaguy99@gmail.com
Tom Daily         540-347-7606     yomrrose@comcast.net
DAVE MAILLER      540-347-7594     dpmailer@gmail.com
Peg Mailer
Mike Kleskie      703-881-8202     mkoeskie@mbpc.com
Ray Bell          540-347-7288     bell2x2@comcast.net
Peter Ballard     703-216-9131     TING@YAHOO.COM
James Spano       571-469-0938     jivincio@verizon.net
Gay Traeger       540-349-2442     gtpi@comcast.net
Natalie Embassy   321-363-6834     nembassy@gmail.com
Maucer Premo      540-347-1947     npremo@earthlink.net
Chip Register     TFH: 540.347.6762     chip.register@tfh.net
Pat Browne        540-347-3614     Prewne 35
John Browne       540-347-3614     jbrowning@comcast.net
GREG Corcoran     540-347-5855     greg@bethebaptist.org
Marc Geoffrey     8301-651-6385     marc@Seneac prop.com
Route 29 New Baltimore

Craig E. Lepper Vint Hill
Mary Jo Berger mimix450@comcast.net
Chris Simaz owner.com
Louise & Ken Thomas Snow Hill

Ty Luppy Vint Hill
Kenneth Thomas Ken.thomas@comcast.net

Jim & Shelly Lee

opening 9am-7pm

Christa Mayle Snow Hill tc.mayle@comcast.net
Charlie Moore Suffield Meadows moorecl2@comcast.net
Elaine Noble Brookside Realtor conacast.net
Elaine@noble-kam-homes.com
Bruce Noble Brookside Bruce@noble-kam-homes.com
Margaret Jones Vint Hill mjnjonj@comcast.net
Diane Shaffer New Baltimore shaffe121@gmail.com
George Golden golden@comcast.net

Renard Carlos
David Kimble DavidKimble@Hotmail.com
Larry Kovalik Warrenion l.kovalik62@Yahoo.com
- Safe vehicle movement
- Adequate traffic flow (throughput) to minimize congestion
- Historical considerations
- Viewscapes considerations
- Resident access in/from major road entries
- Reasonable access in/from business activities
- Timely/safe movement of school buses
- Limited effect (consideration) of its proximity to
  reduction in direction of heavy three-trucks

Ray Bell
Bell & Bell
540.349.7288
Bell.x20@comcast.net
June 28, 2018

Attn: Secretary of Transportation, Members of the Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board, Representatives from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and Fauquier County Officials

The purpose of this communication, also submitted at the April 30 meeting in Fairfax and the May 07 meeting in Culpeper, with a few modifications to the original copy, is to request reconsideration of the VDOT Proposals for three intersections along the three-mile stretch of Rt 29 between New Baltimore and the Prince William County Line. This is a busy, four lane divided highway that services an estimated 40,000 vehicles/day. Of particular concern is the Proposal that pertains to the intersection of Rt 29 and Vint Hill Rd (Rt 215). This request is in line with and supports the action by the Fauquier County Board of Supervisors (FC/BOS) to delay any action for a year to provide ample time for VDOT, perhaps, in collaboration with County officials and other representatives, to develop alternatives to their current, controversial Proposals.

There have been multiple meetings since last September, regarding the VDOT Proposals, where residents and business owners have expressed concern about the perceived negative impact of the current Proposals. Critics assert the current Proposals would have the opposite effect to the stated VDOT
intent, i.e., to improve traffic safety and flow. The arguments are that the current Proposals favor commuter and other through traffic at the expense of local drivers and businesses. It is also believed that the recommended changes, that include U-Turns, would make Rt 29 more dangerous, especially for inexperienced and elderly drivers, as well as for the operators of some emergency equipment, school buses and large trucks. Vint Hill business owners worry that the current Proposal for the intersection of Rt 29 and Vint Hill Rd (Rt 215), which would result in the elimination of left turns onto and off of Rt 29, would significantly inconvenience their customers and discourage potential additional entrepreneurs in the Vint Hill area.

As has been noted in the past, I believe, even by VDOT, the commonly agreed to real problem with the aforementioned intersection is the sight-distance/line of vision problem caused by the dip(s) in the Northbound lanes of Rt 29 approaching Vint Hill Rd. The inability of drivers to see that the signal at Vint Hill Rd has turned ‘RED’ and that the traffic in front of them is stopping, or has already stopped, is the major cause of the high number of rear end collisions, thereby making that intersection the one with the highest number of accidents in the Culpeper District. The simplest and most direct solution to that problem would seem to be to eliminate the dip(s) and, thus, improve the line of vision for drivers to be able to see the signal and/or have a better, clearer, safer, consistent view of the traffic in front of
them. Other ways to improve overall safety would be to lower the speed limits along this stretch of Rt 29, as well as on some other roads in the immediate Vint Hill area.

Additional suggestions for this intersection include: adding an extended merge lane for Vint Hill Rd traffic turning Right and entering onto Rt 29 North, and extending the existing turn lane for Southbound Rt 29 traffic wanting to turn Left onto Vint Hill Rd.

Your consideration of this request for alternatives to the current Proposals, which has wide support in the community, is much appreciated. Especially, as concerns the intersection of Rt 29 and Vint Hill Rd, directly addressing the cause of the high number of accidents, i.e., the dip(s) would enable this important intersection to be retained and, along with the other suggestions, regarding speed limits and merge/turn lanes, would provide improved traffic safety and flow for many years to come.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Daily

Thomas R. Daily
Chair BOD/Pres Vint Hill Manor HOA
3596 Sutherland Ct.
Warrenton, VA 20187