

**MINUTES OF
ROUTE 29 NEW BALTIMORE ADVISORY PANEL**

Meeting #5: November 29, 2018

1:00 – 3:00 P.M.

1st Floor Conference Room – Warren Green Building

10 Hotel Street

Warrenton, VA 20186

Members Present: Natalie Erdossy, Brookside HOA; John Lynch, VDOT; Tim Hoffman, Vint Hill HOA; George Phillips, Prince William County; Pete Eltringham, Poms Farm; Garrett Moore, VDOT; Marc Geffroy, Business Community; Bryan Lehman, FAA; Craig Oakley, New Baltimore Fire Department; Ike Broaddus, Vint Hill Business Community

Members Absent: Steve Combs, VA Hospital; Cristy Thorpe, C. Hunter Ritchie Elementary School

Staff Present: Mark Nesbit, VDOT; Lou Hatter, VDOT; Ben Davison, VDOT; Holder Trumbo, Fauquier County Scott District Supervisor; Holly Meade, Fauquier County; Marie Pham, Fauquier County

Guests Present: James Ivancic, Fauquier Times; Julie Bolthouse, Piedmont Environment Council; Don Del Rosso, Fauquier Now; Brian Cohn; Ken Thomas, Snow Hill; Bill Chakalos; Tom Daily, Vint Hill Manor HOA; John DePerro, Vint Hill; Chuck Medvitz; Charlie Moore, MCC LLC; Clara Williams, MCC LLC; Jimmie Jones

1. Introductions/ Panel Comments

Garrett Moore opened the meeting at 1 p.m. and asked if there were any comments. There were no comments from the panel members.

2. Meeting #4 Summary – Review of Minutes

Garrett asked if there were any comments from the panel members on the minutes. There were no comments from the panel members. The minutes were accepted as drafted.

3. Reports from the HOA meetings

Garrett noted that at the October 25th meeting the panel members seemed supportive of the concepts presented. VDOT then asked the members to share the concepts with their HOAs to see if there were any concerns. Garrett met with three (3) groups since the October 25th meeting. VDOT received a lot of good questions from residents but did not receive any push back on the concepts. Garrett asked the members if they have received any negative feedback about the concepts. Tim responded that he has not heard anything. Ike Broaddus said that he has generally received positive feedback but has heard concern from the conservation community about making sure caution is exercised in the right-of-way east of Rt. 215 and a suggestion to have an archeological consultant involved to make sure that if old road bed or something is found below that care is taken to document what is there. Garrett responded that he's heard similar concerns. He added that if there is general consensus VDOT will move forward with the concepts.

Garrett noted a few challenges for the group to be aware of:

First, this is an historic area and there will be a Section 106 process. VDOT's historic preservation staff is ready to start this. There will be an environmental document because there are federal funds. Garrett thinks even though this is an historic area there will probably be a categorical exclusion. Under some circumstances it could be an environmental assessment; however, VDOT is generally doing this within the right-of-way and the only options are no build or build. The environmental staff will determine this. This is typically not the area where you would see an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). In addition, stormwater management requirements need to be met. This will push VDOT toward taking more space where the Section 106 pushes VDOT toward taking less space. VDOT would also prefer to take less space to reduce costs. This will have to be reconciled as part of the process. Both the Department of Historic Resources (DHR) and the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) report to the same secretary so VDOT will work with them to resolve this.

Second, keeping the utility work in the right-of-way will be a challenge. The goal is to connect to existing utilities.

Third, at Broad Run Church Road (Rt. 600) VDOT will need additional right-of-way. VDOT will work with the county and The Fauquier Bank to find a way to work together to make this work.

The next step is the Section 106 process. VDOT will come back to the group if anything needs to be modified.

Pete Eltringham asked if the group could discuss the archeological concerns and asked about the Section 106 process. Garrett explained that he's not an expert on this. He gave an example that the appropriate staff would go out and identify places to avoid or may go in and conduct an archeological dig to recover something or they could put fabric down for protection and mark an item depending on what it is. Garrett explained that he's not an expert on this but that they would be involved in the process.

Pete asked if they would be on site as part of the process. Garrett said they would come in advance and educate those working that if they see certain types of things to contact them. Pete suggested that VDOT's experts meet with knowledgeable county staff. Garrett asked that this suggestion be noted in the comments as VDOT has done this in the past.

Garrett noted at the meeting November 27th a resident asked when the Section 106 process would start. Garrett asked Tony Opperman with VDOT when it could start and was informed it could start any time. There is not a date set yet, but it will likely start by the early part of January. Garrett asked the panel members if they need an update on the intersection concept drawings.

Bryan Lehman asked about the signal on US 29 south of the intersection with Rt. 215 and if it is really needed. Garrett noted that it will accomplish several things. If drivers are traveling northbound (NB) on US 29 and want to make a u-turn to go to Rt. 625 or Buckland Market, this will allow drivers to make the u-turn. It will give a break to residents on Rt. 625. It will also help with overflow from the US 29 southbound turning left onto Vint Hill Road (Rt. 215). The proposed double left will increase the capacity of this movement. But traffic will continue to grow and this will allow vehicles to travel south and still make that movement rather than queueing into US 29 SB. Garrett noted that there was a similar question at the November 27th meeting. He added that

the project would remove the two (2) hills south of the Vint Hill Road (Rt. 215) intersection on US 29 NB. This is important because approaching vehicles need the visibility for the proposed signal south of the intersection. The signals would work together so they should not be looked at as independent signals. At the meeting on November 27th a resident asked about the possibility of having a trigger at Rt. 625. VDOT will look into that possibility but it may be too hard to do and not work as well.

Brian Cohn asked if an acceleration lane is not needed for the two (2) right turns from Rt. 215 onto US 29 NB because of the signal. He felt there would be room for an acceleration lane. Garrett responded that there would ideally be an acceleration lane. VDOT avoided this because the input received was not to adjust that grade due to the battlefield.

An audience member inquired about the left turn from US 29 SB onto Rt. 215 and possibly extending the left turn lane vs. adding a second left turn lane. Garrett explained that by adding a second left turn lane double the number of vehicles can make the left turn in the same amount of time without altering the signal. This will add capacity to the other movements while improving the left turns onto Rt. 215. The audience member asked about the vehicles merging on Rt. 215. Garrett responded that Rt. 215 would be widened within the existing right-of-way to accommodate two (2) receiving lanes that would merge back to one (1) lane. The design will not be standard but it will be enough that drivers can safely do it.

Tim Hoffman expressed concern with the proposed signal south of the Rt. 215 intersection and the increase in traffic on US 29 NB. He noted that traffic already backs up extending as far south as Riley Road (Rt. 676). He said that he has personally had two near misses there in the past week from people trying to cross traffic without enough clearance and is afraid this could exacerbate that safety issue. Garrett noted that the US 29/Rt. 676 intersection would need to be watched. Currently the crash history there is pretty good. Craig Oakley added that there are hardly ever any crashes at that intersection. Pete asked if the public schools and first responders have any concerns with the proposed concepts. Craig said that the Opticom signal preemption needs to remain. Tim asked roughly how often first responders have calls on US 29. Craig said that it varies greatly.

Garrett noted that at the proposed improvements for the intersection with Broad Run Church Road (Rt. 600) and the right-of-way line extending further north across from Mayhugh's is due to the elevation change on the SB side of US 29. Tim expressed concern with the proposed median break location at Mayhugh's and two (2) recent crashes in that area. Garrett said that VDOT will look at the crash history. VDOT's hope is that by moving the median break slightly further west will help.

Garrett recapped that to date VDOT has not received any pushback on the proposed concepts. The hurdles facing the proposed projects are the historic area, stormwater management, and utilities. VDOT will need support from the county as a whole, particularly to close US 29 NB and remove the two hills. If the proposed project at US 29 and Rt. 215 can move forward in the summer of 2019 VDOT will begin advertising probably in February 2019. (0:33:44)

Ike asked if the stormwater was due to a change in impervious conditions or if it is temporary stormwater management due to construction. Garrett said that VDOT would try and keep the temporary stormwater management minimal such as silt fences. There's not that much disturbance. There are two issues that VDOT will have to treat for: 1. Best management practices (BMP). VDOT can buy credits for that. 2. Mitigation for volume. There's a small amount of pavement proposed to be added with these concepts. Normally VDOT would fall under threshold and not

have to do anything new. The regulations got much tighter a few years ago which has expanded right-of-way takes because VDOT is required to not only mitigate for what they are doing now but also what was done decades ago in the past. Because of the grading involved with removing the humps VDOT will need to pursue a waiver to minimize this.

Ike asked about the timeline for the project. Garrett explained that VDOT is already starting to work toward this and that the next step is to get the environmental document, borings and finish survey. Ike asked if both projects would be bid as a single project. Garrett said that they would but it may be phased. The humps on US 29 NB approaching Rt. 215 would be removed first. VDOT would like to work with The Fauquier Bank to avoid a right-of-way take and work cooperatively with them. There are utilities to move in there. Brian Chon asked if VDOT's intent is to close their entrance on US 29. Garrett said they are not trying to close their entrance right now but they need to talk with the bank to see what they want to do long term.

Bryan Lehman asked about employees at the FAA who get off between 2:30 and 4:30 pm and make the left turn from Rt. 600 or Rt. 215 onto US 29 SB. Bryan said the employees are concerned with existing backups and did not feel the proposed concepts would provide much help. He asked if there is anything else that can be done. Garrett summarized the concern employees have with the ability to turn left on US 29 from either Rt. 600 or Rt. 215. Garrett noted that there would be three lanes total at Broad Run Church Road (Rt. 600) – a left lane, a left/thru lane, and a right turn lane. He noted that this improvement is similar to the improvement that was constructed at Dumfries Road (Rt. 605) and US 29 approximately 18 years ago and it has improved the left turn from Rt. 605 onto US 29. This makes a bigger difference than people expect. Garrett noted that at the intersection of US 29 and Rt. 215 the double left turns will allow additional cycle time for other movements. He reiterated that this is a 10-15 year solution. At some point a grade-separated interchange, bypass or widening will be required.

An audience member asked how long the projects would take from start to completion and where would the detour be when US 29 NB is closed to remove the humps. Garrett said the main interference to traffic would be removing the two humps on US 29 NB which could likely be done in about three weeks. The biggest risk is on US 29 NB so VDOT would likely give the contractor a daily incentive to complete the project early. Both projects will likely take a few months due to utility relocation and signal work. Most of the work is out of traffic and could be done at night. The same audience member asked if the traffic would be detoured around New Baltimore. Garrett explained that traffic traveling north on US 29 to destinations north of Rt. 215 would be detoured to US 17 to Marshall and then to I-66. The plan has not been laid out yet. If the panel members have any thoughts on this and any critical times or movements that VDOT should be aware of they should let VDOT know.

Marc Geffroy asked when the work at US 29 and Rt. 600 would start. Garrett said that it would be phased, partly due to funding availability. Much of the money programmed to this is spread over six years. VDOT does not have a firm date yet. Marc also asked if VDOT has a projection for how these proposed concepts would alter the delay on Rt. 600 and US 29. John Lynch said that drivers will still see a level of service (LOS) F but it will be a better F so the delay times will be less. This data can be brought to the group. Pete noted that at one of the earlier meetings VDOT said they would bring this information to the group at a later date. John said VDOT can bring that information to the January 24th meeting.

Action Item: Bring the LOS information to the advisory panel at the January 24, 2019 meeting.

Ike asked if when VDOT is detouring traffic during the US 29 NB closure if VDOT will just use signage or notify Google or other apps to show it in maps to reroute drivers. Garrett said that the mapping systems will be notified and pointed out that VDOT has a partnership with Waze.

Brian Cohn asked which project would be completed first. Garrett said that the intersection of US 29 and Rt. 215 would be completed first. Brian asked what the chance is that VDOT will start in 2019. Garrett noted that it is a heavy lift and estimated it has a 25% chance of starting in 2019. This is contingent on getting stormwater management and the environmental document. VDOT isn't trying to ramrod through the process.

Pete noted that the meeting on November 27th included more than just the Poms Farm HOA. There were also members from Westervelt, Finchingfield, PEC, Fauquier County citizens, Brookside, and Buckland as well as residents from New Baltimore and the whole Rt. 625 community. Garrett responded that this could be covered and then asked if the county had anything to add. Pete added from the November 27th meeting to include the archeological processes, possibility of a trigger at Rt. 625, impact to Cerro Gordo in Price William County, longer turn lanes at the u-turn south of Rt. 215, and the lane marking at the crossover at Rt. 676. Garrett noted that the lane marking at the median crossing at Rt. 676 is out of scope.

Garrett noted that for the January 24, 2019, meeting VDOT would bring the following:

1. An analysis presenting the movements and time saved. He noted that the modeling for this would be precise but not accurate.
2. Garrett will be meeting with people in the next few weeks to start the environmental document, historic resources document, and stormwater management. VDOT will come back to the advisory panel with a schedule to report as much of this will likely be underway.

Action Item: Update the panel members on the progress of the environmental document, historic resources document, and stormwater management plan.

Garrett noted that the next meeting is scheduled for January 24, 2019.

Given that there were no additional items to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 1:53 p.m.