

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

Meeting #9: April 25, 2019

1:00 – 3:00 P.M.

1st Floor Conference Room – Warren Green Building

10 Hotel Street

Warrenton, VA 20186

Members Present: Tim Hoffman, Vint Hill HOA; Pete Eltringham, Poms Farm and Fauquier County Transportation Committee for Scott District; Garrett Moore, VDOT; Steven Combs, state veterans home (Puller Veterans Care Center);

Members Absent: Craig Oakley, New Baltimore Fire Department; Haven Melton, FAA Vint Hill; Natalie Erdossy, Brookside HOA; George Phillips, Prince William County; Cristy Thorpe, C. Hunter Ritchie Elementary School; Ike Broaddus, Vint Hill Business Community

Guests Present: David Bradeson, Chemung Construction; Billy Myers, Chemung Construction; Stan Kloss, Virginia Department of General Services, Brian Cohn

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

1. Introductions/ Panel Comments

Garrett Moore opened the meeting at 1:00 p.m. with introductions and reviewed the agenda. He asked if there were any comments or questions from members and/or guests. No comments were made.

Pete Eltringham made note of the meeting minutes from the March 28, 2019 meeting saying that they were good.

2. Meeting #9 Summary – Review of Minutes

Garrett informed the group that on April 10, 2019 the Commonwealth Transportation Board officially awarded the construction contract for the Cut and Fill the Hills Project to Chemung Construction. He confirmed that the contract has been executed. Garrett emphasized that for the three the northbound lanes are closed there will be inconvenience to motorists, particularly during the first week. This is the “least bad” alternative to completing the project quickly and affordably. VDOT does not want to hide the inconvenience from the public and stressed that this may be a good time for those who are able telework or plan a vacation during the closure.

Garrett announced that he will not be attending the May meeting and that John Lynch will run that meeting.

Garrett emphasized that no funds have been taken away from the Cut and Fill the Hills Project. The \$7.4 million of Highway Safety Improvement Funding (HSIP) is allocated for both the Route 29/Route 215 and Route 29/Route 600 improvements. Of that, \$4.7 million of HSIP funds are associated with the

safety improvements for the Cut and fill of the Hills Project. He added that there is a cost benefit of approximately \$860,000 and Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is looking to get the types of monies to use the full value of the \$7.4 million in funding. The next phase that VDOT will focus on is the turn lanes and the signals at Route 215 and then just because of where the work is at Route 600, this will be the follow on phase. This phase, when it comes to safety, after the Cut and Fill the Hills Project, scored second in safety rating. The proposed improvements at the Route 600 and Route 215 intersections justified a total of approximately \$860,000 of safety funding.

Pete said he would be interested in having a discussion as to the status of phases two and three and the overall \$7.2 million project. He suggested this item be placed on the July agenda. Garrett noted Pete's request.

3. *Public Feedback and Follow-Ups*

Garrett asked if anyone from the public had any comments. No comments were made.

4. *Cut and Fill the Hills at Route 215: Overview and Funding*

a. *Contractor Introduction*

Garrett introduced David Bredeson and Billy Myers of Chemung Construction. They have a reputation for doing excellent work and for completing projects on time. Billy Myers said that Chemung Construction is teaming up with lead design and assist team Volkert Inc., as well as Douglas Explosives who will be responsible for the blasting portion of the operation.

b. *Construction Overview*

The rock is one of the key items Douglas Explosives identified. Boring logs provided detail of the rock as part of the geotechnical report; however, until crews actually start work they do not know what they will find. Chemung Construction teamed with Douglas Explosives well in advance of the construction bid and again after the award to strategize on the condition of the rock, project parameters, and options for blasting based on State and County fire marshal regulations. Douglas Explosives is very familiar with blasting in tight, restrictive areas and will do their own seismic monitoring. They understand the time sensitive nature of the project and for this reason are bringing in a third party that will be responsible for providing immediate notifications for the seismic equipment. The blast will go off and the seismic results will be forwarded immediately, via email, to a pre-determined email distribution group. Douglas Explosives is expected to submit their pre-blast plan the week of April 29 and it is probable that the plan will include the recommendation for multiple daily blasts to meet the schedule. Chemung Construction will conduct pre-blast surveys.

Tim Hoffman asked if Douglas Explosives is working with Fauquier County Water and Sanitation Authority regarding seismic blasting affecting parcels with wells. Billy said that Douglas Explosives understands that both wells and septic are to be included in the investigation. Douglas Explosives has already done preliminary investigation and identified parcels with wells versus septic. Per State requirements, certain structures will be structurally investigated particularly if the building/parcel is within a certain distance from the blasting zone. Tim cautioned that Vint Hill is less than two miles away and the area has three to four wells that the community is dependent upon and have been sensitive to seismic activity in the past. He added that the water system for Vint Hill is antiquated. Pete feels there are approximately eighty-eight families that are within a mile/mile and a half of the project and are on a well and are sensitive to what seismic vibrations can do.

David Bradeson of Chemung said there will be four designated fixed stations (i.e. locations) that the third party will set up around plus the third party will have their own station. Garrett noted this is in addition to the closed structure. The blasting plan will show the designated locations and each blast will produce a diagram and provide the minimum requirements for seismic equipment. Douglas Explosives is bringing in the third party contractor because of the sensitivity of the location. After each blast an email will be sent to the designated email distribution group with the results allowing for near real-time review. This will be coordinated through VDOT.

David said that Douglas Explosives will notify residents who are within certain distances of the blasts (notification to the designated tenants) and Billy said they will follow a three-step notification process: 1) informal; 2) door flyer; 3) written document, which must be signed and returned. This is standard practice per State and County regulations. Garrett clarified that the three-step notification process will be aimed at the impacted area only. Vint Hill area residents will not be notified, as their distance is too far away from blasting. Tim asked for confirmation that the seismic vibration will not impact the Vint Hill area. Garrett said that Vint Hill should not be impacted. Once the blasting plan is approved, it will be distributed to the stakeholders. Pete asked about the blasting radius. The regulation is, based on the blasting location, any parcel that is within 150 feet will require a structural investigation, as well as all wells within 300 feet of a blasting location. The point of the seismic readings is to make sure that after each reading you verify that the blast was completed in accordance with State and County regulations.

A video of an actual blasting was presented depicting the typical blasting cycle, which includes a State regulated multi-horn process with the first horn sounded as a warning, the second sounded within a minute prior to the blast, and the third horn (three short blasts) means all clear. The all clear horn means that a certified blaster has inspected the area where the blasting took place to ensure it complied with all regulations.

To be proactive, Chemung Construction is proposing that Douglas Explosives be allowed to do some preliminary pre-drilling prior to the closure period. This would allow Douglas Explosives to study the condition of the rock and investigate what its anticipated reduction will be in regard to drilling in order to determine what they are up against from a blasting perspective. It was confirmed that during a blasting, traffic will be stopped at Route 15 and once the all clear horn is sounded, traffic will be advanced at a slow roll. No traffic controls are set-up for the southbound lanes. Garrett noted that there should not be any throw from the blasting. There are a couple of areas where mats will be used due to structure's location to the blasting. Mats are used to catch potential throw. Billy said that if the entire blasting project were matted, it would significantly impact the time period of the closure.

Garrett confirmed that the preliminary pre-drilling could take place as early as the first or second week of June. David Bradeson said that preliminary drilling will take place at night. Prior to blasting the rock outcroppings located in the median they will need to be hammered down and flattened. The contractor will first try to rip the rock with an excavator to see if it will break up. The goal is to do as much of the work in the median at night first prior to the closure and flatten the rock prior to July 8th. This will allow the contractor to focus on blasting beginning July 9th. Pete asked that residents are made aware of the preliminary night drilling, as he knows of at least ten families who will be affected. Garrett agreed that residents should be notified in advance of the proposed drilling at night so they can plan around it.

Billy reported that Chemung Construction will be utilizing heavy quarry equipment for the project. E-ticketing associated with Fleet Watcher software, a truck tracking mechanism, will allow the project manager to know in real time where trucks are from the time they are loading to the time they are returning. The use of a 25' paver is proposed, which is typically used on airport runways. These resources combined will expedite the process. Tim asked if project dump trucks and other heavy equipment will be using Route 29. Billy responded that they would.

Steven Combs asked Chemung Construction if they planned on hauling debris material offsite for disposal. Billy noted that Chemung is still determining that. There is a certain amount that will be placed onsite and roughly 8,000-10,000 yards of debris that will be hauled offsite. Chemung is working with the County and McMichael's Equipment Company to get a permit to place debris there. Steven noted that the Puller Veterans Care Center, another state agency, is about to start a major construction project in Vint Hill and could possibly use some of the debris as fill.

c. Schedule & Funding Update

John Lynch commented that at last month's meeting it was discussed that there were some consultant vouchers that needed to hit the project's budget. There are only a couple of outstanding vouchers and will continue to provide an update on the budget on a monthly basis. The next goal will be to lay out the funding for Phase two of the project and provide estimates for that work.

5. Update: Regional Detour & Local Alternative Route, Truck Restrictions

Lou presented a "more polished" regional detour map. (more detail below under *Communication's Plan* section.)

Mark Nesbit provided an update regarding maintenance of traffic efforts. VDOT is coordinating with local law enforcement and state police to plan for additional law enforcement presence during the project. It is expected that many secondary roads will experience and increase in traffic necessitating additional law enforcement. Supplemental contracts with law enforcement are being put in place.

VDOT's Safety Service Patrol, which currently provides service on Interstate 66 in urban areas, will be adding this service to Route 17 between Marshall and Warrenton during the closure period. The Warrenton Tow Board discussed and agreed to implement the use of "Instant Tow" services, which are set to provide tow service to stranded motorists. This allows "Instant Tow" to be dispatched to a crash site at the same time as when law enforcement. Coordination with Prince William County law enforcement to cover any spill over into that county has been addressed.

VDOT has looked at several intersection locations for the use of ten portable cameras to monitor traffic flow and incidents. VDOT will continue to utilize portable, changeable message boards that are and will be deployed to various critical locations, as needed. There are also several routes that will have temporary truck restrictions. VDOT is still working out considerations for specific problematic intersections such as Route 215 and Route 600 where VDOT is taking a look at a temporary all way stop condition and/or a combination of law enforcement directing traffic during peak times. Chemung Construction also has responsibility for signing the detour route and maintenance of traffic in and around the project. VDOT will be working closely with Chemung Construction to ensure this is a seamless effort. He commented that on the first day of the closure there will be a lot of traffic that will need to be turned around due to their not knowing of the closure.

6. Draft Communication Plan

Lou reviewed what has been done already and what is in place from a communications plan and public outreach standpoint. He thanked the Route 29 Advisory Group and public meeting attendees for forwarding VDOT messages and news releases to constituents, customers and residents. Every news release the Warrenton Residency has produced has been sent to other VDOT district offices up and down the corridor. Another news release is scheduled and will include the regional detour flyer.

VDOT is distributing the regional flyer to local businesses including Lord Fairfax Community College who will distribute it to their students. VDOT will also be forwarding the regional detour map to other colleges and universities in the area. Lou commented on VDOT's robust social media presence both on twitter and Facebook, which they will utilize to get the word out. A paid radio advertising campaign will start prior to the closure and will emphasize the regional detour route. Mark added that VDOT has also reached out to utility companies who may have work scheduled along the closure route to either get the work done now or postpone it until after the closure period.

Lou said the Fauquier Chamber of Commerce is assisting by electronically distributing information to other area chambers. Craig Oakley of the New Baltimore Fire Department provided Lou with the contacts for non-emergency transport companies who use Route 29 to transport patients from hospital to hospital. Tim asked for a list of radio stations on which to hear the radio ads. Lou responded that radio stations WTOP, NPR, and WINC in Winchester have begun providing news messaging to their listeners, and that he would provide a full list at next month's meeting. Garrett said that the radio ads will become more frequent as the closure period comes nearer.

Lou added that feedback from the Virginia Trucking Association was received. The Federal Motor Carrier Administration maintains a database on primary truck routes and when they list the closure of Route 29 on that database, the message should be seen by all major trucking companies.

7. Meeting Calendar – monthly, time, location

Garrett reviewed the upcoming meeting calendar to include the following date. These meetings will continue monthly with no concrete end date. The next meeting is scheduled for May 23rd from 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors meeting Room, Warren Green Building, 10 Hotel Street, Warrenton.

8. New Business & Wrap-up

No new business was discussed.

9. Adjournment

Given that there were no additional comments or items to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.