

## Policy Committee Meeting Notes

<b>Subject</b>	Vergennes PEL Study Policy Committee Meeting
<b>Date and Time</b>	January 6, 2025, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
<b>Location</b>	Virtual Via Zoom Meeting In-Person at the Vergennes Fire House, 50 Green Street, Vergennes, VT
<b>Policy Committee Member Attendees</b>	<p>Voting Members:</p> <p>Chair – Adam Lougee (ACRPC)</p> <p>Kati Gallagher (VNRC)</p> <p>Brent Rakowski (ACRPC Transportation Advisory Committee Chair)</p> <p>Diane Lanpher (City of Vergennes), Municipal Appointee</p> <p>Ron Redmond (City of Vergennes), Municipal Appointee</p> <p>Matthew Bogaczyk (VTrans)</p> <p>Matthew Arancio (VTrans)</p> <p>Mary Rudd (Town of Panton), Municipal Appointee</p> <p>Matthew Birong (Representative of Addison-3 District – Ferrisburgh, Vergennes, Panton, Waltham, and Addison), Vermont Legislature</p> <p>Renny Perry (Vergennes Partnership), Business Community</p> <p>Phil Summers (Addison County Chamber of Commerce), Business Community</p> <p>Rhonda Williams (Town of Waltham), Municipal Appointee</p> <p>Bill Smith (Vermont Truck and Bus Association), Trucking Industry**</p> <p>Clark Hinsdale (Town of Ferrisburgh), Municipal Appointee**</p> <p>Jubilee McGill (Representative of Addison-5 District – New Haven, Weybridge, and Bridport), Vermont Legislature**</p> <p>Mike Audy (Town of New Haven), Municipal Appointee**</p> <p>Non-Voting Members:</p> <p>Amy Bell (VTrans), Observer</p> <p>Mike Winslow (ACRPC), Observer</p> <p>Liz Shipley (FHWA), Observer</p> <p>Faith Dall (VTrans), Observer**</p> <p>Joel Perrigo (VTrans), Observer**</p> <p>Jacqueline LeBlanc (FHWA), Observer**</p>
<b>Study Team Attendees</b>	<p>Stephanie Camay, (WSP)</p> <p>Delia Makhetha, (WSP)</p> <p>Stephen Chiaramonte, (WSP)</p> <p>Annabelle Dally, (WSP)</p> <p>Maya Miller, (WSP)</p> <p>Ken Robie, (DuBois &amp; King)</p> <p>Jim Gish, (VHB)</p>
<b>Public Attendees</b>	<p>Mel Hawley, (Vergennes Property Owner)</p> <p>Terry Pelletier, (Panton Resident)</p>

\*Joined late

\*\*Invited, but not present

The Policy Committee meeting presentation is available on the Vergennes PEL Study website, Committees and Agency Coordination Section (<https://vergennespel.com/committees-agency-coordination>) under Policy Committee Meeting Materials: [https://vergennespel.com/media/030np2pm/20250106\\_policy-committee-meeting-presentation.pdf](https://vergennespel.com/media/030np2pm/20250106_policy-committee-meeting-presentation.pdf)

## ***Meeting Summary***

Adam Lougee, Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) and Chair of the Policy Committee (the committee), started the meeting at 11:04 a.m. on Monday, January 6, 2025. Adam thanked everyone for coming to this meeting and for their hard work leading up to this major point in the study. Adam shared the agenda, to which no changes were made. Stephanie Camay, WSP, stated, for the record, that a change had been made to the previous agenda that had been advertised leading up to this meeting noting that the public comment period had been moved up to before the committee discussion and consensus point. No changes were made to the agenda as presented. Adam turned the meeting over to Delia Makhetha, WSP, for Zoom Orientation and Roll Call. Twelve of the sixteen voting members and three of the six non-voting members were present. **A quorum was met.** Seven members of the study team from WSP, DuBois & King (D&K) and the study's community liaison with VHB were also in attendance. In addition, two members of the public were present.

## ***PEL Study Background***

Stephanie Camay, WSP, provided an overview of the Study, presentation slides 6-11. Stephanie explained the Route 22A corridor has been studied over the past 25 years and the goal of this PEL Study is to link previous planning studies to future environmental review. Previous studies indicated regional agreement that truck traffic in downtown Vergennes should be addressed. Through the PEL Study, the team is making a concentrated effort through public engagement as we develop transportation solutions.

Stephanie explained that the PEL Study is an approximately three-year process and as mentioned we are now at the end of that process. Stephanie indicated that the last time the committee met we reviewed the criteria to be used to evaluate the routing alternatives and since that meeting the study team has incorporated the committee's input and evaluated each of the route alternatives. Stephanie concluded that the final steps would be to create an implementation plan and document the process through a final report. Stephanie stated the goal is to wrap those remaining tasks up over the next few months during the first quarter of 2025.

Stephanie highlighted that PEL is the planning process and within VTrans project lifestyle, it is part of Project Initiation. This PEL Study will conclude in 2025 and then the next step is to authorize funding and then any alternatives coming out of the PEL Study will move into Design and Engineering including the following: conceptual, draft and final design, environmental studies and NEP, permitting, and right-of-way acquisition. Following the Design and Engineering phase the project would then move to construction. Stephanie explained that there

would still be a lot left to do before getting to construction, but the PEL process is intended to help streamline the environmental review process and the public outreach component is a big part of that.

Stephanie noted that on the call today are members of the Policy Committee who will be asked for approval of the Alternatives Evaluation Technical Memorandum and the study team's recommended route alternatives as well as your consensus to move forward with NEPA pending funding authorization from VTrans. Stephanie encouraged the committee to remember that while we are asking for consensus today this is still part of a larger planning process and that the goal of PEL is to reduce the number of alternatives and impacts that will be reviewed further under the NEPA process and to help streamline. Stephanie noted that these are just recommendations and that nothing agreed upon today is binding at this stage of the larger process.

Stephanie opened the floor to the committee for questions or comments. There were no questions or comments.

## ***Alternatives Evaluation***

### ***Overview***

Stephanie recapped the concept screening which included the study of four new roadways, the use and improvement of an existing roadway, and a "No Build" option or no changes beyond routine maintenance. Stephanie noted that the study team recognizes that each route option has strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities which have been explored and evaluated throughout this process. These routes were further evaluated through a set of criteria that was based on the Purpose and Need. Stephanie reminded the committee that the Purpose defines the transportation solution needing to be solved and the Need provides the evidence needed to support the Purpose. Stephanie noted that this Purpose and Need is a refined version of the Purpose and Need from the 2019 study that was redeveloped through this PEL study process and also reflects the input through public outreach and data collection. Stephanie stated that this Purpose and Need statement has been reviewed and approved by both the Technical and Policy Committees.

Stephanie noted that VTrans and the ACRPC reviewed the Alternatives Evaluation Technical Memorandum shared with the committee. Stephanie stated a meeting was held with VTrans Leadership to brief them on the results and recommendations and a subsequent meeting was held with the Technical Committee. Stephanie shared some of the feedback received as a result of those meetings. The Historic Preservation Department with VTrans requested a deeper dive into historic and cultural resources. This additional review has been completed but is not yet reflected in the memorandum as it is currently under review with the Historic Preservation Department but will be incorporated at a later date. VTrans leadership noted that the construction costs seemed low and provided additional data to allow the study team to rework the construction cost estimates. An additional request was made by VTrans leadership to include development costs which were also added. Stephanie noted that none of these changes resulting from the additional historic and cultural analysis impacted the study team's recommendation. Stephanie also noted that the recommendation is based on the criteria only so the additional costs were not considered for this decision.

Kati Gallagher, VNRC, asked that given all of the routes seem to have significant environmental impacts whether it would have been appropriate to engage with ANR or if VTrans or the Regional Planning Commission feedback included some of the potential environmental impacts in this review. Matthew Arancio, VTrans, responded that VTrans does coordinate with ANR and ACCD as part of the review of this document and is happy to receive any additional feedback from the agencies, but has not made that initial contact with them to discuss further. As far as the environmental impact goes, that section is reviewed by the Department of Historic and Cultural Resources Officers within the Agency and the environmental folks as well. Matthew stated there is a vetting process and across-agency coordination information reviewing and sharing as part of this process.

### High-Level Alternatives Evaluation

Stephanie provided a high-level overview of the alternatives evaluation. To create the overview the criteria were grouped into three categories within the Purpose and Need statement including transportation impacts, local and regional issues, and environmental resources. The criteria scoring within each grouping were culminated to create these overall ratings.

### Alternatives Evaluation

	PURPLE ALTERNATIVE	BLUE ROUTE ALTERNATIVE	PINK ROUTE ALTERNATIVE	GREEN ROUTE ALTERNATIVE	ORANGE ALTERNATIVE
Transportation Impacts	-6	5	5	1	3
Local and Regional Issues	-3	5	4	-2	-5
Environmental Resources	-19	-23	-20	-17	-13
<b>Total</b>	<b>-28</b>	<b>-13</b>	<b>-11</b>	<b>-18</b>	<b>-5</b>
Construction Cost Estimate	\$54 M	\$107 M	\$132 M	\$103 M	\$19 M
Development Cost Estimate	\$21 M	\$44 M	\$54 M	\$45 M	\$12 M

Stephanie noted that this is a transportation study so any alternative carried forward would need to have a transportation benefit. When analyzing transportation impacts based on the criteria (safety, mobility, etc.) all of the routes except the Purple Route provided a transportation benefit, therefore meeting the Purpose and Need.

Brent Rakowski, ACRPC TAC, asked what the key aspects of the transportation components are preventing the Purple Route from meeting the Purpose and Need. Brent stated that from his perspective, the Purple Route would meet the primary objective of getting truck traffic out of downtown Vergennes. While the Purple Route might provide a lesser reduction than other routes it still meets the Purpose and Need. Ken Robie, DuBois & King, stated that we would get into the specific criteria ratings within each group later on in the presentation.

Stephanie reviewed the local and regional issues highlighting that a major component of the Purpose and Need is the impact truck traffic has on quality of life in terms of noise and air quality on both a local and regional scale. Stephanie stated that a prominent concern raised through our public engagement efforts was the desire to resolve the impact on downtown Vergennes without shifting the issue onto other communities. Only the Blue and Pink Routes fully meet the Purpose and Need when considering local and regional issues. Stephanie reviewed the third and final grouping, environmental resources explaining the goal of the PEL is to identify these impacts at a precursory level. During the NEPA process mitigation efforts such as avoidance will be more deeply explored. Stephanie stated that each alternative has a varying degree of environmental impacts with the Purple, Blue, and Pink Routes having the most significant. Stephanie shared the construction and development cost estimates noting that costs are not part of the PEL process and were not factored into the decisions for final recommendations.

### Evaluation Matrix

#### Transportation Benefits

Category	Criteria	Specific Measure	Route Alternatives				
			Purple	Blue	Pink	Green	Orange
Transportation Performance							
Transportation	Traffic Volume	Truck volumes on Route 22A in downtown Vergennes (AM/PM)	-85/-42	-123/-77	-123/-77	-123/-77	-123/-77 (north of Macdonough Drive)
	Traffic Operations	Change in overall network traffic operations	--	+	+	-	--
	Proposed Route Alternative	Travel times for freight vehicles	---	+	+	-	+
		Travel length in mileage	+5.2	+0.4	+0.4	+0.9	-0.1
	Bicycle and Pedestrian	Potential for expansion of regional bicycle network	+	+	+	+	0
		Potential improvement to pedestrian circulation	0	0	0	0	+

Stephanie pulled up the full evaluation matrix and responded to Brent's earlier question regarding the Purple Route. Stephanie explained that while the Purple Route does reduce truck traffic in downtown Vergennes, it also increases travel time and length for the trucking community. While the portion of the Purpose and Need related to reducing truck traffic in downtown Vergennes is met, the portion of the Purpose and Need related to not negatively impacting travel time and length is not. Ken Robie reminded the committee that the Purple Route only diverts a portion of the truck traffic as it proposes a north/south split which is why you see the lower score for the criteria specific to the reduction of truck traffic.

Brent Rakowski stated he was having trouble seeing how that related to the Purpose and Need. Brent stated that as a resident of Vergennes, he does not care if truck drivers have to travel an extra five miles and that should not even be a criterion being evaluated. Brent stated he was trying to understand how that meshes with the overall Purpose and Need of the study to reduce truck traffic and their impacts on downtown Vergennes. Brent continued he could understand that the Purple Route impacts other communities along Route 17, but it is somewhat mitigated by traffic being divided up throughout the region. Stephanie responded that weighting criteria differently was something that has been discussed and considered, but it would be difficult to

determine how to weight each criterion equitably as each stakeholder or group has different interests and priorities.

Mary Rudd, Town of Panton, stated that she has questions about the travel times for the Blue and Pink Routes as the Technical Memorandum states stop signs are intended at the intersections with Panton Road and MacDonough Drive. Mary expressed concern regarding having stop control at these intersections with the new routes being a proposed speed limit of 45 mph. Mary stated that we should have learned our lesson from Route 7 after traffic signals had to be installed at the intersections with 22A and Monkton Road. Mary explained that she did not see how stop signs could work and is concerned that there will be accidents if that type of traffic control is implemented. From an evaluation standpoint, Mary asked if the traffic analysis assumed traffic signals instead of stop signs if the ratings would change for the relevant criteria. Stephen Chiamonte, WSP, responded to Brent's earlier question, stating that for the mobility and access criteria, it was clear that maintaining the throughput of freight through the area was a part of the overall Purpose and Need of the project leading to the study team trying to balance many different users within each of these alternatives.

Stephen stated he wanted to make sure that intention was clear. Stephen responded to Mary's question stating that for the Blue and Pink Routes the lowest treatment level for traffic were evaluated at each intersection for the expected traffic volumes. As these alternatives move forward into NEPA, a much deeper dive into the level of treatment needed at each intersection for example a roundabout or traffic signal will be evaluated. At this level of analysis, the two-way stop control is operationally sufficient, but that does not mean that other safety or operational treatments will not be proposed at those intersections later. Mary responded that it is not really a fair comparison if you are using a type of treatment to score these options that might not ultimately be used.

Ken Robie responded that this is giving a worst-case scenario. The stop-and-go traffic associated with the stop control will give you the worst travel time and is more conservative while traffic signals would give you an improved travel time and higher score but might not be warranted. Mary asked for clarification on what type of stop control was analyzed. Ken responded they would be two-way stop controlled and requested Stephen confirm which roadways would have priority. Stephen clarified that Panton Road would have priority, but at the MacDonough Drive intersection, the new roadway would have priority. Ken explained that the route with an anticipated high volume was given priority at each intersection for this analysis.



## Local and Regional Issues

CATEGORY	CRITERIA	SPECIFIC MEASURE	ROUTE ALTERNATIVES				
			PURPLE	BLUE	PINK	GREEN	ORANGE
LOCAL AND REGIONAL ISSUES							
Quality of Life	Noise and Air Quality	Decibel change at receptors along Route 22A in downtown Vergennes	1 dbA	4 dBA	4 dBA	4 dBA	0
		# of new sensitive receptors within 500 feet of proposed route alternative	174	13	42	34	40
	Property Impacts	Acreage of partial and full acquisitions	28	60	65	24	44
		# of estimated full parcel acquisition	0	0	2	3	9
		# of estimated partial parcel acquisition	71	13	10	14	11
Economic Vitality	Property Tax Revenue	Potential to increase property tax revenue for Vergennes and Towns	++	+++	+++	+	++
	Sales Tax and Tourism Revenue	Potential to increase sales tax revenue for Vergennes and Towns and increase tourism visitation for Vergennes	+	++	++	+	+
	Job Creation and Commercial Occupancy Rates	Potential to increase and retain jobs and increase commercial occupancy rates in downtown Vergennes and Towns	+	+++	+++	+	++
Land Use	Development Density Infill Versus Sprawl	Ability to foster infill development within Vergennes	+	+++	+++	+	++
	Zoning Changes, Comprehensive Plan, and Land Reclassification	Requires changes to zoning, comprehensive plans, or land classification	--	-	-	--	--
Equity	Environmental Justice	Potential for environmental justice populations within footprint of route alternative	-	--	--	-	--

Stephanie reviewed the local and regional issues grouping which includes quality of life, economic vitality, land use, and equity. Stephanie highlighted the quality of life criteria as a primary reason for this study is to reduce truck traffic throughout downtown Vergennes to improve noise and air quality. The study team evaluated decibel noise change along 22A in downtown Vergennes and the number of new sensitive receptors (residents, schools, parks, etc.) within 500 feet of a proposed route. Ken Robie highlighted that the noise and air quality evaluation is a great example of where the primary piece of to pull trucks out of downtown Vergennes, but to do so without negatively impacting other places. This shows the flipflop reaction where you have improvements along 22A in downtown Vergennes shown in green and the negative impacts shown in red in other locations as the truck traffic is displaced. Stephanie stated that property impacts including partial and full parcel acquisitions and acreage were evaluated.

Brent Rakowski asked for clarification if the intention is reduce/minimize impacts or eliminate them. Ken Robie clarified the intention is to reduce or minimize impacts. Ken provided the example of the traffic volume criteria where the Purple Route which reduces the truck volumes by half is shown as a benefit, but lesser than those that divert it completely such as Blue, Pink, and Green, and where the Orange Route is shown as neutral because the same volume will still travel through half of downtown Vergennes before being diverted. Brent asked with respect to property impacts along the Purple Route. Brent stated it would be helpful to know what level of traffic Route 17 can currently support and what the anticipated segment that would be. Brent explained that from his understanding Route 17 exists with a 60-foot right-of-way which should be plenty to expand the shoulder 10 feet limiting the need for property acquisition. Brent elaborated he knows there are other components such as drainage, but the property acquisition assumptions feel very high. Ken Robie explained that the assumption for Route 17 is that it would have to be built at the same cross-section as the new alternative to match what is already

being proposed for 22A south of Route 17. Ken stated he believed the layout is 11-foot lanes and 6-foot shoulders which would require widening along the entire length. Ken added that there are also sections that would require full-depth reconstruction requiring strip takings. This is why you see 71 parcel impacts, but only 28 actual acres. Stephanie added there are also no full takings.

Stephanie reviewed the economic vitality which was evaluated as part of a separate economic assessment included in the appendix. The basis of this evaluation focused on property tax revenue, sale tax, tourism revenue, and job creation. Stephanie highlighted that all the alternatives support economic vitality to a varying degree. Matthew Arancio added that there is a similar chapter within the memorandum focusing on future land use which is a good example of working and coordinating with other agencies and speaks to the question Kati asked earlier on about coordination. Matthew explained that future land use evaluation reviewed what future land uses could potentially exist along their potential roadways. The team received ample feedback from ACCD about their concerns regarding sprawl and what that could mean when creating space around future roadways. The evaluation focuses on future land uses while acknowledging and mitigating ACCD's concern regarding sprawl. Stephanie stated this is the perfect segue into the next criteria land use which evaluated the ability to foster infill development within Vergennes and potential required change to existing land use and zoning.

Mary Rudd asked how the Purple Route could have more negative impact to zoning changes than the Pine and Blue Routes. Adam Lougee explained that the existing uses along the Pink and Blue Routes require fewer changes as portions within Vergennes are already zoned for industrial or residential use. Mary stated that half the Blue Route goes through Panton which is zoned residential and agricultural. Adam agreed but reminded her that one route goes entirely through Vergennes. Mary stated that the Pink and Blue Routes should be scored differently in this criterion. Adam responded that qualitatively the land use changes are similar. Mary stated there should be a distinction because one will impact Panton's zoning, and one will not. Adam agreed that was a fair distinction, but even along the Blue Route, along the Vergennes portions at least, there is already an appetite and movement to change the zoning for development. Mary stated that this evaluation seems to only focus on Vergennes impacts and is minimizing the impacts along the Panton portion of the route.

Ken Robie highlighted that there is a negative shown for the Blue Route for that criterion due to zoning changes within Panton. Mary stated that all the other routes show a double negative and suggested that the Blue Route should also be double negative due to the zoning changes in Panton. Ken stated that if you take away the town boundaries and just consider the zoning changes alone giving equal weight to zoning changes regardless of town designation agricultural land being considered for development is a negative. The town has no bearing in the evaluation as zoning change is considered a zoning change and is negative.

Brent Rakowski stated that explains the Blue and Pink Route, but not the Purple Route. Brent asked what makes the Purple Route double negative. Adam responded that most of the Purple Route is rural residential, agricultural, or conservation in New Haven and Addison. Brent asked if the roadway exists and the zoning exists, would there even need to be any changes. Adam responded that if you are building a highway or reconstructing a highway you are introducing



the potential for future development and potential land use changes which is what is being reflected. Mary asked why that is not the case for the Blue Route then. Mary asked if the difference is because it is a shorter length or because it is through Panton. Adam responded that it is neither and clarified that the full length of the Blue Route is a mixed bag, so it evens out. Brent asked if there would need to be changes along any of the routes for them to be constructed. Adam responded no; the towns could choose to not make any changes. Ken summarized that everyone agrees that land use changes are negative across all alternatives, but there is a difference in opinion on what qualifies as a double versus a single negative. Ken pondered if the distinguisher is acreage or length or something else and asked the study team to better define how those ratings were determined. Ken reminded the committee that these ratings are more qualitative or an order of magnitude.

Stephanie reviewed the last criterion in this grouping equity or environmental justice which was evaluated based on Federal Highway guidance. The study team evaluated minority populations and income disparity within the route footprints. Based on typical criteria for environmental justice populations, the entire study area is not considered to contain any minor populations. The study team took a deeper dive into the EPA screening and disparity of income particularly within Vergennes. While the medium income is higher, there is disparity in income and a large population would be the threshold for environmental justice based on income. To be overly conservative, any route through Vergennes are given a double negative due to impacts on income based environmental justice populations. This would be assessed further in NEPA.

### Environmental Resources

CATEGORY	CRITERIA	SPECIFIC MEASURE	ROUTE ALTERNATIVES				
			PURPLE	BLUE	PINK	GREEN	ORANGE
ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES							
Natural and Cultural Resources	Wetlands	Area of impacted Class II wetlands (acres)	4.3	9.3	7.9	9.9	0.8
	Surface Waters	# of new stream crossings	0	3	1	7	3
	Floodplains	Floodplain encroachment (acres)	0.5	3.5	4.4	4.9	0.6
		State River Corridors encroachment (acres)	3.3	4.0	4.9	5.4	1.1
	Vegetative Communities / Wildlife Habitat	# and acreage of significant habitats impacted	1 / 0.27 (1)	1 / 1.89 (13)	1 / 3.21 (22)	3 / 7.80 (19)	1 / 0.79 (2)
	Rare, Threatened, and Endangered (RTE) Species	# of mapped RTE animal/plant species present within route alternative	3 / 0	15 / 0	15 / 0	7 / 0	4 / 1
		# of mapped uncommon animal/plant species present within route	7 / 2	3 / 2	3 / 2	1 / 0	0 / 0
		Acreage of significant natural communities impacted	0.6	0.6	1	0	0
	Farmlands	Acreage of primary agricultural soils impacted	29	22	26	22	6
	Historic Resources	# of historic resources entirely intersecting with route alternatives	9	1	0	0	2
		# of historic resources near (within 750 feet) route alternatives	5	10	7	3	8
		# of known archeological resources near route alternative	3	2	2	1	2
	Hazardous Materials	# of hazardous sites within 150 feet of proposed route alternative	15	0	0	0	3

Stephanie reviewed the environmental resources criteria which included impacts to wetlands, surface waters, floodplains and river corridors, vegetation and wildlife habitats, RTE specifics, farmlands (primary agricultural soils), historic and archeological resources, and hazardous materials. Additional analysis was performed on historic resource impacts based on feedback from VTrans.

Brent Rakowski stated that he sees wetland impacts as a pretty significant hurdle and avoidance is the first step in determining if you can have these impacts. Brent continued that from his perspective the Purple Route already exists and has these impacts and while it might require additional impacts, the new constructs are entirely new impacts. Brent asked how one justifies building a new roadway with all these new impacts with the Purple Route available. Brent questioned how any of these new roadways could make it through NEPA or by the Army Corp of Engineers when all these impacts could be avoided by building the Purple Route. Ken Robie responded that is where the Purpose and Need comes in as the Army Corp of Engineers will pick the option with the least impact, but it will have to meet the Purpose and Need.

Ken explained that this not being NEPA or the 404 process other alternatives not recommended here could be pulled back in and moved forward in either of those processes down the line. Ken reminded the committee that nothing decided today is binding and alternatives could get pulled back into the mix at a later time during NEPA or the Corp of Engineers permitting phase. Brent asked with respect to prime agricultural soils, 29 acres are listed along the Purple Route, which seems very high to me, the figure seems to suggest that the entire corridor is considered new construction. Ken clarified that it is prime agricultural soils outside of the existing roadway footprint not necessarily outside of the right-of-way. Ken explained that in a future version, the estimate was higher as the existing roadway footprint had not been subtracted out but has since been updated as shown here.

Brent stated that in terms of historic resources, he noticed the Addison Town Hall and the New Haven Train Station are listed. Brent explained that the New Haven Train Station has since been moved and wondered if that was reflected somewhere and was curious what impact this would have on the Addison Town Hall. Brent stated that 15 sites were identified as hazardous materials and asked how those were identified. Brent asked if it was just a simple search through the ANR site. Ken confirmed that it was 15 sites that were identified on the ANR site, and the information is mostly just for awareness. Brent asked if we knew where those 15 sites were located.

Ken stated that they were in various locations throughout the area, and some might not necessarily be within the actual building footprint. Ken explained that this highlights why the environmental scores are not included in the new scores as it is difficult to verify with any certainty at this stage what is truly an impact. Stephanie circled back on the historic resources the train station relocation is included in the revised version which is currently being reviewed by the Historic Preservation Office and when that is complete it will be shared with the committee.

### **Recommendation**

Stephanie recapped the recommendation being made to the committee. The Purple Route does not meet the Purpose and Need for transportation and local and regional issues. Both the Green

Route and Orange Route do meet the Purpose and Need for transportation, but not for local and regional issues. Therefore, the consultant team recommends the dismissal of the Purple, Green, and Orange Routes.

The Pink Route and the Blue Route both meet Purpose and Need for transportation and local and regional issues. The No Build Alternative will continue as per NEPA. Therefore, the consultant team recommends the Blue and Pink Routes continue to NEPA with the No Build Alternative.

### **Public Comment**

Adam Lougee opened the meeting to public comments. Two public participants were present. Mel Hawley, a property owner in Vergennes who would be impacted by the Pink Route Alternative, and Terry Pelletier, a Panton resident, shared their opinions on the route alternatives and the study team's recommendations.

Mel introduced himself as the owner of 120 Panton Road, along with his wife. Mel stated that their property is one of the most, if not the most, impacted properties along the Pink Route, and he does not want the Pink Route to be constructed. Mel informed the committee that he is also on the board for the Prospect Cemetery which the Pink Route also impacts when it leaves Route 22A. Mel explained that this portion of the cemetery is currently undeveloped and is intended to be used over the next century or two or potentially even three. Mel stated that the cemetery would not be able to simply buy land elsewhere to make up for the loss and was asking that if the Pink Route were to be constructed it could be designed such that it avoids impacting the cemetery. Matthew Birong, State Representative from Vergennes, asked how much acreage the cemetery has. Mel stated that he did not have those numbers on hand, but he would estimate the cemetery is approximately 10 acres in total with approximately 3-4 acres being undeveloped. Mel offered to get the exact numbers if the committee was interested. Mel stated that he has been following the process closely, communicates with Jim Gish and the study team, attends every meeting, is part of the mailing list, and monitors the study website frequently for updates and events.

Mel explained that despite all of this he was not notified of the Technical Committee Meeting on December 13 until after it has taken place, and the comment period has closed. Mel stated he has only attended one Technical Committee Meeting in the past and was not sure if he would have been provided an opportunity to provide comment that he would have liked to attend. Mel expressed that he felt the study team had fallen short relative to the lack of communication and notice to the public. Mel stated that he did request the recording of the meeting and hopes to be able to listen to it. Mel asked the committee not to vote in favor of the consultant recommendation. Mel offered that there is an alternative between the Purple Route and the No Build that should be considered. Mel stated that he believes the Purple Route is being scored out due to the design of the matrix. Mel explained that the Purple Route is overdesigned which causes the impacts to be inflated resulting in low scoring. Mel stated that Route 17 already accommodates truck traffic though he agreed that there are sections of Route 17 that are substandard and need to be upgraded now.

Mel stated that he does not agree that only the Pink and Blue Routes accomplish the Purpose and Need and agreed with Brent that the Purple Route also meets the objective of reducing truck traffic

in downtown Vergennes. Mel restated that the solution is a hybrid between the Purple Route and the No Build alternative.

Terry Pelletier commented in the chat stating that they agree with everything Mel has said today. Terry asked if part of the problem with using Route 17 is that there would be no way to force truck drivers to use it. Terry understood that if GPS shows a shorter route (i.e., through Vergennes) truck drivers will use it. Terry asked if solutions to this have been discussed. Terry stated that in general they would love to see the use of existing roadways and would love to see Mel's idea of a hybrid Purple Route and No Build alternative considered.

Ken Robie responded that Terry is correct and that an alternative like Route 17 would require enforcement. Ken explained that there is nothing physical that could be installed to stop them it would have to be enforcement. Ken also wanted to address Mel's comment that Purple Route was overdesigned. Ken agreed that trucks are currently using Route 17 and the VTrans is able to complete some improvements to Route 17. Ken explained that VTrans can only complete upgrades up to a certain point using federal funds. Ken continued that in order to make the changes to traffic characteristics and the design changes associated with them the project becomes something bigger and has to follow state and federal guidelines and processes of a new roadway. Ken summarized that is the reasoning behind having to make the drastic changes proposed.

Rhonda Williams, Town of Waltham, asked if the NEPA process requires two proposals to be put forth so there is another option other than the No Build. Ken Robie explained that there is no formal requirements, you could move forward with one alternative. Ken continued to explain that with one alternative the NEPA process would be more focused on minimizing impacts and tweaking the general route to reduce impacts wherever possible. Ken provided the example of Mel's request to avoid impacts to the cemetery with one alternative the NEPA process would focus on mitigation. Ken explained that even with the Blue and Pink Routes the NEPA process will include investigating something between the two routes that is better than what we can determine with our limited data.

Matthew Arancio added that the study team has been encouraged by FHWA to include multiple alternatives to move forward and to emphasize that alternatives that were previously excluded might come back as part of NEPA. Matthew reminded the committee that this is the first stage drawing lines on a map and doing preliminary screening of the anticipated impacts. Matthew continued that this would be refined in the second stage, NEPA. Matthew emphasized that during the NEPA phase discussions on the intrinsic nature of the Blue and Pink Routes requiring a new bridge versus other routes may result in other alternatives coming back for consideration. Matthew stated that link Ken said there is no requirement, but we have been encouraged to move multiple alternatives forward in light of a global assessment of the impacts.

Mel asked why the Blue and Pink Routes are being considered two alternatives. Mel stated that he does not see them as two routes as about 80% of the alternative routes are the same. Mel explained he sees Blue and Pink as sub alternatives of on main alternative. Ken stated that early on in the process these routes were evaluated as one, but as the process continued there were enough distinguishable characteristics to separate them.

Mel stated that he understood, but as an observer, this feels like one alternative with a band of potential alignments. Mel provided an example of the bypass considered 50 years ago which was one route with a range of potential alignments. Stephanie stated that during the initial screening, these routes were evaluated as one, but as the evaluation became more specific and conceptual designs were developed and the variations at the southern end and the footprints required separate analysis.

Adam Lougee closed the public comment period.

### **Discussion and Consensus Point**

Brent Rakowski stated that in hindsight criteria associated with the timeline and implementation would have been helpful. Brent explained that he will never see most, if any, of these constructed while others might have had the ability to be implemented immediately. Brent stated that the City of Vergennes is looking to replace the existing in the next 5-10 years which allows some time for discussions on how trucks and vehicles will travel through town. Brent restated that he would like to think the Purple Route is a viable option that might be needed at some point. Brent requested more documentation as to what decisions were made and why. Brent stated that he provided some initial comments on the Technical Memorandum via email, a major one being that the traffic data is 10 years old, and he was questioning how relevant it is. Brent restated that as a resident in Vergennes he would selfishly like to see something constructed in his lifetime. Brent stated that he had an interesting conversation with the VTrans Engineer on the Route 22A corridor project and learned how hard it was to implement and construct.

Brent provided an example of how long this process can take siting the first study of the bridge was in 95 and it was said it would be 20 years old and people were discouraged. Brent emphasized how critical the timeline is here between the coordination with the bridge work and the dire need for safety improvements. Brent expressed that it was only a matter of time before someone is hit or something catastrophic happens with fuel and propane trucks coming into town and 18-wheelers sliding backward down the hill in the winter. Brent recognized it was too late to add timelines as a criterion at this point, but the residents need an idea and there needs to be some practicality here.

Ken Robie explained the timeline and cost cannot be used for scoring or ranking in NEPA which is why they are being included in this process separately. Ken agreed that from a planning standpoint the timeline and implementation plan is important, but the study team needs direction to put it together. Ken reminded the committee that any of the alternatives will take a significant amount of time even after you secure funding and when funding would be secured is unknown.

Mary Rudd commented that four million is much easier to obtain than 20 million so cost must be a consideration here. Ken responded that the alternatives need to be vetted to ensure they solve the problem so money is wasted on something that does not meet the Purpose and Need. Mary stated well that goes back to the earlier point is are we looking to reduce trucks in



Vergennes or eliminate them. Ken responded lower it. Mary stated that is subjective. Matthew Birong stated that he heard that we are the only municipality with a population of this size (not footprint as we are small) with only one egress as most others have two or more. Ken responded that could not confirm that data point, but it is true that there is only one egress. Matthew B. stated his concern with only have one bridge which is in extremely poor condition with fragmented emergency services and first responders on either side. Matthew B. stated that when VP Pence was vacationing in Bomoseen and would be traveling through Vergennes, the Secret Service had him rerouted due to the bridge's poor condition and the safety concern. Matthew B. reiterated the need to replace the bridge and the benefit of having a second bridge for redundancy. Ken stated that it is safe to assume the bridge will be replaced long before any of these alternatives would be built and agreed that resiliency is important. Ken reminded the committee that the redundancy with a secondary bridge was talking about along throughout this study while it was never formally a criterion it is represented in the matrix qualitatively from a transportation standpoint.

Rhonda Williams asked if it would make sense to put forth three proposals based on the discussions had today. Rhonda stated that she heard the local and regional impacts that some of these alternatives would have, but considering the timeline for a new build and the current route issues, I am considering some of these other options. Adam Lougee asked if Rhonda was asking if the Policy Committee is able to make an additional recommendation in addition to those proposed by the consultant team. Rhonda confirmed that is what she was asking. Adam stated that the Policy Committee has that ability if that is what they chose to do. Adam continued that the Policy Committee's goal is to recommend transportation solutions that achieve the Purpose and Need and while the consultant team is very capable and spent time putting together these recommendations which we should consider, but we have the ability to make additional recommendations.

Matthew Arancio added that the City of Burlington recently on a PEL study made the decision to accept the consultant recommendations, move the study forward into NEPA, and identified a locally preferred alternative. Matthew explained the locally preferred alternative did not have any sway over the NEPA process but was on the record and documented and included in the conclusion of the study. Matthew stated this was a balance of accepting the consensus point and making note of a specific committee decision. Brent Rakowski stated that he would agree with Rhonda in that he would like to see three options despite the fact the report makes it pretty clear it does not meet the Purpose and Need, I would like to understand on how the Purple Route does not meet the Purpose and Need. I would not want to see it as a subcategory. I would like to have it considered and not have it as a note that locals support it. Mary Rudd agreed and stated that the Pink and Blue Routes are very similar it is just whether it is in Vergennes or Panton and therefore doesn't really provide a true option. Mary stated that she agrees the Purple Route should be carried forward as a true option and not as just a mention. Adam Lougee asked Ken or Stephanie to elaborate on why the Purple Route does not meet the transportation criteria of the Purpose and Need.

Ken Robie agreed but first wanted to address the Purple Route in general. Ken stated that in passed VTrans history when only new road projects went through NEPA through the NEPA

process an alternative that utilized existing roads was required through NEPA to be analyzed. Ken stated this a very similar situation so it is likely that an alternative like the Purple Route could be brought back through the NEPA process. Ken summarized that pulling the Purple Route back into the works now will not throw a wrench in the plan in that sense.

Brent Rakowski stated that in terms of how things are presented to NEPA those alternatives being recommended are going to be evaluated unless there is a dealbreaker that would bring the Purple Route back in. Ken responded that if three are recommended than all three would be fully vetted in the NEPA process.

Adam Lougee asked if Ken if he could answer Brent's question about why the Purple Route does not meet the transportation criteria of the Purpose and Need. Ken explained that it is as we said previously, the Purple Route is only half the benefit of the others so less of a benefit as the Pink and Blue with the real offset being the additional travel length and time and the negative change in overall network traffic operations. Brent asked if travel times, travel lengths, and operations are part of the NEPA process. Ken confirmed and stated it would get even further into it than we did here. Brent stated he is just trying to figure out how to get the square peg in the circular hole and understand how travel times fits in with the Purpose and Need. Brent stated the Purple Route reduces truck traffic in downtown Vergennes which meets the Purpose and Need, and he fails to see how trucks having to drive a bit further is related to the Purpose and Need of reducing truck traffic.

Ken confirmed that the Purple Route reduces traffic and meets that requirement of the Purpose and Need, but the Purpose and Need also states that the transportation solution cannot adversely affect the trucking community, and the Purple Route fails to meet that criterion. Ken explained that no one can argue that it is not an impact so the question is should that one criterion (lowering the volumes in Vergennes) be scored higher than the others in the two (travel time and length). Brent stated he understands that but does not agree with disregarding the alternative entirely as not meeting the Purpose and Need for that reason. Brent agreed that traveling further and longer is an impact to trucking community, but there are other things that impact certain communities so trying to balance that is what he is struggling with. Ken agreed that this is all subjective to each person's position for example if you are trucking company that runs through Vergennes and you are forced to take the Purple Route those same deliveries are now costing more money which is a big impact to trucking companies and at the same time their trucks using downtown Vergennes isn't an issue for them, but it is for other stakeholders. Ken explained the evaluation of these alternatives is a balancing act.

Matthew Arancio emphasized that with the Purpose and Need statement it is like threading a tight needle throughout this process and the nuances of this have not escaped us. Matthew explained there has been a lot of vetting throughout the entire process to arrive at this decision and these nuances are things the study team has gone back and forth on in regard to the dissonance, connection, tradeoffs, and impacts between benefits to downtown Vergennes versus the region. Matthew stated that the impact regionally with the Purple Route seemed to weigh differently in comparison to the Pink and Blue Routes which is why it had that level of separation. Matthew reemphasized that this is the tightest needle we have had to thread

throughout the process as we chose routes that on one hand are really good for some places, but on the other hand are impactful to other areas. Brent reiterated that to him the Purple Route still meets the Purpose and Need.

Stephanie Camay agreed that the Purple Route meets the first condition of the Purpose and Need by reducing the impacts of truck traffic but does not meet other components of the Purpose and Need such as Mobility and Access. Stephanie continued that the Mobility and Access is where those negatives are deriving from as you are diverting the truck traffic onto other roadways causing additional impacts and conflict points. Stephanie stated that not only the Purpose, but each of these Needs informed a criterion used in the evaluation. Stephanie reminded the group that each of the Needs were identified in the 2019 study, reinforced through public input at the start of this study, and then vetted by the Technical and Policy Committees.

Brent responded that this helped clarify, but that he is still hung up on the minimization component which is that you are minimizing regional freight through the area which in his mind does not disqualify you from meeting the Purpose and Need. Brent further explained that this could lead to an alternative scoring lower in the evaluation than others it should not prevent it from outright meeting the Purpose and Need.

Ken Robie reexplained that the Purple Route partially meets the Purpose and Need to a degree and deciding where to draw the line has always been a question throughout this study. Matthew Arancio stated that the study will be evaluated by Federal Partners by how the study followed the process in terms of developing a Purpose and Need statement, evaluating the alternatives based on that statement, and the identification of alternatives that meet that statement. Matthew further explained that when we are looking at this we are certainly considering those nuance benefits that you are raising and the intention of the Policy Committee and the public engagement is to enrich the process with local input and document the qualitative impacts. Matthew stated that the success study will be evaluated by Federal Partners on how well we responded and followed the rules we set out through this process. Matthew expanded on Ken's point that taking stricter interpretations is how the recommendations have arisen.

Brent explained that a better analogy of what he is trying to make for the Purple Route is the Blue Route. Brent continued that the Blue Route has major environmental impacts including the construction of a new bridge over Otter Creek, segmenting environmental corridors, and crossing wetlands, not to mention property line adjustments, but still meets the Purpose and Need, while the Purple Route adds five minutes to truck travel time and doesn't meet due to regional transportation impacts. Brent asked how this correlates.

Matthew Arancio asked if the scale of the Purple Route both length and geographic extent in comparison to the other routes might be a distinguishing factor. Ken Robie responded that is definitely a factor on the environmental side as it is 7 miles in comparison to 2.2 miles. Brent clarified that he is open to all alternatives but just cannot understand the Purple Route being removed from further discussion and it is limiting his ability to move forward. Ken Robie

responded that Brent's argument is exactly what the NEPA process looks to evaluate which is does the satisfaction of the Purpose and Need justify the environmental impacts of an alternative when compared to an existing route option. Ken stated that these things will be studied at a deeper level in NEPA.

Matthew Arancio reminded that group that the PEL process is to perform a high level screening by taking the universe of alternatives and whittling it down to a few through a significant screening process before taking a deeper dive in NEPA. Matthew continued that the PEL study is meant to build the groundwork for future processes, and this is just an initial screening other alternatives can be considered moving forward. Matthew stated that by virtue of the PEL process we have identified the Purpose and Need, gone through our evaluation process, and assessed community impacts from a qualitative and quantitative standpoint, and this is the sum of that work so far. Matthew summarized that what he is trying to say is that this decision does not preclude the Purple Route as part of the NEPA process as if the Blue and Pink Routes are deemed insufficient other route alternatives, such as Purple, would be identified.

Ken Robie added that this would also include the No Build which will be considered and could be selected if the Blue and Pink Routes impacts do not justify the benefits or another alternative, such as the Purple Route, could be considered. Brent asked if there was an approach where the Purple Route would be a viable option for submission to NEPA. Ken Robie responded that it is a viable option for the committee to recommend the Blue, Pink, and Purple be considered moving forward. Brent asked for clarification if this meant in terms of a recommendation or in terms of the Purple Route being documented as meeting the Purpose and Need. Ken Robie clarified it would not result in that type of documentation.

Matthew Arancio expanded on that by explaining it would be a recommended by the committee as part of the study. Ken Robie further clarified that to change the outcome of the study recommendation we would have to take several steps back and change how things are evaluated. Matthew Arancio explained it would all be documented and packaged up as part of the study that will be brought forward and shared with the Federal Partners. Matthew continued that documenting a committee decision here provides that additional qualitative evidence for further evaluation and consideration at the conclusion of this process and the beginning of any subsequent process.

Katie Gallagher stated her team has not had the opportunity to dive into the details and while this conversation has been helpful it has also raised more questions. Katie asked if someone could speak to the consensus point we are looking to reach here today, what the timeline is moving forward, and if there is any flexibility in providing the committee more time to review and consider the options. Stephanie Camay responded that the consensus point the Policy Committee was being asked is whether they, "approve the Alternatives Evaluation Technical Memorandum and the study team's recommendation" which would be the Blue and Pink Routes moving forward into NEPA and whether they "approve proceeding to NEPA, pending funding" which would be a future action by VTrans and FHWA. Stephanie continued that in addition there is also the option to add the Purple Route for further study under NEPA, not as

meeting the Purpose and Need, but as a committee preference. Stephanie stated that we were looking for those decisions today with additional comments due by the 13. Stephanie left the decision of whether the committee is prepared to make that vote to the committee itself.

Renny Perry stated that if a motion is needed to support the recommendation that he would make it now. Renny explained that this whole thing has gone for a lot of years and he has been a part of a good many of them. Renny continued that this study has never gotten this far and he would not want to do anything to jeopardize the ability to move forward. Renny explained that he feels particularly strongly about this after hearing that the Purple alternative could come back in the NEPA process. Renny stated that the Purple alternative is a reasonable thing to look at, but there is another part of the greater process that will address that and he did not think this part of the process was appropriate to address that. Renny restated that the committee should move forward with what they have.

Renny stated that he personally feels the Blue and Pink Route are not the same and the Pink Route is more realistic as it is contained in Vergennes. Renny asked the committee to consider the politics surrounding this, particularly money. Renny provided an example from when he worked in the court system and was involved in building court houses. Renny prefaced by saying that he understands the money comes from different places, but from his experience it was a tough process politically to get enough money to build a courthouse much less to build a highway through people's properties and so on. Renny emphasized that the process is not easy so from a political basis having it all in Vergennes makes more sense because we are the most effected as opposed to other towns. Renny stated this is the concern with alternatives like the Purple Route with how many other municipalities and people would be affected it would become a political football and particularly when it comes to money. Renny finalized that he didn't think the committee should take on that responsibility and if it comes up in the NEPA process and is later determined to be the best option then that is fine and we can go and argue that point then, but not now, not at this point, that was his motion.

Renny Perry, Vergennes Partnership, made the motion to support the recommendation. The motion was seconded by Matthew Birong, State Representative from Vergennes. Matthew Arancio offered to meet with Katie Gallagher separately to review the material and answer any questions she made have. Katie was agreeable. Brent Rakowski, ACRPC TAC, asked if there was interest in amending that motion to include a local alternative which would be the Purple Route. Adam Lougee referred the question to the members who made and seconded the motion. Renny Perry responded that the request deserves some consideration and would consider amending the motion as long as the amendment would not hold up or interfere with the process moving further. Renny Perry requested clarification.

Matthew Arancio, VTrans, stated that it would not prevent the study moving forward to the NEPA process, but would provide contextual evidence that the Policy Committee's preference to have an additional route considered. Adam Lougee asked for clarification for moving forward if the committee would vote on the acceptance of the recommendation with the addition of the Purple Route for consideration and then the approval of moving forward into NEPA. Matthew Arancio clarified it would be three separate points which would include



accepting the recommendations, moving forward with NEPA, and signaling a local preference of the Purple Route for inclusion. Adam clarified it would not be a preferred alternative, but an additional alternative for consideration of further study in NEPA. A member of the Policy Committee stated it would be considered equal to the recommendation.

Ron Remond asked for clarification on what Matthew Arancio meant by signaling of an alternative and if that was different from accepting. Matthew Arancio clarified that it meant after the review of this document the committee has decided this. Mary Rudd, Town of Panton, requested voting on Brent Rakowski’s suggestion first followed by the acceptance of the study team’s recommendation followed by approval to move forward to NEPA. Renny Perry stated that he understood where Mary was coming from and did not feel the order of the motions mattered before offering to withdraw. Renny Perry and Matthew Birong withdrew the motion and the second.

Mary Rudd, made the motion “the Policy Committee recommends the Purple Route be included for consideration with both the Pink and Blue Routes.” Brent Rakowski seconded the motion. After no further discussion, Adam Lougee called for a vote on the motion. Eleven responded “yes,” none responded “no,” and one abstained. The motion passed. The Policy Committee recommends the Purple Route be included for consideration with both the Pink and Blue Routes.

Renny Perry made the motion “to accept the study team’s recommendations.” Ron Redmond seconded the motion. After no further discussion, Adam Lougee called for a vote on the motion. Nine responded “yes,” two responded “no,” and one abstained. The motion passed. The Policy Committee accepts the study team’s recommendations. Brent Rakowski explained his decision to vote “no” was due to his disagreement with the Purple Route not meeting the Purpose and Need.

Renny Perry made the motion “to proceed to NEPA.” Rhonda Williams seconded the motion. After no further discussion, Adam Lougee called for a vote on the motion. Eleven responded “yes,” none responded “no,” and one abstained. The motion passed. The Policy Committee approves proceeding to NEPA.

	Motion 1	Motion 2	Motion 3
Katie Gallagher	Abstain	Abstain	Abstain
Brent Rakowski	Yes	No	Yes
Diane Lanpher	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ron Redmond	Yes	Yes	Yes
Matthew Bogaczyk	Yes	Yes	Yes
Matthew Arancio	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mary Rudd	Yes	No	Yes
Matthew Birong	Yes	Yes	Yes
Renny Perry	Yes	Yes	Yes
Phil Summers	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rhonda Williams	Yes	Yes	Yes

Adam Lougee, Chair      Yes      Yes      Yes  
Bill Smith, Clark Hinsdale, Jubilee McGill, Mike Audy – not present

Renny Perry clarified that the record should not show the Pink, Blue, and Purple Routes as equal standing as the Purple Route was just an add on. Ron Remond stated that the Purple Route was a committee recommendation. Renny Perry stated that he did not consider a committee recommendation an equal standing to the study recommendation, but if that is what it is, then that is what it is. Adam Lougee clarified the question was does the committee agree to move the Purple Route forward with the study recommendation of the Pink and Blue Route and the committee accepted that.

### **Next Steps**

Stephanie Camay, WSP, provided an overview on next steps before Adam Lougee, the Chair of the Policy Committee, closed the meeting. Stephanie stated the study team has finished the Evaluation Technical Memorandum which the committee can provide comments on until January 13. Stephanie discussed the next step will be for the study team to create an implementation plan and developing the final report which will include the recommended alternatives and the local land planning and funding options. Stephanie stated there would be a public meeting in late winter/early spring and will notice the committee with more information when available. The meeting was officially adjourned at 1:04 p.m.