



Route 28 Environmental Assessment Project Update / Alternatives Dev Tech Memo Review

Prince William County Department of Transportation
Thursday, January 16, 2020, 9:30 AM

A meeting was held on the above date and time for the Route 28 Environmental Assessment (EA). Meeting participants are listed below:

Name	Organization	Phone	Email
Rick Canizales	Prince William County	703-792-6825	rcanizales@pwcgov.org
Elizabeth Scullin	Prince William County	703-792-4051	escullin@pwcgov.org
Paolo Belita	Prince William County	703-792-6273	pbelita@pwcgov.org
Robert Iosco	VDOT	703-259-2764	robert.iosco@vdot.virginia.gov
Matthew Arcieri*	City of Manassas		marcieri@ci.manassas.va.us
Stuart Tyler	Parsons	571-437-3098	stuart.tyler@parsons.com
Surbhi Ashton	Parsons	703-856-7908	surbhi.ashton@parsons.com
David Knepper*	USACE		david.a.knepper@usace.army.mil
Barb Okorn*	EPA	215-814-3330	Okorn.Barbara@epa.gov
Stephanie Kubico*	EPA	215-814-2762	Kubico.Stephanie@epa.gov
Ralph Spagnolo*	EPA		Spagnolo.Ralph@epa.gov
Mark Wejrowski*	EPA		Wejrowski.Mark@epa.gov
Joy Gillespsi*	EPA		
Mackenzie Scott*	DEQ	804-698-4371	mackenzie.scott@deq.virginia.gov
John Simkins*	FHWA	804-775-3347	John.Simkins@dot.gov

* Participated by telephone/WebEx

The meeting was informal, to introduce the project to new members of the project team, to review the contents of the Alternatives Development Technical Memorandum, and answer any questions about the project and memo in general. Stuart Tyler walked through the memo, and it was projected on the WebEx. The discussion is summarized below.

- During Stuart's description of the project history and previous documents, David Knepper asked whether the Corps of Engineers was involved in the 2017 *Route 28 Corridor Feasibility Study* (Feasibility Study), the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA)-funded study that was the precursor study to the EA, which evaluated, screened, and ranked a range of alternatives within the Route 28 corridor. Elizabeth Scullin responded that the Corps had not been involved in that study.
- Stuart described that Alternatives 2A, 2B, and 4, the top three ranked alternatives from the Feasibility Study, had been carried forward in the EA. As part of the EA, revisions have been made to the 250-foot-wide corridors identified in the Feasibility Study (typical sections were reduced and alignment shifts made) to minimize impacts to environmental resources. These

revised alternative corridors were presented at the second round of public meetings held for the project in October 2019 (the first round of scoping meetings were held in December 2018).¹

- MacKenzie Scott asked about attendance at the meetings. The group discussed that the meeting sign-in sheets indicated that at least 165 citizens attended the meeting on October 9th and 14 attended a follow-up meeting held two weeks later to discuss the project's potential right-of-way impacts to individual property owners that would be affected by the project. Over 15,000 postcards announcing the meeting in English and Spanish were mailed to property owners within a one-mile radius of the three project alternatives. Additionally, the meeting information was distributed via email to the project notification list and posted on the project website: www.route28study.com.
- Rick Canizales shared with the group the reasons why Prince William County was conducting the Route 28 EA and pursuing project development as a local project. He explained that NVTAs were providing funding for the study and that County residents (73% in favor) had passed a bond referendum in November 2019 approving \$200 million towards improvements in this corridor. The County believed that as a local project, it could be implemented more quickly and at less cost than if it was federalized. The EA was being completed to fully consider the environmental impacts of the project and identify any necessary mitigations, which would be the “right thing to do” in light of funding partners, the public, and stakeholder agencies.
- Stuart highlighted some of the key environmental resources and potential environmental impacts of the alternatives (Table 6-2 in memo). He described the Fairfax County Widening Project, which will widen Route 28 from the northern terminus of this project at Compton Road to six lanes (ultimately eight) up to Route 29 just south of I-66.² He added that the Corps of Engineers had issued a Preliminary Jurisdictional Determination (PJD) and that the Virginia Department of Historic Resources had concurred with the historic properties identification.
- Barbara Okorn asked for confirmation on whether the PJD had been issued for this particular project and Stuart confirmed. She also asked whether this project was coordinating with Fairfax County on their widening project, and Stuart again replied in the affirmative, adding that a Categorical Exclusion (CE) had been completed for that widening project, a public hearing had been held, and the project was in the design stage.
- The group discussed that Alternatives 2A and 2B were on new location (the southern portion of which had been acquired by the County in the 1960s) and that both would provide a four-lane limited access facility; the latter feature would allow for safer and more efficient travel for bicycle and pedestrian use as well as for implementation of express bus service. Alternative 4 would add two lanes to existing four-lane Route 28 within the project limits; crossing roadways and driveways that are located along the entire length.
- Stuart ended with a presentation of the cost summary for the alternatives, which showed that Alternative 4 would be almost \$100 million more than Alternatives 2A and 2B. MacKenzie indicated that cost would not be a factor that the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

¹ The Feasibility Study and information presented at both sets of public meetings can be found on the project website: <http://route28study.com/project-resources/>

² <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/projects/route28-widening>

would consider in their evaluation. Rick responded that he understood, but emphasized the need to consider purpose and need in the comparison of the alternatives.

Subsequent to the meeting, Hannah Schul, DEQ, clarified that DEQ makes permitting decisions based on the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA). Per the Clean Water Act, a permit cannot be issued if a practicable alternative exists that would have less adverse impacts on the aquatic ecosystem. The LEDPA does take cost into consideration, but an alternative would only be potentially eliminated if costs are clearly exorbitant compared to similar alternatives.

- Barbara asked whether a preferred alternative had been identified. The group discussed that Alternative 2B ranked highest in the Feasibility Study and that it was less impactful than Alternative 2A. Impacts to Bull Run Regional Park by Alternative 2B could be mitigated; the project team has been coordinating with park representatives during the course of the EA.
- Stephanie Kubico asked why the median was 14 feet and whether it could be narrowed. The group discussed that the typical section will be reviewed and minimized further if possible, taking into consideration VDOT's roadway design standards and requirements from a safety standpoint.
- Ralph Spagnolo asked about the stream impacts reported in Table 6-2 and whether they were temporary or permanent. Stuart responded that impacts were reported for limits of disturbance that included construction area. Clarification would be added regarding the type of impacts and whether they are temporary or permanent.
- Barbara indicated that EPA would provide formal comments by January 24, 2020.

Prepared by: Surbhi Ashton

This meeting summary reflects the preparer's understanding of the discussions at the meeting. This summary shall initially be considered as draft, open to comments for a period of five (5) business days beyond the date of initial issuance. If no comments are received within five (5) business days, this meeting summary shall be considered final.