

1 **Special Selectboard Meeting**
2 **Wednesday, July 8, 2020**
3 **Meeting Minutes**
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6 **NOTE: Due to the need for separation to prevent the spread of COVID-19 virus, the**
7 **meeting was held remotely via video conferencing with participants.**
8

9 Members Present: Brian Carpenter, Heather Seeley, Farhad Khan and Dan Brown. Nick Artim,
10 Lindsay Fuentes-George and Victor Nuovo were absent.

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12 The meeting was streamed live on the MCTVVT YouTube channel.

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14 **1. Call to Order**
15

16 The meeting was called to order by Chair Brian Carpenter at 7:00 p.m. He said the meeting
17 this evening would be a presentation on the Rail and Bridge Project and what is going to
18 happen over the next 10 weeks, beginning Monday, July 13th, 2020.
19

20 Carpenter reviewed the goals established at the outset of the project: to protect the safety of
21 the community; minimize impact on the downtown, businesses, residents and cultural and
22 religious institutions; maintain traffic flow and pedestrian access, develop and maintain a
23 credible schedule; and to engage the local community with clear communications to all
24 stakeholders.
25

26 Carpenter said the presenters this evening were VTrans Project Manager Jon Griffin, Project
27 Managers for Kubricky Nate Speanburg and John Whittaker, VHB Project Manager and
28 Engineer Aaron Guyette and Matt Hogan of VHB who would be helping with the
29 communications for this presentation.
30

31 Guyette began the presentation with an overview of the scope of the project to replace the two
32 railroad bridges with a precast concrete tunnel. He said the overall project length is just a little
33 over 3,500 feet and the tunnel length is around 360 feet with a total construction area of
34 approximately 6.1 acres. He said the depth of the tunnel will be 21 feet, an increase over the
35 18' depth from the rail bed to the bridges now.
36

37 Griffin went over all that had been accomplished over the last several construction seasons to
38 get to the point we are now. He said in 2018 the temporary access road was completed, new
39 stormwater drainage system for the downtown was constructed and electrical and
40 telecommunications lines were moved underground. He said in 2019 the new Town sewer,

41 water and stormwater lines were installed downtown, ledge under the Main Street Bridge was
42 removed and rail slopes were stabilized.

43

44 Speanburg said he and Whittaker would be going through the activities that had happened
45 over the last few months to prepare for the 10-week shutdown, and then would describe in
46 detail what to expect during the shutdown, as well as what to expect after the shutdown.

47

48 Speanburg said they had mobilized equipment and set up marshalling yards for the majority of
49 their materials at the Fifield Farm on Rt 30. Whittaker went on to describe the location of the 3
50 cranes, with the largest 300-ton crane on Triangle Park that will place the precast pieces of the
51 tunnel.

52

53 Speanburg said Merchants Row was closed to traffic on May 28th and Main Street would close
54 July 13th at 7:00 a.m. when the Main Street Bridge and footbridge would be removed. He said
55 Printer's Alley would also close Monday morning, July 13th, and Merchants Row, Main Street
56 and Printer's Alley will all be closed until September 21st (All dates subject to change due to
57 weather and other conditions.). He said work would be happening 24-7 during the 10-week
58 shutdown.

59

60 Speanburg said Main Street would close between the Bakery Lane/Mill Street intersections
61 and North Pleasant Street, with cross-town traffic detoured to Cross Street and the Shuttlebury
62 pedestrian shuttle will run a continuous-loop downtown.

63

64 Community Liaison Jim Gish went over the wayfinding signage that will be directing motorists
65 and pedestrians around town. Both Gish and Speanburg acknowledged the cooperative efforts
66 in the signage plan from Neighbors Together, Better Middlebury Partnership, Addison County
67 Regional Planning and Addison County Transit Resources (ACTR).

68

69 Whittaker went through the various phases during the 10-week shutdown. He said during
70 Phase 1 (July 13-July 23rd) the rail corridor would be excavated to a depth of between 4 feet
71 and 12 feet. He said approximately 6 truck loads per hour of excavated soil would be hauled
72 to the Fifield Farm marshalling yard or sent to the Heffernan pit if not needed for reuse. He
73 said there is some additional rock that will need to be blasted similar to last fall, and that would
74 be done during daylight hours only. Also during this phase, he said, the stormwater pipes
75 would be connected. He also pointed out that LED lights had been installed on power poles
76 along the corridor for night work, to eliminate some of the gas-powered light packs to minimize
77 noise overnight.

78

79 Speanburg said that during Phase 2 (July 23rd-August 13) they would begin hauling the
80 precast pieces and they'll have six flatbed trucks hauling continuously from Fifield. He said the

81 majority of the pieces would come up South Main Street to the Main Street roundabout and
82 then back down Main Street to the site, but there will be some that will go across Cross Street
83 Bridge to Seymour Street to Marble Works. He said there will be a time when a crane will be
84 located in Seymour Street causing one-way traffic and full-closure at times, but you will be able
85 to access businesses. He said to create a safer environment for traffic during the transport of
86 these precast pieces, all parking on South Main Street between the Golf Course and Academy
87 Street will be suspended during this time.

88

89 Speanburg said Phase 3 (August 14-Sept. 21st) would be mostly hauling the excavated soil
90 back to the site to backfill the tunnel and u-walls, and when the backfill is complete they will
91 begin work on rebuilding the roadways and sidewalks and the rail corridor will be rebuilt.

92

93 Whittaker said after September 21st traffic will open to thru traffic on Main Street and
94 Merchants Row, with Merchants Row remaining one-way from Main Street up the hill as they
95 continue work on Triangle Park. He said the Battell Block driveway will be reopened and
96 parking on Main Street and in front of the Battell Block will be restored. Fencing will remain
97 around Triangle Park while work continues on landscaping that area and Printer's Alley will
98 reopen.

99

100 Speanburg spoke on the challenges to the community and how everyone should plan for
101 congestion at the Cross Street/Court Street intersection, and again at the traffic circle on Main
102 Street. He said there will be no direct pedestrian access across the rail corridor, Main Street
103 will be restricted to emergency vehicles and delivery services, and said there will be
104 construction 24 hours a day/7 days a week, so there will be lights, noise and dust.

105

106 Gish said he will be giving ways to maneuver around town in his bulletins and gave instructions
107 on how to keep up to date on the website and to reach out to him with questions and concerns.
108 He also went over the parking availability downtown. He said there will be 11 parking spaces
109 in front of the Post Office with a 15-minute parking limit. He said the upper and lower
110 municipal lots directly behind the Town Offices and Ilsley Library will have a 2-hour limit. He
111 said 12 spaces directly behind Ilsley Library will be specifically marked for seniors and families
112 with small children, and Franklin Street is now one-way to allow for parallel parking alongside
113 the park to help with the spaces eliminated on South Main Street. He said there is on-street
114 parking on Weybridge St, South Street, South and North Pleasant Street and Seymour Street,
115 so they feel there is adequate parking for people to come downtown.

116

117 Gish also went over the detour route and cautioned people on the use of the Pulp Mill Bridge
118 as a detour, since it is limited in width and height and is an historic structure. He also went
119 over the maps that will be printed and said they have 5,000 maps to distribute around town to
120 show people how to maneuver around downtown.

121

122 Speanburg said from October to December there will be work on the final construction of the
123 rail corridor, installation of concrete cap walls and decorative railing and grading in Triangle
124 Park and Lazarus Park along with some initial plantings. Whittaker said there would still be
125 some intermittent short-term lane closures on Main Street and Merchants Row to facilitate the
126 site grading and landscaping. He said Triangle Park would remain fenced off for landscaping
127 and there would be intermittent sidewalk closures and detours to finish other landscaping in
128 the area. He said in 2021 they hope to finalize plantings, paving and line striping and project
129 cleanup and completion of the project. He said Kubricky hopes to get as much done as
130 possible in 2020 to minimize impact in 2021.

131

132 Guyette went over the renderings of the design of Triangle Park/Lazarus Park areas following
133 completion of the project. Guyette also introduced Britta Tonn, an historic preservationist with
134 VHB, who is working on updating Middlebury's Historic District as part of the mitigation
135 required in the Historic Review of the Federal Funding process. He said Devon Coleman of
136 the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation would speak as well.

137

138 Tonn went over the same presentation given to the Selectboard at the June 23, 2020 meeting
139 on the process they'll go through to update Middlebury's Historic District Nomination on the
140 National Register. She said Phase 1 of the project will be to survey the village and record
141 information about the history and architecture of each building and document structures. She
142 said the information gathered in this survey will determine if the boundary needs to be
143 expanded. She said Phase 2 of the project is completion of the updated National Register
144 nomination that will incorporate information on the survey.

145

146 Coleman said this update is long overdue, since it was originally completed in the 1970's. He
147 said the National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's buildings that are
148 worthy of historic preservation and this program is administered by the National Park Service
149 through the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation.

150

151 Guyette said the entire project team wanted to thank the Middlebury community and every
152 project he's worked on in Middlebury has been enjoyable. Griffin and Speanburg agreed it has
153 been very enjoyable working in Middlebury and how it's been pretty much open arms from the
154 businesses and even daycares bringing the kids to see the big equipment.

155

156 Carpenter said there was a question about the sequence of the placement of the precast
157 tunnel pieces. Speanburg said they'll be bringing in the pieces to go just north of Merchants
158 Row and will work south and then will come back and work north from the center.

159

160 Gish answered a question regarding bike racks, and said VTrans funded the purchase of bike
161 racks to be placed at various places around town and they will be installed shortly. Gish also
162 answered a question about South Pleasant Street traffic flows, and said left hand turns from
163 South Pleasant Street onto Cross Street have been temporarily eliminated, but there are no
164 other restrictions at that intersection.

165
166 Gish said there is no impact on Mill Street, you can still enter from Main Street and continue
167 through to Weybridge Street, and Park Street will also be accessed as usual. Gish said there
168 will be a parking enforcement officer, Jodi Covey, who will be out enforcing the time limits in all
169 areas downtown.

170
171 There was a question on water discharge and Guyette said the new tunnel will drain into the
172 new stormwater system and the water from Main Street and Merchants Row will also enter into
173 this system as well. He said there will be a vortex circulator to separate out solids from Main
174 Street and the Green, and the water from the tunnel will pass through several manhole
175 structures for sediment to settle before it empties into Otter Creek. He said overall it is a big
176 improvement over what is there today.

177
178 There was a question regarding the Historic Register and how the Town Plan might impact it.
179 Tonn said the Historic Register doesn't place any restrictions on a property and the only time
180 there might be a review would be if there was some type of Federal funded or permitted project
181 that might impact a property. Coleman said Middlebury is already listed in the National
182 Register, so this is just an update and the Register is more of a planning tool.

183
184 Carpenter thanked the presenters and adjourned the meeting at 8:11 p.m.

185
186 Respectfully submitted,
187 Beth Dow