

Public 502 Hearing

(19 V.S.A., §502)

Colchester

Project No. NH 028-1(31)

Proposed Interchange Improvement for Interstate 89 Exit 17 and Chimney Corners

Date: **November 12, 2020**

Time: **6:00 PM**

Location: **Virtual Hearing via the Zoom online platform**

Link to join the Zoom webinar:

<https://vhb.zoom.us/j/95585699018?pwd=M2ZHd2RxbkdKdXM0QXhsdUNZNEtMUT09>

If prompted:

Webinar ID: 955 8569 9018

Passcode: 047442

Or Telephone:

+1 312 626 6799

Webinar ID: 955 8569 9018

Passcode:



WHAT IS A PUBLIC HEARING?

WHAT IS PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT?

A continuous process of two-way communication between the citizens and public agencies, during which a conceptual plan is discussed and the field of choice narrowed until a final solution/plan is developed.

WHY A PUBLIC HEARING?

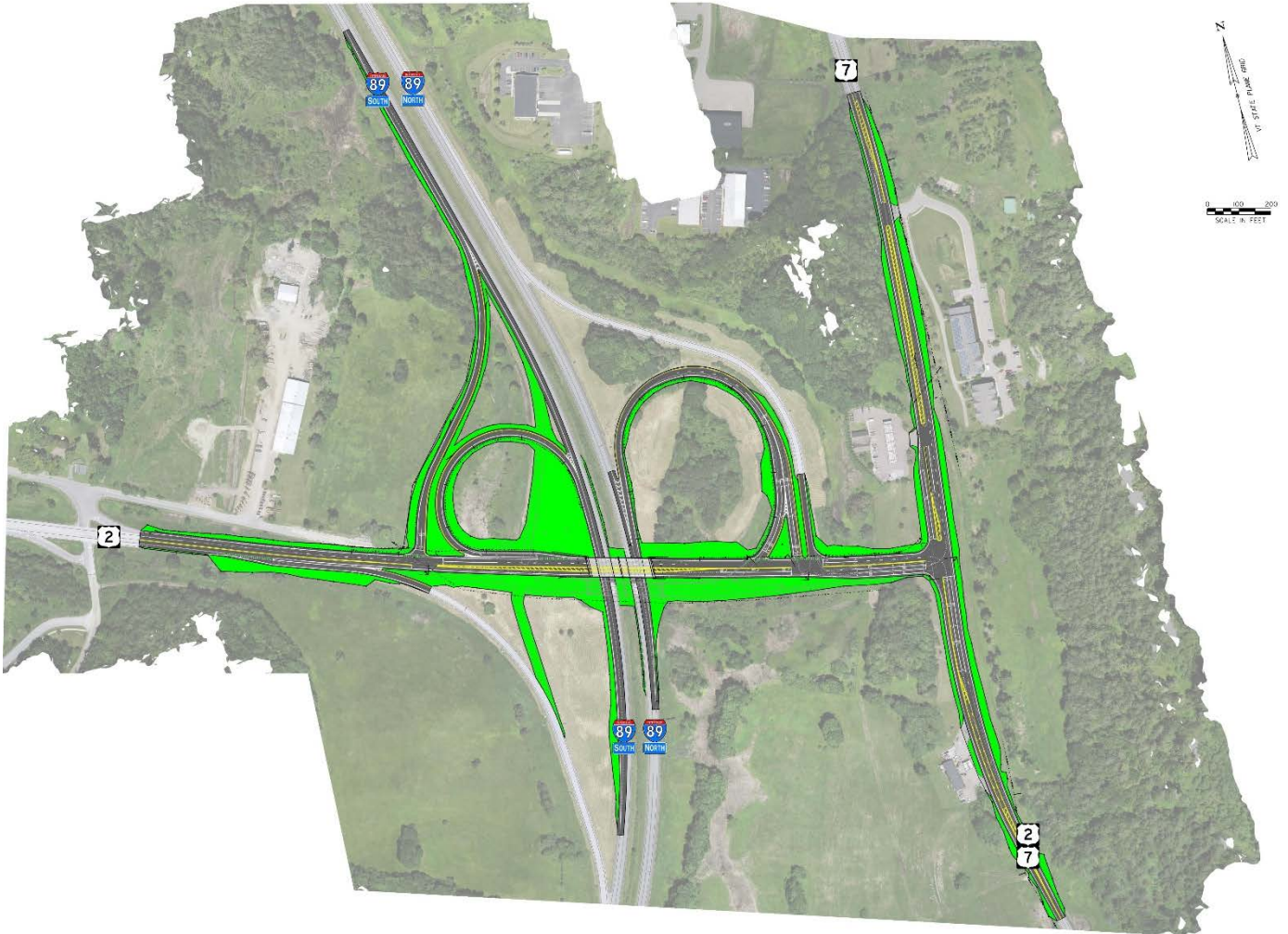
A Public Hearing provides an opportunity for the Agency of Transportation and the community to exchange information about proposed highway/bridge projects. The Hearing lets us listen to the concerns of local residents and obtain information on the proposed project. Input from local sources is very important for determining various elements to be included in a project.

PROJECT GENERAL INFORMATION

PROJECT LOCATION

The project is located at the Interstate 89 Exit 17 interchange in the Town of Colchester.

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PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of this project is to improve safety and efficiency for all modes of transportation within the project area and to replace a structurally deficient bridge.

PROJECT NEED

There are multiple project needs affiliated with this interchange area. Traffic congestion on the I-89 northbound off-ramp frequently leads to vehicles queuing back on the interstate shoulder during peak hours. There are also two High Crash Location (HCL) intersections along US-2 within the project area. Bicycle infrastructure along US-2 (designed as part of the Lake Champlain Bikeways Corridor) is not well defined through the interchange area, as cyclists contend with high vehicular speeds and turning vehicles without a dedicated space. Beyond the transportation safety needs, Bridge No. 18, which carries US Route 2 over I-89, has reached the end of its structural service life and needs to be replaced.

SCOPE OF WORK

Bridge No. 18 will be replaced with a new bridge, built parallel to the existing bridge, just to the north. US Route 2 will be realigned to this new bridge location and the three intersections along US-2 will be reconfigured with new traffic signals.

The intersection of US-2 and the I-89 southbound ramps will be relocated to the west. The ramps will also be reconfigured to eliminate a left-turn movement for vehicles coming from US-2 westbound onto I-89 southbound, which will be replaced with a new loop on-ramp to I-89. The I-89 southbound off-ramp will be shifted west to make room for this new loop ramp, and a new gravel wetland will be installed for stormwater treatment within the new loop ramp. The US-2 eastbound to I-89 southbound on-ramp will functionally remain with some minor geometric modifications.

The intersection of US-2 and the I-89 northbound ramps will be slightly relocated to align with the new US-2, but will also incorporate additional turn lanes on the I-89 northbound off-ramp, which will be widened to accommodate 4 lanes at the intersection (two lanes for each turning movement). Widening along this off-ramp will continue back onto the interstate to provide additional deceleration length for departing northbound vehicles. The I-89 northbound on-ramp will functionally remain with some minor geometric modifications.

The intersection of US-2 and US-7, known as Chimney Corners, will be widened to include additional left turn lanes – double left turns are provided for the US-7 northbound to US-2 westbound movement, as well as the US-2 eastbound to US-7 northbound movement. Widening along US-7 in both directions is provided to accommodate these additional lanes at the intersection.

The project will also include other incidental elements, such as guardrail, street lighting, relocated utilities, stormwater infrastructure, traffic signs and pavement markings.

RIGHT-OF-WAY REQUIREMENTS

The extent of land acquisition is not fully developed at this time because the limits of construction indicated on the plans are preliminary.

TIME SCHEDULE

The current schedule for this project anticipates construction beginning in 2022.

COST

The preliminary construction cost estimate is \$25,000,000. Funding for the design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction of this project is anticipated to come solely from Federal sources (100%).

RIGHT-OF-WAY PROCEDURES

Most right-of-way procedures are mandated by Public Law 100-17, 101, the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Land Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended. The provisions of the Act that apply are those governing the acquisition of property or rights therein for the project.

There are four phases of right-of-way acquisition, three of which will be briefly summarized below. The fourth phase applies to those who may be displaced from their home, farm or business. In compliance with Federal procedures, we have brochures available which explain this phase in some detail.

FIRST PHASE

Initially, property owners will be contacted by an agent who will be inquiring about the physical characteristics of the property, such as the locations of property lines, water lines, septic systems, and so forth. This agent will explain the preliminary information about the design of the project and its effects on their property.

SECOND PHASE

Following this interview, an extensive title search of the property is conducted which assists in the formulation of Right-of-Way plans. These plans, together with other testimony, are presented to the Superior Court for its consideration of the Necessity for this project.

THIRD PHASE

Upon acceptance by the court of the highway location, each affected property is valued based on the current fair market value. During this valuation phase, the appraiser will inspect the property then prepare an Appraisal or Value Finding Report, which is considered for content and accuracy by a Reviewing Appraiser, who works independently of the Right-of-Way staff. At this point, the value of the property to be acquired is determined. The completed appraisal is then transmitted to the Negotiator who will contact each owner, thoroughly explain the project and its effects on the owner's property and tender the State's monetary offer of fair market value for the property to be acquired, in writing. In addition, the owner will receive an explanation of their legal rights, including the right to a Compensation Hearing conducted by the State Transportation Board, and the right to appeal the award of the Board to the Superior Court. A brochure is available which explains this phase in greater detail.

The foregoing was a brief outline of the Right-of-Way function. If you have specific questions, we will try to answer them, or will refer them to our Right-of-Way Section for reply. You can also call the Right-of-Way Section at (802) 279-7506, email the right-of-way section at trey.polk@vermont.gov, or write to:

Trey Polk, ROW Acquisitions and Utilities Manager

Vermont Agency of Transportation

Right-of-Way Section

2178 Airport Rd, Unit B

Berlin, VT 05641

Should you have any specific questions or comments concerning this handout, please feel free to contact Patti Coburn at (802) 224-6667, by email at patti.coburn@vermont.gov, or by letter sent to this following address:

Patti Coburn, Project Manager

Vermont Agency of Transportation

Highway, Safety & Design Section

2178 Airport Rd, Unit B

Berlin, VT 05641

Vermont Agency of Transportation

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WRITTEN COMMENTS

We would appreciate your input and suggestions.

Please return this sheet, with comments, by mail to the address on the back of this sheet. In order to be included as an official part of the hearing transcript, the final postmark date for written statements and other information will be November 23, 2020.

COMMENTS:

Please check one:

NAME _____

Property Owner adjacent to project

ADDRESS _____

Organization Representative

(Organization and Title)

Other: _____

1) Fold along dashed lines; 2) Tape or staple; 3) Place stamp and mail

Place
Stamp
Here

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