

Stillwater U.S. Route 4 Corridor Plan Study Advisory Committee (SAC)

Meeting 4

Wednesday, April 5, 2006

4:30 PM, Stillwater Town Hall

Meeting Notes

Attending: Ernest Martin (Mayor, Village of Stillwater), Kathie Stoddard (Town of Stillwater), Annetta Melber (Village of Stillwater), Joe Finan (Saratoga National Historical Park), Jaime O'Neill (Saratoga County Planning Department), Kevin Novak (NYSDOT Region 1), Jason Purvis (CDTC), Shelley Lang (CDTC), and Michael Welti (TCC)

Absent: Greg Connors (Supervisor, Town of Stillwater), Kate Maynard (Saratoga PLAN)

Guests: None

1. Welcome and Agenda Review

Michael Welti, Project Manager from The Chazen Companies (TCC), reviewed the agenda for this meeting (attached). Mr. Welti noted that Supervisor Connors called just before the meeting to explain that he was still at a County meeting in Ballston Spa. He apologized and said that he would try to get back to Town Hall for this meeting as soon as possible.

2. Committee Business

The committee agreed that the meeting notes from the February 1, 2006 Study Advisory Committee Meeting were complete and that they should be made available for public review. They will be posted on the Stillwater website, and hardcopies will be available for public review at the Town and Village offices.

3. Preliminary Draft Route 4 Corridor Plan – feedback and suggestions

The Committee discussed the Preliminary Draft Route 4 Corridor Plan. TCC mailed the plan to committee members a week prior to this meeting. All members in attendance reported receiving the preliminary draft.

General feedback about the preliminary draft was very positive. Members of the committee expressed satisfaction with the comprehensiveness of the recommendations and the organization, text, and graphics in the report. Several specific comments and suggestions were provided including the following:

- When recommending that a sidewalk be installed along Route 4 from the heart of the Village to the school complex, the report should note that sidewalks must be designed (to the maximum extent possible) to have a continuous grade as they cross driveways. Existing sidewalks along some sections of Route 4 in the Village are sloped to meet the driveway grade creating a difficult and uncomfortable experience for some pedestrians.
- Consider the possibility of making Park Avenue one way (heading south from Lake Street to Route 4) if a traffic signal is eventually installed at the intersection of Lake Street and Route 4.
- A label on the Village Center Land Use / Transportation Concepts graphic points to the intersection of Route 4 and Park Avenue and says to “slow traffic at entrance to Village Center”. The report should provide suggestions for how to accomplish this.

- Jason Purvis (CDTC) agreed to send Mr. Welti a .jpeg showing an example of a speed table. He also asked that TCC research any problems that may be associated with trucks passing over a speed table. He noted that truck volumes are fairly high on Route 4 and that may create long-term maintenance issues.
- When discussing the future development of the Champlain Canal Trail northward from the Village, the draft report discusses two possibilities. The first is use of the old Champlain Canal right-of-way; the second is use of the Route 4 right-of-way for the development of an off-road trail running parallel to, but separated from the highway. When preparing the report, Mr. Welti looked for but could not find pictures he has from Martha's Vineyard and Sanibel Island of very nice multi-use paths that run parallel to the road or highway. CDTC agreed to look for a picture(s) in their files. It was noted that there are two local examples – Dunning Road east of Route 9 in Malta and Moe Road in Clifton Park- that TCC could photograph.

It was agreed that the report should discuss the old canal right-of-way as the preferred alternative for this trail's location. The Route 4 right-of-way should be described as a fallback position if necessary for some sections of the trail.

- Mr. Welti asked Mr. Purvis for design suggestions (pictures, illustrations) regarding the Gurba Trail's proposed crossing of two streets (Mitchell Road and Halfway House Road) and the railroad tracks. Mr. Purvis agreed to look for good examples. Joe Finan (Saratoga NHP) suggested that Mr. Welti also contact Karl Beard at the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program for suggestions.
- It was suggested that a trail connection be drawn to the state-owned riverfront parcel (possible future beach) on the *Land Use/Transportation Concepts* map. The trail could run from the northern end of Ferry Lane to the beach parcel and then back toward Route 4 at the school or via Clinton Court. One problem with this idea, that would need to be addressed in the future, is that Ferry Lane is a private road. The Village is looking at the possibility of building an access road from its water plant (at the northern end of Ferry Road) straight west to Route 4 so that it is not dependent on access through Ferry Lane. The Village has also applied to the Canal Corporation to acquire the riverfront strip of land from the State.
- Mr. Welti asked the committee for guidance regarding the section of the report titled "Related Corridor Issues". The current draft includes recommendations regarding waterfront access in the corridor because this was expressly stated as a subject for study in the scope for this project. Other issues/ideas that arose through the public process were the notion of locating a visitor's center in the Village Center and the need for recommendations for improving the Village Center business district. The committee suggested that recommendations for preserving agriculture in the corridor should also be included. It was agreed that these subjects would be covered in this section of the report but that the level of detail would not be very deep. Instead the recommendations would be directional, indicating good models or programs to investigate.

4. Implementation and Funding

Mr. Welti distributed an outline of implementation projects and programs that he prepared based on the recommendations in the preliminary draft plan. He noted that this was his attempt to distill the large number of recommendations, which are organized topically in the previous sections, into a reasonable number of projects and programs for the community to undertake, and to give priority to these projects and programs. The implementation section will eventually include suggestions for how to organize and fund these projects and programs. Preliminary ideas for funding were included in this outline.

Mr. Welti reviewed the outline with the committee. The committee generally agreed with the projects and programs described in the outline and the relative priority given to them. They suggested that TCC continue to provide detail for these in the final draft. Several ideas related to funding and technical assistance were discussed, including the following:

- CDTC will be issuing an RFP in the next week or so for project funding under the Transportation Enhancements Program (TEP). Applications will be due on June 30. Several of the projects described in the draft implementation section could be good candidate projects.
- CDTC will also be accepting applications this summer for small scale bicycle/pedestrian safety projects under its Spot Improvement Program.
- CDTC will be updating the region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in the fall. It is not clear whether there will be funds available for new projects, however it would be worthwhile for Stillwater to be engaged in this process. It should be noted that any new projects listed on the TIP would probably take several years to actually receive funding.
- It was noted that a not-for-profit organization such as the Open Space Institute (OSI) could be a source of matching funds for a parkland, open space, or farmland acquisition project in the corridor. OSI has been very active in the lower Hudson Valley and has worked on a few successful projects in the Upper Hudson Valley as well. If the Town or Village is interested in submitting a parks acquisition grant application to the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation for a project such as the Admiral's Marina property, it could make sense to reach out to OSI.
- For a number of the projects listed in the Draft Implementation Section, the first step for the Village and Town would be to reach out formally to NYSDOT. For example, the Village could request that the NYSDOT provide some of the pedestrian and bicycle signage discussed in the transportation recommendations section. These could probably be provided quickly and at no cost to the community. The Village and Town could also request a new signal warrant analysis for the intersection of Lake Street and Route 4, and a speed zone analysis for Route 4 near the school. They could also discuss with NYSDOT how best to start moving the Village Center traffic calming recommendations in the plan forward.
- Kevin Novak (NYSDOT) reported that he looked into the status of New York State's Safe Routes to Schools program at Mr. Welti's request. NYSDOT has named an interim Safe Routes to School Coordinator (Eric Ophardt) but the program has not been developed beyond that. It is not yet known how New York's share of federal funding for this program under SAFETEA-LU will be administered and distributed to projects around the state. Everyone agreed that the sidewalk extension project for Route 4 in the Village (up to the school complex) sounded like a perfect candidate project for this program.

5. Next Steps

Following this meeting, TCC will make revisions to the draft plan. The plan will be made available for public review toward the end of April and the second public workshop will be scheduled for mid-May. The committee agreed to work over the coming days (via email) to find a suitable date for the public workshop. It will likely be held at the Community Center or the school.

Once a date for the public workshop has been determined, TCC will work with the Town and the Village to coordinate publicity. Turnout for the first public workshop was fairly strong, and it is hoped that this level of public interest can again be achieved.

The next Study Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting will be held one or two weeks after the public workshop. A date at the end of May or early June will be selected once the public workshop date has been determined. The next SAC meeting will be the final one, and it is very important that the whole committee be in attendance. The purpose of the meeting will be to review comments received from the public regarding the draft plan and to decide on any changes that will be made for the final draft.

6. Public Comment

Nobody from the public attended this meeting.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Welti, AICP
Project Manager
The Chazen Companies

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Study Advisory Committee (SAC)**

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AGENDA

1. Welcome and Agenda Review
2. Committee Business
 - Meeting notes from SAC Meeting #3 on February 1, 2006
3. Preliminary Draft Route 4 Corridor Plan – feedback/suggestions
4. Implementation and Funding – prioritize together
5. Next Steps
 - Schedule Public Workshop 2 – publicity / logistics
 - Schedule next Study Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting
6. Public Comment
7. Adjournment

Stillwater U.S. Route 4 Corridor Plan

Proposed Timeline

Stillwater U.S. Route 4 Corridor Plan		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
TASKS / Month										
Task 1	Project Coordination	I		⊙	⊙		⊙		⊙	
Task 2	Existing Conditions	—————								
Task 3	Public Workshop 1			★						
Task 4	Architectural and Design Guidelines				—————					
Task 5	Transportation Recommendations				—————					
Task 6	Implementation and Funding					—————				
Task 7	Public Workshop 2							★		
Task 8	Final "Route 4 Corridor Plan"							—————		

- I = Project Initiation Meeting with the Study Advisory Committee (SAC)
- ⊙ = Additional Meetings with the SAC
- ★ = Public Workshops