

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

**Meeting 1 – Project Initiation
Tuesday, November 15, 2005
7:00 PM, Stillwater Town Hall**

Meeting Notes

Attending: Jaime O'Neill (Saratoga County Planning Department), Kathie Stoddard (Town of Stillwater), Greg Connors (Supervisor, Town of Stillwater), Jason Purvis (CDTC), Shelley Lang (CDTC), Kevin Novak (NYSDOT Region 1) and Michael Welti (TCC)

Absent: Ernest Martin (Village of Stillwater), Kate Maynard (Saratoga PLAN)

Guests: None

1. Welcome and Introductions

Each member of the Study Advisory Committee (SAC) introduced themselves and provided a brief description of their background, and information about the organization/community that they represent.

2. Agenda Review

Michael Welti, Project Manager from The Chazen Companies (TCC), reviewed the agenda for this meeting (attached). This meeting of the Study Advisory Committee would serve as the project initiation meeting as described in the scope of work for this project.

3. Project Scope and Schedule

Michael Welti reviewed the project scope and schedule as outlined in the professional services contract for this project. Most committee members were already familiar with the proposed scope of services, and Mr. Welti quickly reviewed each task. The committee discussed the photo log described in Task 2 (Assessment of Existing Conditions) to ensure that everyone agreed about what this component should include. The committee also discussed the various methods that would be used to provide information about this project to the community. In addition to use of the Town website, the committee agreed that it would be useful to reach out to the local newspapers, encouraging them to write articles about the project in advance of public workshops in order to generate community interest and participation.

A nine (9) month schedule has been established for this project. Supervisor Connors asked whether the project could be completed in a shorter time period. After some discussion, the committee agreed that it would be worth trying to complete the project sooner (perhaps in 7 or 8 months), but there was also a recognition that this might not be possible. Members of the committee noted that it is usually difficult to achieve agreement and a shared sense of purpose in the community in a shorter timeframe.

4. Preliminary Issues Identification for the Corridor

Mr. Welti asked the committee to brainstorm with him a list of the primary issues in the Route 4 Corridor that should be addressed in this study. The committee was quickly able to generate the following list:

- Lack of sidewalks – especially going out toward the school. Committee members noted that students are often seen walking in the travel lanes going to or from school.
- The Village of Stillwater is the center of the Stillwater community. But there was agreement that the Village does not look very appealing. The business district should be improved. It should be cleaned-up, with an improved streetscape. It should be more business-friendly and more family-friendly. There was a question about whether utility lines could be undergrounded.
- There is no public access to the Hudson River except at the Block House.
- Connectivity from the Village to neighborhoods just outside of it should be improved. Make it possible for people to walk from neighborhood to neighborhood and from neighborhood to Village Center.
- There is a desire to expand the availability of recreational trails.
- Connections to the National Park must be improved. The Park was described as an incredible asset to the community, yet people cannot get there safely unless they travel by car.
- The Schuyler Creek corridor, which runs for several miles through the Town to the Hudson River, was described as an opportunity for walking trails.
- Equestrian trails would also be a nice quality of life improvement. Horses are very popular in the Stillwater countryside.
- Only one intersection in the Village has a traffic control signal (flashing light). There are several other locations where some type of traffic control might make it easier for pedestrians to cross the street (Route 4) safely – by the library, at the entrance to the school, and near the Block House.
- The old boiler house was recently demolished. There is interest in creating a visitors center at this location. A walking trail and the Veteran's Park are adjacent to this site.
- The first phase of a four-phase walking trail is now underway and will be completed in the Spring. Future phases will be completed as resources are available.
- There was some discussion about the future potential impact of the Luther Forest Chip Fab project.
- The committee noted that it would be very useful to speak to someone from the Saratoga National Historical Park early in the process.

5. Next Steps:

Assessment of Existing Conditions – over the next several weeks, TCC will prepare a summary of existing conditions in the Route 4 Corridor as described in the project scope of

services. The draft report will be sent to committee members at least one week in advance of the next SAC meeting in January.

The committee discussed the availability of certain types of data:

- TCC already has GIS files for the Town and Village of Stillwater. If any additional GIS data is needed, TCC will coordinate with Jamie O'Neill at the Saratoga County Planning Department.
- CDTC has accident data for Route 4; however this data is probably a few years old. If needed, Supervisor Connors agreed to ask the Police Department for updated accident data.
- NYSDOT agreed to provide whatever traffic data it has to TCC. Mr. Welti will work with Mike Hartman (TCC's traffic engineer for this project) to identify necessary data and will forward the request to Kevin Novak at NYSDOT. Mr. Novak will check to see if class counts (i.e. trucks) are available for Route 4.
- If there is a need for traffic counts at a specific location(s) – such as a critical intersection – NYSDOT or CDTC might be able to assist. Traffic counts are not part of TCC's scope of services.
- Route 4 is also designated as State Bike Route 9.

Public Workshop #1 – The first public workshop for this project will be held at the end of January. The workshop's purpose will be to: introduce the project to the public, provide a summary of existing conditions in the corridor, expand upon our understanding of the issues of concern that should be addressed through this study, and engage the participants in a visioning/design exercise that will guide the development of design guidelines for the corridor.

The committee agreed to a tentative date and location for the public workshop:

Thursday, January 26th at 7:00 P.M.

Stillwater Community Center

Supervisor Connors agreed to confirm the availability of the date and location by early December so that publicity for this public workshop could begin.

Once the date and location for the Public Workshop are confirmed, the Town will begin posting the information on its website and announcing the workshop at its meetings. A more focused publicity effort will begin immediately after the New Year. TCC will assist the Town and Village in preparing flyers and press releases for the workshop. The committee will also reach out to local newspapers, encouraging them to write an article about the study and the workshop.

6. Public Comment

Nobody from the public attended this meeting.

7. Next Study Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting

The next SAC Meeting was scheduled for:

Wednesday, January 18th at 4:30 PM

Stillwater Town Hall

Supervisor Connors agreed to confirm the dates of the next SAC Meeting and the Public Workshop with the Village Mayor.

8. 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 Introductions
2. Agenda Review
3. Project scope and schedule
4. Preliminary Issues Identification for the Corridor
5. Next steps:
 - Assessment of Existing Conditions – sources of information?
 - Public Workshop #1 – logistics
6. Public Comment
7. Schedule next Study Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting
8. Adjournment

Stillwater U.S. Route 4 Corridor Plan

Proposed Timeline

Stillwater U.S. Route 4 Corridor Plan											
TASKS / Month		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
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