

Joe Colangelo

From: Alex Weinhagen <hinesburgplanning@gmavt.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 12, 2013 6:03 PM
To: 'Joe Colangelo'
Subject: Hannaford - VTrans meeting on 3/12/13

Joe,

****Please pass this report along to the Selectboard****

Per the Selectboard's instructions, I met with VTrans staff on March 12 to discuss the Hannaford project – specifically the modifications that Hannaford has proposed for Route 116. I outlined the areas of concern that the DRB identified (and conditioned) in their approval. VTrans staff was happy to hear our areas of concern, and indicated that they would continue to work with us as the process moves forward. They indicated that they have NOT yet received a “1111” permit application from Hannaford for the proposed Route 116 improvements, and that this was a little odd given that the Hannaford's Act 250 application appears imminent. In other words, VTrans usually sees applications for work in a State Highway well ahead of an Act 250 application, so that they can do their analysis and iron out issues ahead of time. The single point of contact for me to follow up with is Shaun Corbett (VTrans Utilities and Permits Section). I will be sending him the DRB decision for reference.

The four areas of concern that I focused on during the meeting were:

1. **Commerce Street intersection (left turn lane)** - Capacity of the proposed left turn lane extension for Route 116 southbound traffic. Need to make sure that what is proposed is adequate, and that post construction monitoring is done. If this left turn lane needs to be extended farther north, there could be a large expense related to widening the Patrick Brook crossing (box culvert). Neither the Town nor the State wants to end up on the hook for such an expense if the Hannaford project necessitates it.
2. **Commerce Street intersection (turn radii)** – I reported that the existing turn radius for Route 116 southbound traffic turning left on to Commerce Street is not sufficient for large trucks (i.e., 18-wheelers). It seems that the stop bar for Route 116 southbound traffic needs to be moved farther north. This may impact the first item listed above.
3. **Mechanicsville Road intersection** – Hannaford's traffic study indicated that this intersection is failing with regard to delays for traffic exiting Mechanicsville Road on to Route 116 during the peak times. Their study also indicated that their project will increase this delay. They noted that this intersection already meets the warrants for a new signal, and they agreed to put money in escrow for what they calculated as their share of potential future improvements to this intersection. I told VTrans that the Town really wants to be consulted before any decisions are made about improvements to this intersection. I went on to say that adding a new traffic signal to this intersection would NOT be favorably received by community members given that we already have three traffic signals. I explained my observations about the Route 116 traffic queue actually facilitating vehicles exiting Mechanicsville Road thanks to the “politeness factor” of people already stuck in a line of traffic. I noted that the delay for Mechanicsville Road drivers at this intersection doesn't seem bad enough to warrant a huge expenditure of funds for a new traffic signal, and that the Town has informally discussed other options such as making Mechanicsville Road a one-way road (i.e., in from Route 116 but no outlet to Route 116).
4. **Charlotte Road intersection** – Per previous discussions, I reminded VTrans that the Town supports the improvements proposed by Hannaford at this intersection, and that we'd like to find a way to implement these improvements as soon as possible – i.e., ahead of Hannaford construction if possible.

On a related note, we are about to begin work with the CCRPC and a consultant on a Route 116 Corridor Study, which will focus on the portion of Route 116 through our village growth area. This will in part be an update to the 2004 Route

116 Corridor/Scoping study. It will also explore short, medium, and long term solutions to help improve our traffic congestion through the village, and plan for the future as vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic increases due to growth inside and outside (i.e., south) of Hinesburg. This project will probably get underway with new traffic counts in May, meetings with stakeholders (e.g., VTrans, Selectboard, Village Steering Committee, Road Foreman, etc.) in June, and a public forum to present the issues and possible solutions in the fall. My hope is to have the project completed, including possible implementation options, by December with a presentation to the Selectboard, so that you can factor possible short term projects into the FY14-15 budget work, and long term projects into the capital budget.

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