



**Route 29 Project Delivery Advisory Panel  
April 28, 2016  
Summary Meeting Minutes**

NOTE: The meeting video is posted at [route29solutions.org](http://route29solutions.org).

Meeting 43 of the Route 29 Project Delivery Advisory Panel (PDAP) was held at the Virginia Transportation Research Council in Charlottesville, Virginia on April 28, 2016. Meeting information included:

- Meeting Agenda
- Presentation addressing agenda items

All material distributed at the meeting is available at [route29solutions.org](http://route29solutions.org)

1. In attendance: Pete Borches, Chip Boyles, Morgan Butler, Kristin Szakos, Brad Sheffield, Chris Engel, Henry Weinschenk. Facilitator: Philip Shucet.

Absent: Mark Graham, Karen Weiner.

VDOT Technical Team members were also in attendance.

2. Public Feedback:

Three e-mails were received and no new comments were made on the Provide Input section of [route29solutions.org](http://route29solutions.org). Two calls were made to the project hotline. A summary of comments is included in the meeting presentation which is posted on the project website [route29solutions.org](http://route29solutions.org). In addition:

- Brad Sheffield noted that the county will get VDOT's input through normal channels for two special use permit applications at Route 29 and Greenbrier Drive. These use permits are not part of the Route 29 Solutions program.

3. Report on PDAP Feedback. Details are included in the meeting presentation which is posted on the project website [route29solutions.org](http://route29solutions.org).

- Lane Corman sent notice of blasting to adjacent property owners April 26.

4. Panel Feedback/Open Discussion

- No comments.

5. Construction Milestones: Graphic is included in presentation posted on [route29solutions.org](http://route29solutions.org).

- Route 29/250 interchange ramp is on schedule to wrap up May 21.

6. Route 29 Solutions Project Updates: Dave Covington reviewed project updates. Updates with photographs are included in the presentation posted on [route29solutions.org](http://route29solutions.org).

Bullets below reflect additional information and discussion other than that included in the presentation.

- Route 29/250 Interchange:
  - On schedule to open by May 21.
  - Critical path has moved from noise wall to the grading of the barrier wall.
  - There will be a right-of-way fence parallel to the sound wall.
  - In response to Henry Weinschenk, Dave Covington said the fence is only on the north side because the slope on the south side is too steep to walk.
  - In response to Chris Engel, Dave Covington said there is a break in the noise wall for maintenance that will have a chain across the opening.
  - Pete Borches said the new ramp at Best Buy does not appear wide enough. Henry Weinschenk also expressed concern, saying he thought a tight radius required more lane width. Mark Graham also commented on the ramp width through earlier emails.
  - Dave Covington said VDOT's engineers have validated the geometry of the ramp and confirmed it is being built to meet all VDOT and AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials) codes.
  - Kristin Szakos suggested that perhaps it appears more dangerous than it is, and that the narrow appearance could be beneficial in slowing down traffic which will make it more safe than if it was wider.
  - Philip Shucet said the geometry used to design the ramp takes into account the radius of the curve.
  - Dave Covington said there's 28 feet of pavement; when adding the inside of the gutters the pavement is 30 feet. The ramp widens as it climbs to meet Route 250.
  - Gore area, where it splits, is 4-5 feet wider than the ramp.
  - VDOT has consulted with the designer and confirmed that the design meets minimum requirements, but does not exceed minimum requirements.
  - Dave Covington noted that when a project is under construction, it may appear more narrow because of barrels and varying road surfaces.
  - Dave Covington said VDOT has modeled cars and tractor trailers on the ramp and the design is sufficient with no overlap or problems.

- *NOTE: The matter of the ramp design will be included for clarification and confirmation as part of the May 12 agenda.*
- One contractor will perform the wall staining on all of the Route 29 Solutions projects. The schedule is: summer or early fall for the Best Buy ramp, then Rio GSI, then possibly Berkmar bridge in late 2016 or in 2017.
  
- Rio GSI
  - Meetings with contractor becoming more frequent as May 23 approaches.
  - Lane Corman's goal is to finish early, on August 5.
  - In some areas, steel plates in the road are being replaced with asphalt.
  - Curb adjustments in front of Fashion Square Mall are being made to better define lanes since the traffic light has come out.
  - Curb cut underway on Rio west so cars can turn left out of Hardees and Merchants Tire to head west on Rio Road during the 103-day period.
  - Decorative stamping of concrete has begun in some locations.
  - Shift to new pavement occurs May 1.
  - Pete Borches said PDAP has talked a lot about protecting pedestrians and asked why the design calls for a roll face curb. He said he understands VDOT's explanation that the curb prevents errant cars from moving back into traffic, but he said he thinks that would endanger pedestrians.
  - Philip Shucet indicated that the design protects pedestrians. Once above 45 mph design speed in an urban area, VDOT's design manual requires the use of the type of curb being installed at Rio.
  - The purpose of the design is to allow the driver to maintain control of the vehicle if it hits the curb. A more vertical faced curb at speeds above 45 mph may result in a greater likelihood the driver would lose control of the vehicle.
  - Philip Shucet noted there's been a lot of state and national research on curbs and safety of both drivers and pedestrians. The curbs at the Rio GSI are the curbs specified by VDOT on urban roads with speeds of 45 mph and above.
  - Pete Borches noted the curb and sidewalk areas are tight spaces and he would not feel comfortable walking on the sidewalk. He expressed concern that design compromises were made due to the tight right-of-way.
  - Philip Shucet confirmed that there are not any design compromises and that the curb design is the design required by VDOT.
  - Dave Covington said the curb requirement is not based on how much space is available for the road.
  - Philip Shucet the requirements are based more on safety and human factors than on geometry. Below 45 mph, there are design options. At 45 mph, that option disappears and VDOT specifies the curb that is at the Rio GSI.
  - Henry Weinschenk said it seems counterintuitive not to have what he called a traditional curb there.
  
- Route 29 Widening

- Jack and bore and wire wall installation continue.
- Berkmar Extended
  - Blasting will last about a month near the Kohl's and 3 to 4 weeks near the Sam's Club
- Signal Updates
  - Spreadsheet of signal upgrades provided.
  - Installation has begun and will wrap up next week.
- Hillsdale Extension
  - The two relocated businesses will move by the end of June.
  - May 9 is the last day for potential bidders to ask questions.
  - The city issued an addendum on Tuesday, April 26 that included responses to questions already submitted.
  - The city will answer questions May 9 through May 16.
  - Based on pre-bid meeting, Hillsdale may attract more bidders than the other Route 29 Solutions projects. Route 29/250 interchange had two bids.

7. Status of Disposition of VDOT bypass right of way: Details are included in the presentation posted on [route29solutions.org](http://route29solutions.org).

- Some parcels were double counted, so the total number of parcels has been reduced from 93 to 90.
- The map provided does not include one parcel at Route 29 widening because it's too far north to be included to scale. It is a property that has been retained by VDOT for storm water retention on Route 29 widening.
- Morgan Butler asked for clarification of the properties with conservation easements. Lou Hatter responded that the properties had pre-existing conservative easements. Henry Weinschenk noted that the owner retains ownership but agrees not to develop a property designed as conservation easement. Philip Shucet he'll get clarity on these properties.
- The number of properties retained by VDOT is three, not five as presented at the last PDAP meeting: one for Berkmar Extended, one for stormwater management for Route 29 Widening and one for the project offices.
- Chris Engel asked about the 13 properties with condemnation issues. Philip Shucet said they were properties taken by eminent domain and some clean up needs to be done before they can be released for sale. John Lynch said in essence, they never closed - that certificates were filed, money was put in escrow, owners claimed the money but the cases never settled.

- Philip Shucet said the one property that's in litigation results from a substantial difference in price between the amount originally paid to the property owner and the amount the property owner offered for repurchase.
- Lou Hatter will follow up on valuation of properties.

8. Route 29 Solutions Program Budget Update: Budget graphic is included in the presentation posted on [route29solutions.org](http://route29solutions.org).

- Philip Shucet thanked Dave Covington for assigning a number to the exposure, a practice not often seen in public works project budgets.
- Dave Covington said it's a representation of managed risk.
- Morgan Butler asked if there's an incentive for finishing the Hillsdale project early. Dave Covington said there's no incentive but there are liquidated damages if the project is late.

9. Interim Milestones for September 2 Completion: Details are included in the presentation posted on [route29solutions.org](http://route29solutions.org).

- The finished course of asphalt may not be down and may be finished in the evening.
- Return the intersection to full safe operation, however some items that do not affect full, safe operation may not be finished.
- Kristen Szakos asked if it includes crosswalks and sidewalks. Philip Shucet said he believes it does but he will check.
- Henry Weinschenk asked about fire suppression and ventilation. Dave Covington clarified that when the RFP went out so there was some uncertainty about the need for fire suppression. Fire suppression and ventilation in the underpass is not required and is not included in the contract.
- Philip Shucet noted that close and frequent communication between VDOT and Lane Corman continues to accomplish the 103-day schedule.

10. Secretary Aubrey Layne Attending May 26 Meeting: The Transportation Secretary's preference is for a morning meeting. The panel agreed on a 10:30 a.m. start time for the May 26 PDAP meeting. Brad Sheffield noted he would not be able to attend that day regardless of the time because of a conflict with a Virginia Transit Association meeting.

11. New Business and Wrap Up

- Lou Hatter provided a brief marketing update. He said VDOT's campaign began the previous week with radio, TV, print and online advertising. As May 23 approaches, the focus will change from preparing for construction to dealing with construction. Advertising sends viewers to the project website for details. Open for Business maps are being distributed — the second 10,000 printing.
- The county campaign is starting now too. Chip Boyles said several thousand door hangers are out. Business marketing is hitting radio, TV, newspapers and social media. Six businesses are featured.

- Brad Sheffield said Jaunt's Route 29 express bus starts Monday, May 2 and leaves hourly during morning and evening peak service hours. The website is [29express.org](http://29express.org).
- Chip Boyles said the state is conducting updates to long range plans through the VTrans2040 effort and encouraged participation.

The next panel meeting is May 12, 2016, 2:00pm, at Virginia Transportation Research Council in Charlottesville, Virginia.

The meeting was open to the public, streamed live, and is available on video at [route29solutions.org](http://route29solutions.org)