



**Route 29 Project Delivery Advisory Panel  
November 12, 2015  
Summary Meeting Minutes**

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

Meeting 33 of the Route 29 Project Delivery Advisory Panel (PDAP) was held at the Virginia Transportation Research Council in Charlottesville, Virginia on November 12, 2015. 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, Mark Graham, Satyendra Huja, Brad Sheffield, Chris Engel, Henry Weinschenk. Facilitator: Philip Shucet.

Absent: Karen Weiner.

VDOT Technical Team members were also in attendance.

2. Public Feedback:

Five comments were submitted via email through [route29solutions.org](http://route29solutions.org) and one new post was submitted on the Provide Input section of [route29solutions.org](http://route29solutions.org). Seven 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 response to comments:

- While several commented on the U-turn at Rt. 28 southbound, Philip Shucet said his bigger concern is the Myers Drive U-turn, where drivers are making illegal left turns. Delineators have been installed to discourage lefts. Pete Borches noted that one delineator was knocked down by motorists still turning left.

3. Report on PDAP Feedback:

- Rt. 29 widening signals for pedestrians and bicyclists will be on December 3 agenda
- Construction timeline schedule will be available beginning December 3 agenda
- Will look for opportunities for “good news” releases

- U-Turn notation will be added to one TODS sign on Rt. 29 southbound for Thai 99, Fabio's and Taco Bell.
- Philip Shucet said draft drawings of future expansion options for the Berkmar Bridge were received, but costs have not been submitted yet by Lane-Corman.
- Rt. 29 / Rio Road accident statistics post-September 9 closures were provided in the presentation posted on [route29solutions.org](http://route29solutions.org). October statistics are not yet available.

#### 4. Panel Feedback

- Pete Borches said potholes continue to be an issue and asked if patching material is readily available. Jason Tracy said it is.
- Henry Weinschenk again suggested that engineering should include future Ashwood and Hollymead extensions. Chip Boyles noted those projects need to be in the regional long range plan for engineering to occur. Chip Boyles said even though they are in the county's plan, they've never been submitted to be considered for the regional long range plan. Discussion ensued about advantages and disadvantages to property owners and the county.
- Henry Weinschenk said he was almost hit near at the Route 29/250 interchange by cars running the red lights. In addition, lanes were closed today on Route 29 southbound. He is also displeased with the appearance of the guardrails on Route 29 at the interchange.
- Philip Shucet said the Route 29 southbound closure was not authorized and that the matter was discussed with the contractor.

#### 5. Design-Build Plan Submission Schedule

- Architectural hardscape plan expected December 17 versus December 3 as shown in the table included in the presentation posted on [route29solutions.org](http://route29solutions.org).

6. Route 29 Solutions Project Updates: Dave Covington reviewed project updates. Updates 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:
  - Lane closures were not authorized for today. Closures were supposed to be limited to the turn lane for work on the guardrail/median and to the shoulder for sidewalk work.
  - Morgan Butler asked if the project is on schedule. Dave Covington said it is on or ahead of schedule.
  - Pete Borches asked if the left turn lane on 250 west to Emmett will be extended. Dave Covington said it will be extended approximately to the bridge.

- Mark Graham and Morgan Butler inquired about planting additional trees in the median. Philip Shucet said the project team will look at it.
- Rio GSI:
  - When Rio was closed, business accesses were still open and there were signs noting that.
  - Morgan Butler asked how the nighttime lane closures were impacting traffic. Dave Covington there's been minimal impact. The longest delay measured was over 4 minutes, so adjustments were made to reduce it to 2 minutes. Philip Shucet noted that there's been more pressure on traffic when lanes close in the evening rather than in the morning.
  - Morgan Butler asked if triple lane closures at night will continue through the holidays. Dave Covington said they will continue in order to build the walls. He also noted traffic is moving well through the closures.
  - Henry Weinschenk asked how many piles have been driven. Dave Covington responded 15 of 62.
  - Dominion Virginia Power has finished its relocations.
- Berkmar:
  - Pete Borches asked how long the archaeological recovery will last and whether the bats pose any problems with clearing. Dave Covington said data recovery continues until spring. Clearing is scheduled to be complete before the time of year restriction associated with the bats.
- Signals:
  - Loop upgrades will be made on the Hydraulic/Rio loop to better manage traffic during the summer closures, even though it's not an official detour. Cost is coming out of the Route 29 Solutions budget, not the Lane Corman budget. Work will be done by VDOT's two on-call contractors.
- Hillsdale Extension:
  - A new ad date was set for March 31, 2016.
  - Philip Shucet said VDOT's Hal Jones stepped into a VDOT leadership role to work with the City.
  - Mark Graham asked when Notice to Proceed is. Dave Covington discussed the typical award process timetable for VDOT projects, but this is a city project. Philip Shucet said he will get a schedule from the city to share.

7. Placemaking: Lee Caitlin of Albemarle County said the results of the SIR's research on Placemaking was vetted with business advisory groups, through an online survey and with new community advisory committees. As a result, the county confirms the name "Rio" for the general area; confirms geographically designated corners; and confirms descriptors to provide additional context. The county suggests considering

better descriptors to provide additional context. Her presentation is included in the meeting presentation posted on the project website [route29solutions.org](http://route29solutions.org)

- Philip Shucet said the PDAP will devote time at the next couple meetings to discuss a final recommendation.
- Henry Weinschenk said he believes that only using “Rio” is being boring and safe.

#### 8. Draft Pedestrian Lighting Plan:

- Morgan Butler said the SELC had a landscape architect review the plans for pedestrian lighting, landscape on the bridge deck, and crosswalks/architectural hardscape to make suggestions for improvements.
  - Lighting plan:
    - Continue pedestrian lights along Route 29 and Rio to the edge of the project and beyond the project on Rio.
    - Use terra cotta color concrete or asphalt on crosswalks to unify the pedestrian walkway.
    - Align pedestrian lights across from each other.
    - Don't hang lights on signal poles; instead set up one light between on its own pole.
  - Bridge deck:
    - Suggested surfaces in the semi-circle be bricked or stamped brick.
    - Suggested makes and models of planters on the bridge deck.
    - Consider a single, long planter on the straight side of the semi-circle
    - Remove (or at least minimize) railings on top and bottom of semi-circles.
    - Use gray colored concrete curbs around the borders to unify the look.
    - Flush mount conduit box to pavers or hide elsewhere.
    - Paint conduit box to match pavers.
    - Suggested plant varieties.
- Mark Graham worries about dark areas and uneven lighting and asked for a light intensity plan.
- Pete Borches asked about color temperature of lights
- Henry Weinschenk liked the idea of one large rectangular planter. Suggested elevating so trees could be planted.
- Chip Boyles noted there's a question of on-going maintenance. Philip Shucet said it's the county's responsibility to maintain the landscaping.
- Pete Borches noted that the safety of pedestrian crossings is important.
- Philip Shucet said the final landscaping plan will have more than the 100 percent plans indicated. Work will be done to develop a more robust plan that's maintainable, but doesn't cause issues with the structure.
- Dave Covington said the lighting plan will be discussed at the December 3 meeting and the hardscape plan at the December 17 meeting

9. Toy Lift: Pete Borches said Toy Lift is the largest Christmas charity for children in the area helping 4,000 kids and distributing 800 bikes. He noted the importance of smooth traffic movements around Fashion Square Mall the day of the event, December 4.

10. New Business and Wrap Up:

- Henry again expressed concern for safety on Route 29 from red light runners near the Best Buy ramp. He also suggested an early connection from Seminole Square to Whole Foods as part of the Hillsdale project.
- Morgan Butler will be absent December 3.

The next panel meeting is December 3, 2015 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)