

From: Sams, Larry H [mailto:lsams@ncdot.gov] Ω

Sent: Friday, February 06, 2009 3:07 PM

Subject: Southeast High Speed Rail Update

February 6, 2009

Dear

RE: Southeast High Speed Rail Update, Richmond to Raleigh

Note: Please do not "reply" to this email as it will not be seen. Thank you.

GENERAL UPDATE – February 2009

This update is going to Virginia residents who have furnished emails to our project team. If it has reached you in error you may call our toll free number (1-800-749-7245) and ask to be removed (be sure to leave your email address and phone number with area code).

Trail Concept – Local Public Information/Workshop Meetings Scheduled in Virginia

State and local government agencies in North Carolina and Virginia are working with local citizens in each county to identify the best location for a Greenway/trail along the SEHSR corridor. Three local public workshops have been scheduled in Virginia to gather input (workshops in NC will be scheduled at a later date). Meeting locations are as follows:

- February 12, 2009, 7:00 pm - Mecklenburg County

Location: Mecklenburg County Board Room, Goode Bank Building, 350 Washington St, Boydton, Virginia, 23917.

- February 19, 2009, 6:30 pm - Brunswick County

Location: Brunswick County Board Room, 100 Tobacco St., Lawrenceville, VA, 23868

- February 26, 2009, 6:30 pm - Dinwiddie County

Location: Eastside Enhancement Center, 7301 Boydton Plank Rd., Petersburg, VA, 23803

For questions or additional information, please contact Mr. Keith Lewis at 919-829-0328.

For your information, at the end of this email is a summary description of the Trail Concept that was included in a previous email.

Overall Project Information and Updates

I encourage you to continue following the project through our web site, www.sehsr.org. This web site continues to be one of your best sources of information on the project. We try to update it periodically as major changes occur and as major work elements progress.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at 919-733-7245 ext 266.

David B. Foster, PE,
SEHSR Tier II EIS Project Manager
Rail Environmental Program Manager, NCDOT Rail Division

Update on Trail Concept (from July 2008)

We are excited to announce the evaluation of a parallel trail concept along the SEHSR project. This is another “first” for this project, and a unique opportunity to provide additional “value added” for all the towns and communities along the corridor.

The initial idea of a trail came from several Virginia communities in 2006. From that beginning almost two years ago we now have funding from each state to include the additional environmental assessments for a multi-use trail/greenway into the ongoing SEHSR project

The trail concept would be a separate project, parallel to and outside the rail right of way, but within the Southeast High Speed Rail study corridor. As such, all environmental work being collected and analyzed for the rail project would be available for evaluation of the trail concept. That is what makes this such a unique opportunity.

Any construction project that uses public funds must have appropriate environmental documentation approved by the state and federal agencies. Clearing the environmental work at this time for the trail corridor represents a significant cost and time benefit over a piecemeal approach. This would allow trail proponents to apply for state and federal funds for the eventual completion of the trail.

The trail concept runs from just south of Petersburg, Virginia (at Burgess) to the north side of Raleigh at the Neuse River (approximately 116 miles), connecting all the cities and towns along the way. It could become an important link in the East Coast Greenway, a proposed trail that would traverse the eastern seaboard states from Maine to Florida.

The trail location would vary in proximity to the rail right of way, and would also cross from the east side to the west side as needed, using current or purposed grade separations (i.e. there will be no “at-grade” crossings of the trail and the main rail line)

For approximately 76 miles, where the proposed rail improvements will fall within the existing rail right of way, the trail concept is envisioned to be on a 30’ trail cross section on a 60’ right of way, completely outside the rail right of way. The minimum separation (between the tracks and the trail) would be 50-60 feet, and the average should be about 100 feet.

For the remaining 40 miles, where the rail alternatives are expected to go off of the existing rail right of way, the trail would likely use the old, inactive rail right of way.

The trail concept will follow the “preferred” rail alignment. As such, preliminary designs of the trail concept will not begin until after the preferred rail alignment is selected, following completion of the DEIS. Public involvement for the trail will be handled by the resource agencies in both states (VA Department of Conservation and Recreation, and the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources).

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