

State of Vermont
Agency of Administration
Department of Buildings & General Services
October 10, 2016

Williston Public Safety Field Station; Site Location

The statutory request:

On or before October 10, 2016, the Commissioner of Buildings and General Services, in consultation with the Commissioner of Public Safety, shall submit a recommendation for a site location for the public safety field station and the equipment storage facility to the Chairs of the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions and the Senate Committee on Institutions based on the evaluation described in subsection (a) of this section. It is the intent of the General Assembly that when evaluating site locations, preference shall be first given to State-owned property located in Chittenden County. (Act 160 of 2016; Section 34, Subsection b)

In accordance with Act 160 of 2016, Section 34, we developed a preliminary program for the facility to assist in determining the size of the site necessary to support the Williston Public Safety Field Station (WPSFS) mission. We also reached out to VTrans and ANR to identify State-owned property in Chittenden County that may be available for the location of a new WPSFS. VTrans responded indicating there were four potential sites they knew of that could be available. The sites are: 1) a site one on the corner of Redmond Rd and Mountain View Rd in Williston, 2) a site off the River Rd in Essex, 3) a site on the North side of St George Rd (Exit 12) in Williston on the West side of I 89 and 4) was a site on Severance Road in Colchester.

On August 8, 2016, Mike Kuhn and Allen Palmer from BGS met Major William Sheets and Captain James Whitcomb from the Vermont State Police and Roger Barry, a private contractor representing AOT at the Exit 11 rest area in Richmond for the purpose of touring potential AOT owned sites for a new barracks in the Williston area. We traveled to the two Williston sites and the Essex site. We did not visit the Colchester site, because Major Sheets indicated it did not meet their requirements for access to their area of responsibility.

After visiting the three sites, an evaluation of the development and permitting potential was performed. The Williston Redmond Road site was found that the use is not permitted in their zoning district. The Essex site off of River Road is a Conditional Use in their zoning district, but the need for substantial infrastructure improvements and access accommodations would be difficult and expensive at best. Additionally, it was determined that the site had been identified as a deer yard which would require additional expenses due to mitigation requirements for our State Land Use Permit. The only one that remained a possibility was the Williston site on St George Rd next to I-89.



On September 7, 2016, Mike Kuhn and Allen Palmer met with representatives from VTrans to discuss the possibility of co-locating the WPSFS with their proposed Park & Ride on the land mentioned above near Exit 12. It was at this meeting that VTrans informed us that they did not actually own the land in question and were in the process of trying to acquire it, but only the portion necessary for their Park and Ride. It turns out that there is not enough room on the parcel to site both the P&R and a new PSFS. According to our search, there are no State-owned properties suitable to host the new Public Safety Field Station.

Allen relayed this information to Major Sheets and he requested that we begin advertising for land. On or around September 26, 2016, an ad was placed in the Burlington Free Press and Seven Days requesting proposals for 8-10 acres of land within 2 miles of exits 11, 12, 13, or 16. At that time, the ad was also placed on the BGS Electronic Bulletin Board.

Replies are due by 3:00 on Thursday October 13th. At which time we will begin evaluating the developability of the proposed sites. Depending on the number of proposals received, we will provide an update on our progress and site recommendation on or before December 1, 2016 per legislative direction.

Respectfully Submitted

Michael J. Obuchowski

Michael J. Obuchowski, Commissioner of Buildings & General Services

Keith W. Flynn

Keith W. Flynn, Commissioner of Public Safety