

**TOWN OF HOPKINTON, RI
RESOLUTION**

**A RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO THE FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR THE FUTURE NORTHEAST CORRIDOR - WASHINGTON,
DC TO BOSTON, MA RAIL LINE**

WHEREAS, the Final Environmental Impact Statement released by the Federal Railroad Administration presents a preferred alternative route as part of the proposed upgrade to the Northeast Corridor which includes a section of nearly 13 miles of new rail line in the State of Rhode Island affecting the Towns of Westerly, Charlestown, Richmond and South Kingstown, as part of the so-called Old Saybrook to Kenyon Bypass; and

WHEREAS, the proposed new rail line will principally affect the Towns of Charlestown and Westerly in Rhode Island, including 5.6 miles in Charlestown; and

WHEREAS, through lack of specific outreach on the part of the Federal Railroad Administration, the affected Towns, the citizens, and impacted property owners were wholly unaware of the proposed new route alignment through Charlestown and Westerly, and as a result there were no comments received from the Towns during the public review and comment period for the Tier 1 Draft EIS last year; and

WHEREAS, the review and outreach that the Town of Charlestown, stakeholders and active members of the community have undertaken since becoming aware of the project on or about December 18, 2016, is the first such engagement that the community has done; and

WHEREAS, the scope of this project and the impact of the route on the Town of Charlestown is significantly negative, as the proposed rail alignment will:

1. Destroy dozens of private homes
2. Decimate the historic mill villages of Burdickville, Columbia Heights and Kenyon
3. Cross land owned by the Narragansett, a federally recognized Indian Tribe
4. Fragment historic and active farmland
5. Fragment the Francis Carter Preserve, a major land holding of The Nature Conservancy along the Pawcatuck River
6. Pass through and/or destroy numerous publicly and privately owned open space otherwise protected in perpetuity
7. Require several crossings of the Pawcatuck River which has been nominated by Congress as a Wild and Scenic River
8. Lie entirely within the land acquisition and habitat management area of the recently established US Fish and Wildlife Great Thicket National Wildlife Refuge
9. Lie entirely within the EPA designated Wood-Pawcatuck Sole Source Aquifer; and

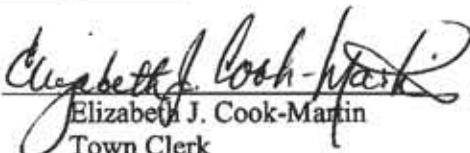
WHEREAS, the Federal Railroad Administration has provided a 30 day waiting period on the Final EIS to allow feedback on the preferred alternative which ends on January 30, 2017, a period of time which the Town considers inadequate to provide sufficient comments outlining in detail their opposition to the preferred alignment; and

WHEREAS, the impacted Towns will bear a significant burden due to loss of areas of environmental, historic, agricultural and social importance without commensurate benefits to those communities as a whole; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council of the Town of Charlestown has invited the neighboring Towns in Washington Council to consider a resolution supporting Charlestown's position.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Council of the Town of Hopkinton hereby opposes a change to the railroad alignment and authorizes this resolution be sent to the Federal Railroad Administration, to Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo, to U.S. Senator Jack Reed, U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse, Congressman James Langevin and our local delegation showing the Town's opposition to the so-called Old Saybrook to Kenyon Bypass rail alignment as proposed within its borders, and to keep the railroad on its current Right of Way.

Adopted: January 17, 2017

ATTEST: 
Elizabeth J. Cook-Martin
Town Clerk

