

**Northeast Corridor FUTURE, Washington, DC to Boston, MA  
Tier 1 Final EIS  
A RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE IN  
CHARLESTOWN, RI**

The Town Council of the Town of Charlestown hereby resolves as follows:

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 Town of Charlestown, its citizens, and impacted property owners were wholly unaware of the proposed new route alignment through Charlestown, and as a result there were no comments received from the Town or interested parties in Charlestown 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 of Charlestown considers inadequate to provide sufficient comments outlining in detail their opposition to the preferred alignment; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Charlestown will bear a significant burden due to loss of areas of environmental, historic, agricultural and social importance without commensurate benefits to the community as a whole.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Council of the Town of Charlestown hereby opposes a change to the railroad alignment within its borders, and authorizes its Town Administrator to undertake the following:

1. Prepare and send a letter of opposition to the Federal Railroad Administration, along with a request to extend the comment period on the Tier 1 Final EIS to April 1, 2017.
2. Prepare and send a letter to Governor Raimondo of Rhode Island stating the Town of Charlestown'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, with copies to all of its federal and state legislators.
3. Prepare and send letters to U.S. Senator Jack Reed, U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse and Congressman James Langevin stating the Town of Charlestown'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.
4. Prepare a detailed response to the contents of the Final EIS, as time may allow, including evidence of incomplete and inaccurate data and improper process, to be distributed to all involved agencies and officials.
5. Prepare and send a request to all municipalities within the State of Rhode Island, requesting support of this resolution.
6. Invite a joint resolution with our neighboring towns in Washington County.

The resolution shall take effect upon passage.

By resolution of the Charlestown Town Council  
at a meeting duly held on January 10, 2017.

Amy Rose Weinreich, CMC

Attested To By

Amy Rose Weinreich, CMC Town Clerk

