

TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN, RI

A RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO ANY REVIVAL OF THE OLD SAYBROOK TO KENYON BYPASS

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

WHEREAS the Federal Railroad Administration had previously proposed an upgrade to the Northeast Corridor which included thirteen miles of new rail line in the State of Rhode Island affecting several towns, including Charlestown, as part of the Old Saybrook to Kenyon Bypass; and

WHEREAS the residents of the Town of Charlestown were caught off guard by this proposal in 2017; and

WHEREAS the residents of the Town of Charlestown will not be caught off guard again; and

WHEREAS the scope of this project and the impact of the route on the Town of Charlestown would have: Destroyed dozens of private homes; decimated the historic mill villages of Burdickville, Columbia Heights, and Kenyon, that are eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places; crossed land owned by the Narragansett, a federally recognized Indian Tribe; fragmented historic and active farmland; fragmented the Francis Carter Preserve, a major land holding of The Nature Conservancy; crossed the National Wild and Scenic Pawcatuck River; passed through and/or destroyed numerous publicly and privately owned open space otherwise protected in perpetuity; crossed through Burlingame and Great Swamp State Wildlife Management Areas; was proposed entirely within or directly adjacent to the acquisition area of the Great Thicket National Wildlife Refuge; and was proposed entirely within the EPA designated Wood-Pawcatuck Sole Source Aquifer; and

WHEREAS the Old Saybrook to Kenyon Bypass was laid to rest in the Federal Railroad Administration NEC Record of Decision and called for more research and alternatives; and

WHEREAS the current New Haven to Providence Capacity Planning Study is intended to develop and evaluate alternatives to grow rail capacity and improve rail performance between New Haven, CT and Providence, RI, with a goal of minimizing effects on both the natural and human built environments; and

WHEREAS the Capacity Planning Study is an alternative analysis to identify and evaluate; new potential rail alignment alternatives; improvements to existing rail lines; focused on the project planning phase; an opportunity to conduct a robust and inclusive public outreach effort and to understand the needs of local communities; and

WHEREAS the Capacity Planning Study is not a direct continuation of NEC FUTURE. It is not a return to previously proposed alignments; and

WHEREAS the Town of Charlestown seeks to make it known to all that the Town is opposed to any revival of the Old Saybrook to Kenyon Bypass.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Council of the Town of Charlestown hereby opposes a revival of the Old Saybrook to Kenyon Bypass; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Clerk is hereby authorized to send a copy of this resolution to U.S. Senator Jack Reed, U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse, Congressman Seth Magaziner, Governor Dan McKee, Narragansett Indian Tribe Chief Sachem Anthony Dean Stanton, and all identifiable opponents of the bypass.

This RESOLUTION shall take effect upon passage.

By resolution of the Charlestown Town Council at a meeting held on February 26, 2024.

Amy Rose Weinreich, CMC
Amy Rose Weinreich, CMC Town Clerk

