

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)
Minutes
April 27, 2021

Attendees:					
X	Barre City	Scott Bascom	X	Moretown	Joyce Manchester
X	Barre Town	James West			Dara Torre, Alt
		Sebastian Arduengo, Alt		Northfield	Jeff Schulz
X	Berlin	Bob Wernecke	X		Jon Ignowski, Alt
	Cabot	John Cookson		Orange	Lee Cattaneo
X	Calais	David Ellenbogen		Plainfield	Bob Atchinson
		Karin McNeill, Alt	X	Roxbury	Gerry D'Amico
X	Duxbury	Alan Quackenbush	X	Waitsfield	Don LaHaye
	E. Montpelier	Frank Pratt			Harrison Snapp, Alt
X	Fayston	Jared Cadwell		Warren	Camilla Behn
X	Marshfield	Robin Schunk	X	Washington	Peter Carbee
X	Middlesex	Ronald Krauth	X	Waterbury	Steve Lotspeich
X	Montpelier	Dona Bate	X	Williamstown	Richard Turner
		Harold Garabedian, Alt	X	Woodbury	Chris Koteas
			X	Worcester	Bill Arrand
	Staff:	Christian Meyer			
	Guests:	Zoe Neaderland			

Chair Steve Lotspeich called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm. A quorum was present.

Adjustments to the Agenda

No adjustments to the agenda

Public Comments

Zoe Neaderland announced that as part of the continuing State Rail Plan and State Multimodal Freight Planning effort there will be a Virtual Freight Forum on May 6, 2021 from 4-5:30.
<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/freight>

Review of Draft March Meeting Minutes

*Richard Turner motioned to approve the minutes as presented; Peter Carbee seconded. **Motion passed.** James West abstained*

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VTrans Project Selection and Prioritization Process

Asset Driven Projects:

Christian Meyer discussed the process for evaluating the proposed asset driven projects put forth by VTrans to the Region for review. He led the committee through the process as using the example of the Barre City to East Montpelier paving project.

Under mobility and connectivity, several TAC members felt that access was being improved in the projects where the cited facilities (park-and-ride or bus stop) were present. While the resurfacing of the road may not be providing additional turn lanes it was improving access for non-motorized forms of transportation and as such should probably be noted. The committee asked Christian Meyer to record these concerns and follow up with VTrans on how to approach them in this context.

Zoe Neaderland noted that regardless of what guidance VTrans would provide on these questions it was still a good idea to record the assets within the project limits even if they do not contribute to the final scoring. Including these facilities is valuable because it will be recorded for future conversations, helping both ourselves and others over time.

Christian Meyer expressed some confusion as to how to best interpret the nature of the Economic Access questions oriented toward the region. From her experience, Zoe Neaderland suggested, documenting how we approached this question and be consistent throughout.

The question was posed as to whether shoulder widening was an inherent indicator that travel lanes were being narrowed. Steve Lotspeich noted that in the route 100 repave from Waterbury to Morristown, the design narrowed the lanes by a foot to 11 feet and added a foot of shoulder. Per HSDEI 15–103, under Vermont State Guidelines, state highways should have a maximum lane width of 11 feet for all directions of travel.

Steve Lotspeich asked how these criteria were being ultimately aggregated. Christian Meyer explained that the points from each criterion were summed to arrive at a final Transportation Value (TV). There is no minimum score a project need receive to be considered for funding. While this prioritization process is still in its pilot phase, the ultimate purpose of the TV is to help facilitate a well-informed discussion. The role of the TAC will be to ultimately endorse a ranking of the projects. TV may be an important consideration in this ranking but need not be the be-all-end-all consideration in this ranking. It is the TAC’s task to provide project elements that may not be fully reflected in the score. We will document our scoring process and convey this with our endorsed submission.

1 James West asked if there is a total budget for these projects. There is a state-wide budget for
2 transportation projects. There is not a regional budget. Projects from the CVRPC will be
3 considered for geographic equity with the rankings from regions across the state.
4

5 Robin Schunk asked about how the project limits were set. She is familiar with the Peacham to
6 Marshfield paving project and felt the section in most need of work was outside the project
7 limits. Zoe Neaderland could not speak to this project specifically but noted that often it is most
8 cost effective to maintain those portions of roadway that are in relatively good shape and
9 reconstruct the deteriorated section in the future. What about the Moretown to Montpelier
10 project? Why was the project split in Middlesex? Christian Meyer will forward these questions
11 to VTrans for comment.
12

13 Concern was raised regarding the incorporation of demographic data, such as average income,
14 in the ranking process. This is an element that VTrans has already indicated they are working to
15 revise. They will incorporate equity in the prioritization process.
16

17 The committee discussed how best to proceed. There is still another month before the regional
18 rankings of the asset driven projects needs to be submitted to VTrans. In light of the meeting's
19 conversation, the Committee requested that Staff redistribute the project sheets. Committee
20 comments shall be collected by Staff (please hold project discussions via email), and Staff will
21 develop a preferred ranking for committee review. At the May TAC meeting the Committee will
22 vote to endorse a preferred ranking of the projects.
23

24 Chris Koteas asked if there was any expectation of how this process would play out versus past
25 processes. Zoe Neaderland mentioned that VTrans did do a simulation using this process
26 compared with the former prioritization process and the results were favorable. Christian
27 Meyer mentioned he would share the program White Paper which has a certain amount of
28 background on the prioritization process.
29

30 Regional Projects:

31 Waitsfield has put forward the intersection of Route 100 and Route 17 as a regional priority.
32 Regional priorities need not have a final project design for submission. This can be a method for
33 a community to bring VTrans' attention to a troubled location or corridor. In this case the
34 project went through scoping 20 years ago. No final design could be agreed upon. The
35 intersection has remained a trouble spot for crashes and additionally there is increased bike
36 and pedestrian demand. This project would go to VTrans for their consideration and study.
37

38 *Jared Cadwell motioned to submit the project to VTrans. Don LaHaye Seconded. **Motion passed***
39 *unanimously.*
40

41 **VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian Program**

1 The intent of the VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian Program is to improve access and safety for
2 bicyclists and/or pedestrians through the planning, design and construction of infrastructure
3 projects. Application deadline is 1PM June 4, 2021.

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5 Recording of program webinar: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dy2RTIRG8xM>

6 Program Website: <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/local-projects/bike-ped>

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8 **TAC Member Round Table**

9 Bob Wernecke discussed the ongoing work in Berlin to complete needed maintenance on a
10 historic bridge over the Dog River. While the Bridge is a town asset, Berlin signed an agreement
11 with the state that requires VTrans to be responsible for maintaining the structure in exchange
12 for Berlin preserving its historic features. Other municipalities in the region may also have bridges
13 that fall under this category.

14

15 Ronald Krauth brought up the better back roads program. He spoke to how the improvements
16 that came through this program have made a really positive impact on the road but that over the
17 years they have deteriorated. Are there opportunities to replace the damaged reflectors? Bob
18 Wernecke noted that the primary purpose of the program had been to aid towns in designing
19 improvements but that now it is likely the town's responsibility to maintain the improvements.

20

21 **Adjourn**

22 *Don LaHaye motioned to adjourn at 8:15 PM. Seconded by Ronald Krauth. **Motion passed***
23 *unanimously.*