

**SOUTHERN WINDSOR COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)**

Meeting Minutes of January 16, 2013

A meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) was held at the SWCRPC office in Ascutney at 6pm.

Attendance – TAC members present: Kristi Morris, Springfield (Chair); Tom Kenyon, West Windsor (Vice Chair); Sharon Bixby, Ludlow; Gordy Eastman, Reading; and Mary Habig (CRT, by conference call).

Quorum reduced to 4 members just before the January meeting – since Cavendish, Chester and Andover currently do not have representatives. Mark Huntley was recently elected to the Vermont House of Representatives and is no longer the Cavendish TAC representative.

Others present: Katharine Otto and Jason Rasmussen, SWCRPC; Aaron Brown, Vital Communities.

Meeting Opened: Kristi Morris opened the meeting at 6:00 pm.

HUD Sustainability project – Aaron Brown, Vital Communities

Aaron explained the foundation of the HUD Transportation workgroup of the East Central Vermont Sustainable Development Plan Project and how the project is gathering public input. SWCRPC is working with the Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission and other entities to develop a regional plan that will guide decision-making and investments aimed at maintaining the place we call home. More information about the project can be found online at www.ecvermont.org. Jason Rasmussen is part of the Transportation working group.

The TAC discussed the following issues related to having a sustainable transportation system in the region:

- Reducing Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT)
 - o Support P&R facilities for transit and carpoolers (particularly as relates to the 2012 Park and Ride Needs Assessment in terms of expanding lots and making better bus circulation)
 - o Discussed Complete Streets
- Work-housing connection
 - o issue of too many regulations hindering attracting new businesses
 - o should have more job growth (not just all in the Upper Valley)
 - o zoning may need to change in order to encourage development in central areas (ease up the regulations rather than them being more restrictive than in the less central areas)
 - o high speed internet is a notable issue in some communities – which hinders the ability of businesses to locate there
- Money
 - o state funding is not keeping up
 - o most roads are already not paved – so un-paving roads is not much of an option for reducing costs
 - o Accelerated Bridge Construction (ABC) is a good program which looks at bridge replacement in a much more cost-effective manner
 - o Maybe reduce the winter maintenance expectation?
 - o Upgrading equipment in highway departments can significantly improve fuel efficiency.
 - o Issues of wetland/ water v transportation system conflicts – such as multi-use paths next to the river having hard time with permits

Acceptance of minutes of November 8, 2012 minutes

Sharon Bixby moved to approve the minutes of November 8, 2012 as written. Seconded by Gordy Eastman. Approved unanimously.

Scenic Route 100 Byway Extension

Katharine explained how the Scenic Route 100 Byway is hoping to expand from 6 towns to 19 towns. In the SWC Region this would add Cavendish to Ludlow and Andover. The draft Corridor Management Plan Update is available online for review at <http://swcrpc.org/wp/programs/byways/>. A public hearing with the Vermont Scenery Preservation Council is scheduled for March 13 at 6:30pm at the Londonderry Town Offices.

Sharon Bixby moved to authorize Kristi to sign a letter of support for the byway extension. Seconded by Tom Kenyon. Approved unanimously.

2012 Regional Park and Ride Count Report

Katharine presented the 2012 Regional Park and Ride Count Report, which includes monthly counts from the three I-91 P&R lots that service the region. TAC discussed possible reasons for the highly variable occupancy rates of the lots and were interested to know the percentage of transit users to carpoolers. Kristi noted an error in the calculated average lot usage for the year which Katharine will follow up on.

Regional Transportation Plan Update

Katharine and Jason have started to visit town selectboards and road foremen to introduce the regional needs list, as well as solicit input for the annual project prioritization and needs list.

Updates and Announcements

- a. Outreach to town selectboards about projects, RTP needs, project prioritization...
- b. Legislative update
 - a. Road and Bridge standards update – Coming soon. Updates due as part of Act 110 (Water Quality Bill) to the legislature in January 2013
 - b. VLCT Legislative Reports available online at <http://www.vlct.org/advocacy/weekly-legislative-reports>
- c. Construction project updates
 - a. VT-131 repaving – the plans have now been finalized
 - b. VT-11 Bridge 41 in Andover – This bridge is near the Chester-Andover townline on VT-11. The scoping report indicates a brief bridge closure for 2 weeks is the recommended alternative, with the signed detour using VT-103 and VT-100 via Ludlow. VTrans is aware that they will need to balance this construction with that of the Walker Bridge in Ludlow – which may be due to construction in the same year and each use the other bridge for the detour. There is a Regional Concerns Meeting to discuss alternatives and other issues on March 14 at 6:30pm at Andover Town Hall.
- d. Permit updates
 - Brief update from Jason on the VTrans Fair Share study and the Act 248 and Act 250 applications that are currently pending in the Region.

Next Meeting:

Next meeting will be February 20, 2013 and will include discussion of High Risk Rural Roads Program candidates and Project Prioritization.

Sharon Bixby moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:50pm. Seconded by Tom Kenyon. Approved unanimously.