

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

Meeting Minutes of February 16, 2011

A meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) was held at SWCRPC in Ascutney, VT, at 7:00pm.

Attendance – TAC members present: Bruce McEnaney (Chair), Chester; Sharon Bixby (Vice Chair), Ludlow; Gordy Eastman, Reading; Kristi Morris, Springfield; and Tom Kenyon, West Windsor.

Others present: Sue Clark, VTrans; Jason Rasmussen and Katharine Otto, SWCRPC.

Meeting Opened: Bruce McEnaney opened the meeting at 7:05 pm.

Acceptance of Minutes of November 10, 2010

Sharon Bixby moved to approve the minutes of November 10, 2010 as written. Second by Tom Kenyon. Approved unanimously.

Review of project lists

Consideration of new projects

Jason Rasmussen explained about the process of adding new projects to the lists. He explained the inquiry from Okemo regarding financing their project to add a left turn lane on VT-103 to access Jackson Gore and reconfigure the Buttermilk Falls intersection (as required by Act 250 permit and VTrans access permit conditions). The TAC agreed that while they feel Okemo's pain, they don't feel that the type of funding that goes through the TAC would be helpful as they can't guarantee funding and it would be way too long a time frame. The project probably does not meet the "critical need" criteria, and no feasibility study has been prepared to date.

Other potential new projects discussed were bridges 5 and 7 in West Windsor – there is a real need given that they are falling into the river. Katharine and Jason will look into if those bridges are in VTrans plans for future projects.

Project Prioritizations

Jason Rasmussen reviewed the prioritization process for this year, including both prioritizing projects in VTrans' budget as well as identifying new "pre-candidate" needs for the Town Highway Bridge program. Jason presented the list of transportation projects, including programmed projects the TAC prioritized last year. Jason reviewed the process to prioritize town bridge projects in two separate categories based on VTrans guidance:

1. "Front of Book" and "Development & Evaluation" Projects – programmed town bridge projects
2. "Pre-Candidate" Needs – evaluating potential new town bridge projects that VTrans should consider to program as "Candidate" Town Highway Bridge Program projects

The TAC established a list of the Region's priority project priorities (listed by category):

Bike and Pedestrian Facilities

1. (Joint) – Ludlow bike path project

Park and Ride Lots

1. Springfield Park and Ride

Roadway

1. Cavendish-Ludlow (Smithville)

State Highway Bridges

1. Weathersfield BR15 (big culvert) on VT131
2. Weathersfield BR11B (big culvert) on VT131
3. Ludlow BR102 (big culvert) on VT100

Town Highway Bridges

1. Springfield Br57 (Harry Hills Bridge)
2. Ludlow Br25 (Walker Bridge)
Ludlow Br 54 on Pond Street – Remove if Town approves

Discussion points:

- Keep the Ludlow bike and ped programs on the prioritization list since there is a renewed interest in the project (although maybe in a different location)
- Why is the Cavendish ledges project still there? Jason explained that the Project Deletion explained by Kevin Marshia to the TAC in November 2010 has not yet been passed by the legislature.
- Removed Cavendish ledges project since do not want it.
- Removed Weathersfield roadway project since will be substantially completed in FY2013.
- What are the culverts? Don't really know much about them. Prioritized according to AADT since no other way to prioritize them in terms of need.
- Why is there such a difference in AADT on VT-131 in Weathersfield (between the two state "bridges")?
- Remove Ludlow bridge 54 from the priority list since it has secured other funding.

Town Highway Bridge Program – "Pre-Candidate" Projects

The TAC established a list of the Region's priority project priorities:

1. Cavendish Br 58 on Depot Street
2. Springfield Br 62 (McDonalds) on VT11/Chester Road
3. Windsor Br 55 on US5/Main Street
4. Springfield Br 56 on Main Street
5. Chester Br 13 on Green Mountain Turnpike
6. Andover Br 26 on Howard Hill Road
7. Ludlow Br 26 on VT103/ Main Street

Discussion points:

- Remove Reading bridge 28 – the Selectboard does not want it fixed through this program
- Remove Ludlow bridge 57 – this bridge project is funded through the Structures Program
- Nothing much else has changed with the bridge projects, other than those which moved to the project prioritization or have already secured funding, so keep same order as last year.

Gordy Eastman moved to accept the prioritization of the projects and town highway bridge candidates as determined at the meeting, and recommend approval by the SWCRPC Board. Sharon Bixby seconded. Approved unanimously.

Scenic Byway

Katharine Otto introduced the proposed Scenic Route 100 byway from Andover to Pittsfield. SWCRPC is coming to the end of a year long process of compiling the nomination and corridor management plan with representatives from other businesses, chambers and RPCs along the byway. The Byway Committee have just finished bringing the final plan before all the selectboards for their approval and comments before the plan is submitted to the Vermont Scenery Preservation Council next week. The public hearing for the Byway will be held on March 24th at 7pm at the President Calvin Coolidge Museum and Education Center in Plymouth and it would be great to have members of the TAC there.

Clarification that the Scenic Byway program differs from the Scenic Highway/Road program that currently runs along VT-131 in Cavendish. Amongst other things, the Scenic Byway program is non-regulatory.

Katharine asked for a letter of support from the TAC.

Sharon Bixby moved to write a letter of support for the Byway. Gordy Eastman seconded. Approved unanimously.

Updates and announcements

Legislative Updates

A summary of major transportation legislation for this session was handed out. There was some discussion about the status of the Interstate Weight Limit pilot project and it's continuation past following the completion of its one year pilot. (see VLCT Weekly Legislative Report no.6 at www.vlct.org/advocacy/weeklylegislativereports/ for more information.) A new bill (S.49) was brought to the VT Legislature that would assure that when Congress acts to permanently allow trucks up to 99,000 pounds on Vermont's interstates, state statute would agree with the federal law. The Senate passed the bill on February 15, 2011 and it is now before the House Committee on Transportation.

Timber Creek 2, Ludlow

A new project for 208 residential units on Okemo Mountain is currently before the Ludlow Development Review Board. It will also require an Act 250 permit, so we may ask for TAC input on traffic issues in the future.

Town road sign standards / Sign inventories

Katharine has been reaching out to road foreman about the sign inventories. We are hoping to help towns out with sign inventories on Class 1 and 2 roads during this summer. Kudos to West Windsor's Highway Department for already completing their inventory!

Updated town road and bridge standards

The TAC had previously discussed proposed changes to the town road and bridge standards in response to Act 110 at the October 2010 meeting. The legislative report on the updated town road and bridge standards was released in January, showing what may be the final version of the update. Looks like some of the sensible additions that were present in the draft have disappeared, but there is no

confirmation on whether these are the final standards yet. The SWCRPC can help towns to integrate the new standards into their adopted town standards so they remain eligible for the reduced local match for Structures and Class 2 Roadway funding.

Park and Ride Counts

Katharine presented the 2010 report of monthly park and ride counts. It is interesting to see the correlation between gas prices and use of the lots.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Counts

Katharine presented a summary of the bicycle and pedestrian count, which are conducted annually in June/ July as part of a required TPI task.

Way To Go Week

Way to Go Week this year is from May 16th through 20th. It is about encouraging commuters to find alternative ways to commute to work other than driving alone. The SWCRPC is starting to work on outreach for this program along with other RPCs, and we are looking for ideas. We are planning to reach out to local energy committees and have materials at our upcoming Home Energy Expo. Ideas suggested by TAC members include using Green Up Day (May 1st) to promote it, Public Access TV, and incorporate Amtrak's \$12 ticket program with this program.

Future Agenda Topics

- Salt brine
- Prioritize highway crash locations – full meeting – March
- Access management permit categories

Next Meeting: March 16, 2011 at 7 pm

Tom Kenyon moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 pm. Second by Kristi Morris. Approved unanimously.