

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

Meeting Minutes of June 19, 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); Michelle Lindberg, Cavendish; Bob Parker, Chester; Sharon Bixby, Ludlow; and Jeff Slade, Weathersfield.

Others present: Katharine Otto and Jason Rasmussen, SWCRPC; Jeff Taft-Dick, Vermont Bicycle and Pedestrian Coalition; Michelle Ovitt, Connecticut River Transit (The Current); Anila Hood, Senior Solutions (COASEV).

Meeting Opened: Kristi Morris opened the meeting at 6:10 pm.

Welcome and introductions

Acceptance of minutes of April 10, 2013 minutes

Jeff Slade moved to approve the minutes of April 10, 2013. Seconded by Sharon Bixby. Approved unanimously.

Regional Public Transit Overview - Michelle Ovitt, Operations Manager at Connecticut River Transit (CRT) (The Current)

Michelle gave an overview of the public transportation services that CRT provide throughout the Region – including the commuter buses on I-91 to the Upper Valley, Springfield in-town routes and providing rides for elders and persons with disabilities. CRT is also starting to plan for three day service in Windsor. CRT does not just provide buses, but also coordinates a large number of volunteer drivers – who currently provide about 100 rides a day. Unfortunately CRT did not receive all the funding it asked for in its FY2014 application – did get the bus shelters and capital funds for new buses, but did not get funding for Windsor service or Route 30 study.

CRT and SWCRPC are part of a working group of the Springfield Hospital Community Health Team which are trying to identify gaps in transportation provision for their clients – whether through Medicaid, E&D, VHAB, or a more unique case. The working group are also trying to increase awareness amongst human service providers of the different transportation options – particularly so they can encourage the timing of appointments so that clients can use existing services like the Springfield in-town bus route where possible.

Elders and Transportation Overview - Anila Hood, Senior Solutions (Council on Aging)

Anila gave an overview of transportation provision and needs for elders within the Region. Senior Solutions (formerly the Council on Aging for Southeastern Vermont, COASEV) provides assistance to elder primarily through their senior helpline and case management across Windham and Windsor counties. They assist seniors with transportation issues through their partnerships with public transit providers (CRT, DVTA, Stagecoach), Cares groups and Windsor's Volunteers In Action group. Over the years they have been seeing steady increases in needs for transportation – FY '10: 22,804 one way trips in FY2010 (Oct 09 – Sep 10), 25,798 in FY2011 and 27,718 in FY 2012.

With advancing age, many of our seniors must give up their cars and rely upon family or friends for medical appointments, shopping, church-going and other social activities. In many cases, this network is either not available or is greatly diminished as time passes. For others, financial constraints disallow owning a vehicle. In both instances, seniors are at risk for isolation, food insecurity, medical deterioration and depression. Affordable/accessible transportation is critical to keeping seniors independent and can help avoid early nursing home placement.

Some of the barriers include the rural nature of the geographic area served; an increasing need for door-to-door services as well as door-through-door which will become increasingly evident as people live to very old age and need more assistance with activities of daily life such as shopping. Other challenges include gaps in existing services i.e. 2 day notice for medical appointments, vehicle in household, etc.

Election of Officers

Sharon Bixby moved to nominate Kristi Morris as Chair. Seconded by Bob Parker. No other nominations. Approved unanimously

Jeff Slade moved to nominate Tom Kenyon as Vice-Chair. Seconded by Sharon Bixby. No other nominations. Approved unanimously.

Appoint At-Large Members

There was some discussion about how to proceed with appointing at-large members since there are potentially three people interested.

Jeff Slade moved to change the Bylaws to allow up to 4 at-large (non-voting) members of the TAC in the Bylaws, to be voted upon following proper notice at the next TAC meeting. Seconded by Bob Parker. Approved unanimously.

Jeff Slade moved to appoint Jeff Taft-Dick and Jennifer Grant as at-large members of the TAC. Seconded by Sharon Bixby. Approved unanimously.

Transportation Planning Initiative FFY2014 Work Program

Katharine Otto and Jason Rasmussen reviewed the proposed transportation work program for Oct 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014 (Federal Fiscal Year 2014). Katharine briefly highlighted some of the updates and new items on the upcoming TPI work program, including:

- Inventory and evaluate on-road bike facilities along Vermont state highways (postponed by VTrans from FY2013)
- VT Strategic Highway Safety Program (SHSP) Regional Safety Forum with Windham Regional Commission (postponed from previous years)
- Assist VTrans to identify a fair share cost method for better addressing transportation impacts of developments under Act 250 review (continued from FY2013)
- Complete the Regional Transportation Plan Update
- Compile information about town implementation of Complete Streets

Jason Rasmussen asked whether as town representatives there are any services they would like the RPC to provide.

Sharon Bixby moved to recommend that the Regional Planning Commission approve the FFY 2014 transportation work program. Seconded by Shep Thomas. Approved unanimously.

Updates and Announcements

- a) *Way To Go Commuter Challenge*. Katharine gave a brief overview of how SWCRPC got involved with outreach
- b) *Upcoming Grant opportunities*
 - a. VT Bicycling and Pedestrian Program – mandatory training in early June. Applications due July 26th.
 - b. Better Backroads (due July 15, 2013)
 - c. Transportation Alternatives (formerly Transportation Enhancements) – will be coordinated around Bike-Ped Grant so those who are not funded through it can still apply. So applications will be out in early Fall.

Next Meeting:

Next meeting will be the postponed train-themed meeting, hopefully on July 17th, 2013 although may be another date depending on the availability of speakers. Voting on Bylaw amendments will also be part of the agenda. August meeting will be cancelled for the summer.

Sharon Bixby moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:35pm. Seconded by Bob Parker. Approved unanimously.