

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

Meeting Minutes of October 19, 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; Kristi Morris, Springfield; Neil Daniels, Weathersfield; Tom Kenyon, West Windsor; and Mary Habig (CRT).

Others present: Joe Flynn, Dummerston Incident Commander (VTrans); Sue Clark, VTrans; Marie Caduto, ANR Watershed Coordinator, and John Broker-Campbell, Jason Rasmussen and Katharine Otto, SWCRPC.

Meeting Opened: Bruce McEnaney opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.

Tropical Storm Irene Recovery

Discussion about what happened during and post Tropical Storm Irene relating to our transportation network.

Joe Flynn (Incident Commander at the VTrans Dummerston Incident Command Center (ICC)) gave an overview of what has been happening with the state highway network since Tropical Storm Irene. The Dummerston ICC covers the south eastern part of the state – which for our region is everything but Ludlow. Ludlow was under the Rutland ICC which has already managed to close down. The main points Joe covered were:

- A lot of progress has been made with opening the roads and re-opening bridges (whether making repairs or putting in temporary bridges).
- Repairs were made by VTrans crews, as well as assistance from the National Guard, mutual aid assistance from other state Agencies of Transportations and many independent contractors.
- They have just 3 major tasks left – VT107, VT-131 and VT-106. These roads were harder to fix. Instead of, as in some other cases, being able to do temporary fixes before later upgrading to more permanent fixes, these roads had to be fixed right from the start. They are hoping to have VT-131 open to the public by mid-November

John Broker-Campbell shared a map of local road and bridge damage – both just after the event and as of October 15th. The RPC has been compiling information on road network damage to assist towns and so that the State had a better idea of the progress on the recovery efforts. Initially information was collected to assist local travel – showing which roads were open, closed and emergency only. That task then morphed into collecting information on the type of damage and the current road status – twice a week, then once a week.

Marie Caduto (Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) Watershed coordinator) discussed what happened in our rivers and lakes during the event and after, particularly as it relates to our transportation infrastructure. The main points Marie covered were:

- The rivers and streams, on the whole, acted how they expected
- Over time a new deeper river channel will emerge in the wider shallower channel we currently have – we need to leave the river to do its own thing

- For many places this was way above a 100-year storm event – but haven't had the data yet to work out how much above
- Protecting infrastructure (houses) has to be done – but there has to be some give and take.
- Avoiding the problems that flooding causes (such as not having houses and infrastructure in floodplains) is better than floodproofing. But this will take a long time.
- There have been issues with people doing the wrong things in the streams. Gravel, sand deposits and big irregular rocks should be left in the rivers and streams – not only for fish habitat, but also to provide some friction to the water when it rushes through. Tree trunks are also useful for those purposes.
- Sediment in the lakes of Ludlow and Plymouth won't settle until next year
- Just as wildfires serve a purpose, what about floods? Floods help rivers to re-establish equilibrium after we've been changing it for the last 200 years.
- If a road is running right next to the river, for every 1 foot a road is raised the river channel becomes 3 feet narrower.
- In recovery we need to think of the long term while doing the short-term fixes, including studying the rivers and towns adopting Fluvial Erosion Hazard areas.

John Broker-Campbell gave an overview and handout of some of the potential FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs – Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA), Pre-Disaster Mitigation Competitive (PDM-C) (due November 4th), and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) (Letter of intent due December 30 and application due January 20). Documenting damage is key. Apply for funds, even if you don't think that you have the greatest need – show a demand so that hopefully more money will be allocated in the future.

Acceptance of Minutes of July 13, 2011

Tom Kenyon moved to approve the minutes of July 13, 2011 as written. Second by Sharon Bixby. Approved unanimously.

Updates and announcements

- a. *I-91 Bridge 33 N&S over RT 44 in Windsor [IM 091-1(64)].* Delayed until at least the first quarter of 2012 due to Irene
- b. *South Woodstock bridge project (SEP-14).* New project in South Woodstock which had a public meeting in Woodstock July/August 2011. Likely delayed due to Irene. Although outside the region, we felt it would be useful to keep track of the project as it may affect commuters using VT-106, particularly those living in Reading.
- c. Dead trees along the state highway. Staff following up with the Districts. They know where the dead trees are, and deal with it when they can. Usually have an issue with getting permission from landowners.
- d. *Town Right of Way Issues – Road Foreman Meeting - summary of answers from Jim Barlow (VLCT Staff Attorney) – will be forwarded by email*
- e. *State Energy Plan – Public comment until November 5th*
- f. *State Public Transit Plan – VIT hearing November 16th*
- g. *Transportation Enhancement Grants – We have two applications from our region – Ludlow for a bike path north of the village connecting to Jackson Gore and Buttermilk Falls, and Chester for sidewalk upgrades around the village*
- h. *2011 Bike and Pedestrian Count Report – Katharine handed out the new report which includes counts for at least a week and from both the Spring and Summer.*
- i. *2012 Better Backroads Grant Round – We are working on an application.*

Access management category updates

The TAC reviewed the final suggestions for the access management category changes for state highways. Following consultation with the towns we have the following recommendations:

Villages (Make category 6)

1. Felchville – need to move related category six slightly further north to the intersection with Tyson – where the village actually is.
2. Perkinsville – need to add
7. Ascutney - Move change from Category 6 to 4 on Route 5 to after the intersection with VT-131

Make category 4

4. Route 100 in Andover (previously no category)
6. Route 10 and 106 intersection (previously no category)

Make category 3

5. Route 11 near Chester/ Springfield border (previously no category)
10. Route 11 between Chester and Springfield (Upgrade)

Take no action

3. Gassetts – do not need to recognize village
8. Route 11W Springfield end
9. Route 11E Chester end
11. North Springfield – Route 106 and 10 intersection.

Sharon Bixby made a motion to recommend the changes to the state. Seconded by Tom Kenyon. Approved unanimously.

Next Meeting: November 16, 2011 at 7 pm

Future agenda items

- More on flood recovery progress

Sharon Bixby moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 pm. Second by Tom Kenyon. Approved unanimously.