

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

**Meeting Minutes of September 24, 2014**

A meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) was held at the Connecticut River Transit Offices in Rockingham, VT, at 6pm.

**Attendance** – TAC members present: Kristi Morris, Springfield (Chair); Tom Kenyon, West Windsor (Vice-Chair); John Saydek, Cavendish; Arne Jonynas, Chester; Sharon Bixby, Ludlow; Jeff Slade, Weathersfield; and Jeff Taft-Dick, At-Large.

Others present: Katharine Otto, SWCRPC; Maureen Shattuck and Trevor Hanbridge, Springfield Hospital's Community Health Team (CHT); Jill Lord, Mount Ascutney Hospital; Rebecca Gagnon, Connecticut River Transit; and Ross MacDonald, Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans).

**Meeting Opened:** Kristi Morris opened the meeting at 6:05pm

**Welcome and introductions**

**Acceptance of minutes**

*Tom Kenyon moved to approve the minutes of August 28, 2014. Seconded by Jeff Slade. Approved unanimously.*

**Discussion about unmet transportation needs and efforts by Hospital Committees/ Partnerships**

Maureen Shattuck and Trevor Hanbridge from Springfield Hospital's Community Health Team (CHT) gave an overview on their efforts to identify and address unmet transportation needs in the Springfield area:

- The CHT was started up about 2.5 years ago as part of the Blueprint for Health, and is funded by Vermont's five public and private health insurers. The CHT covers the area of the Springfield Medical Cares System (SMCS) which goes out as far as Ludlow, Grafton, Reading and parts of NH. It became obvious in early meetings that transportation was a key barrier to health care. The first meeting of the CHT transportation group was in November 2012.
- About 1.5 years ago the CHT compiled the "Transportation Algorithm" to first help people truly understand what transportation options were in the Springfield area, including less expensive options (eg not calling the ambulance for transportation, when a pre-paid taxi could meet the need). That helped address some of the transportation needs, but it became clear there were still people falling through the cracks.
- The CHT secured a small grant to address these unmet needs, and then received a \$50,000 Holt Foundation grant in January 2014 which really enabled them to identify and address the unmet needs. The data they have collected as they have been using the grant will help them to seek both further funding and maybe also policy changes that would prevent more people from falling through the cracks.
- Community partners have been key to the success of the Team, as well as a wide variety of strategies. A key part of their efforts is "Health Transit" (<http://healthtransit.org/>) which focuses on transportation options.

Jill Lord from Mount Ascutney Hospital gave an overview of efforts by their staff and partners to address unmet transportation needs in the Windsor area:

- A community assessment carried out a few years ago said that transportation is a key issue
- Volunteers in Action is a key partner who provides rides in the area. Unfortunately the drivers are aging and they need more people to help give the rides.
- Several funding opportunities the Springfield area have pursued (eg Holt grant) are not available to the Windsor area
- They have been working with the Good News Garage to provide shopping trips to Claremont's Walmart and Market Basket twice a month
- Windsor began to explore reinstating the in-town bus route a year and a half ago, but that effort stalled.

## Update on Connecticut River Transit

Rebecca Gagnon, General Manager from Connecticut River Transit (CRT, "The Current", [crtransit.org/](http://crtransit.org/)) gave an overview of what has been happening with transit in the area, and what is to come:

- Basic statistics for CRT: \$1.6 million for Medicaid transportation, \$565,000 for Elders and Persons With Disabilities Program, 70 volunteer drivers, 300 calls a day requesting rides, 10 dial-a-ride buses and many fixed route buses also.
- Fares instituted to replace the "donation" on all routes earlier this year. This is an effort to help cover costs better as the donation system was not really working. There has not been too bad a loss in ridership. Fares range from \$1 to \$3, some per ride and some per day.
- CRT just purchased 4 new vehicles to help cover rides for patients with mobility issues or larger patients. These new vehicles should cut costs for CRT since they won't need to use the Golden Cross Ambulance as much (currently \$19,000 per month to use them).
- CRT will be merging with another transit provider, Deerfield Valley Transit Association (DVTA) from the Wilmington VT area, in the next year. A variety of details are yet to be worked through.

## Tour of CRT facility

Rebecca Gagnon gave a route of the CRT facility, including the offices, a storage area for buses, a maintenance bay, and a bus wash.

## Go Vermont – Ross McDonald, VTrans

Go Vermont is a resource for Vermonters offering free carpool matching and vanpool services, and statewide bus routes [www.connectingcommuters.org](http://www.connectingcommuters.org). Ross particularly focused on how to use the new carpooling service through Zimride both for regular trips and special events. There has been a significant increase in use of Vermont's rideshare service since it moved to its new, easy-to-use format.

## State Park and Ride Facility Plan

This discussion was postponed to the next meeting.

## Updates and Announcements

- Vermont Highway Safety Alliance Annual Meeting – 10/14/2014*
- State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Public hearing – 10/21/2014 at 2pm. If you cannot attend, you can email comments and questions to Matthew Langham at VTrans.*
- Vermont Transportation Board Hearings – aimed at 18-35 year olds, closest meetings to the region are 10/22 in Randolph and 11/4 in Brattleboro*
- NNERI meetings coming later this fall – October/ November*
- Handheld cell phone ban goes into effect 10/1. <http://highwaysafety.vermont.gov/phonesdown>*
- Regional Transportation Plan Update – will be having its noticed public hearing at the next RPC Board meeting (10/21 at noon) alongside other chapters of the Regional Plan which have updates.*

## Other Business

Tom Kenyon asked about whether there are any statistics about the success of the Route 4 rumble stripes. Katharine will follow up with VTrans.

## Future agenda items and next meeting date

State Park and Ride Facility Plan discussion was postponed to the next meeting.

Next meeting - 10/22. While meetings are regularly on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month, there will be a doodle poll to work out availability for the November/ December meetings – which would otherwise fall the day before Thanksgiving and Christmas.

*Sharon Bixby moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:20pm. Seconded by Jeff Slade. Approved unanimously.*