

1 Chittenden County Metropolitan Planning Organization  
2 Regular Meeting  
3 Minutes  
4

5 DATE: Wednesday, March 15, 2006  
6 TIME: 7:00 p.m.  
7 PLACE: CCMPO Offices, 30 Kimball Avenue, South Burlington, VT 05403  
8 PRESENT: Gerard Mullen, Bolton Andy Montroll, Burlington  
9 Jeff McDonald, Charlotte Marc Landry, Colchester  
10 Dale Arango, Essex Junction Andrea Morgante, Hinesburg  
11 Ken Nolan, Milton Virginia Clarke, Richmond  
12 Paul Bohne, Shelburne Alternate Marc Maheux, Underhill  
13 Tom Buckley, Westford George Gerecke, Williston  
14 Mike O'Brien, Winooski (V-Chair) Polly McMurtry, VTrans Plan. Coordinator  
15 Ex-Officio: Chris Jolly, FHWA Aaron Frank, CCTA  
16 Garret Mott, CCRPC  
17 Others: Matthew Langham, VTrans Rich Ranaldo, VTrans Special Projects  
18 Greg Brown, CCRPC  
19 Staff: Scott Johnstone, Executive Dir. Peter Keating, Sr. Trans. Planner  
20 Christine Forde, Sr. Trans. Planner Dave Roberts, Sr. Trans. Planner  
21 Daryl Benoit, Trans. Planner Susan Smichenko, Sr. Trans. Planner  
22 Bernadette Ferenc, Exec. Asst.  
23

24 The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by the Vice-Chair, Mike O'Brien. He welcomed  
25 Polly McMurtry who just returned after two months in Italy.  
26

27 1. Changes to the agenda. Virginia Clarke added item 8g. - a report from the Regional Plan  
28 Review Committee.  
29

30 2. Public Comment Period. There were no members of the public present.  
31

32 3. Action on Consent Agenda. There were three minor TIP amendments on the consent agenda.  
33 GEORGE GERECKE MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA.  
34 JERRY MULLEN SECONDED AND THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.  
35

36 4. Approval of Minutes. VIRGINIA CLARKE MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY JERRY  
37 MULLEN, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 15, 2006. MOTION CARRIED  
38 WITH JEFF McDONALD, DALE ARANGO, PAUL BOHNE AND MARC MAHEUX  
39 ABSTAINING.  
40

41 5. FY 07 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Update. Scott Johnstone noted that the  
42 meeting packet included the results of what happened when we asked people for ideas. We  
43 received 325 ideas from the public forum, emails, phone calls, letters, etc. Then we had to  
44 decide what to do with it all and to be considerate about it. We tried to organize them to get  
45 some themes from them. He looked for the opportunities here, what money is available and  
46 what's tied up with things we have supported before. Our initial FY06 budget was \$1.9M,  
47 including the expectation of new money from SAFETEA-LU. He did not include any carryover  
48 money because that was committed to on-going projects. For FY07 it looks like we'll have  
49 \$2.2M to work with, not including carryover. At the UPWP committee last night there was some

1 question about why we don't do something different than support SOVs. Scott noted that we  
2 spend at least half our UPWP budget on things that deal with non-SOV related things.

3  
4 Scott Johnstone then reviewed areas where we have upward pressures: We need a new computer  
5 server, which we share with CCRPC and our half would cost between \$12-15,000; we need to  
6 put more money into the 2030 MTP, technical assistance (TA) and TDM, such as sustaining  
7 Way to Go Week.

8 Areas where we see major downward trends are:

- 9 • CCRPC has asked for \$60,000 less than FY06;
- 10 • Safe Routes to Schools has been a pilot program and since it's now a national program we'll  
11 get VTrans funding that will be separate from the UPWP budget;
- 12 • We'll need less for the Transportation Model since we just did a major update;
- 13 • The TIP takes less work since Christine has it so well organized, plus we need her to work on  
14 other projects;
- 15 • Communications – we're not doing as much with the newsletter and we really need to  
16 evaluate the value of paying for a formal setup for our newsletter, vs. email. We've also  
17 spent a few thousand dollars to get people together for an annual meeting - is that necessary?
- 18 • Strategic planning is down - although we have more to do this year we don't need a  
19 consultant;
- 20 • Locally managed technical assistance and scoping is down. Historically these were put in  
21 play because we didn't have the match to spend the federal dollars. A lot of communities  
22 have used the funds, but their staff is maxed out doing these projects, and the interest and  
23 backlog has slowed down. We're not suggesting that the regular TA and scoping should go  
24 down. Today we have funding available because nobody wants to put up the 20% match.
- 25 • We also do not need money for the 2025 MTP since it's adopted.

26  
27 This leaves us options for investment. We can either add to TA and scoping; invest in strategic  
28 new opportunities; or a combination. He doesn't think we should reduce spending on TA and  
29 scoping, but he's not sure raising it a lot makes sense either. He's not sure we can manage many  
30 more projects here or locally going through the process because there is already a backlog  
31 waiting to advance to the design process.

32 Scott was able to boil down the 325 ideas to 16-17 conceptual areas:

- 33 • TMA (Transportation Management Area) startups – we have CATMA that is a very  
34 successful TMA, but we haven't really found ways to get more of them. TMAs are a great  
35 way to build additional public transportation infrastructure we don't have to pay for, as they  
36 are predominantly paid for by private dollars. We'd put some dollars in for seed money to  
37 help get the private sector going and try it out and eventually it would pay for itself.
- 38 • TDM/bike/pedestrian marketing initiatives: campaign to get folks to do more of that.
- 39 • Regional/inter-regional bike ped coordination. At some point in the future this MPO will go  
40 beyond Chittenden County boundaries. Probably St. Albans first and then maybe to  
41 Vergennes as the state doesn't want a lot of MPOs. The Island Line is a good example of  
42 where it crosses county line and we're trying to figure out how to coordinate activities. If we  
43 start working with other counties now it would help with bike path connectivity.
- 44 • Futures initiatives. There are lots of ways to think about land use and transportation planning  
45 and when we're in the middle of updating a plan, new ideas might seem scary and be set  
46 aside. This would allow us to educate ourselves about new ideas before we get to the 2035  
47 plan so that we wouldn't feel intimidated to include them.
- 48 • Enhanced TSM Initiative. We want to make the most of what we have.

- 1 • Alternative Fuels Plan. This is one of our goals in the MTP and we've never spent a dollar  
2 on it, so we should either look at it or get rid of the goal.
- 3 • Air Quality Plan. This has come up a lot.
- 4 • Transportation Safety Program. Because of language in SAFETEA-LU, the 2030 MTP will  
5 be required to have a chapter on safety.
- 6 • Aging Population Initiative. We need to decide what to do with the Aging of Vermont and  
7 what that will mean for transportation. We're being contacted by health and human service  
8 agencies already.
- 9 • Project Management and Information System. We need to develop a way to know what  
10 we're managing.
- 11 • Small Community Service Initiative. When he did his listening tour he heard that the smaller  
12 communities have a problem with the services we provide. Either they don't know about  
13 them or they don't have the staff to even develop an application. Should we try to figure out  
14 a way to help level the playing field?
- 15 • Past Project Performance Research. Perhaps we should review completed projects, such as  
16 US 7, to see what happens after improvements are made to see the LOS, etc. so we can learn  
17 from it.
- 18 • Transportation Model: Regional Phase 1 would begin to extend to surrounding regions and  
19 we'd all benefit because we'd get data about traffic coming into Chittenden County. The  
20 Day Based model will be needed if we ever fall out of attainment for air quality. (Ours is  
21 peak hour.)
- 22 • Innovative Financing Initiative. Has already been discussed.
- 23 • Park and Ride Scoping Initiative. We need to do more and faster.
- 24 • Land Use Planning (Model legislation, parking): There were many suggestions to develop  
25 model legislation, such as TDM recently developed by Colchester, to put into community  
26 bylaws and plans.
- 27 • Assist communities – projects to implementation. Sometimes projects get lost once scoping  
28 is done and reports are issued to the town. We need to make sure they don't fall by the  
29 wayside and then by the time the project is ready to move we find the scoping study is  
30 obsolete. Is there a way the MPO can help a project get to the design phase?

31 A lot of these ideas don't embed a long-term transportation program and it may be a wise  
32 strategic choice to just have these last for the life of SAFETEA-LU. That way, if we don't get  
33 more money in future federal transportation legislation it would be easier to pare back.

34  
35 The UPWP Committee had the following input:

- 36 • Added aging concept to a list of possible initiatives.
- 37 • Added assistance to communities to get to implementation initiative.
- 38 • Agreed that TA and scoping need to be budgeted at a level that is achievable and will result  
39 in projects moving forward to design and construction.
- 40 • Agreed that locally managed TA and scoping desire from communities seems to be going  
41 down.
- 42 • General concurrence with a list of initiatives, with various advocates for each.

43  
44 Scott Johnstone then said over the next few weeks staff will develop a preliminary UPWP budget  
45 and scope based on input from the UPWP committee and the board. We'll have the TAC review  
46 it for preliminary reaction, meet with UPWP committee for input and present it at the April  
47 board meeting. We plan to hold the public hearing in May.

48

1 There was a brief discussion about why the number of requests for locally managed scoping is  
2 down. Scott said some of the communities have been very busy and some have found if they  
3 wait a while they don't have to pay the 20% local match. George Gerecke said in the past couple  
4 of years we've allocated funds and nobody has asked for them. He said at least in Williston, the  
5 public works director has a lot on his plate and just can't handle any more. Jerry Mullen said in  
6 the small communities they have only one or two staff and they don't have time to come up with  
7 plans, etc.

8  
9 When asked about TMA start up and what groups might fit that, Scott Johnstone said a TMA is a  
10 collection of private sector employers that want to provide transportation services to their  
11 organizations and they pay the bill. In our work we identified 6-8 areas in Chittenden County  
12 where it may be ripe to form a TMA including IBM, Taft Corners, downtown Burlington, Water  
13 Tower Hill and the Route 15 corridor. We need to move people around and this can be done  
14 with shuttles, off-site parking with shuttles, subsidizing transit passes, carpooling, and  
15 encouraging walking and biking. When asked if there is a long-term real look at what the needs  
16 are going to be and how they can be filled, rather than finding folks who want to do it, Peter  
17 Keating said the MTP identifies 10 preliminary employment centers for TDM program. Last  
18 year we did a TDM plan and those areas have been identified.

19  
20 Andrea Morgante said one of the things that struck her reading through the list, was getting a lot  
21 more focused on the issue of aging. She thinks that is really talking about ourselves and we  
22 should look at places in the country that already have elder populations and see what works there  
23 (or not). .

24  
25 6. Executive Director's Report. This was sent electronically to members.

26  
27 7. Circ Highway Presentation. Rich Ranaldo distributed three documents: Circ-Williston EIS  
28 newsletter #2, which gives a general description of what they're up to and where they're going;  
29 the PowerPoint presentation of the design workshops from February and the Indirect and  
30 Cumulative Impact (ICI) Assessment workshop held last week. VTrans embarked on a five-step  
31 process in the EIS. We're in step 3 and have been since November. This is the detailed analysis  
32 of the short list of alternatives. The eight alternatives can be categorized as focusing in three  
33 areas (as shown in the newsletter) and include roundabouts, public transit, park and ride lots, and  
34 bike & pedestrian. Step 4, culminating in a Draft EIS should be happening middle to late  
35 summer. They'll have formal public hearing to describe it to the public and give a comparison of  
36 the alternatives. Step 5 or Final EIS will culminate in a Record of Decision by the end of the  
37 year. In step 3 they do intend to have two more ICI workshops and another round of meetings to  
38 share what the detailed analysis is telling us (late spring/early summer). In the past year they've  
39 had 21 public meetings with about 710 people attending, which is great participation.

40  
41 The public design workshops were to take their design out to the see what members of the  
42 communities felt would work better. The first one in Williston dealt with the Route 2A corridor;  
43 Essex Junction covered Five Corners and Park Street; and the last in Williston covered the A& B  
44 corridor. Each night was different and people had different concerns. These include:

- 45 • Adding capacity to Route 2A.
- 46 • Don't want to see roundabout at Five Corners.
- 47 • Pedestrians crossing 2A
- 48 • Sidewalks and combined use paths along 2A.
- 49 • How do pedestrians get through roundabouts?

- 1 • In the A/B alignment folks were concerned about noise and what'll happen in their  
2 backyards.
- 3 • Support for looking at ways to narrow the footprint through the A/B corridor.
- 4 • Support for overall connection of the interstate to Route 117 through the A/B corridor.
- 5 With this information they're revising the design as it unfolds. Over the next month they'll  
6 finalize preliminary design. They're now waiting for preliminary transportation model runs to  
7 help inform them about intersections and roundabouts to see capacity we need, and they'll be  
8 coming back with the effects of that design on the environment and transportation.
- 9

10 The last piece Rich Ranaldo talked about was the ICI work. Up until now the ICI study has  
11 taken a parallel track and now they need to come together. What do we use for employment and  
12 populations projections? They've been established in the past and we've looked at those through  
13 scoping process this past year. Some feel the projections are dated and high. There is new and  
14 more recent information available and they're working with CCRPC and CCMPO staff on these  
15 projections to understand what the future may bring. ICI is supposed to determine what the  
16 places will look like with all the projects in the plans built. Last Thursday's session provided  
17 their findings. They're seeing Chittenden County as a percentage of the Northwest Vermont  
18 region holding its own or lessening a little outward to 2025. The most recent demographic  
19 information has suggested that Vermont and the Northeast in general are "demographically  
20 challenged" (we're older and grayer and there are less of us). Their conclusion is that there will  
21 not be less jobs or people, but the rate of growth will be slower than originally thought. George  
22 Gerecke said the other part of the message is that the Chittenden County share of the percentage  
23 of growth will drop but that the rest of the Northwest region will grow at a slightly faster rate.  
24 (The Northwest region is a six-county area.) Rich Ranaldo noted the next charge of the ICI work  
25 is how to distribute the population and employment over the next 20 years. They plan to use the  
26 LUAM tool of the Transportation Model that CCMPO has to help allocate employment and  
27 population based on land that is available for households and employment. Then each  
28 alternative will be interjected into the model and we'll see where these things will be in 2025.  
29 He noted the LUAM process is shown in a flow chart in the ICI hand out. It's a complicated  
30 process, but with the help and support of the RPC & MPO technical staff they have updated the  
31 2000 development build-out to 2005 and will look out to 2025. They will look at it first without  
32 Circ Williston and then with each of the alternatives. The next step in ICI is to hold workshop  
33 #4 and report what we're finding. Workshop #5 will be "now that we know where potential  
34 impacts are, here are the potential strategies for dealing with them". This will be its own chapter  
35 in the EIS. When asked if there has been any consideration of the cost of fuel, or is everything  
36 here to do with building the road one way or the other, Rich Ranaldo said they've heard that  
37 question and they'll look into that to see what impact the last six months have had on driving  
38 habits. Chris Jolly asked if it's possible as they move forward that some of the 8 alternatives can  
39 be dropped or will they be looking at all 8 through the end? Rich Ranaldo said they have  
40 discussed whether they should reduce the list because there is so much similarity, but they need  
41 to really see how that would affect the document, so right now it's 8. Tom Buckley questioned  
42 constraints that were in play when you looked at public transportation. Rich said they looked at  
43 what is out there today and what is being planned for the future. Aaron Frank said Louis Berger  
44 had a transit sub-consultant that was very well versed in public transportation and they worked  
45 with CCTA. When asked the time horizon for ICI, Rich said 20 years to 2025.

46

47 Rich Ranaldo reminded members that they can go to the circ website at [www.circeis.org](http://www.circeis.org) as a  
48 way to contact him and to find out about future meetings. If you don't have access to the web,  
49 hard copies of all material are available at all public libraries in Burlington, Colchester, Essex,

1 Essex Junction and Williston, as well as his office. All the notes from the workshops are on the  
2 website so we can see what the public has had to say.

3  
4 8. Committee Reports.

- 5 a. Executive Committee. The draft meeting minutes from March 1<sup>st</sup> were attached to the  
6 meeting package.
- 7 b. Technical Advisory Committee. The March 8<sup>th</sup> TAC report was sent electronically. The  
8 major discussion was the future of the TAC. Some feel it should be a smaller technical  
9 committee. Others support leaving larger committee for networking. There was also a lot of  
10 discussion about what they should be working on.
- 11 c. Strategic Planning Committee. There has not been any activity since the last board meeting.  
12 The committee is ready to discuss committee structure but wanted to hear from the TAC first.
- 13 d. Public Transportation Committee. Tom Buckley reported that there is an unmet needs study  
14 in progress that SAFETEA-LU requires and Peter Keating is laboring through. This was  
15 piloted last year by three RPCs and the survey has had lots of problems and they're trying to  
16 deal with them. Chris Cole talked to them about the state's short-range transit plan. The  
17 next version will be fiscally constrained. Discussion led to a consensus in the group that it is  
18 important for the MPO to develop a position, so this committee will develop a position for  
19 MPO on new starts for presentation to the board. They also talked about the western corridor  
20 from Burlington to Bennington. They did some brainstorming about how the committee  
21 could help this board develop a future for public transportation. We began discussion about  
22 the plan after this plan (2035). They will meet again in May.
- 23 e. Finance Committee Report. There was none.
- 24 f. CCRPC. Garret Mott said the RPC staff has been working closely with MPO staff on the  
25 forecasting and have agreed how to do them. He feels it's a major step forward. They have  
26 put together their tasks and their work plan for FY07 and presented them to the UPWP  
27 committee, which is \$60,000 less than FY06. They participated in the quarterly meeting of  
28 the Northwest Vermont project. They're still plugging away on the regional plan and look  
29 forward to hearing from the MPO. Technically the comment period ends March 31<sup>st</sup> and  
30 they've received many comments. When Mike O'Brien said ours may be late, Garret said it  
31 would really be helpful to have them sooner rather than later. When Mike suggested that  
32 perhaps the draft could be forwarded to CCRPC as unofficial comments, Ken Nolan said  
33 Milton has some serious concerns about that. Scott Johnstone noted that the Plan Review  
34 Committee recommended these be discussed by the board tonight with final action in April.  
35 Ken Nolan just saw them at 8 a.m. today and it was just added to the agenda tonight. Mike  
36 O'Brien said we'll have a full discussion at the April meeting. Garret Mott said the  
37 committee will not be addressing them until they are official MPO comments.
- 38 g. Regional Plan Review Committee. Virginia Clarke said the committee went line by line  
39 through the document and focused on how transportation was related to each section of the  
40 regional plan. As we know from our MTP, land use and transportation are integrally related  
41 and land use is the biggest driver in transportation. Peter Keating said comments were on 1)  
42 changing text in background information or 2) suggesting new policy in certain areas. They  
43 explained rationale if they provided a new policy and why it makes sense from MPO  
44 perspective. There are 26 individual comments or changes and unless you look at the  
45 regional plan you probably don't know the context they're in. A brief discussion ensued  
46 about how to access the draft regional plan. It is available on their website and on CD in all  
47 municipal offices.

48  
49 Ken Nolan said he is still trying to figure out our new committee structure. When he left  
50 there was the board and the TAC. Now there is a myriad of committees and the same 4-5

1 people are serving on all committees. He will discuss this with the Executive Committee. He  
2 did run these comments by his town staff and they have some concerns:

- 3 • One item that concerns them deals with language on planning area descriptions and  
4 reference to village centers. They are currently trying to create a new downtown that  
5 doesn't necessarily qualify as an existing village center with what is being discussed  
6 in the legislature and that could cause problems for them.
- 7 • Under Future Land Use Issues we're recommending adding language that "municipal  
8 plans and bylaws should promote infill development, redevelopment and open space."  
9 He's not sure of the context, but if we want to put open space in metro areas that  
10 raises concerns for them.
- 11 • He appreciated the earlier discussion about TMA programs, but Husky is identified  
12 and if you reference CATMA but don't recommend funding, he's concerned.
- 13 • A deal killer which would cause him to vote against it is under Transportation and  
14 Rights of Way background on page 4 regarding transportation ROW held by private  
15 entities should be acquired by the public – often it is the appropriate thing to do, but is  
16 not always appropriate.
- 17 • Under Housing Policies we suggest "all new housing developments ...where  
18 appropriate should plan for public transportation services..." Does that say that  
19 anytime someone subdivides to build two houses or only if an Act 250 permit is  
20 required?
- 21 • At one point we address forested land management – the comment from town staff  
22 was why is the MPO commenting on forest management?

23  
24 Mike O'Brien said we'll leave it to this board whether we should deal with items that are not  
25 specifically dealing with transportation. Garret Mott did note the RPC has asked for comments  
26 about everything in the plan, but it's up to the MPO whether they're comfortable with it. He  
27 thanked Peter Keating for being a valuable asset to the RPC review committee – he's been a real  
28 help and a loyal soldier attending every meeting and has been a great help with the wording.

29  
30 Mike O'Brien asked members to get their comments to Peter Keating, prior to the next board  
31 meeting. When Peter asked if members would find it helpful to put each comment in the context  
32 of the regional plan for them, they agreed it would. Marc Maheux feels that although he's new,  
33 the MPO as a transportation board, should deal with only transportation issues. He has a town  
34 planning commission to deal with the rest.

35  
36 JEFF McDONALD MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY JERRY MULLEN, TO ADJOURN  
37 AT 8:40 P.M. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

38  
39 Respectfully submitted,

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41  
42  
43 Bernadette Ferenc  
44 Executive Assistant