

Chittenden County Metropolitan Planning Organization  
Regular Meeting  
Minutes

Date: Wednesday, May 16, 2007  
Time: 7:00 p.m.  
Place: CCMPO Offices, 30 Kimball Avenue, Suite 206, South Burlington, VT 05403

Present: Bill Keogh, Burlington Alternate      Jeff McDonald, Charlotte  
Marc Landry, Colchester      Jeff Carr, Essex (Sec.-Treas.)  
Dale Arango, Essex Junction      Andrea Morgante, Hinesburg  
Rob Zimmerman, Huntington Alt.      Bob Penniman, Jericho (Chair)  
Ken Nolan, Milton      Virginia Clarke, Richmond  
Jim Dudley, Shelburne      Jim Condos, South Burlington  
Steve Owens, Underhill      George Gerecke, Williston  
Mike O'Brien, Winooski (V-Chair)      Amy Bell, VTrans  
Others: Marc Maheux, Underhill      Ken Robie, VTrans Special Projects  
Max Levy, Essex Selectboard      Matthew Langham, VTrans  
Staff: Scott Johnstone, Executive Director      Peter Keating, Sr. Transportation Planner  
Christine Forde, Sr. Trans. Planner      Dave Roberts, Sr. Transportation Planner  
Eleni Churchill, Sr. Trans. Planner      Daryl Benoit, Transportation Planner  
Bryan Davis, Transportation Planner      Bernadette Ferenc, Executive Assistant

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by the chair, Bob Penniman. He introduced the new representative from Underhill, Steve Owens and Max Levy from the Essex Selectboard.

1. Changes to the Agenda. Ken Robie is here to give us an update on the public process for the circ highway and we'll add it as new Item #4. We'll move the consent agenda item (Western Corridor Consultant Selection) to item 10a. since we are now requesting action.
2. Public Comment Period. There were none.
3. Action on Consent Agenda. Item moved to deliberative agenda.
4. Circ Highway Briefing. Ken Robie noted that they have three public information meetings scheduled for next week on the Circ EIS. He distributed a newsletter describing these meetings. They'll also hold a separate meeting for public officials on Tuesday, May 22 at 9:00 a.m. at the CCMPO offices, which Sec. Lunderville is expected to attend. There will be a press briefing following at 1 p.m. to answer questions before the public meetings. The intent of the public meetings is to present the results of the detailed analysis. A summary of what will be out in the draft EIS which they anticipate releasing by the end of July. Jim Condos expressed concern about the short notice for the public officials meeting and suggested they hold another one later in the week. Ken Robie said they'll look into that option. He said the reason for the late notice was that they were going to hold those meetings the week before the Draft EIS was issued, but because they've heard that folks were anxious they decided to move them ahead. Once the draft is released, there is a 45 day comment period and there will be a formal public hearing after 30 days. Cost issue: If you listened to VPR or read the *Williston Observer* you heard that there is another \$1M on the table. In 2004 VTrans estimated the EIS would cost \$2M; Louis Berger's first estimate came in at \$4M and since then it has gone up to \$5.2M and now they'll amend it

1 again to \$6.2 M. The last million is non-consultant costs. The reason for the high cost is the  
2 amount of time they've spent on thoroughly evaluating each of the ten alternatives. When asked  
3 what type of contract that was, Ken Robie said it's a personal services contract with labor rate  
4 schedule. Bob Penniman said he asked Ken to come tonight and address the costs because he  
5 recalled the \$2M in the TIP for 2004 and the current TIP has \$6.3M. Ken Robie said there is  
6 \$1.5M in construction for FY08 and they're requesting those dollars be moved to PE. It was  
7 noted that this EIS is 80% federal/20% state cost split.  
8

9 5. Approval of Minutes. JEFF CARR MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF  
10 APRIL 18, 2007 WITH CORRECTIONS, IF ANY. MARC LANDRY SECONDED. MOTION  
11 CARRIED WITH JIM CONDOS, BILL KEOGH, MARC LANDRY AND STEVE OWENS  
12 ABSTAINING.  
13

14 6. Executive Director's Report. Scott Johnstone did not get his report out before the meeting but  
15 hopes to have it out on Friday. He announced that Susan Smichenko has now moved to Boston  
16 and has left the CCMPO. We have hired Bryan Davis who started on Monday to fill Michelle  
17 Mraz's position as transportation planner doing small community outreach and bike/pedestrian  
18 work. He noted that we've had an entry level position open for a year, but we think we have  
19 someone ready to accept the position. He'll be graduating from UVM this year and we hope  
20 he'll be on board by June.  
21

22 7. Innovative Financing Presentation. Scott Johnstone made a brief presentation about what is  
23 happening in the country and here in Vermont. We're driving a lot more and we're growing as a  
24 region and it's estimated that our population will grow from 150,000 to 190,000 by 2030.  
25 Growth is not happening in the urban core as much as in outlying areas, thus increasing VMT  
26 and congestion. Spending: FY08 there was \$53 M in budget for the region that VTrans sent to  
27 the legislature, but they funded about half. There is significant money – there is \$430M in the  
28 transportation budget in this state, but \$35.6M goes to JTOC, which funds things other than  
29 transportation. Bill Keogh noted that this year there is other money funding transportation. Jim  
30 Condos said the majority of money is used for state police (public safety). VTrans said too many  
31 promises have been made for too many projects and we can't do them all. They're not happy  
32 with all the earmarks for projects they hadn't heard of. The philosophy of the Road to  
33 Affordability is to fix what we already have and most public comments support that approach.  
34 However, it is a misnomer that there is no money. There has never been more money for  
35 transportation in this country. SAFETEA-LU funding is at a record high. There is also dialog  
36 that the National Highway Trust Fund is going bankrupt. That's true. As spending goes up, the  
37 reserves go down and eventually we'll be in the red, which could be as early as 2009.  
38 SAFETEA-LU was designed to do that. The state DOTs lobbied Congress to stop the reserves  
39 and put the money to work, so it was done knowingly. He gave a summary of challenges. Our  
40 fuel tax purchasing power is eroding. Construction costs have increased 10-15% per year over  
41 the past few years. That's what's driving the show. He noted US Chamber is now suggesting  
42 increases and indexing gas taxes. Our local chamber is going to begin discussions this summer.  
43 The transit fund is solvent to about 2013, but faces the same problems. He presented a chart of  
44 state gas taxes that shows that Vermont is below the national average. He reviewed various tax  
45 options states have used to raise revenue. He noted that tolling is shown to solve only about 5%  
46 of the problem in dense urban areas. He showed a timeframe for transportation. There are short  
47 term problems that may need to be solved in the next reauthorization, but other long term  
48 problems may be pushed out to future reauthorizations. Folks are looking at a wide array of  
49 ways to fund transportation. He hopes board members are coming to the workshop to be held

1 on June 4<sup>th</sup> from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Billings Student Center at UVM. We have partnered  
2 with UTC and VTrans on this workshop. Bob Penniman suggested members RSVP if they plan  
3 to attend because there may be limited space. Scott Johnstone noted that we want to have at least  
4 two people from each community (including staff and policy people). When asked if we invited  
5 Sen. Mazza and Rep. Westman, Scott said we invited all members of the House and Senate  
6 Transportation Committees. Jim Condos said the Road to Affordability may end up increasing  
7 taxes at the local level because local communities have to pick up the slack from state.  
8

9 8. FY08 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Bob Penniman noted that the action we're  
10 asking for tonight is to warn a public hearing for next month. Scott Johnstone made a brief  
11 presentation about what is in the FY08 UPWP. New money includes \$1.976 M in PL funds  
12 which is 85 % of the authorization of SAFETEA-LU. If it goes up to 87 or 90%, we'll make  
13 adjustments mid-year. He described baseline with the ups and downs. Staffing level is the same  
14 as budgeted in FY07. Our overhead rate is substantially lower for FY08 because as a group  
15 more time is billable. We had 44 comments from the public this year (vs. 320 last year). The  
16 responses to all comments are on the website. He highlighted the key comments and noted that  
17 we are proposing new investment in safety program; environmental program to prepare for the  
18 day we go out of attainment; Western Vermont corridor study (which is off budget money);  
19 SR2S lite to help communities who either didn't hear about the program or get funding; bike-ped  
20 plan is five years old and needs to be updated; Way To Go Week now has it's own task as we  
21 enhanced the program and budget; communication and public involvement (we feel we need to  
22 do more on it); small community initiative is enhanced due to response this year. We're  
23 planning Tmodel enhancements (over 18 months we're planning to spend \$220,000 with  
24 \$140,000 budgeted this year). We want to go from peak hour to day based model to allow us to  
25 do air quality monitoring. We also want to expand it to cover Northwest Vermont and update  
26 our trip survey from 1998 data. The innovative financing effort is enhanced as we feel there is  
27 more work for us to do; and we've continued technical assistance and scoping. All of the  
28 committees have looked at it and recommend it go to public hearing. **JIM CONDOS MADE A**  
29 **MOTION THAT THE CCMPO WARN THE DRAFT UNIFIED ANNUAL WORK PLAN FOR**  
30 **PUBLIC HEARING ON JUNE 20, 2007 AND FURTHER DIRECT THE STAFF TO**  
31 **PROVIDE APPROPRIATE NOTICE TO THE MEMBER COMMUNITIES PER OUR**  
32 **BYLAWS. BILL KEOGH SECONDED.** Bill Keogh is chair of the Burlington City Council  
33 Transportation Committee and wondered how the City would be involved in the Western  
34 Vermont Corridor study. Scott Johnstone said they will be a participant in the regional dialogs  
35 that will happen. Rob Zimmerman said Huntington sent in request for road stabilization scoping  
36 project and he didn't see it on page 31. Scott Johnstone said the table was done before the  
37 request came in and we can add it to the list. Jeff Carr said this is the first year of the new format  
38 for the UPWP which is now related to the MTP goals. The spreadsheet is in Technicolor to  
39 show different partners (yellow for CCRPC; purple for CCTA, etc.) Right now the goals jump  
40 around and he hopes we'll get even more organized in future years by working with the MTP  
41 committee to better define the goals. When you vote for this work program, you're voting on the  
42 operating budget for next year. He is happy to recommend we hold a public hearing and approve  
43 it next month. Members suggested that we add a key to describe what the colors in the budget  
44 spreadsheet mean. Andrea Morgante noted that one of the comments in a public hearing was a  
45 suggestion about school transportation and she suggested we may want to include school districts  
46 and Dept. of Education in our discussions since school buses could be used for other uses. Scott  
47 Johnstone said we hope to deal with it but it becomes complicated in areas outside of Burlington.  
48 Amy Bell said there will be some changes to tables on page 44 regarding carryover numbers

1 since we'll have to extend the FY07 contract and some of those numbers may be reduced.  
2 VOTE: MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

3  
4 9. Proposed Bylaw Amendments. Bob Penniman noted we had a discussion last month and we  
5 encouraged members to go to their communities and get their feedback so we could go forward  
6 with the proposed bylaws. Scott Johnstone gave a brief overview of the significant bylaw  
7 modifications:

- 8 ? Recognize standing committees that already exist.
- 9 ? Add new Regional Initiatives Committee (RIC) to focus on issues that cut across town lines.
- 10 ? Changing name of TAC from "Technical" to "Transportation" Advisory Committee
- 11 ? Fix quorum for Executive Committee (needs to be 4 with 6 member committee).
- 12 ? Assure new leadership is elected in June.
- 13 ? Eliminate appendices for Executive Committee and TAC, by incorporating them into the  
14 body of the bylaws.
- 15 ? Committee did not come up with significant modification in voting structure, but suggests we  
16 review this with each decennial census because that's when we'll look at boundaries of the  
17 CCMPO and the numbers are better. They did suggest we begin process of reviewing the  
18 voting structure in 2008 or 2009 to come up with a formula that will work for everyone.

19  
20 The Strategic Planning Committee recommends that you warn a public hearing for June 20,  
21 2007. JIM CONDOS MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY BILL KEOGH, THAT CCMPO  
22 WARN THE DRAFT BYLAWS FOR PUBLIC HEARING ON JUNE 20, 2007 AND  
23 FURTHER DIRECT STAFF TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE NOTICE TO THE MEMBER  
24 COMMUNITIES PER OUR BYLAWS. Ken Nolan said Milton asked for review of voting and  
25 were told there would be changes. They were disappointed at how it came out He did go back  
26 to Milton Selectboard and was told that if we can't reach resolution where this is looked at  
27 directly, they would not support the bylaw amendments. At the time of the vote he will  
28 recommend the committee take this up ASAP and not wait until 2008 or 2009. Jeff McDonald  
29 asked how the community assessment is determined for each community and wondered whether  
30 that shouldn't be addressed in the bylaws, since we're codifying things. It was noted that a  
31 community's portion of the local match assessment is based on their percentage of the county's  
32 Equalized Education Grand List. After a brief discussion, members generally agreed that we  
33 should include this. Jeff Carr suggested that we clarify that this assessment is for local match  
34 funds. Scott Johnstone will come up with the language and pass it by the Executive Committee  
35 and include it in the warning. VOTE: MOTION CARRIED WITH MILTON ABSTAINING.

36  
37 10. Prioritization of Projects. Christine Forde called members attention to a document at their  
38 places which is the FY06 Year End Report on the TIP. This report lists all projects that were  
39 funded in FFY06 and is provided for members' information. (We do have reports for each  
40 federal fiscal year on our website.)

41  
42 Christine Forde noted that this is third year that we're using the methodology we borrowed and  
43 modified from an MPO in Pennsylvania. She described how the process works. The projects are  
44 scored by VTrans program categories and each criteria is scored as High, Medium High,  
45 Medium or Low impact. She highlighted two changes that we made since last month. Paving on  
46 page 3 scores were right but the ranks were off. After South Burlington questioned the Route  
47 116 paving project, it was scored medium high for connectivity. She gave the new ranking for  
48 the paving projects. The second change is on page 4 under state bridges. The US 2 iron truss  
49 bridge was changed to Medium High for accessibility. When asked what PIN was – Christine

1 Forde said it's the state's Project Identification Number. GEORGE GERECKE MADE A  
2 MOTION THAT WE APPROVE THE PROJECT PRIORITIZATION AS AMENDED AND  
3 FORWARD IT TO VTRANS. JIM DUDLEY SECONDED. Jeff Carr asked Amy if there was  
4 any way she could see VTrans giving the MPO ranking more than 20% of the score, since we  
5 have a cooperative arrangement, Amy Bell said she didn't think so, but that we might be  
6 surprised how significant a difference that 20% could make. Jim Condos questioned why each  
7 region is scoring projects so differently. Amy Bell said VTrans is not in a position to declare  
8 how regions score their projects. Christine Forde feels we have a better scoring system because  
9 we use different factors that aren't considered in the state criteria and other regions use the same  
10 categories as the state. VOTE: MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

11  
12 11. Nominating Committee Appointment. .Bob Penniman said the bylaws call for the chair to  
13 appoint the nominating committee, and he has appointed Mike O'Brien and Jim Condos

14  
15 11 a. Western Vermont Corridor Consultant Selection. Scott Johnstone noted that in the board  
16 package we gave two options for action tonight on the Western Corridor project. We're down to  
17 two consultants at this point and therefore we ask that you approve Option B since we don't yet  
18 have a final choice. Eleni Churchill noted that we interviewed three firms that we had shortlisted  
19 from the six proposals. We have narrowed it down to two but we have to ask some questions  
20 and get clarification to take back to the selection committee. The study is the entire length of  
21 Route 7 from Massachusetts to Canada. The committee has representation from the five RPCs,  
22 VTrans and CCMPO. The MPO is managing this project, but the decision is being made by all  
23 regions. JIM CONDOS MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY JIM DUDLEY, THAT SINCE  
24 A PREFERRED CONSULTANT HAS NOT BEEN IDENTIFIED, WE AUTHORIZE THE  
25 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEETO ACT ON THIS ISSUE DURING THEIR NEXT MEETING, IF  
26 THE OCCASION ARISES. VOTE: MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

27  
28 12. Committee Reports:

- 29 a. Executive Committee. Minutes were included in the packet.
- 30 b. TAC. George Gerecke reported that at the May TAC meeting Scott Johnstone reviewed the  
31 UPWP status and they unanimously endorsed sending it on to the board tonight. They had  
32 made a couple of suggestions that were incorporated into the Draft UPWP. George attended  
33 the recent Pedestrian/Bike Summit and feels it was very well done and staff deserves a lot of  
34 credit. Three TAC members will review the sidewalk applications that are due May 25<sup>th</sup>.  
35 TAC members brought up items they'd like to hear about, such as rail/truck issues and  
36 innovative financing. Peter Keating said at each TAC meeting staff reports on various on-  
37 going projects and those are all documented.
- 38 c. Public Transportation Committee. Bob Penniman said they have been on record to discuss  
39 sustainable funding. Virginia Clarke said the committee may need to look at their mission  
40 statement to see if the needs have changed.
- 41 d. Finance Committee. Jeff Carr said things seem to be fine financially.
- 42 e. CCRPC. No one here.
- 43 f. MTP Committee. Have not met. Scott Johnstone was just given the response from VTrans  
44 to our letter regarding funding levels to use in the MTP and he has not had a chance to  
45 review it.
- 46

1 13. Members' Items:

2 ? George Gerecke noted that they had a meeting last week with VTrans and Williston about  
3 Williston Park and Ride that Scott coordinated and it went very well. Scott Johnstone said  
4 both sides agreed it was time to meet and it covered more than just the park and ride. He  
5 noted it's a good role for the MPO to play with towns having trouble communicating with  
6 VTrans. He said there was progress was made and there is tentative agreement for two park  
7 and ride lots – one to serve regional interests near the interstate and one for local interests  
8 nearer Taft Corners. George Gerecke said Williston used to require each new applicant to  
9 provide their own traffic study. They had a separate traffic study done for the Taft Corners  
10 area and now require applicants to tie into it. It was agreed that the traffic grid system, park  
11 and ride lots, etc. will not work without work on Exit 12. Scott Johnstone noted that Route  
12 2/Industrial Avenue is a regional project and we need to hold another meeting to include  
13 South Burlington and BIA. Brief discussion about the airport's plans to expand the south end  
14 and the traffic it will bring to an already congested area.

15

16 JEFF CARR MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY JEFF MCDONALD, TO ADJOURN THE  
17 MEETING AT 8:55 P.M. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

18

19 Respectfully submitted,

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21

22

23 Bernadette Ferenc  
24 Executive Assistant