

1 CHITTENDEN COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
2 REGULAR MEETING  
3 MINUTES  
4

5 DATE: Wednesday, April 15, 2009  
6 TIME: 7:00 p.m.  
7 PLACE: CCMPO Offices; 30 Kimball Avenue, Suite 102, South Burlington, VT  
8 PRESENT: Andy Montroll, Burlington Jim Donovan, Charlotte (7:20)  
9 Marc Landry, Colchester (VC) Jeff Carr, Essex (Chair)  
10 Dale Arango, Essex Junction Andrea Morgante, Hinesburg (7:20)  
11 Bob Penniman, Jericho Jim Dudley, Shelburne (Sec-Treas.)  
12 Denis Gravelin, South Burlington Steve Owen, Underhill  
13 George Gerecke, Williston Mike O'Brien, Winooski  
14 Amy Bell, VTrans  
15 Ex-Officio: Chris Jolly, FHWA Leslie Pelch, CCRPC  
16 Others: Ernie Blais, FHWA Vermont District Administrator  
17 John Zicconi, Director, VTrans Planning, Outreach & Community Affairs Div.  
18 Matthew Langham, VTrans  
19 Dave Crawford, Essex Junction Village Manager  
20 STAFF: Michele Boomhower, Exec. Dir. Peter Keating, Sr. Trans. Planner  
21 Christine Forde, Sr. Trans. Planner David Roberts, Sr. Trans. Planner  
22 Eleni Churchill, Sr. Trans. Planner Daryl Benoit, Trans. Planner/IT Web  
23 Bryan Davis, Trans. Planner Jason Charest, Trans. Engineer  
24 Bernadette Ferenc, Exec. Asst.  
25

26 The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by the Chair, Jeff Carr and he welcomed Ernie  
27 Blais, Vermont FHWA District Administrator, John Zicconi the new Director of VTrans  
28 Planning, Outreach and Community Affairs Division, and Dave Crawford, Essex Junction  
29 Village Manager.  
30

31 1. Changes to the agenda. The chair used his prerogative to change Item #7 (Essex  
32 Junction/New England Central Railroad (NECR) Rail Proposal) to an information item, rather  
33 than an action item.  
34

35 2. Public Comment Period. There were none.  
36

37 3. Action on Consent Agenda. There were three items on the consent agenda which were minor  
38 TIP amendments. GEORGE GERECKE MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT  
39 AGENDA, SECONDED BY MARC LANDRY. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.  
40

41 4. Approval of Minutes. JIM DUDLEY MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MIKE  
42 O'BRIEN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 18, 2009, WITH CORRECTIONS IF  
43 ANY. Amy Bell asked to clarify line 4, page 4 that ...they didn't submit (rather than amend) the  
44 STIP for approval to FHWA and FTA because... Page 5, line 9 corrected spelling of precedent  
45 (from precedence). MOTION CARRIED WITH JERICHO ABSTAINING.  
46

47 5. Executive Director Update. Michele Boomhower noted that most of the last six weeks have  
48 been dedicated to work on the FY2010 work program.

- 1 • She noted that Brian Searles, BIA manager, has been working with the MPO, City of South  
2 Burlington and developers in the Exit 12B area and some language has been developed to  
3 encourage collaboration of all involved for a public/private partnership for this project. They  
4 met with Senate Transportation committee and will meet with the House Transportation  
5 Committee tomorrow.
- 6 • We, along with VTrans, have been invited by National Cooperative Highway Research  
7 Program (NCHRP) to partner in a US transportation scan where MPOs from around the  
8 country meet with selected agencies to collaborate on various topics. Ours is “best practices  
9 in managing TIP/STIP, etc.” This will be held at the beginning of June.
- 10 • The new US Secretary of Transportation is coming to Vermont on Friday hosted by Sen.  
11 Sanders. A reception will be held in Room 11 at the Statehouse at 2:30 p.m.

12

13 6. Reclassification of Pond Road in Hinesburg and St. George. Jeff Carr noted that this item  
14 was a hold over from previous meetings. Michele noted that we were asked to reclassify a  
15 section of Pond Road from a rural minor collector to a rural major collector in Hinesburg. There  
16 was a small portion that passes through St. George and we felt we should have a letter of support  
17 from St. George, which we have now. BOB PENNIMAN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE  
18 AND SEND A LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR RECLASSIFICATION OF POND ROAD IN  
19 HINESBURG AND ST. GEORGE. STEVE OWEN SECONDED AND THE MOTION  
20 CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

21

22 7. Essex Junction/New England Central Railroad (NECR) rail proposal. Jeff welcomed Dave  
23 Crawford of Essex Junction. Mr. Crawford explained that they are interested in a partnership  
24 with NECR to improve the rail line for freight and passenger rail. This is just one part of their  
25 collaboration. The proposal is to use Western Corridor funds to make infrastructure repairs and  
26 upgrades on about 50 miles of main line track to connect from Canadian National RR in East  
27 Alburg through St. Albans, to Essex Junction and then to Burlington. The project goals are to  
28 allow for safe movement of fully loaded 286,000 lb. cars between East Alburg and Burlington.  
29 He then reviewed the benefits. Customers from the north would be able to ship on 286K cars  
30 rather than 263K cars there now. This will increase their efficiency and make them more  
31 competitive. Customers of VTR in Burlington can take advantage of increase weight shipments  
32 for commodities. Right now the cars carrying fuel come in partially full because of the weight  
33 limitations. These improvements would raise FRA track class from I to II on the Burlington  
34 trunk. Amtrak could provide service to Burlington and would establish commuter rail from  
35 Burlington to Essex Junction. The future they’re most interested in here is the commuter rail.  
36 They estimate it’ll take \$5.2M for the project and Rail America & NECR would provide 20%  
37 match if we can get Western Corridor funding. The work could be done in two seasons. They  
38 need support of legislature, MPO and VTrans.

39

40 Workscope: Existing bridge inspection reports indicate necessary upgrades they’re talking  
41 about. Small rail will be replaced with heavy rail. They feel this is the commuter link between  
42 St. Albans and Burlington and that it’s very important to the region. They have a problem with  
43 the tracks being used as paths and they want to construct retaining walls and fences to maintain  
44 safety in the rail ROW. The rail work is estimated to cost \$5.2M and the safety path is  
45 estimated at \$600,000 to start and \$2M to complete. As partners they’re trying to get the most  
46 long term value for the dollars spent and they request the MPO support this project. They have  
47 much interest in having MPO consider rail in our initiatives. Every freight car going through  
48 saves truck traffic on our roads. George Gerecke said as a follow-up, the TAC reviewed this and  
49 voted to strongly support a bill to look at all sources of funding rather than just limit it to

1 Western Corridor funds. When asked if there were funds from the Western Corridor Earmark,  
2 Dave Crawford said the information he has from rail advisory council is that Western Corridor  
3 funds are pretty extensively over-committed so there is a lot of competition for those funds.  
4 Their idea is that since they have the 20% match maybe VTrans would change their priority.  
5 The downside is that the legislature is considering VTrans program right now and Sen. Mazza  
6 has indicated that it probably won't happen this year. Bob Penniman said VTrans made a  
7 commitment to the tunnel which was the weak link in the link we're talking about and agreed to  
8 use some of the earmark which NECR also agreed to match. Would the modification to the  
9 tunnel encourage 286K? Mr. Crawford believes it's a weight standard not height. Mike O'Brien  
10 appreciates the work they're doing and is encouraged to hear this and he feels the City of  
11 Winooski would be happy to meet with the Village to discuss this issue further. Dave said  
12 they've geared up for this over 2-3 months and the next round is to go to each community.  
13 They'll see Mayor Kiss on Friday and will want to meet with Winooski. Mike O'Brien said  
14 they've talked about shared use of the rail corridors and safety. Dave said Canadian National is  
15 willing to support this and they own the rail. Denis Gravelin asked about the rail south. Dave  
16 said portions of the rail on the western side of the state are up to 286K, but other portions are  
17 below that standard and need \$30-40M to upgrade. Their argument is that if you get this chunk  
18 done, you get the area from St. Albans.

19  
20 John Zicconi said the tunnel project is complete and it used federal funds with a match from  
21 NECR. The tunnel is safe and secure although not high enough for double stack cars. He said  
22 Mr. Crawford is correct about the over extension of the earmark funds. We had received \$30M  
23 and there are some major projects in line for those funds. We need to maintain what we've got  
24 and that is still their number one priority. They support everything put on the table tonight, but  
25 funding is limited and they know it'll take \$80M to upgrade tracks from Rutland-Burlington and  
26 Rutland south to Hoosick. There are discretionary pots of stimulus money related to freight that  
27 they intend to apply for. It'll be very competitive, so they don't know how successful they'll be.  
28 If stimulus funding comes through, they estimate they can have commuter rail in three years. Jeff  
29 Carr asked Dave Crawford the timeline on this. Dave said that with what they've heard here and  
30 from Sen. Mazza, they really don't have a chance this year and the stimulus discretionary  
31 funding sounds like it'd be in the fall. Discussion ensued about stimulus money and that the  
32 discretionary funds had to wait for rules before they could do anything. Dave Crawford said this  
33 could be built by then. Chris Jolly said there are two different discretionary pots of funds – FRA  
34 and FHWA. When board members wondered where we go from here, Jeff Carr said we need to  
35 turn this over to our staff to work with Essex Junction and VTrans to put a package together for  
36 board action, perhaps in June. Dave said the Village and NECR would work with VTrans on  
37 this. When asked if this material will be posted somewhere, Dave said he'll put in on the Village  
38 website. Jeff suggested our staff get copies out to all members.

39  
40 8. FHWA/VTrans ARRA (American Reinvestment and Recovery Act) presentation.  
41 Ernie Blais reviewed objectives of the Act: Job preservation and creation; infrastructure  
42 investment; energy efficiency and science; assistance to unemployed; and, state and local fiscal  
43 stabilization. ARRA highlights include: Total appropriation of \$787 Billion; \$48.1 B for  
44 transportation including \$27.5 B for highways and \$8.4 B for transit; with \$26.6 B  
45 apportionment to the states. Vermont will receive \$126 M for highways and bridges and \$5.6M  
46 for transit. It's also possible Vermont could get some of the National Surface Transportation  
47 discretionary grant money for the Western Rail Corridor and Bennington Bypass. The first  
48 project funded is the Richmond Bridge for \$1.5 M. The next group of 19 projects totaled  
49 \$45.7M. He estimates 60-80 projects in Vermont will be funded with ARRA. There is also

1 \$3.8M in transportation enhancements which is a 3% set-aside; and there is a 30% suballocation  
2 per STP requirements for individual areas over 200,000 population, areas with population less  
3 than or at 200,000; and a portion is reserved for areas less than 5,000 population.

4  
5 Eligible uses: restoration, repair, reconstruction and other activities under STP; limited  
6 passenger and freight rail transportation and port infrastructure projects; they may not be used for  
7 conversion of previously authorized federal aid projects; Federal share can be up to 100%; and,  
8 priority is to be given to projects that are projected for completion within 3 years; located in  
9 economically depressed areas; expeditious project delivery; and maximize job creation and  
10 economic benefit. There is a use it or lose it provision. Half of the funds apportioned to the state  
11 have to be obligated within the 120 days or they will be redistributed to other states. The ARRA  
12 time frame is February 17, 2009 – September 30, 2010. He reviewed the certifications needed  
13 from the Governor: section 1201, 1511, 1607, which have all been completed. He then  
14 reviewed the federal requirements: DBE goals are applied to ARRA; there is no change in Buy  
15 American program; and the Davis Bacon will apply to all ARRA funds. He then reviewed  
16 regional surface transportation discretionary grants and what are eligible for these funds. He also  
17 reviewed FHWA stewardship and oversight responsibilities on these projects. Their office will  
18 conduct additional site inspections and financial review. The federal website is:  
19 <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/economicrecovery>. When asked about matching requirement, John  
20 Zicconi said they would need legislative action to NOT have a match and the legislature doesn't  
21 seem inclined to do that.

22  
23 John Zicconi brought this close to home in Vermont. He distributed list of Vermont projects and  
24 noted that most of them had been advertised and were awarded contracts. It was noted that only  
25 the Richmond Bridge will not have a local match because it was a historic bridge and they do not  
26 need a match. For stimulus phase 2 they haven't come up with a list yet. He noted that the  
27 MPO, VLCT and other towns and cities have submitted lists for funding. He noted that the  
28 projects have to be on the federal aid network and be ready to go. He said about 80% of the  
29 requests will not meet one of the conditions. Right now they do not have the ability to add  
30 anything to the capital program and they're hoping to get that from the legislature. He has been  
31 trying to get people to have stimulus blinders on. We have a lot of federal funding that have  
32 deadlines they have to meet. They had \$44 M in Phase 1 they had to obligate. Their next  
33 deadline is October 1, 2009 when they have to obligate federal formula funds for FY2010 -  
34 \$80M. The next deadline is March 1, 2010 which is the next phase of ARRA and they have  
35 \$80M again. They also have the federal FY2011 funds that will have to be obligated by Oct 1,  
36 2010 (\$135M). He said they will not get in a position to have to turn any funding back. The  
37 sources of funding have the same requirements and local match. Stimulus funds may also have  
38 more restrictions and more scrutiny. Mr. Zicconi reiterated that all projects have to go through  
39 the prioritization process so all projects will compete for funding the same, and projects with the  
40 highest priority will go forward. The state has a lot of needs and this new money will give us  
41 more to meet these needs. We don't want to spend it just to spend it, we want to spend it wisely.

42  
43 Michele Boomhower said we received our fiscal constraint letter from the Agency which gave us  
44 \$10M for FY2010; \$11M for 2011; \$29M for 2012; and \$23M for 2013; and she's curious about  
45 the number being somewhat small with the large numbers you're talking about. Matthew  
46 Langham said the way we derive the figures for fiscal constraint is we look at projects we think  
47 are ready to go. They do not include ARRA funds or earmarks. Jeff Carr would like to review  
48 monies going to other regions to compare where we fit in the total. Matthew said they're  
49 preparing an Access database to give to Michele so we can sort it any way we want.

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2 John Zicconi distributed VTrans bid comparisons between 2008 and 2009 to show that there is a  
3 significant increase – from \$117M in FY08 to \$292.2M in FY09. The second page deals with  
4 paving (\$55.5M in FY08 to \$101.3M in FY09). There is a subset of money for enhancement -  
5 \$3.8M. The enhancement committee who makes these decisions is meeting tomorrow. As part  
6 of the exercise of getting lists of projects that are shovel ready, they asked for projects eligible  
7 for enhancement funds. The legislature decided it wanted a brand new, from scratch process to  
8 get new applications for these funds. The timeline will be very short for a lot of the communities  
9 and will require applications be in by May 15, 2009. They don't think they'll be able to spend  
10 \$3.8M. He will ask for the ability for the legislature to allow him to obligate the entire \$3.8M in  
11 projects. Instead of being stimulus funds it would also extend time frame to bring them to  
12 fruition and communities would have an additional \$3.8M to vie for. They really want to remove  
13 as many impediments as they can. Bob Penniman said since they've already put out for bid and  
14 awarded paving projects and towns are currently negotiating per ton price, would he care to share  
15 what that might be compared to last year. John didn't know. He said they do have built into  
16 their bids a slider to the actual price paid. Andrea Morgante asked if there is a question about  
17 whether there is the capacity to get all the work done. John said the paving companies have  
18 assured him they can do it all. John Zicconi said they had put enhancement awards for 2009 on  
19 hold, but the legislature has decided to move forward and the committee will move forward to  
20 award projects for 2009. Dave Crawford said Essex Junction has made several requests for  
21 projects. When they get communication from VTrans that we can get the money, will they have  
22 time to have a special town meeting to get the local match? John said the committee has to deal  
23 with this tomorrow. Discussion continued. When asked who is on the committee, John said two  
24 from the House, two from the Senate, director of historic preservation, ANR, VLCT and RPCs.

25  
26 John gave a little background on himself. He's been at the Agency for three years as public  
27 relations. They have renamed the Policy and Planning Division, to Planning, Outreach and  
28 Community Affairs Division and he is the new director. The second list he distributed was an  
29 ARRA summary. Their website will have a list of stimulus projects and updates on the projects.  
30 Michele asked if they could do the same thing with the regular program. John is hoping to have  
31 a complete new website that would be Agency centric that can make it easier to find a whole lot  
32 of things. Jeff Carr thanked him for coming.

33  
34 9. Discussion of Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)/STIP status. Christine Forde sent  
35 an email to everyone, with a revised FY08 TIP. She's been revising it over the FY09 year.  
36 We're required to do a TIP every four years. The amendments we approved tonight brings the  
37 FY09 year of the FY08 TIP in line with the FY09 TIP. She expects a draft FY2010 TIP by the  
38 end of April and the committee will review it and then have the TAC review it. Jeff Carr said  
39 the Executive Committee asked for this explanation to help explain this process to new members.  
40 Christine Forde said the FY09-2012 TIP should be recycled. She noted that we update it every  
41 year which helps us to update all projects. Jeff Carr wanted people to know that there is some  
42 precedent for not adopting a TIP. Chris Jolly said the point here is that the MPO approves the  
43 TIP in June or July but it doesn't become official until it goes to the state for the Governor's  
44 signature and then to FHWA.

45  
46 10. FY2010 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Michele Boomhower gave a brief  
47 review of the process of developing this work program. The base fiscal information is that we'll  
48 have \$1.3M in FHWA funding (including carryover). FTA is about \$122,000 and then there is  
49 state and local match, for a total program budget of \$3.36 M. We're putting more funding into

1 technical assistance and coordination, locally managed planning assistance and a new  
2 environmental program, where there is more emphasis at the federal level. Declining budget  
3 amounts are in the MTP as we're winding down. The Western Corridor Study will be done and  
4 the bulk of the transportation model update will be completed. There were 23 ideas given this  
5 year and they were minor in nature and most fell into existing programs and activities. She  
6 briefly reviewed projects in planning assistance and coordination (list the projects); corridors and  
7 circulation and transportation environmental planning. Jeff Carr noted that when we approve the  
8 UPWP we are approving the annual operating budget for this organization. BOB PENNIMAN  
9 MADE A MOTION THAT WE WARN A PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE FY2010 UNIFIED  
10 PLANNING WORK PROGRAM AS PRESENTED. ANDY MONTROLL SECONDED AND  
11 THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

12  
13 11. Committee Reports:

- 14 a. Executive Committee. The draft minutes from the April 1, 2009 meeting were in the packet.  
15 b. Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC report was send electronically.  
16 c. Public Transportation Committee. The committee did not meet last month.  
17 d. Finance Committee. Jim Dudley noted the committee met on March 31<sup>st</sup> and reviewed the  
18 financial reports for February and the FY2010 budget.  
19 e. CCRPC. Jeff Carr noted that there will be a joint Executive Committee meeting tomorrow at  
20 Winooski City Hall and then members will head over to the new offices for a tour.

21  
22 DENIS GRAVELIN MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN AT 9:07 P.M. JIM DONOVAN  
23 SECONDED AND THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

24  
25 Respectfully submitted,

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29 Bernadette Ferenc, Executive Assistant  
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