

1 CHITTENDEN COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
2 TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE - MINUTES
3

4 DATE: Tuesday, June 2, 2009
5 TIME: 9:00 a.m.
6 PLACE: CCMPO Offices, 110 West Canal Street, Suite 202, Winooski, VT

7 Present:

8 George Gerecke, TAC Chair, Williston
9 Jeanne K. Wilson, Hinesburg
10 Ed Wildman, Huntington
11 Amy Bell, VTrans
12 Bernie Gagnon, Shelburne
13 Dan Bradley, Burlington
14 Robin Pierce, Essex Junction
15 Chris Jolly, FHWA
16 Paul Craven, Railroad Industry
17 Mike Coates, Business Representative
18 Matthew Langham, VTrans
19 Meredith Schuft, Institutions Representative
20 Jane Marvin, Seniors Representative
21 Gary Estus, Westford
22 Dean Bloch, Charlotte
23 Seth Jensen, Jericho
24 Bruce Hoar, South Burlington

25 MPO Staff: Michele Boomhower, Executive Director
26 Jason Charest, Transportation Engineer
27 Daryl Benoit, Transportation Planner
28 Christine Forde, Senior Transportation Planner
29 Bryan Davis, Transportation Planner
30 Peter Keating, Senior Transportation Planner
31 Eleni Churchill, Senior Transportation Planner
32 Janet Botula, Admin/Communications Assistant

33 Others: Charles Hunter, NECR
34 Bruce Seifert, Burlington CEDO
35 Karen Paul, Burlington City Council
36 Sandrine Thibault, Burlington Planning and Zoning
37 Roger Derby, Colchester Selectboard/CCRPC Board
38 Jon Moore, CCTA
39 Charlie Baker, CCRPC
40 Julie Potter, CCRPC
41 Steve Rolle, PB Americas, Inc.
42 John Weston, PB Americas, Inc.
43

44 Chair George Gerecke called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. The agenda was amended to include a
45 change to the FY09 year of the FY08-11 TIP. It was determined that it would be discussed as Item 6b.
46

47 **1. Consent Agenda**

48 No items were on the Consent Agenda
49

50 **2. Approval of Minutes**

51 A MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL 7, 2009 BY ED WILDMAN
52 AND SECONDED BY MIKE COATES. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.
53

54 **3. Public Comments**

1 No members of the public were present
2

3 **4. FY 2010 – 2013 Transportation Improvement Program**

4 Christine Forde presented an overview of the TIP process, noting that last year's TIP was not updated.

5 She went on to describe:

- 6 • The TIP development process,
- 7 • project and use categories,
- 8 • the function and performance preservation categories which includes corridors/streetscapes
9 (including illustrative projects which are listed but have no funding),
- 10 • intersections (some of which are active, others stalled, and others illustrative),
- 11 • paving as well as bridge preservation,
- 12 • the capacity expansion category,
- 13 • bike/pedestrian improvements,
- 14 • intermodal and transit.

15
16 Mike Coates expressed concern about the cost of the EIS process for Exit 12B and the need to control the
17 monies spent on the process. Chris Jolly responded that it's difficult to control as the EIS process is fairly
18 complicated and alternatives must be looked at etc. The best way is to have a well defined scope of work
19 and manage the contract as it moves along. Amy Bell noted that an EIS is a federal requirement that all
20 agencies are required to follow. Chris mentioned that the good news was that this was a new clean
21 project without a long history and perhaps we can learn from past projects. George Gerecke stated that it
22 is important to be aware of the possible legal challenges as well.
23

24 Christine then went on to list projects that have been completed in 2009 as well as those that have been
25 delayed. She distributed a table which showed projects with both one and two year delays. Mike Coates
26 was concerned that there was nothing about rail in the TIP. Christine responded that Federal Railroad
27 Administration (FRA) monies were not in the TIP and that there were no rail projects that she was aware
28 of. Mike noted the St. Albans to Burlington rail upgrade project and he proposed that the TAC and MPO
29 Board support it by transferring \$5.2 million in FHWA rail funds to this in order to bring the track from
30 the Canadian border to Burlington up to the 286 Standard. New England Central Railroad (NECR) is
31 putting up a 20% match which is a good chunk of the money necessary. The project will lead to an
32 improved track speed between Burlington and Essex Junction for a potential future commuter line. He
33 stated that there will be a Rail Council meeting and this will be on the agenda. If the TAC can support
34 this it will help to carry the project forward.
35

36 There was a lengthy discussion about including the rail project in the TIP with Michele encouraging the
37 idea of sending a message that the Board endorsed this project and that, through the TIP process, we are
38 serious about it. Mike Coates again stressed the importance of taking advantage of NECR's willingness
39 to provide a match of approximately \$1 million. Although the project stretches from the Canadian border
40 to Burlington, the TAC and MPO only have authority over the part in Chittenden County. It will be
41 necessary to get the part outside of Chittenden County approved in the STIP.
42

43 A MOTION WAS MADE BY MIKE COATES, SECONDED BY ROBIN PIERCE, THAT THE
44 BOARD AND TAC SUPPORT THE TRANSFER OF \$3 MILLION IN FHWA FUNDS TO THE FRA
45 FOR RAIL IMPROVEMENTS BETWEEN MILTON AND BURLINGTON AND THAT THIS
46 AMOUNT BE ADDED TO THE TIP. THE MOTION PASSED WITH VTRANS VOTING AGAINST.
47

48 Matt brought up four issues in the TIP that VTrans was concerned about. These included pushing
49 Champlain Parkway funding out to future years than currently proposed, transit funding concerns, moving
50 some Exit 12B funding to future years, and adjusting the regional line items for Traffic Signal
51 Optimization and Safety funds. Michele recommended that the TAC approve the TIP with the exception
52 of the VTrans concerns and then revisit those items next month. Christine stated that the recommendation

1 is to warn the public hearing for July and that it would be a good idea to approve the TIP with the
2 exceptions.

3
4 A MOTION WAS MADE BY DAN BRADLEY AND SECONDED BY BRUCE HOAR TO ADOPT
5 THE TIP MINUS THE ITEMS ADDRESSED BY MATT LANGHAM BUT INCLUDING THE
6 WESTERN RAIL CORRIDOR FUNDS FOR THE BURLINGTON TO MILTON UPGRADE. THE
7 MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY WITH VTRANS ABSTAINING.

8
9 The agenda was changed to allow for the public presentation of the Draft Western Corridor Management
10 Plan which was scheduled for 10:00 a.m.

11 12 **8. Western Corridor Transportation Management Plan**

13 A PowerPoint presentation was made by Steve Rolle of PB Americas, Inc. summarizing the work done
14 thus far by the consultant along with the study's preliminary recommendations. He stressed that at this
15 point there are recommended actions and strategies but no specific projects. It was noted that there will
16 be two more public meetings with final recommendations due by June 22. The Draft Implementation
17 Plan will be prepared by July 30th and a public comment period will be open until August 1st.

18
19 Michele summarized by saying that this has been a multi-year comprehensive project. Some
20 opportunities that have come up in the meantime: a couple of federal stimulus competitive grants for
21 passenger rail and freight. We will be able to use the findings from this study to support grant
22 applications. It's good timing as those evaluating the applications like to see documentation such as this
23 study. She appreciates all of the time and effort by those who have been a part of the process.

24
25 Paul Craven asked about what would happen at the conclusion of the study. Michele responded that
26 working groups will be organized to make sure the project does not sit on a shelf. She expected the
27 RPC's in the Corridor will make up some of the membership and that the group would meet quarterly or
28 at least several times per year. Paul then asked about funding and Michele stated that it may be through
29 grants or federally authorized spending. Paul asked about ABRBE (Albany, Bennington, Rutland,
30 Burlington, and Essex) funds but Michele thought it was too hard to tell at this point as ABRBE funds are
31 already over-obligated. She felt that recommendation will dovetail with the proposed projects in Jefford's
32 earmarks. She further stated that there was lots of activity in the plan but nothing was targeted to specific
33 funding. The plan should be helpful in re-emphasizing problems and perhaps be helpful in getting
34 funding. The consultant stated that continued coordination is the real value of the study.

35 36 **5. Transportation Action Grant Recommendation**

37 Bryan Davis explained that the TAG program is the result of FHWA finding nearly \$400,000 in federal
38 transportation planning funds that have accumulated from years past. In March 2009 the CCMPO
39 announced Round 2 to member municipalities and local nonprofit organizations stating that \$100,308
40 (this amount includes the required 20% local match) would be available for transportation-related
41 planning projects. The review committee consisting of Peter Keating, Jason Charest, Jane Marvin,
42 Bernie Gagnon, George Gerecke and Amy Bell evaluated the seven applications that were submitted.
43 Based on 10 criteria, as well as the merits, quality, and eligibility of each application, the committee
44 recommended the full funding of four projects: CarShare Vermont: \$30,620, the Town of Jericho: \$15,
45 500, the Town of Huntington: \$25,000; and Local Motion: \$28,536. The review committee also
46 recommended that the balance of funds (totaling \$652) be awarded to the Town of Jericho to enable their
47 project to be closer to applying for engineering/construction funds.

48
49 A MOTION TO RECOMMEND TAC APPROVAL OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE
50 RECOMMENDATIONS WAS MADE BY JANE MARVIN AND SECONDED BY GARY ESTUS.
51 THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

52 53 **6. Item 6 was delayed until later in the meeting**

1 **6b. Item 6b was also delayed**

2
3 **7. Sidewalk Grant Application Reviewers**

4 Peter Keating announced that applications for the Sidewalk Grant were due on June 5 and that volunteers
5 would be needed to help review the applications. Jane Marvin and Bruce Hoar agreed to assist and
6 George Gerecke stated that he might be able to help.
7

8 **6. TIP Amendment**

9 Christine Forde stated that this TIP amendment, to add a new project to the FY09 year of the TIP for
10 reconstruction of a previously existing pedestrian bridge in Jericho, had been discussed at the May Board
11 meeting and that the Board had warned this amendment for a Public Hearing in June. Seth Jensen
12 explained that part of this bridge on Route 15 by the Red Mill fell into the river and, that it is a major
13 piece of the Town's pedestrian infrastructure. He has been working with VTrans and they now have the
14 necessary easements. The TAC is requested to endorse the Board's ruling. There was a question about
15 the funding and Michele explained that there was \$45,000 in anticipated earmark funding from Senator
16 Sanders for project engineering. Requests have been made to move forward on the project but other than
17 the \$45,000, it is considered an "illustrative" project.
18

19 A MOTION TO ENDORSE THE BOARD'S WARNING OF THE TIP AMENDMENT WAS MADE
20 BY DAN BRADLEY AND SECONDED BY JANE MARVIN. THE MOTION PASSED
21 UNANIMOUSLY.
22

23 **6b. FY2008 Transportation Improvement Program**

24 Christine briefly described the requested changes to the FY09 year of the FY08-11 TIP as being: a) the
25 addition of \$1,627,014 in FY09 for the resurfacing of the Exit 16-17 areas of I-89 in both the north and
26 southbound lanes, b) the addition of \$221,950 in FY09 for the installation of fire preemptive detectors
27 and hardware at six intersection along US7 in Colchester, and c) the addition of \$190,000 in FY09 for a
28 Transportation Enhancement Grant award for the installation of midblock crosswalks in twenty-nine
29 locations in South Burlington.
30

31 A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AMENDMENTS TO THE FY09 YEAR OF FY08-11 TIP WAS
32 MADE BY DAN BRADLEY AND SECONDED BY AMY BELL. THE MOTION PASSED
33 UNANIMOUSLY.
34

35 **9. Status of Projects and Subcommittee Reports**

36 Jason Charest reported that Hinesburg and Richmond have been selected to participate in the High Risk
37 Rural Roads program. They will be contacted soon by Jason or VTrans and will be eligible to receive a
38 safety audit or corridor review. He is also working on a TPI task to collect sufficiency ratings on rural
39 major collectors. The bulk of the work will be compiled by our interns while they're out in the field.
40 Jason also discussed a dynamic striping project in Underhill.
41

42 Daryl Benoit reported that the interns have started doing traffic counts for VTrans and various
43 municipalities. He mentioned that towns should get their data requests in early. They are also working
44 on paving assessments in Charlotte and Richmond and a culvert and sign inventory in Huntington.
45

46 Bryan Davis stated that the projects selected through the first round of the TAG program are moving
47 forward. He mentioned his involvement with the June 1 kickoff of the Burlington Safe Street
48 Collaborative which is fostering respect by all parties using the roadways. He also attended a planning
49 meeting for the Burlington Bike Fest, another program which promotes walking and biking. He
50 announced that CarShare Vermont now has between 200 and 250 members. Their next step is to expand
51 the program to Winooski and to add a pickup truck. He reminded everyone that the next Road Managers
52 meeting takes place on July 14th in Colchester.
53

1 Christine Forde reported that several scoping projects are now wrapping up: a) the Staples Third Lane
2 project which will help to improve congestion issues for those exiting Burlington onto I-89 southbound,
3 b) the Exit 12b alignment study – although they are waiting for comments from VTrans. (This project still
4 needs a funding plan and an EIS as there are environmental constraints), c) three intersections: James
5 Brown Dr./2A, US2/North Williston Road roundabout and VT15/Ethan Allen Ave. She also mentioned
6 activity on new bridge projects two of which are located in Huntington, and one in Essex.
7

8 Peter Keating stated that Way to Go week grew by double digits this year to 3,500 participants up from
9 2,900 last year. An awards ceremony will take place at ECHO on June 5th. Negotiations are still in the
10 works for the handoff of the program to VEIC. He further reported that the MTP advisory committee met
11 in April. He plans to have another meeting with them later this month. He also met with a group
12 representing various Natural Resource agencies to introduce them to the MTP and begin the federally
13 required consultation process. He will be looking to them for further input as the project moves forward
14 this fall. Peter reported that Dave Roberts had mailed out a RFQ to various consultants for the Chittenden
15 County Transportation Technical Assistance Program. The applications are due on June 26. He will be
16 needing assistance for reviewing the submittals and asked for volunteers. Bernie Gagnon agreed to assist.
17

18 Eleni Churchill reported that the Exit 16 Transportation Management Plan was coming to completion.
19 The first and second draft have been submitted and reviewed. She will be meeting with VTrans soon and
20 hopes to have the project finished by the end of June. She also mentioned that she has received the first
21 phase draft report of the VT2A Access Management Study in Essex Junction. The second phase will
22 involve the “crescent” road idea around the Five Corners.
23

24 Michele discussed her recent dealing with the legislature some of which involved the innovative financing
25 of I-89 Exit 12B. The private developer, the Burlington Airport, the MPO, and the City of South
26 Burlington made several presentations to the legislature seeking endorsement of an approach to fund the
27 local share match of the proposed interchange and to move it towards the EIS phase. There will be a final
28 presentation on the alignment study and a kick off meeting for the innovative finance approach in late
29 June. Michele also met with VTrans to discuss the seven recommendations by the Blue Ribbon
30 Committee on Innovative Finance to determine which ones could be worked on collaboratively. She was
31 pleased to see that Blue Ribbon recommendations make their way into the legislative process. She also
32 mentioned that she has received a list of the projects that will receive funding from Round 2 of the ARRA
33 funds. Although no Chittenden County projects were included we may end up better off as these will free
34 up funding for projects with fewer requirements. She was excited that the UPWP had passed.
35

36 **10. CCMPO May Board Meeting Report**

37 The Board approved the UPWP, warned a TIP amendment public hearing for the Jericho Pedestrian
38 Bridge, endorsed the Essex to Burlington rail project, and heard a report on State Transportation
39 Legislation.
40

41 **11. Chairman/s/Member’s Items**

42 Amy Bell distributed the updated VTrans organization chart and mentioned that it was also available on
43 the web.
44

45 The meeting adjourned at 11:35 am.

46 Respectfully submitted,
47

48 Janet Botula
49