

TO: Town Manager Josh Arneson and Richmond Selectboard
FROM: Cathleen Gent, Chair - Richmond Transportation Committee
DATE: September 3, 2021

RE: Input RE: Richmond Route 2 Repaving Project

The purpose of this memo is to provide input from the Richmond Transportation Committee regarding recent Selectboard discussions and communications with VTrans and Governor Scott pertaining to the Richmond Route 2 repaving project. Yesterday, Josh Arneson forwarded me the response letter from VTrans, which addresses some of the on-going concerns raised by the Selectboard and the Transportation Committee.

During the August 10th meeting, the Richmond Transportation Committee discussed the Route 2 repaving project. The meeting minutes captured the discussion and the approved motion, based on information presented during the August 2 Selectboard meeting, that the Richmond Transportation Committee favors stopping the project and taking more time to address stormwater, sidewalks, and other aspects of the project. The approved August 10 meeting minutes capture the discussion and motion:

Route 2 Repaving Project Update: There was a brief update from several members (Gent, Kart, Knowles) who – along with Venkataraman - attended the Selectboard meeting on this topic. The Committee also reviewed the letter from VTrans indicating that our application for 2021 Bike & Path Program funding was not approved. The chair requested that Venkataraman get in writing formal feedback regarding why the application was rejected. Venkataraman said that the town manager is preparing a draft response letter to the VTrans secretary. Knowles stated the problems of addressing storm water run off for property owners and of water pooling on roadway during storm events. There was general agreement that a piecemeal approach to this project will simply not work, and that dealing with the roadbed, water and/or sewer lines, drainage, shoulders, sidewalks, streetscape, etc. should be approached together, as Waterbury has been, the theme being, “Do it right the first time.”
Motion by Knowles, seconded by Floyd, that, based on the information available and presented during the August 2 Selectboard meeting, the Transportation Committee favors stopping the Route 2 repaving project and taking more time to address stormwater, sidewalks, and other aspects of the project. Voting: Unanimous in favor of the motion.

Since then, Town Planner Ravi Venkataraman provided the Richmond Transportation Committee with the two letters sent by Selectboard Chair Christine Werneke to Governor Scott and to VTrans Secretary Joe Flynn. Those letters lay out the Selectboard’s and Town’s concerns regarding the scope of the project as it stands now. During the August 24th meeting, the Transportation Committee discussed those letters and the Route 2 repaving project. On behalf of the committee, all members wish to express appreciation to Christine and the full Selectboard for those excellent letters, which clearly laid out numerous issues. Also, the Transportation Committee reached consensus on bringing forward addition concerns about the project. As framed by VTrans, the project title focused on “repaving” misses the point that a whole new road is needed, not simply a layer of asphalt. Because Route 2 serves as a regional thoroughfare for several other towns, the Transportation Committee believes it is would be very helpful to reach out and communicate with other municipalities, as well as commuters and businesses, so they can understand the full extent of the project’s scope, not simply VTrans

narrow focus on repaving. The Transportation Committee would like to emphasize with VTrans and state officials the need for 6-foot shoulders along Route 2 in Richmond leading up to and leaving the village. If 6-foot shoulders are not incorporated, the committee would like alternative options for non-vehicular travel along Route 2. Finally, the Richmond Transportation Committee recognizes the importance of engaging with legislative representatives and our members are poised to reach out to state house and senate members when the time is right. We appreciated that the recent letter to Secretary Flynn from Christine Werneke copied numerous legislators.

The Transportation Committee will review the letter from VTrans' Matthew Bogaczyk at a future meeting and I will encourage committee members to attend the Selectboard's meeting on September 7th when the Route 2 repaving will be discussed.

Thank you for your consideration and your continued attention to this important matter.

Cc: Ravi Venkataraman, Town Planner; Richmond Transportation Committee