

TO: Richmond Selectboard

FROM: Ravi Venkataraman, Town Planner

DATE: December 3, 2021

SUBJECT: Richmond Transportation Committee Restructuring

During the November 30, 2021 Transportation Committee meeting, the committee voted to request the Selectboard to reduce the number of committee members from seven to a minimum of five members. Enclosed are the draft November 30, 2021 Transportation Committee meeting minutes for your consideration.

The committee currently has five full-time members and two vacancies. Quorum has been an issue at recent meetings based on the approved seven-member committee. With the ongoing transportation planning projects, the committee needs to be able to have a quorum regularly attend in order to conduct business and move projects forward.

The committee has had one position vacant since mid-October and another position vacant since early November. I have advertised the vacancies on the Transportation Committee since late October on Front Porch Forum. Transportation Committee members and I have reached out to other town boards and committees, the Richmond Climate Action Committee, and community members to fill the positions. However, we have not been successful to date in our recruiting efforts.

The Transportation Committee decided on requesting the stipulation for a minimum of five members to allow for additional members without formally changing the member composition. The committee welcomes anyone who would like to join the committee at any point in time and is appointed by the Selectboard to serve on the committee. The Transportation Committee also appreciates the ability to conduct business when a majority of its filled seats are present.

To facilitate action, I have prepared the following draft motion:

I, _____, move to amend the membership rules of the Richmond Transportation Committee from seven members to a minimum of five members.

Richmond Transportation Committee

Meeting Minutes – November 30, 2021

Committee members: Cathleen Gent (chair), Chris Cole (vice-chair), Mark Damico, Jon Kart, Allen Knowles, Two Vacancies

Others present: Ravi Venkataraman (Town Planner), Christine Forde (CCRPC)

Ravi Venkataraman was present at the meeting physical location and all other participants participated remotely.

A quorum was reached and the chair convened the meeting at 3:02 PM.

Gent announced that she received an email from James Floyd that he needed to resign from the committee, effective November 8th, due to numerous obligations. That leaves two vacancies in the seven-member committee. The topic about committee membership will be taken up later in the meeting.

Meeting Minutes: October 12, 2021 minutes moved by Cole, seconded by Damico. There were no changes. *The minutes were approved unanimously.*

VPSP2 Program: Christine Forde from Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) presented a slide presentation about the VTrans Project Selection and Project Prioritization Process (VPSP2 Program). Forde explained that this is a new process used by VTrans with a performance-based, data driven project selection and prioritization system for local and regional transportation projects, linked to VTrans capital program. There is a “transportation value” concept for multiple transportation modes with projects scored on eight criteria. This year, the focus is on pavement, roadway, traffic and safety projects. In 2022, the focus is on bridges. Forde reviewed the general project annual calendar schedule and details for the eight criteria. Forde answered committee member questions and discussed the value of Richmond identifying projects now, especially with the CCRPC ECOS plan revision just underway. Forde offered to meet again with the committee and agreed to send the statewide list of the projects approved in the 2021 VPSP2 pilot year. Gent noted that a letter from VTrans to the Selectboard referenced the VPSP2 program as a potential vehicle for taking up parts of the Route 2 repaving project that are not part of the VTrans current scope, such as sidewalks and curbing.

Planning for Future Grants:

a. VTrans Municipal Assistance Bureau Annual Grant Program: The committee reviewed packet materials provided by Venkataraman. Damico noted that the schedule for each grant program is very helpful. Gent reviewed the general grant programs. There is no action to be taken at this time, since there are no application deadlines in the near future. The Committee will take this up again, when discussing potential applications for the federal or state pedestrian/bicycle grants. Gent noted that Venkataraman has reached out to Josh Arneson and Peter Gosselin with respect to restriping Bridge Street according to recommendations in the FY21 UPWP Bridge Street corridor study. It may be too late for that to be done at this point in the season.

b. UPWP FY23 Grants: Venkataraman reviewed his November 15 memo to the Selectboard with a list of potential transportation and land use UPWP applications for FY23. Gent noted that the Planning Commission will discuss the land use applications at their meeting tomorrow. The committee provided comment on each item in the list. Gent also added one grant idea to the mix, namely the East Main Street sidewalks and curbing which will not be done as part of VTrans’ Route 2 repaving. Because the original scoping and engineering plans date back to 2011, it is good to confirm or modify the plans to be ready for construction as soon as possible. There was agreement that the East Main Street sidewalks and curbing should be added to the list, with Cole noting that the current East Main Street sidewalks and curbing present safety problems and that the East Main Street entrance area represents the life blood of the community. The committee then talked about the priorities. *One motion was offered originally by Kart, seconded by Cole. Kart then offered a friendly amendment, seconded by Cole, as follows: Priority #1 –Scoping/engineering study for East Main Street sidewalks and curbing; Priority #2 – Update to 2014 scoping study for shared-use path between village and Exit 11 area, including Route 2-I89 and VT-117,*

and not restricted to Route 2 itself; Priority #3 – Creating official map for the walk, bike, trails map, which would convert the master bike/ped master plan into a regulatory map. Voting: Unanimous vote to approve the motion. Venkataraman will bring this recommendation to the Selectboard asap so that work on the applications can commence. Forde left the meeting at this time.

c. Department of Forests Parks and Trails Recreational Trails Program: Cole asked Venkataraman if this grant program is for recreational trails. Venkataraman indicated that is the case, and he will refer the grant program information to the Trails Committee for consideration.

UPWP FY22 Grant Updates

a. Sidewalks Scoping – the committee discussed the Local Concerns meeting minutes.

b. Phase 2: Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan South End – the committee discussed the steering committee meeting. Knowles said he is impressed with the consultants work and that he valued participating in the project site visit with the consultants and Venkataraman. He noted that neighbors at Fay’s Corner came out and talked with the project team about their concerns for that area. The local concerns meeting may be scheduled for late January.

Transportation Committee – Consider Recommendation RE: # of Members: Since two members have recently resigned, Gent said that it is difficult to have enough members at a meeting to achieve a quorum, as four members must be present. Venkataraman offered information that the Transportation Committee could request that the Selectboard appoint a minimum of five members, which would provide flexibility to add to the committee without having to go to the Selectboard to change the committee size. Damico said his schedule makes it challenging to stay on the committee. Cole responded that Damico brings a good and valuable perspective to the committee. Damico also pointed to how he is new to government involvement and is getting used to how slowly things can move forward. Cole pointed out that the transportation committee has gotten a lot of the preliminary pieces in place and is poised to have transportation facilities plans and construction underway in the next year or so. Damico said he would stay on the committee until another person steps forward. *Motion by Knowles, seconded by Damico, to request the Selectboard decrease the number of members from seven to “five or more” members. Voting: Unanimous vote to approve the motion.*

Green Mountain Transit: Cole has received cost information from Jamie Smith. Cole briefly reviewed the information and this topic will be taken up at the next meeting.

Old and New Business:

a. General Communications with Public RE: Sidewalks – will be taken up at next meeting

b. Water/Sewer Expansion in Gateway – Gent referenced letter from Virginia Clarke to the Selectboard with the Planning Commission endorsement for the extension. Gent noted a public vote of current W/S members will take place on December 7th.

c. Route 2 Repaving Update – Venkataraman said there has not been any further discussion. Cole and other committee members requested that Venkataraman ask Josh Arneson to add this to a Selectboard meeting agenda.

d. FY23 Budget Request – Venkataraman reported \$30,000 is in the budget for sidewalk infrastructure and \$20,000 for transportation committee match for grants.

e. Committee schedule for December – The committee agreed to a start time of 4 PM for the December 14 meeting and that we will meet on December 28.

f. Transportation Committee Work Plan – This will be taken up at the next meeting.

Adjourn – At 4:55 PM, motion to adjourn by Knowles, seconded by Cole. Approved unanimously.

-Minutes taken by Cathleen Gent