

Richmond Transportation Committee

Meeting Minutes – February 22, 2022

All participants attended the meeting remotely.

Committee members present: Cathleen Gent (chair), Chris Cole (vice-chair), Mark Damico, Allen Knowles
Others present: Ravi Venkataraman (Town Planner), Erik Alling (Stantec), Jason Charest (CCRPC), Sai Sarepalli (CCRPC).

Not present: Jon Kart

A quorum was reached and the chair convened the meeting at 5:34 PM.

1. Revisions to Agenda: Gent added two items to the end of the agenda, time permitting: Committee member reappointment process and Capital Plan.

2. Meeting Minutes: *February 8, 2022 minutes were moved by Cole, seconded by Damico. The minutes were approved unanimously.*

3. Committee Planning Session

In light of Kart not being present and guests prepared to discuss the UPWP FY22 sidewalk scoping, Gent postponed this topic.

4. UPWP FY22 Project Updates

a. Sidewalks Scoping – The consultant team introduced themselves. Alling said the project team is looking to get feedback from the committee prior to the alternatives' presentation meeting on March 17th. Alling presented two alternatives for the Jericho Road sidewalk between the schools (School Street) and Valley View Road. The first alternative provides a 5' sidewalk on the west side of Jericho with a 30" tall box beam. The width of the road would not change, with a 9' travel lane and 3' shoulder. The project team is concerned about placing a marked crosswalk where the sidewalk ends across from Valley View Road. Alling said there could be enhancements to caution vehicular traffic about the crossing, such as signs. The second alternative would include a 5' grass strip and no guardrail. One challenge is that the alternative may be steep. The consultant team will have more data shortly to estimate the needed slope and impact. In response to a question from Damico, Alling said there may be a retaining wall. As with the first, there would be no crosswalk designation at Valley View Road. Knowles asked about snow removal and maintenance for both alternatives. Committee members offered suggestions for different ways to reduce vehicular speeds at Valley View Road and Alling said a passive means to calm traffic would be examined. The discussion turned to the crossing at School Street and whether two lanes are needed to exit from School Street onto Jericho Road and a potential sidewalk on the north side of School Street.

Alling then showed alternatives for the east side of Bridge Street between Jolina Court and Esplanade. He pointed out that the VHB study from last year is incorporated into the current project for the area between Main Street and Jolina Court. The two alternatives are both at-grade sidewalks, with either a 5' green strip or variable green strip widths. Committee members provided comments and questions, in particular about the sidewalk re-building project on the west side of Bridge Street that the highway department will undertake this year. Questions about possible storm water issues on the east side of the street were raised, and committee members expressed support for raised sidewalks on the east side, at least between Jolina Court and the Town Center. Alling said a raised sidewalk option with or without stormwater features would need to be identified very soon. Venkataraman said that, because the public alternatives' meeting has been announced, it cannot be changed from March 17. It was agreed by all in attendance that a special Transportation Committee meeting should be held ASAP with Peter Gosselin and the project consultant team in attendance.

Alling then discussed the at-grade alternatives on Huntington Road between the Farr Complex and the entrance to the Johnnie Brook Trail. Both alternatives show a bituminous (blacktop) at grade path along the road. One

alternative has box beam and one has a 5' green strip. For that alternative, the sidewalk would be closer to the house. There was discussion about maintenance and winter use. Gent noted that there has been some past discussion about the path location to the north of the house in the floodplain. Alling said it is unknown what the flood regulations' restrictions are, etc.

b. Phase 2: Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan – South End – Knowles and Venkataraman provided a brief update from the local concerns meeting on February 9th. Gent noted that the steering committee meeting will take place in mid-March.

5. Route 2 Repaving Project Update – Coles and committee members said they thought the Selectboard letter was excellent. Venkataraman said there will be an in-house staff meeting to discuss integrating the East Main sidewalk and stormwater work with the Route 2 paving. He had no other updates.

6. Speed Study Report – The committee discussed the speed study report from CCRPC for Huntington, Kenyon and Hinesburg roads. Venkataraman said the report will be provided to the Selectboard, and asked if the Transportation Committee had any comment. Cole noted that speed studies are based on engineering standards for certain speeds and that the CCRPC recommendations for slower speeds in certain areas for Huntington and Hinesburg roads are likely based on the crash data. The roads are built for vehicles and that a fog line is needed on the roads. The general sentiment from the committee was that we understand the speed study is to offer recommendations to make the roads safe for vehicles, which we support, but we will also continue to bring projects forward for transportation infrastructure that include features to serve others like pedestrians, bicycles, and vulnerable users.

7. AARP Walkability Tool Audit – Gent confirmed that Kelly Stoddard-Poor will attend the next committee meeting to introduce the tool and provide tips for implementing it. Committee members agreed the tool looks very user friendly. Gent listed some possible questions for Stoddard-Poor.

8. Grant Opportunities

a. Building a Better America grant opportunities – Venkataraman said he has reached out to CCRPC and that Eleni Churchill suggests that, because there is no specific guidance from US DOT for the grants, we should revisit this in late spring. The committee will discuss this again at a future meeting.

b. Better Places Grant – Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development – Venkataraman attended an information session about this grant. He said it appears the grant can be used for some action related to public places and would apply to Richmond's Village Center area. This year, applicants must contact ACCD staff and get approval to submit an application. One challenge is a requirement of crowd-funded/local match. Venkataraman said it is a rolling grant application.

9. Old and New Business – None taken up.

The Committee members recommended that the special Transportation Committee meeting for further discussion about the special Bridge Street sidewalks be scheduled for Monday, February 28 at 4 PM. Venkataraman will reach out to Peter Gosselin and consultant team members.

10. Adjourn – At 7:05 PM, motion to adjourn by Cole, seconded by Knowles. Approved unanimously.

-Minutes taken by Cathleen Gent