

# Richmond Transportation Committee

Meeting Minutes – May 24, 2022

All participants attended the meeting remotely.

Committee members present: Cathleen Gent (chair), Chris Cole (vice-chair), Jon Kart, Allen Knowles, Cameron Wong

Others present: Ravi Venkataraman (Town Planner), Eleni Churchill (CCRPC), Bryan Davis (CCRPC), Jason Charest (CCRPC)

A quorum was reached and the chair convened the meeting at 5:31 PM.

**1. Revisions to Agenda:** None.

**2. Welcome new/re-appointed members:** The committee welcomed new member Cameron Wong and re-appointed members Jon Kart and Allen Knowles, all of whom were appointed by the Selectboard. Gent thanked outgoing member Mark Damico for his many contributions and dedication during his time on the committee. Approved by acclamation. Gent briefly reviewed how the committee operates within the open meeting law. This will be discussed during the organizational meeting, scheduled for the next meeting.

**3. Meeting Minutes:** *May 10, 2022 minutes were moved by Kart, seconded by Knowles. The minutes were approved unanimously.*

#### **4. Route 2 Repaving/FY23 UPWP Grant Project Amendment and GMT Work Plan**

Churchill announced that the two FY23 UPWP grants for Richmond projects have been approved by the CCRPC Board. Those two projects include the Richmond Gateway Scoping Study and the Official Map, Phase 1. Churchill described the Gateway scoping study, which is to review a scoping study completed in 2014, choose alternatives from the study that appear to remain viable, and explore potential other alternatives, including bringing ped/pike facilities to River View Commons mobile home park. The official map project will focus on gathering data during phase 1. Cole recapped a meeting with VTrans and with town staff and Selectboard members, and a Selectboard meeting discussion during the May 16 meeting. He pointed out the two major issues within the Route 2 repaving project are town stormwater pipe alignment and pinch points on West Main Street to the Exit 11 park and ride. Road Foreman Peter Gosselin met with VTrans to ensure the stormwater connections are suitable. The pinch points are not yet addressed. Cole said that Gosselin has proposed that paving for the section between the edge of the village on West Main and Exit 11 be postponed until the pinch points are adequately expanded within VTrans' repaving specs. A meeting will take place later this week to discuss this option. CCRPC staff and Transportation Committee members discussed whether to tie the new project addressing the on-road pinch points into the FY23 UPWP Gateway Scoping Project or to keep them separate. Cole suggested that it is better to have two separate projects because people want off-alignment access to the park and ride and the Town wants wide shoulders on Route 2, which is designated by VTrans as a priority corridor for non-vehicular access. Churchill said there are funds to apply for another UPWP grant specifically to examine and find solutions for the pinch points along Route 2.

Cole said that both short- and long-term solutions are needed. There was discussion about a shuttle between the village and the park and ride. Churchill said Green Mountain Transit advised that would not be viable as a fixed route, perhaps as a demand-response route. That would be expensive, and would not be a short-term solution. There was discussion about micro-transit pilots. Wong asked if a report is available for the Montpelier micro-transit pilot. Churchill and Davis will provide any reports to Venkataraman for distribution to the committee. Churchill said it is possible Richmond could be added. Cole suggested a program with three towns to our north (Jericho, Underhill, and Cambridge) to reach sufficient scale might be feasible. Venkataraman said that it may be worthwhile to take a deeper dive into ped/bike challenges at exit 11. Cole suggested one short-term solution could be to do what was done in Essex, where GMT purchased a small non-CDL bus and Essex runs and operates the bus.

Churchill explained the VPSP2 prioritization process used by VTrans. Whatever funding is used for planning, there will need to be a scoping study for the pinch points, and the process goes through VPSP2. *Motion by Cole,*

seconded by Kart, to support a new application for a scoping project on US Route 2 to address the deficient shoulders between West Main and Exit 11. Voting: Unanimous in favor. Churchill said the next step is for CCRPC to work with Venkataraman to write a scope and prepare a budget and bring that back to the Richmond Transportation Committee. Once the proposal is ready, it will be prepared for the Selectboard to discuss the application and needed local match. Churchill added this project will be done via UPWP FY23.

There was a brief discussion about the FY23 UPWP Gateway Scoping Study. That topic will be discussed again at the next meeting, including how to look more deeply at options for the Exit 11 area.

#### **5. VTrans Bide/Ped Application**

Gent noted that the Transportation Committee approved a motion at the last meeting to recommend to the Selectboard that they approve the application and match for the VTrans Bike/Ped application, which is due June 8<sup>th</sup>. Venkataraman, Kart and Knowles have worked on the application and Venkataraman said the application is ready for final review. Cole deferred to Davis from CCRPC to do a final review. Davis will also write a letter of support from CCRPC. Venkataraman will present this application for approval by the Selectboard on June 6 and encouraged members of the committee to attend that meeting.

#### **6. AARP Walkability Tool Audit**

Kart and Knowles have led two sessions, and a number more are scheduled. More audits are scheduled. Gent will send out that schedule.

#### **7. FY22 UPWP Projects Update**

a. Sidewalks Scoping – The Transportation Committee took up the question as to whether to recommend any alternatives for two of the three projects in the scoping study. Gent noted that the committee has already made its recommendation for the alternative for the proposed sidewalk on the east side of Bridge Street. The committee first discussed the Jericho Road project. Knowles said he and a resident from Valley View walked that stretch of road and Knowles has asked whether Stantec (the consultants) actually went in person to inspect the slopes, which seem to be quite steep and may require a retaining wall. Charest said that the consultants did do site visits and pointed out the sidewalk is two feet below the road grade. He added that the work was based on lidar data, not a formal survey. More discussion followed. *Motion made by Kart, seconded by Knowles that the Transportation Committee supports a recommendation to the Selectboard for a preferred alternative with the box rail, where the project allows for a five-foot path and a green strip where feasible. Voting: 4 in favor (Gent, Cole, Kart, Knowles) and one abstention (Wong).*

The Committee then reviewed the project between the Farr Complex and Johnnie Brook trail on Huntington Road. Kart brought up the potential for moving the house. Other committee members said not enough information is known about that option. Discussion also included reducing standard width of path, placing the path on the south side, etc. *Motion by Knowles, seconded by Kart, to recommend to the Selectboard Alternative 1, including the drawings. Voting: 4 in favor (Gent, Cole, Kart, Knowles) and one abstention (Wong).*

Charest said the final report for the Selectboard will be modified to reflect comments made by committee members and to incorporate the three recommendations made by the Transportation Committee. The report will be presented to the Selectboard on June 6.

b. Phase 2 – Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan – Venkataraman and Kart said that project is moving forward smoothly. Venkataraman said a public meeting is scheduled for June 28. He will send public announcements during the week of June 6.

**8. Grants** – Churchill and Venkataraman explained the federal RAISE Grant Program. At this time, Richmond does not have any applications suitable for that program.

**9. Old and New Business** – The agenda for the June 14 meeting was discussed.

**10. Adjourn** – At 7:19 PM, motion to adjourn by Kart, seconded by Knowles. Approved unanimously.

-Minutes taken by Cathleen Gent