

Richmond Transportation Committee

Meeting Minutes – April 11, 2023

Committee members present: Chris Cole (Chair), Cathleen Gent (Vice Chair), Keith Jennings, Allen Knowles, Cameron Wong

Others present: Bryan Davis (CCRPC), Keith Osborne (Town Planner), Susan Wells (Richmond resident), Melissa Wolaver (Richmond resident)

All attended remotely.

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

Abbreviations used in RTC minutes: ARPA = American Rescue Plan Act of 2021; CCRPC = Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission; D&K = Dubois and King; GMT=Green Mountain Transit; PPL = Project Pipeline Document; RTC = Richmond Transportation Committee; RVC=Riverview Commons; SB = Selectboard; TAP=Transportation Alternatives Program; UPWP = Unified Planning Work Program; VDH = VT Dept. of Health; VTRANS=Vermont Agency of Transportation;

1. Welcome and Public Comment: Susan Wells’ application to be a member of RTC is pending SB action. Cole and Gent have each applied for another term on the committee. Cole expressed thanks to Gent for her work.

2. Revisions to the agenda: Gent noted there is a Bike-Ped grant opportunity to be discussed if time permits and this is added under 8. General Updates. Wells requested the Cochran Rd. Mid-Year Adjustment Program be moved earlier in the meeting due to time constraints, and without objection this is done.

3. Approval of Minutes from March 28, 2023: There were no corrections or additions to the minutes. **Motion by Gent, seconded by Wong, to approve minutes. Approved unanimously.**

4. Update: Bridge Street New Sidewalk, east side, from Jolina Court to across from Esplanade St (“lower segment”):

a. TAP Grant Award: This grant for the sidewalk construction was received and the SB voted to accept it at their April 3, 2023 meeting. This obligates the Town to provide \$56,000 in matching funds.

b. ARPA Fund Project: The SB discussed whether the matching funds should come from the Sidewalk Reserve Fund, or possibly from the ARPA funds. The pros and cons of various ways to apply the funds were discussed for this and other possible sidewalk projects by the SB and also by Gent at our meeting. Other projects to consider include the “upper segment” of the Bridge St. east side sidewalk (Big Spruce to Jolina Ct.) and Jericho Rd. sidewalk above School St. A decision has not yet been reached.

c. Next Steps: Cole and Gent met with Town staff Arneson, Gosselin and Osborne about carrying the project forward. Cole noted that going forward, the RTC no longer has an active role, and the Town now takes over the project.

5. Update: Cochran Road: Speed Limit & “Share the Road” Program –Selectboard Discussion: The SB on April 3, 2023 discussed the proposal brought by Francis Churchill to the Transportation Committee on March 28. Arneson recapped the SB discussion in an email to Cole and Gent: “The Selectboard would

like to move forward with a communications plan as proposed for a share the road campaign on Cochran Rd. At the meeting, they discussed having the Transportation Committee work on a plan, possibly with feedback from CCRPC and Local Motion.” Jennings noted that speeding is a town wide problem and gave the example of Kenyon Rd. Cole noted that East Hill Rd. residents have also complained. Wells noted that the repeated calls for more enforcement are unrealistic with the shortage of police officers. Cole proposed that Francis Churchill head up the “share the road” educational effort, and there was unanimous consensus for this by the RTC. Jennings and Wong agreed to work with him. Local Motion has agreed to participate. Bryan Davis agreed to be a point of contact with CCRCP and can help locate resources there. Gent noted that the SB wants a “share the road” effort to be underway within about two months.

Regarding speed limits on Cochran Rd. the SB declined to take any action beyond current plans for radar speed signs and a traffic count. It was questioned whether the traffic count methodology would capture pedestrian and bicycle use. Per Bryan Davis, the “two tube” counting devices may be able to count bicycles based on lower speed, but not pedestrians.

6. Finalize Walkability Audit Report/ Prepare for Selectboard Meeting: Gent commented that the current draft of the report looks good. Wong questioned whether there were any more photos coming, and whether appendices are to be included. Discussion was that most appendices could be omitted.

a. Cumberland Farms – New Photos: Melissa Wolaver gave a short slide show presentation with photos of the situation on the Bridge St. side of Cumberland Farms. Cole suggested she show the pictures during the public comment section of a SB meeting. This problem is included in the Walkability Audit, but her photos illustrate the safety problem very clearly. Cole asked Osborne to check on what the permitting allowed when the site was approved. Osborne noted that safety should be an overriding concern. Cole also suggested getting the Town’s legal advisor to comment on what the Town’s liability is for a situation that persists in spite of multiple resident complaints that it is unsafe.

b. Finalizing report: Gent will present the report to the SB and will request time at the May 15, 2023 meeting to do so.

7. Updates for FY23 and FY24 UPWP Projects:

a. Richmond Western Gateway Scoping Study: Bryan Davis reported on the Local Concerns meeting of April 10, the three prior focus groups, the ongoing online and paper survey, and the website. Next steps will be conceptual design alternatives from D&K, followed by another public meeting to review these.

b. Cochran Road - Mid-year Adjustment Program: Bryan Davis noted that staffing changes at D&K have occurred, but there is now a D&K traffic engineer assigned to work on the placement of the radar speed signs and the temporary speed humps. Wells asked about the timeline for this, and Davis said probably by the end of May.

c. Route 2 pinch point study: Bryan Davis said that Jason Charest is the person at CCRPC handling this. No one at the meeting had new information. The last that was heard is that the start was delayed due to staffing changes at Stantec, and the kickoff meeting is expected in late April.

d. FY24 Cochran Rd. Corridor and Scoping Study: Bryan Davis reported that funding decisions are not final yet, but he is confident this study will be funded for FY24, and we should hear sometime in May. He noted that the plan is for a corridor study for the central 45mph length, and scoping for the two 25mph zones at either end. He reviewed the expected timeline.

8. General Updates:

a. Dialogue with railroad about future projects: Nothing new to report.

b. Bike-Ped grant application: There is a new grant cycle coming up. Osborne plans to attend the session on how to apply. Further discussion deferred to the next meeting.

9. Agenda Items for Next Meeting on April 25, 2023:

- Progress on “Share the Road” effort; invite Francis Churchill to the meeting
- Preparation for Walkability Audit presentation to SB
- Bridge/Cochran/Huntington/Thompson intersection: Have we heard back from CCRCP/VHB about cost estimates for fourth “preferred alternative”?
- Bike-Ped grant application
- GMT study to SB; any further role for RTC?
- Cumberland Farms situation; Osborne may ask for it to be a SB agenda item

10. Adjourn: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by consensus at 6:54PM.

Minutes by Allen Knowles