

Richmond Transportation Committee

Meeting Minutes – June 27, 2023

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

Others present: Keith Osborne (Town Planner), Dan Mallach (D&K), Garry Bressor, Jeanette Malone

All attended remotely.

A quorum was reached and the Chair convened the meeting at 5:32 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; THBC = intersection of Thompson Rd, Huntington Rd, Bridge St, and Cochran Rd; UPWP = Unified Planning Work Program; VDH = VT Dept. of Health; VTRANS=Vermont Agency of Transportation;

1. Welcome and Public Comments: No public comments for items not on the agenda.

2. Revisions to Agenda: Jennings has pictures to present of intersections in Colorado that may be useful for the THBC conundrum. Gent would like to review the presentation of the Walk Audit study to the SB. These will be added to 8. General Updates, time permitting.

3. Approve Minutes from June 13, 2023, meeting: There were no corrections or additions to the minutes. **Motion by Kart, seconded by Wells, to approve the minutes. Passed unanimously.**

4. Organizational Meeting: Cole briefly reviewed the yearly organizational task of electing officers, and turned the conduct of that over to Osborne. Osborne reviewed the need to return the signed open meeting law attestations. Gent suggested a review of the public meeting law, which will be added to a future agenda.

Position of Clerk: Motion by Gent, seconded by Wells, to appoint Knowles to continue as Clerk. No other nominations were made. Knowles agrees to accept the position. **Approved unanimously, excepting Knowles, who abstained.**

Position of Vice Chair: Motion by Knowles, seconded by Wells, to appoint Gent to continue as Vice Chair. No other nominations were made. Gent agrees to accept the position. **Approved unanimously, excepting Gent, who abstained.**

Position of Chair: Motion by Gent, seconded by Jennings, to appoint Cole to continue as Chair. No other nominations were made. Cole agrees to accept the position. **Approved unanimously, excepting Cole, who abstained.**

5. Western Gateway Path Scoping Study presentation, Dan Mallach, D&K: Mallach gave a brief review of the process that generated the two concepts being presented, including public input, use of prior

studies, evaluation of physical constraints, and RTC and CCRPC participation. See Related Files of the 6-13-2023 RTC meeting for the slides used in the discussion with specific details of the concepts.

Concept One: North Side Straight: The most efficient route, with the greatest technical feasibility and lowest cost, but closest to Route 2 traffic. Discussion included:

- why this was felt a better option than the south side route proposed in the prior scoping study, which included traversing more flood plains and crossing US2
- the question of a direct link to the schools; the school administration's final position on this is currently not known to us
- the difficulty of traversing the area adjacent to the cemetery
- the difficulty entering/exiting the village, with the hill, poor site lines, and narrow physical space
- traversing creeks and drainage that currently have culverts too narrow to accommodate a path
- how the ongoing Pinch Point Study may have overlapping solutions for entering/exiting the village, and may also affect plans for the area with the current retaining wall
- traversing the entrance/exit ramps at the exit 11, I-89 interchange, and whether this is feasible from a safety standpoint
- traversing the Park and Ride, and loss of parking spaces there
- getting under the I-89 bridges, and the way that was done for the new Williston Park and Ride at exit 12
- in the area between the interchange and Governor Peck Rd, the probable need for boardwalks to traverse wetlands
- options for crossing Governor Peck Rd. to access RVC

Concept Two: Emerald Trail: A unique route for safer and pleasant segments further from Route 2, but with cost and technical challenges. Discussion included:

- this concept solves the problem of the I-89 interchange by tunneling under entrance/exit ramps and going behind the Mobil station and Park and Ride; this would need to avoid the interstate "clear zones"
- the eastern portion is similar to North Side Straight, including the problems getting into/out of the village and getting past the cemeteries
- Cole noted that Federal money exists for reconnecting disadvantaged communities that were bisected by interstates, and there is the potential for this being a means to construct the segment that would connect RVC to the Park and Ride.
- Wells raised the question of safety with tunnels, and questioned to what extent tunnels would be acceptable to women, especially in the dark months. Mallach discussed design features that can ameliorate tunnel darkness, but acknowledged that safety concerns remain and are real. He suggested any future public survey include a question about this issue.
- the best location for crossing Governor Peck was discussed; this is an issue for both concepts
- signaling the Governor Peck/VT117 intersection was discussed to allow crossing at the throat of Gov. Peck; the signal would need to be linked to the VT117/US2 signal
- Jennings questioned whether the north side of the I-89 corridor had been considered, and showed photos of multiuse paths in Colorado that ran adjacent to highways

6. Updates for FY23 UPWP Projects:

a. Route 2 Pinch Point study: A Draft Report Review Meeting was held 6-19-2023. The Draft Report is in the Related Files for the 6-27-2023 RTC meeting. Questions were raised about some of the costs, including the size of contingency fees and why a retaining wall was less expensive than sheet piling, and where funding would come from. Input from Jason Charest of CCRPC will be sought on these questions. It is hoped that he can attend an upcoming RTC meeting.

b. Temporary Cochran Rd. Solutions (SB/CCRPC project): Gent reports implementation has been delayed by D&K staff turnover, but the temporary speed tables are to be installed soon. Lessons learned from temporary measures should inform the FY24 Cochran Rd. study for permanent changes.

7. FY 24 UPWP Grant Award: Cochran Road Scoping and Feasibility Study next steps: Review application, selecting a consultant, and setting up stakeholders

committee. Due to time constraints, these were reviewed briefly and will be discussed further at future meetings. The study is multifaceted, and RTC members should review the application to be conversant with goals and address all aspects. RTC should be involved in selecting the consultant. Study staff will chair the stakeholders committee and will solicit community participants. Wells will represent RTC in this.

8. General Updates:

a. Review elements of Upper Bridge Street Complete Streets: Deferred to next meeting.

b. Review elements of Lower Bridge Street sidewalk update: Gent reports that CCRPC has agreed to be Project Manager. Otherwise deferred to next meeting.

c. Share the Road update: Wells reported an initial meeting with community volunteers Lisa Kory and Lynne Knowles. Cameron Wong will also join. Another meeting is planned this week. Wells reports they have many ideas, and will likely move ahead in stages. Cole noted the SB desires multiple viewpoints (cyclist, pedestrian, motorist, etc.). Gent notes SB wanted something soon; also recommends Pete Gosselin of the Richmond Highway Dept. as a resource. Cole suggested looking at the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) for signage. Jennings discussed speeding issues on Kenyon Rd.

d. Cumberland Farms: Deferred.

9. Agenda Items for Next Meeting or Near Future:

- Jennings has pictures to present of intersections in Colorado that may be useful for the THBC conundrum.
- Gent would like to review the presentation of the Walk Audit study to the SB.
- Review elements of Upper Bridge Street Complete Streets
- Review elements of Lower Bridge Street sidewalk update
- Review the pertinent Public Meeting Law.
- Feedback from Jason Charest of CCRPC on questions about Stantec Draft Report for Pinch Point study. Hopefully he can attend a RTC meeting.
- Project Pipeline update (probably ready late July- early August)
- FY 24 UPWP Cochran Road Scoping and Feasibility Study

- Share the Road update

10. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Kart, seconded by Jennings. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM.

Minutes by Allen Knowles