

Richmond Transportation Committee

Meeting Minutes – October 25, 2022

All participants attended the meeting remotely.

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

Others present: Ravi Venkataraman (Town Planner)

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

Abbreviations used in these 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; SB = Selectboard; TAP=Transportation Alternatives Program; UPWP = Unified Planning Work Program; VTRANS=Vermont Agency of Transportation;

1. Revisions to the Agenda: Gent requested time to welcome Keith Jennings as a new member of the committee, which was done. Cole provided background on organization and a brief history of the committee over the past 3 years. Open Meeting Law rules were briefly reviewed.

2. Approval of Minutes from October 11, 2022: There were no corrections or additions to the minutes. **Motion by Gent, seconded by Kart, to approve minutes. Approved unanimously.**

3. Update on FY24 budget process: Venkataraman reported that The Selectboard’s review of the Planning and Zoning budget during their October 18, 2022 meeting went smoothly; this portion of the budget includes the \$20,000 for Transportation Services and UPWP programs and the \$5,000 for Contract Services that RTC requested by motion at the October 11, 2022 RTC meeting.

The RTC request for \$80,000 for the Sidewalk Reserve Fund was not approved. The Selectboard, Highway Foreman Pete Gosselin, and Finance Director Connie Bona raised questions and concerns about the proposed increase and further consideration is ongoing. Subsequently, Venkataraman sent an email to Selectboard and Town staff listing the references to the Bridge Street project in planning policies and documents, including the public comment meetings and also detailing the money invested thus far. It was noted that applying for the VTRANS Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant would require a Town match of \$60,000. Currently there is \$40,000 available for this in the Sidewalk Reserve Fund. Discussion resulted in a consensus that the Bridge Street project remains the RTC’s priority and that we need to know whether or not the SB is committed to going forward with this with provision of the necessary funds at a minimum to allow RTC to apply for construction grants.

Motion by Gent, seconded by Kart: The RTC recommends to the SB that a minimum of \$30,000 be added to the Sidewalk Reserve Fund in FY24 to provide for matching funds for construction grants to build the prioritized Bridge Street Corridor projects. Passed unanimously. Venkataraman will convey this to the SB and Town staff working on the budget. (Further Action, Venkataraman) (See below for the motion specific to the TAP grant.)

4. Review on Walkability Study Report: Kart has provided further edits which are being incorporated. Formatting and addition of pictures remains to be done and Wong committed to having that done prior to the November 8, 2022 meeting. (Further Action, Wong and Venkataraman)

5. Update on FY23 UPWP Projects:

a. Western Gateway Scoping Study: A steering committee is being formed and a date is being set for an initial meeting in the next two weeks.

b. Rt.2 Targeted Scoping Study (pinch points): No word back from CCRPC/Stantec on this yet.

c. GMT scoping of new US2 bus route Williston to Waterbury: “Scope of the scope” should be developed in November. We should be updated as this progresses.

6. Discussion of Future Items:

a. FY24 UPWP: Thus far a scoping study for Cochran Road improvements is the only one planned. The committee will need to consider the desired “scope of the scope” for this in the next two months.

b. Official Map: CCRPC will be starting on Phase 1 for an Official Map project as a FY23 project, with Phase 1 focused on gathering information and data. Venkataraman raised the question of the next step. Cole stated that this should be handled by the Planning Commission due to the regulatory nature of an official map.

c. TAP Grant: This is a program from VTRANS with a maximum amount of \$300,000. Bridge Street Corridor improvements fit the criteria for this grant. The amount is only sufficient for building part of the sidewalk and related improvements. After discussion, the consensus was that the south portion of the east sidewalk, from Jolina Court to Esplanade Street, involved fewer obstacles. Bicycle improvements such as sharrows and signage are also needed if funds are sufficient.

Motion by Knowles, seconded by Kart: RTC requests the SB approve applying for a TAP grant for building Bridge Street Corridor improvements. The improvements will be to the extent permitted by the amount received, including the required 20% match by the Town. The maximum grant is \$300,000 and the maximum match would be \$60,000. RTC plans starting with new sidewalk construction on the east side of Bridge Street between Jolina Court and Esplanade Street, and bicycle improvements with sharrows and signage.

Venkataraman will ask this be added to the November 7, 2022 SB agenda. Cole, Kart and Jennings will help Venkataraman with the grant application if the SB approves moving forward. (Further Action, Venkataraman, Cole, Kart, and Jennings)

d. Other grant opportunities: Cole noted that there will be another round of VTRANS bike/ped grants in the spring that we should plan for.

Cole also questioned whether federal equity based grants might be available for connecting Riverview commons with the Park and Ride and the village. Venkataraman noted that we lack the data needed for those applications, because Richmond is too small to have separate census tracts.

7. New Business: The date for the second November RTC meeting was changed from 11/22 to 11/29/22 by consensus.

8. Future Agenda Items:

- Update on FY24 budget and Sidewalk Reserve Fund
- Walk Audit update
- UPWP FY24 projects updates
- Update on SB response to TAP grant application
- Discussion of “scope of the scope” for a Cochran Road UPWP scoping study

9. Adjourn: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:08 PM.

Minutes by Allen Knowles

Further Action Needed:

1. Venkataraman will convey to the SB the RTC motion that \$30,000 be added to the Sidewalk Reserve Fund in FY24 (see 3. Above)
2. Venkataraman and Wong will complete the Walkability Audit report by the Nov. 8 meeting (see 4. Above)
3. Venkataraman will have RTC request for approval to apply for TAP grant to the Nov. 7 SB agenda (see 6c. above)
4. Cole, Kart and Jennings will help Venkataraman with the TAP grant application if the SB approves our applying and commits to the 20% match (see 6c. above)