

# Richmond Transportation Committee

Meeting Minutes – September 27, 2022

All participants attended the meeting remotely.

Committee members present: Chris Cole (chair, joined at 5:39 PM), Jon Kart, Allen Knowles, Cameron Wong (interim chair for this meeting at Mr. Cole’s request due to illness)

Others present: Ravi Venkataraman (Town Planner), Keith Jennings (interested Richmond resident)

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

Abbreviations used in these minutes: RTC = Richmond Transportation Committee; PPL = Project Pipeline Document; ARPA = American Rescue Plan Act of 2021; UPWP = Unified Planning Work Program; CCRPC = Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission; D&K = Dubois and King; SB = Selectboard

## 1. Revisions to the Agenda:

- a. Discuss final scope of Western Gateway Scoping Study under old business. (Venkataraman)
- b. Report on “Car Free Day” event in Burlington 9/22 under new business. (Knowles)

**2. Approval of Minutes from September 13, 2022:** There were no corrections or additions to the minutes. **Motion by Kart, seconded by Knowles, to approve minutes. Approved unanimously.**

## 3. Follow up from September 19, 2022 Selectboard Meeting

**a. Richmond Walk.Bike.Trails Plan (aka bike/ped master plan):** Dayton Crites (Dubois & King) presented the final Walk, Bike ,and Trails Plan to the Selectboard during its September 19, 2022 meeting. Gent and Kart were also present and answered questions. The presentation went smoothly with the attention to Cochran Road highlighted. Residents of Cochran Road attended and commented on the need for timely implementation of pedestrian and bicycle improvements. The final plan is available on CCRPC’s website:

[https://www.ccrpcvt.org/wpcontent/uploads/2022/09/20220914\\_RichmondBikeWalkTrailsFINAL.pdf](https://www.ccrpcvt.org/wpcontent/uploads/2022/09/20220914_RichmondBikeWalkTrailsFINAL.pdf)

A shortcut to this link is up on the Town website. Note that this final report incorporates both phase 1 and phase 2 studies. The report was accepted unanimously by the SB.

**b. Transportation Committee Update Presentation to the SB:** The presentation by Venkataraman went smoothly. The PPL was presented. The graphic generated by Wong as part of the report was singled out by members of the SB for the clarity with which it summarized the volume of information. Gent was present and answered questions from the SB. During the presentation, Venkataraman stated that the RTC prioritizes the construction of sidewalks on the east side of Bridge St and pedestrian safety improvements along the Bridge Street Corridor, and Gent noted that the Village is a priority as it has many projects ready for construction when funding is available. The density of bicycles and pedestrians requires facilities to meet the needs of this area, local businesses, and municipal services. There are also a number of projects outside of the Village, and the RTC is looking for Selectboard guidance on prioritization.

#### **4. Capital Plan and FY24 Budget Recommendations:**

**a. c. Sidewalk Reserve:** Venkataraman noted that the current balance is \$40,000 (\$10K from two years ago plus \$30K from last year). He stated that discussions of sidewalk buildouts can be grouped here. This includes current scoped sidewalk sections on the east side of Bridge St. and Jericho Rd. north of School St. Grants for funds will require substantial matching funds from the town. Discussion resulted in a consensus that the RTC would like to try to get build out of scoped sidewalk sections in coming years.

**Motion by Knowles, seconded by Cole: RTC recommends the SB allocate \$80,000 to the Sidewalk Reserve for FY 2024. Approved Unanimously.**

**b. Transportation Planning:** Current status: Approx. \$19,950. Venkataraman expects another \$3,300 will be deducted for the finalization of the Walk, Bike, and Trails Plan. The new Gateway long-range study will cost about \$8,000--more than the anticipated \$5,000 applied for with the UPWP (CCRPC and town staff have corrected and adjusted all the numbers). The cost of the Gateway Targeted Scoping study is still to be determined. The amount allocated in FY23 Budget: \$20,000. What planning and scoping projects does the committee want to pursue for the FY24 UPWP?

- **Cochran Road:** Venkataraman noted that Cochran Rd. is on the agenda for the next SB meeting related to traffic calming measures in progress. There was discussion of short term and low impact measures that could be instituted quickly; this is currently in the purview of the Traffic Calming Committee. Knowles raised the question of whether Cochran Rd. should be a candidate for a FY24 UPWP study, perhaps for a sidewalk from the Round Church to the cemetery or to Cochran's Ski area. Cole suggested that 5-foot shoulders on both sides of the road would be a best next step. No decision at this time on the specifics, but the consensus was that Cochran Road is a candidate for a FY24 UPWP study and should be discussed further.
- **Huntington Road from Bridge St. to Hinesburg Rd:** Knowles noted that this section of road ended with a "no build for now" status in the Sidewalk Scoping Study (Stantec, 2022), with a tentative plan to study the complete roadway section for motor vehicle, farm vehicle, and farmer safety, as well as bicycle and pedestrian safety. Knowles raised the question of whether this should be a candidate for a FY24 UPWP study. The consensus was to defer this for FY24.

**Keith Jennings:** At this point Keith Jennings was given the opportunity to introduce himself. He stated he moved to Richmond about 1 month ago and has pedestrian and bicycle interests. His professional background includes writing scientific research grants, and he runs a citizen-science project for weather reporting. He expressed interest in volunteer helping on the committee. This was welcomed by committee members. He was advised of the application process if he wishes to become a member of the committee and was encouraged to do so (the RTC roster specifies a minimum of 5 members, but no maximum).

**5. Follow up on discussions regarding the Bridge Street/Railroad Street/Jolina Court intersection:** An updated drawing is included in meeting materials from the engineer the Town retained. Currently the Town is waiting for a reply from the railroad. Committee members had no suggestions or objections to the plan.

**6. Update on Walkability Study Report:** Venkataraman reports further progress but that it is not complete yet. The current version is available for review and suggested edits to committee members.

**7. Follow up on committee recommendations for use of ARPA funds:** Knowles noted that the following was done at the September 13, 2022 meeting: “Motion by Gent, seconded by Knowles for the RTC to make a formal recommend to the ARPA Committee that ARPA money be used to fund improvements recommended in the Bridge Street Corridor Study (2021) and construction of the sidewalk on the east side of Bridge Street (Sidewalk Scoping Study, 2022). Approved unanimously. The formal recommendation should include the facts that these improvements will have Town wide benefits, and that the projects are scoped, have construction estimates, and for the Bridge Street Corridor Study have engineering drawings. These projects can meet the time deadlines attached to the ARPA funds.” Knowles further noted that no one was recorded as being designated to transmit the recommendation to the ARPA committee, and all present agreed they had not done so. Knowles will transmit the recommendation to the ARPA committee. (Further action, Knowles)

**8. Old Business: Western Gateway Scoping Study:** Venkataraman reported that the scope of the study has been finalized and CCRPC has issued a notice to proceed. D&K did confirm that “the Bressor option” is included for consideration. Venkataraman said a steering committee will be needed with one member from RTC. Knowles volunteered; no one else wanted to do it, and Knowles was appointed to represent RTC in the steering committee.

**9. New Business: Report on Car Free Day, 9/22/22 in Burlington.** Knowles attended, car free via ebike. He reports:

**a. Car Share VT:** The cars are garaged in Burlington, and thus this is not useful to Richmond residents. Richmond lacks population density to make basing a car here economically viable.

**b. GMT micro transit:** Cole previously brought up the concept of having GMT provide a micro-bus/van that a Richmond town employee would drive to transport people to and from their destinations. A GMT representative at Car Free Day told Knowles that GMT is looking into expanding the micro-transit program they piloted in Montpelier to cover its non-urban service area; the idea being that the service would not be built around specific towns, but would be area wide. The representative said that a letter of interest was recommended if interest exists. Cole discussed pros and cons of the two approaches. This will be on the agenda for further discussion at the next meeting.

**10. Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 PM

Minutes by Allen Knowles

**Future agenda items:**

- Micro-transit options
- Transportation Planning: What planning and scoping projects does the committee want to pursue for the FY24 UPWP?

- Contract Services: Is the Transportation Committee interested in doing engineering work for particular sidewalk segments to anticipate buildout of particular sidewalk segments in the coming years?
- Capital Improvement Plan: The questions for this committee are: What projects does the committee want to prioritize? And what is the timeframe for projects?

**Further Action:**

- Knowles will transmit the recommendation to the ARPA committee. (Further action, Knowles done)