

# Richmond Transportation Committee

Meeting Minutes – July 12, 2022

All participants attended the meeting remotely.

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

Others present: Ravi Venkataraman (Town Planner), Eleni Churchill (CCRPC), Brian Davis (CCRPC)

A quorum was reached and the chair convened the meeting at 5:32 PM

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

**2. Approval of Minutes from June 14, 2022 and June 27, 2022 Meetings:** There were no additions or corrections. Motion to approve minutes by Kart; seconded by Wong; minutes approved unanimously.

**3. UPWP FY22 Project Updates:**

**a. Sidewalk Scoping Study:** Venkataraman reported Stantec is finalizing the report based on the discussions during the June 14<sup>th</sup> Transportation Committee meeting. The final report should be ready the week of July 11th. Once received by Venkataraman, the updated version of the Scoping Study will be distributed to the committee. The committee will have opportunity to review the study, and suggest minor edits to Stantec. Minor edits can be turned around ahead of the first Selectboard meeting in August. (further action)

**b. Phase 2 Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan:** A public meeting was held June 28, 2022. Meeting notes are available on the CCRPC website at <https://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/transportation/current-projects/walk-bike/richmond-bike-walk-and-trails-plan/> Venkataraman reported that further feedback is needed from property owners for the possibilities of new trail connections along Johnnie Brook from the existing trail to Fay's Corners, and from the Preston Forest trails to Huntington Road or Grandview Rd. Cole, Knowles and Wong all reported that they do not know any of the property owners in these areas. Kart reported that he might, and perhaps Gent might (Gent not present). Can the names of property owners be obtained from the town offices? (further action)

At this point Cole stated that action items such as this need to be clearly listed at the end of meeting minutes so that they can be more easily kept track of. Knowles will implement the action items list.

Kart noted that two of the public attendees at the meeting talked with him later with concerns that the same issues seem to recur over time at various meetings, with no progress apparent. Discussion ensued with the consensus that an ability to convey to the public information on the necessary process and timeline of projects would be helpful. Brian Davis (CCRPC) will see if appropriate materials already exist and can be provided to explain the planning/scoping/NEPA/engineering/construction process. (action item)

Venkataraman noted that the project team will be collecting feedback until the end of the month. They will put together a final report for review in August. Presentation of the final report is anticipated to be in September.

**4. Staff Report:** This is a new item for the agenda. Venkataraman gave a brief update about the Walkability Audit report, in that he will write the report, with editing by Jon Kart, with a goal of a draft by the end of July for committee review, and a final report by the end of August for presentation to the Selectboard. There were no questions.

**5. Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB's) for South End of Bridge Street:** Venkataraman reported that Cara LaBounty approached him about the placement of RRFBs on Bridge Street at the Railroad Street intersection and at the Bridge Street and Huntington Road intersection. Venkataraman provided information from prior studies: VHB and CCRPC investigated the possible placement of RRFBs on the Bridge Street corridor during the collation of the Bridge Street Complete Streets Corridor Study. Both said that no additional RRFBs should be placed on Bridge Street, because the corridor already has two RRFB-improved crossings, the stacking of RRFB-improved crossings is not advised, and the placement of RRFB-improved crossings at controlled intersections is not advised. VHB strongly recommended not to place RRFB-improved crossings at the Bridge Street/Huntington Road intersection. Page 16 of the Bridge Street Complete Streets Corridor Study includes the following: "Support for a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) was heard from the community. With the volumes, speeds, and context for the crossing of Huntington Road, an RRFB is not advisable." Instead, VHB recommended overall improvements to control the intersection. Traffic controls at the intersection would create much safer pedestrian crossings.

The above information was reviewed and discussed. The consensus was that at this time the town should proceed to address this through the Traffic Calming Policy, which is currently focusing on Cochran Road, including the Cochran/Bridge/Huntington/Thompson Road intersection.

**6. Regional Priorities for Park and Rides: Update Richmond Priorities:** CCRPC is updating the Chittenden County Park and Ride Plan. The previous plan was completed in 2011. CCRPC wants to know if there are any changes for recommendations for Richmond's part of the plan.

Richmond Village: After discussion, the Transportation Committee recommended that the prior consideration of a formal designated Park and Ride in Richmond Village be deleted.

Richmond/Jonesville: Jonesville near the US 2-Cochran Road intersection: A park-and-ride facility in Jonesville would be attractive to people travelling from Richmond and Huntington to points east along the US 2 corridor. A potential site was previously suggested at a pull-off, within the state right-of way, on US 2 just to the east the Cochran Road-Stage Road intersection. The Transportation Committee consensus was to retain the recommendation to evaluate the feasibility of using the pull-off as a park-and-ride facility and identify and evaluate other potential locations in Jonesville.

This information was received by Eleni Churchill, CCRPC, in attendance.

**7. UPWP FY23 Gateway Scoping Project:** CCRPC recommends DuBois and King as the consultants for this project. Motion by Knowles, seconded by Kart, to accept the recommendation and designate DuBois and King as the consultants for the Gateway Scoping Study. Motion approved unanimously.

It was noted that for the Rt. 2 Targeted Scoping Study (to deal with shoulder pinch points) Stantec has already been approved as the consultant, at the June 14, 2022 meeting. The Official Map project will be done entirely by CCRPC staff (no consultant).

**8. Cochran Road Traffic Calming Public Meeting:** This meeting occurred on July 11, 2022 and was attended by Knowles and Kart. Minutes from the meeting are not yet posted. Knowles and Kart reported that their sense was of strong public interest and also frustration with the traffic situation on Cochran Rd. At the meeting Town Manager Arneson explained the Traffic Calming Committee's process.

Churchill discussed the need for physical changes to the roadway to slow traffic, and that that approach was more effective than just speed limit signs. She also reviewed the need for a traffic engineering speed study to make enforceable changes to speed limits and discussed some of how that was done with pressure tubes recording over a several day period. She noted that the town can lower speed limits on town roads without the speed study, but that the new posted speed limits would not be legally enforceable.

Davis noted that he did not see advisory bike lanes as part of the options in the draft Bike/Ped –South Master Plan report. These are an example of relatively inexpensive physical changes (paint and signage) that could be implemented, particularly at the east and west ends in the 25 mph zones.

Kart noted that Selectboard member Jay Furr was present at the meeting and spoke about physical changes such as chicanes.

The consensus of the Transportation Committee was to await the recommendations of the Traffic Calming Committee. It was noted that many of the recommendations coming from the Bike/Ped Master Plan studies and the Bridge Street Corridor Study are at the levels of Phases 2 and 3 of the Traffic Calming process, i.e. 2 to 3 years away, after other things have been tried.

## **9. Old and New Business:**

**a. July 26 meeting agenda items:** Cole stated the need for a tool for keeping track of projects and for reporting them to the Selectboard. This will be the Richmond Transportation Committee's Project Pipeline Document. It will list projects and record their progress within the framework of planning/scoping/NEPA/engineering/construction. Gent and Cole will produce a draft of this tool for review at the July 26 meeting. (further action)

**b. Hybrid Meeting Format?** The question of returning to a hybrid meeting format was discussed. All committee members present prefer the Zoom meeting format. Vermont Act 78 allows us to continue the Zoom only format at least until January 15, 2023. The unanimous consensus was to continue the Zoom only format. This can be revisited as needed.

**10. Adjourn:** There being no further business, motion to adjourn by Knowles, seconded by Kart, approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:46 PM.

Minutes by Allen Knowles

## **Further Action:**

**1. Review Stantec Sidewalk Scoping Study and report minor edits.** (all committee members) (see 3.a. above. Study is supposed to be available to us this week, and presented to Selectboard at first meeting in August.)

**2. Try to obtain property owner feedback on Bike/Ped Master Plan Phase 2 trail ideas.** (Gent, Kart and Venkataraman?) (see 3.b. above; this refers specifically to potential connections from Johnnie Brook Rd. to Fays Corners along Johnnie Brook, and from the Preston Forest Trails to Huntington Road or Grandview Rd.)

**3. Obtain public education materials to explain the planning/scoping/NEPA/engineering/construction process.** (Brian Davis) (see 3.b. above; this relates to members of the public wondering why they see the same issues come up repeatedly over time when they attend meeting, and informing them on what it takes to get things done. Brian thought CCRPC might have something that would answer to this need.)

**4. Project Pipeline Document:** (Gent, Cole) (see 9.a. above; this is intended to be a tool for keeping track of projects and for reporting them to the Selectboard. It will list projects and record their progress within the framework of planning/scoping/NEPA/engineering/construction. Gent and Cole will produce a draft of this tool for review at the July 26 meeting.