

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, MAY 17, 2007, NRPC CONFERENCE ROOM**

Attendance: Raymond Larose, Georgette Johnson, Jerry Baitz, Gary Champy, Richard Roberge, Jim Tomlinson, Tim Gaudette, John Roy, David Borthwick-Leslie, John Whitney, Colleen Steen, Bill Rose (Staff)

Chair R. Larose called the meeting to order at 7:02pm

INTRODUCTIONS OF NEW MEMBERS

Following introductions, B. Rose explained that new members had been appointed for the towns of Franklin, North Hero, Grand Isle, Montgomery and Sheldon – though only D. Borthwick-Leslie was in attendance at the May meeting.

LAMOILLE VALLEY RAIL TRAIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER APPOINTMENTS

B. Rose updated the TAC on efforts to recruit applicants to fill the regional seats on the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Advisory Committee. Rose explained that the TAC had granted authority to staff to make interim appointments at the February meeting, and that based on that, Rose had appointed Dick Thompson as the Municipal representative to for the region, Cynthia Scott as the business representative, Nancy Hunt as the landowner representative and Bill Rose as the NRPC representative. Rose explained that the interim appointments were to be ratified at the March or April meeting, but given the absence of a TAC meeting during those months, ratification should take place during the May meeting.

C. Steen motioned to appoint the interim regional representatives to the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Advisory Committee for the full annual 2007 term. J. Baitz seconded. Motion carried.

WESTERN CORRIDOR PROJECT UPDATE/ACTION

B. Rose reported to the TAC that efforts were underway by the regional planning commissions along the western side of the state to develop a comprehensive intermodal corridor plan for the US 7/western rail line corridor project. Rose reported that these efforts had been an outgrowth of individual efforts to plan and implement such large-scale projects as the Rutland Railyard Relocation project, the Middlebury Spur, Federal Street Intermodal Connector and improvements to US 7. Rose stated that the individual regions saw value in cooperatively planning for these improvements and were currently working to hire a consultant to develop such a plan. Rose added that the CCMPO was the coordinating agency on this project, and had developed a memorandum of understanding to conduct the tasks required. Rose then requested direction from the TAC for the board regarding signing onto such an MOU.

J. Baitz motioned for the TAC to favorably recommend that the NRPC Board of Commissioners sign onto the MOU and participate in the planning process. C. Steen

seconded. Motion carried.

2007 ROAD SAFETY AUDIT REVIEW SITE SELECTION

B. Rose solicited the TAC members in attendance for candidate sites for the 2007 round of Road Safety Audit Reviews after giving a brief explanation of past candidates and safety improvements coming as a result. Rose invited the TAC to call with any suggestions prior to the next TAC meeting in June.

PROJECT PRIORITIZATION DISCUSSION

B. Rose distributed copies of correspondence received from VTrans regarding regional project prioritization for the FY 2008 Capital Program as well as the list of projects that VTrans had requested that NRPC prioritize. Rose explained that staff would review the projects and make recommendations related to priority for the June TAC meeting – though Rose explained that given the fact that all of the projects listed had in fact been prioritized the previous year by the TAC, there was not much expectation by staff that any priorities would shift.

UPDATES

Missisquoi Bay Bridge

R. Larose reported that the ribbon cutting ceremony to open the bridge would take place on May 30 at 11am on the Alburgh side of the bridge.

Safe Routes to School

B. Rose reported that the program schools were continuing preparations to apply for infrastructure funding.

US 7 Corridor Study Update

Rose reported that a draft of the study was expected by the end of May, with a steering committee meeting and public meeting to follow shortly thereafter.

LVRT

B. Rose had nothing to add to the previous report earlier in the meeting.

Grand Isle – North Hero Drawbridge

B. Rose briefed the TAC on developments since the discussion of the status of the region's top bridge priority at February's TAC meeting. Rose explained that there was a meeting between NRPC staff and the new project manager for the project – Danny Landry, the previous Monday. Rose reported that Landry had explained that his primary task was to complete the scoping study that had been shelved since 2002. Rose explained that Landry would provide status reports as more information became available. Rose also reported that the state priority ranking criteria lacked any discussion of the mechanical components of bridges – most likely due to the fact that the GI-NH Drawbridge is the only operable draw span in the State of VT. Rose reported that there would be further discussion in the future with the TAC regarding future action steps to address this shortcoming in the evaluation criteria.

Transportation, Community and System Preservation (TCSP) Grant Program

B. Rose updated the TAC on applications for this grant program from the Northwest Region. Rose explained that this program was being funded through funds typically expended as earmarks, but given the moratorium imposed by Congress related to earmarks, the funds were directed to be dispersed through a grant program. Rose reported that St. Albans Town had applied for funding to address storm water runoff issues around the Exit 19/VT104/St. Albans State Highway intersection and that the Town of Franklin had applied for funds to design and construct sidewalk and streetscape improvements identified in the 2006 study.

MINUTES

J. Tomlinson motioned to approve the February 2007 meeting minutes as presented. J. Roy seconded. The motion carried. T. Gaurdette, J. Baitz and D. Borthwick-Leslie abstained.

OTHER BUSINESS

G. Champy, Executive Director for the Northwest Vermont Public Transit Network provided the TAC with an update of the efforts currently underway to improve NVPTN services. Champy reported that the NVPTN would not be operating a Grand Isle route, and had received tentative approval from VTrans to expend the funds allocated for the Grand Isle route on the Downtown Shuttle in St. Albans or the VT 105 route from St. Albans to Richford. Champy also explained that NVPTN was working on a revised schedule and other changes to improve services along the Downtown route, as well as to the Alburgh to Georgia route. Champy also reported that NVPTN was working on developing a new logo and paint scheme as well as rolling out a new outreach campaign. Champy also reported that NVPTN would soon begin advertising on its vehicles, with the hopes of raising additional revenues.

J. Tomlinson motioned to adjourn the meeting, J. Roy seconded. Motion carried and meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm.