

## Transportation Advisory Committee

### Meeting Minutes of September 27, 2023

A meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) was held in-person at the Mount Ascutney Regional Commission office building in Ascutney and via Zoom at 6:00 pm.

#### Attendance

TAC members present: Kristi Morris, Springfield (via Zoom); John Saydek, Cavendish (via Zoom); Diane Foulds, Windsor (via Zoom); Peter Hudkins, Chester; Sharon Bixby, Ludlow

Others present: Jason Rasmussen, MARC; Logan Nicoll, MARC; Matthew Arancio, VTrans (via Zoom)

Kristi Morris opened the meeting at 6:00 pm.

#### 1. Welcome and Introductions

All present members of the TAC and guests introduced themselves.

#### 2. Changes to the Agenda

No changes necessary.

#### 3. Acceptance of May 24 minutes

*John Saydek made a motion to approve the May 24<sup>th</sup> minutes. Second by Sharon Bixby. The motion passed unanimously.*

#### 4. Update on Route 5 Bike Corridor Survey – Matthew Arancio, VTrans

Matthew gave a presentation about an upcoming survey that hopes to gauge the interest of municipalities and Regional Planning Commissions in creating a bicycle corridor along some or all of Route 5, approximately 190 miles.

The survey was requested by the Vermont Legislature and while its primary purpose is to gauge preliminary interest, it will also have space to understand and highlight specific locations of interest and/or concern, and how the corridor is currently used.

The survey is expected to be completed and deployed by early-to-mid October, with results and analysis expected by mid-to-late November. A summary will be available by January for the Legislature.

Survey monkey will be used to conduct the survey.

John said he was supportive of the project and has a history of involvement in bike paths, he questioned what was meant by “Route 5 corridor” and whether that meant bike lanes on the road or a path adjacent to the road.

Matthew clarified that the proposal is for a combination of approaches depending on the specifics of the location; and that at this stage there are no definitive plans, this is a very preliminary first step to understand if the elected/appointed officials that would need to be involved are supportive of the idea before engaging the community at large.

Diane asked how the survey will be conducted and distributed.

Matthew said it will be distributed by VTrans via email through community partners at the RPCs.

Peter asked what “facilities” entails.

Matthew said on-roadway it would likely be a combination of sharrows (shared lanes) and painted bike lanes that connect with multi-use paths adjacent to the road where possible. He clarified that there is not currently a design, this survey is to see if there should be a project.

Jason advised that there has been discussion, especially in Windsor, about the existing railway corridor for development in a similar way.

Matthew hopes that if this project goes forward, they could incorporate such projects into the larger plan.

Kristi asked if the survey would be expanded to include cyclists and the community more broadly.

Matthew said no, this current survey is really to assess the engagement of town governments and ensure there is that initial buy-in to move forward.

Sharon commented that she would like VTrans to take up a similar plan for Route 100.

Matthew highlighted existing initiatives to advance bike paths through the TPI program.

Jason asked about the next steps and what the RPC’s role will be.

Matthew said there is not a definitive plan yet, but expects VTrans will ask the RPCs to handle most of the direct outreach to towns.

There was further committee discussion about the timeline and scope of the survey and project itself.

## **5. Updates and Announcements**

### **a. Safe Streets for All RFQ Release**

Logan informed the committee a Request For Qualifications has been released to secure a consultant to prepare a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan as part of a federal grant MARC has received.

There was committee discussion about what kinds of projects will be eligible under the plan.

### **b. Project Delivery Bureau Updates**

Logan informed the committee that towns have been contacted by VTrans project delivery bureau about three projects that are moving forward that have been on the TAC’s priority project list for many years.

### **c. VPSP2 Project Kick-off for Springfield with consultant**

Logan informed the committee that MARC and officials with the Town of Springfield met with a consultant from Stantec to talk about scoping for intersection re-designs at three intersections in Springfield. This work also includes an intersection in Cavendish, but the Town Manager of Cavendish asked to delay the kick-off of scoping work there while they continue to recover from the July flooding.

### **d. Notes from the Tri-State Transit Conference**

Logan talked to the committee about attending a conference in Killington and things he found interesting about electric buses from that conference.

Jason mentioned that he is on the board for Southeast Vermont Transit (the MOOver) and they are exploring Hydrogen-fueled vehicles for their fleet.

There was further committee discussion about electric vehicles and electric vehicle chargers.

Kristi asked about the recently announced expansion of the MOOver micro-transit service.

Logan confirmed that SEVT has announced expanding their micro-transit service to cover along Route 5 and Route 131 in Weathersfield from the Windsor town line to the Exit 8 Park and Ride and along Route 5 in Hartland from the Windsor town line to the Hartland Public Library.

e. FY23 VTrans Grants in Aid Extension – new deadline 9/30/2024

Logan informed the committee that VTrans has extended the deadline for towns to spend down money under VTrans' Grants in Aid program, it was set to expire at the end September 2023, but VTrans extended it through September 2024 in light of the July and August flooding throughout the state.

## **6. Future agenda items & next meeting date**

a. Next meeting: October 25, 2023.

b. Future Meeting Topics:

Sharon would like to see a future meeting about the flood recovery.

Logan mentioned maybe a follow-up meeting about the Transportation Planning Resilience Tool and how accurate it was at predicting where flood damage would occur.

Peter asked about a future meeting with the Springfield Airport Commission.

## **7. Adjourn**

*Sharon Bixby made a motion to adjourn. Second by Kristi Morris. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm.*