CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPC
Communities Planning Together

110 West Canal Street, Suite 202
Winooski, VT 05404
802.846.4490
www.ccrpcvt.org

North Avenue Corridor Study
Advisory Committee Meeting #2 Notes

DATE: Tuesday, September 17, 2013
TIME: 6:30 PM
PLACE: Miller Center, 130 Gosse Court, Burlington

Members/Alternates Present:
Terry Bailey, BSD
Meredith Birkett, CCTA
Kelli Brooks, Alternate Ward 4 NPA
Jim Holway, Ward 4 NPA
RJ Lalumiere, Alternate Ward 7 NPA
Nicole Losch, Burlington DPW
Kirsten Merriman-Shapiro, CEDO
Daniel Mulligan, Alternate BPHC
Sandrine Thibault, Burl. Planning
Tony Redington, Alternate Ward 3 NPA
Charlene Wallace, Local Motion

Others Present:
Eleni Churchill, CCRPC
Brian Lee, UVM
Diane Meyerhoff, Third Sector Associates
Steve Rolle, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Sai Sarepalli, CCRPC

1) Welcome & Introductions

Eleni Churchill of the CCRPC welcomed the group and introductions were made.

2) Existing Conditions Along the Corridor

Steve Rolle of Parsons Brinckerhoff presented the existing conditions. For purposes of this study, the corridor is divided into five segments. Steve reviewed each segment from the perspective of bicyclists, motorists, bus riders, and walkers. The presentation is available at: http://www.ccrpcvt.org/transportation/corridors/north-avenue-corridor-study/.

Segment 1 - North Street to Washington Street/Berry Street (Old North End)

Physical Characteristics:

- Typical 33 foot curb to curb width; 66 foot ROW
- One travel lane in each direction
- On-street parking on southbound side only (south of Berry St)
- Sidewalks with landscape strip
- Northbound bicycle lane
- Numerous bus stops
- Highest everyday utilization of on-street parking in the corridor

Land Use: Densely developed single-family with some multi-family residential
Traffic: 12,000 AADT
Observations:

- Existing bike lanes are very narrow and storm drains are hazards
- Bike lane southbound ends at Berry St. where on-street parking begins
- Length between pedestrian crossings is longer than desirable
- Narrowest road width of any segment along the corridor

Segment 2 – Washington Street/Berry Street to Institute Road

Physical Characteristics:

- Typical 35 foot curb to curb width; 66 foot ROW
- One travel lane in each direction, no on-street parking
- Sidewalks with landscape strip
- Bicycle lanes both directions

Traffic: 12,000 AADT

Land Use: Primarily undeveloped or institutional; some single-family on east side of street

Observations:

- Considerable open space and low density uses along much of this segment
- No on-street parking for residences on the southern portion of this segment
- "Midblock" Crosswalk at Champlain Farms but no crossings to the north until Institute Rd.
- Bicycle lane on northbound approach to Institute Road is not visible any longer
- There are few right-of-way constraints in this segment
- Travel lanes are typically wide (13 feet) while bike lanes are slightly narrower than desirable
- Transit stops are closely spaced in the south
- Schools are major pedestrian generators (corridor wide)

Segment 3 - Institute Road to VT 127

Physical Characteristics:

- Typical 40-42 foot curb to curb width; One travel lane in each direction
- Northbound center left turn lane and southbound right turn lanes at Institute Rd.
- On-street parking on both sides
- Sidewalks with intermittent landscape strip
- Northbound bicycle lane designation, but no striping. Insufficient width for both bike lane and parking in some areas.
- Traffic signal at Institute Road

Traffic: 12,000 AADT

Land Use: Residential, institutional

Observations:

- Differentiation between northbound bike lane and parking lane is unclear
- No provision for southbound bicyclists
- Bike lane discontinuity at Institute Road
- Conflict with bicycles heading north at the 127 ramp; vehicles are accelerating on ramp.
- Southbound vehicles at VT 127 move to left-turn lanes to pass bicycles and then proceed straight through intersection
- Bicyclists do not heed "Bikes may use full lanes" and ride too close to the curb or parked cars
- Will the Champlain Parkway impact the 127 intersection?
- Turn lanes at Institute Rd. are necessary to accommodate turning volumes

Segment 4: VT 127 to Shore Road

Physical Characteristics:

- 40-43 foot curb-to-curb width; Two travel lanes in each direction (10 to 11 ft lanes)
- No exclusive turn lanes except at Shore Rd (northbound) and VT 127 (southbound)
- No on-street parking
- Sidewalks with landscape strip

- No designated bicycle accommodations
- Traffic signals at Ethan Allen Shopping Center, Ethan Allen Parkway, and VT 127

Traffic: 13,700 north of Ethan Allen Parkway; 19,100 south of Ethan Allen Parkway
Land Uses: Mix of residential and retail; more suburban in character

Observations:

- Left turns frequently block through lanes
- Travel lanes are relatively narrow
- Highest concentration of retail on corridor
- Ethan Allen intersection difficult to negotiate for pedestrians due to high speed of right turning traffic and long crossing distance.
- Entering the park from Ethan Allen is difficult (for cyclists or motorists) due to the high speed of opposing right turning traffic.
- Riding in the street is uncomfortable for all but the most experience cyclists.
- Few opportunities to cross North Avenue
- Ethan Allen Parkway – VT 127 is the busiest segment of the corridor

Segment 5: Shore Road to Plattsburgh Avenue

Physical Characteristics:

- 40 foot curb-to-curb width; 66 foot ROW (corridor-wide)
- One travel lane in each direction with unmarked on-street parking
- Sidewalks with landscape strip
- No designated bicycle accommodations
- Traffic signals at Plattsburg Avenue, Woodbury Road and Shore Road

Traffic: 10,800 AADT
Land Use: Single-family residential, multi-family, scattered retail, institutional
Observations:

- Few opportunities to cross North Avenue
- Many school children walking to/from school
- ADA curb ramps are present but outdated (corridor-wide issue)
- Wide travel way – unclear where on-street parking is allowed
- On-street parking is lightly utilized except near St Marks during events at the church.
- Frequent driveways (corridor-wide issue)
- Several offset intersections
- Access management may improve flow

High Crash Locations (HCLs) in the Corridor:

Birch Court to Woodbury Road
Crashes: 39
PDO: 33 (85%)
Crash Rate: 6.48 per MVM
Actual/Critical Ratio: 1.23
Severity Index: $21,677

Lakewood Pkwy. to Ethan Allen Pkwy.
Crashes: 76
PDO: 60 (79%)
Crash Rate: 10.16 per MVM
Actual/Critical Ratio: 2.00
Severity Index: $41,204

Gosse Court/Woodlawn Road to Poirer Place
Crashes: 46
PDO: 42 (91%)
Crash Rate: 6.18 per MVM
Actual/Critical Ratio: 1.22
Severity Index: $13,100

Strong St./Ward St. to Sherman Street
Crashes: 58
PDO: 4 (93%)
Crash Rate: 9.51 per MVM
Actual/Critical Ratio: 1.81
Severity Index: $12,107

Steve summarized the current average daily traffic volumes along the corridor, AM and PM peak hour volumes, and discussed average daily traffic variations at certain locations (see presentation for more information).

3) Forecast Growth Assumptions
Steve discussed the 2035 growth projections for the corridor which will be used to estimated future traffic volumes (memo provided). Based on historic data (population/households/traffic) and projected population and employment growth in the corridor, a 5-15 percent increase in traffic is expected. Steve noted that the growth associated with potential expansion plans at Burlington College isn't known at this time, but that the highest levels of forecast growth (15%) correspond to the southern corridor segment near the college.

4) Preliminary Discussion of Corridor Vision & Goals
Eleni introduced the preliminary vision and goals for the corridor. She asked that the committee respond via email with comments and questions to her at echurchill@ccrpcvt.org by October 1st.

DRAFT Corridor Vision: North Avenue will provide for **safe, inviting, and convenient travel for all users of all ages and abilities**—including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transportation riders. The **need to move people through the corridor will be balanced with the need to provide access to homes, businesses, and local institutions.** The corridor will develop into an **attractive public space** through creative streetscape, signage, and other site design features. The corridor will become **more livable and desirable by promoting social interaction and public health**.

DRAFT Corridor Goals- Common themes expressed in goals often include:
- Accommodating and balancing transportation needs of different user groups
- Improving safety for all users
- Enhancing specific travel modes and improving connectivity
- Increasing travel choices and managing demand
- Improving livability
- Linking land use and transportation
- Supporting community/economic development

Charlene Wallace of Local Motion asked if the themes could be reworded into goal statements. At this point prior to writing the goals, Eleni is looking for input on the themes and whether others should be added or removed from the list. She suggested that we will have an in-depth discussion on the vision and goal statements at our next advisory committee meeting. RJ Lumiere of Ward 7 asked about the link between land use and transportation. Eleni responded with an example: the number of curb cuts that provide access to the various land uses along the corridor can impact the safety and flow of all

modes of travel (access management is both a land use and transportation issue). Steve suggested also that the transportation infrastructure needs to reflect the context of what surrounds it.

Tony Redington of Ward 3 suggested that need equity among all users – walkers, bikers, and drivers. If our streets address equity, where everyone has separate and quality facilities, it reduces behavioral conflicts. His priorities are safety, equality of modes, interconnectivity, and continued efforts for a sustainable transportation system through TDM and transit. RJ would like to focus on a complete network for bicycling, especially for those who are not experienced cyclists.

5) Next Steps

- Finalize Level of Service (LOS) and more detailed investigation of crashes
- Refine draft vision statement and develop goals (mid October)
- Prepare for first public meeting (October 29th) and Next AC #3 meeting (November/December)
- Continue interactive website development

There was discussion of walking tours of the corridor, possibly with the help of AARP's audit tool.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 PM.