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2 **CIRC Alternatives Task Force Meeting #10 Notes**
3 **APPROVED BY TASK FORCE 10/30/13**

4
5 **DATE:** Thursday, January 31, 2013
6 **TIME:** 6:30 – 8:00 PM
7 **PLACE:** Williston Town Hall
8 **PRESENT:** Please see attached
9

10 **1) Welcome & Introductions**

11 Michele Boomhower of the CCRPC and Cindy Cook of Adamant Accord welcomed everyone and
12 introductions were made. Michele acknowledged the Williston Essex Network Transportation Study
13 (WENTS) Steering Committee, CCRPC staff, Bob Chamberlin of RSG, and Diane Meyerhoff of Third
14 Sector Associates for their work in bringing the study results to the Task Force.
15

16 **2) Review & Approval of Revised Meeting Notes from November 29, 2012**

17 The group accepted the revised meeting notes as provided.
18

19 **3) Status of FY13 Implementation Projects**

20 Ken Robie of VTTrans discussed the Phase I Implementation Projects underway:

- 21 • **Exit 16 Improvements**, Double Crossover Diamond (DCD) Interchange and additional turn lanes
22 on US 2/7, Colchester: Preliminary design is complete; the right-of-way plan will be completed
23 in March. Expected 2015 construction with a budget of \$6 million.
- 24 • **VT2A/289 Interchange**, Essex: Upgrade signal equipment and additional lanes. Expected 2015
25 construction with a budget of \$1 million.
- 26 • **Crescent Connector**, Essex Junction: Conceptual plans are under review; Environmental
27 Assessment is underway; Railroad agreement is underway. Expected 2016 construction with a
28 budget of \$3.5 million.
- 29 • **Vermont 2A/James Brown Drive**, Williston: Traffic signal and additional turn lanes on VT 2A.
30 Public hearing is complete. Expected 2015 construction with a budget of \$2 million.
- 31 • **Transportation Demand Management (TDM)**: The regional group, Go! Chittenden County, is
32 conducting a car share analysis, expanding the CATMA circuit rider program, planning for new
33 transit shelters (to be installed over two years), outreach to employers and commuters,
34 investigating pocket park and rides (leased space opportunities), assisting bike commuters, and
35 supporting signal improvements. The budget is \$1.2 million.
36

37 Ken listed the Phase II Implementation projects. They are all budgeted for engineering in FY14 with
38 future construction totals expected at \$14 million: US 2/Trader Lane Traffic Signal, Williston;
39 Severance Corners Improvements, Colchester; VT 15/Sand Hill Road Intersection, Essex; VT 15/Post
40 Office Square to Five Corners Improvements, Essex Junction; VT 15 Multiuse Path, Winooski,
41 Colchester, Essex and Essex Junction; and Regional TDM.

1 **4) Phase II Planning Study Status**

2 **4A) Colchester-Essex Network Transportation Study (CENTS)**

3 Christine Forde of the CCRPC is developing a scope of work. The study will evaluate the impact of
4 the existing Circ Highway on east-west travel along Vermont 2A and Severance/Kellogg Roads in
5 Colchester and Essex and the impact of not constructing the remaining Circ segments.
6

7 **4B) Route 15 Corridor Park & Ride Studies**

8 Michele explained that these new Park & Ride locations will serve the CCTA commuter bus
9 expansion to Jeffersonville. Locations under consideration include areas at or near to the following
10 locations: Simon's/John Leo's in Essex; Jericho Post Office and/or Merchant's Bank; Villeneuve
11 Sawmill in Underhill; Old Route 15 locations in Cambridge Village; and various locations in
12 Jeffersonville Village. The CCRPC will coordinate with Lamoille RPC.
13

14 **4C) Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS)**

15 <http://www.ccrpcvt.org/corridors/williston-essex-network-transportation-study/>

16 Bob Chamberlin of RSG reviewed the final strategy packages for the WENTS study area and the
17 results of the performance evaluation for 2035. The WENTS Steering Committee recommended a
18 series of core improvements, a preferred strategy package, a new statewide congestion policy, and
19 a series of scoping studies.
20

21 The "Core Improvements," with an estimated cost of approximately \$15-17 million, include:

- 22 • Williston Grid Streets
- 23 • Essex Town Center Connections
- 24 • CIRC Alternatives Phase 1 Implementation Projects in WENTS area: Crescent Connector in Essex
25 Junction; VT2A/James Brown Drive improvements in Williston; and Transportation
26 Demand/System Management programs.
- 27 • CIRC Alternatives Phase 2 Implementation Projects: VT15/Sand Hill Road intersection
28 improvements; US2/Trader Lane signal, VT15 Improvements (Post Office Square to Five
29 Corners); VT15 Multiuse Path; and Transportation Demand/System Management programs.
- 30 • Addressing discontinuities and deficiencies to sidewalks, paths, and shoulders, and adding
31 Transit Improvements: Add a mid-day trip on the Williston Route weekdays; weekday peak
32 hour Jeffersonville-Burlington commuter route.
33

34 The WENTS Steering Committee endorsed Hybrid Strategy Package (HSP)2 as the preferred strategy
35 package. HSP2 includes a reconfigured Exit 12 and related improvements (new grid streets and
36 capacity improvements) for a cost of approximately \$30-49 million. It should be noted that
37 Committee members from the Town of Williston did not take any position on the HSPs. The cost of
38 HSP2 does not include the cost of the core improvements.
39

40 The Steering Committee also recommended a series of scoping studies for Task Force
41 consideration:

- 42 • Exit 12/Grid Streets (HSP2)
- 43 • Vermont 2A/Mountain View/Industrial Avenue and Vermont 2A mainline north to James Brown
44 Drive (HSP2)
- 45 • Vermont 117/North Williston Road Intersection and flooding issues (HSP2)
- 46 • US 2 – Taft Corners to Williston Village Multimodal Improvements (Core)

- 1 • Bike and Pedestrian Scoping Studies: Industrial Avenue to Blair Park (including a crossing of
2 Allen Brook), Vermont 15 (Old Stage Road to Essex Way), and Mountain View Road from Old
3 Stage Road to Vermont 2A.

4
5 Bob outlined the WENTS next steps:

- 6 • Public Meeting #2, hosted by the Williston Planning Commission, on February 5th at 7:30PM.
7 • Development of Network Implementation Plan (February 2013) - Additional Investigations:
8 Permit Requirements; Refinement of Cost Estimates and Timeline; Definition of Scoping Study
9 Elements.
10 • Draft Final Report and Final Report (February/March 2013)

11
12 Bryan Osborne of Colchester complimented Bob's analysis and presentation. Bryan asked about the
13 proposed statewide congestion policy and how it will move forward. Michele responded that the
14 CCRPC can make recommendations for managing congestion as part of the Regional Plan update.
15 CCRPC will meet with VTrans to discuss the proposed policy; it is likely that this effort will dovetail
16 with the VTrans Fair Share analysis that is underway. Legislative action may not be required. Brian
17 Searles of VTrans expressed a desire to support economic growth and deal with traffic congestion,
18 especially in light of limited financial resources.

19
20 Dennis Lutz of Essex asked that in future presentations, staff prepare the information in such a
21 manner that the public will understand the short, mid, and long-term importance of making these
22 financial investments and the corresponding positive congestion results, especially in the short to
23 mid-term. Al Voegelé of Colchester asked if Bob considered future changes to the automobile, like
24 new fuels, vehicle size, and driverless cars. Bob responded that electrification of the fleet will not
25 change congestion, but will reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Road smoothing, something needed
26 for driverless vehicles, will be more appropriate for freeways than arterials. In the modeling, Bob
27 slightly reduced trips due to bicycle and pedestrian improvements, but these trips were
28 overwhelmed by traffic growth.

29
30 Michele noted that both IBM and GBIC/LCCC submitted letters regarding WENTS.

31
32 **5) Review Staff-recommended package of Phase III Planning Studies**

33 Michele reviewed staff recommendations for Phase III:

- 34 • Williston Scoping Study: Williston Grid Streets and Exit 12 Improvements
35 • Williston Scoping Study – Vermont 2A/Industrial Avenue/Mountain View Road improvements
36 and Vermont 2A to James Brown Drive
37 • Williston Multimodal Scoping Studies: Williston Village to Taft Corners; Core Improvements for
38 Bicycle/Pedestrian; Mountain View Road (Old Stage Road to Vermont 2A); Vermont 2A
39 Industrial Avenue to Blair Park
40 • Essex Multimodal Scoping Study: Vermont 15 (Old Stage Road to Essex Way)

41
42 Bryan Osborne expressed concern that the first and second CIRC Alternatives implementation
43 rounds totaled approximately \$25 million, while the last round will likely be in the \$70-\$80
44 million range, and whether VTrans will be willing and/or able to fund all the work that needs to
45 be done. Further, until VTrans fully mitigates the effects of its decision to abandoned the Circ
46 Highway (the negative effect on local roads and the redirection of traffic to roadways that were

1 not intended to receive that traffic), they have more work to do and must remain engaged in
2 the process and provide the necessary funding until that work is complete. He asked VTrans if
3 the process could be expanded. Brian Searles responded that this process had a finite
4 timeframe and VTrans is pleased with the progress. Michele noted that CCRPC's objective is to
5 have the scoping projects complete in terms of preferred alternatives and costs estimates for
6 consideration in November. She will discuss a multiyear implementation program with VTrans.
7 She reiterated that she did not foresee the Task Force process extending beyond December of
8 2013.

9
10 Dennis Lutz requested that a future planning study for Essex, to scope the Vermont 117/Vermont
11 289 Park & Ride Lot, be added to the Phase III list. Essex staff offered to manage this project. There
12 was discussion of adding a Park & Ride in Williston, near Exit 12, to the Phase III list. Staff indicated
13 that there is a Park & Ride project under development near Exit 12, however the project has been
14 slow to advance. The Task Force agreed to add the Essex Park & Ride study to the Phase III planning
15 list.

16
17 Chris Roy of Williston shared input from the Williston Selectboard. The Board is supportive of HSP2,
18 but they have a few concerns:

- 19 • Increase in traffic of the northern segment of Vermont 2A and along N. Williston Road. HSP2
20 increases traffic flows, primarily because there isn't third access point across the river. North
21 Williston Road is becoming a regional connector road and the neighborhoods are feeling the
22 impact.
- 23 • A regional traffic burden is being imposed on N. Williston and Mountain View Roads. These are
24 town roads that are burdened by regional traffic; Town funds will be required to maintain and
25 improve these roads.
- 26 • As for the core improvements, the grid streets at Taft Corners have been planned for some
27 time. The \$17 million of core improvements do not include the grid streets' cost. Again, the
28 impact of losing the Circ's A/B segments means that Williston will have to bear the financial
29 burden of expanding capacity that would have been addressed by CIRC. The grid streets were
30 assumed in the analysis and Williston is paying for them.

31
32 Chris acknowledged that the Selectboard understands the parameters of this process. It is pleased
33 with the improvements discussed, however there is a feeling that the increase in road capacity is
34 being paid by the Town. Williston is in a unique position by providing busy conduits for the county's
35 traffic to get to the Interstate. Chris hopes that VTrans and the CCRPC will keep these concerns in
36 mind as we move forward and see if there is a way to fund grid streets and/or to limit the
37 community's financial burden.

38
39 Jeff Carr of Essex recognized the difficulty of the Williston Selectboard's decision to support the
40 second strategy package. He will be mindful of the contribution Williston is making to the regional
41 transportation system and will try to make sure that it isn't forgotten at the CCRPC level.

1 **Jeff Carr of the Town of Essex made a motion that the Task Force approve the Staff-**
2 **recommended package of Phase III Planning Studies, with the inclusion of the Essex Park & Ride**
3 **at Vermont 117 and Vermont 289. The motion was seconded by Jeff Nick of the Business**
4 **Community. The question was called and a vote taken. The motion passed unanimously, with**
5 **one abstention from Richard Amore of the Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community**
6 **Development.**

7
8 **6) Next Steps**

9 The Task Force will meet again in June to hear the progress of the planning studies and the
10 Legislative process. In September, there will be a briefing about the planning studies. If all goes
11 well, the Task Force will consider projects for recommendation to VTrans, the Governor, and
12 Legislature for FY 2015.

13
14 The Task Force will hold a public meeting on **Thursday, February 21st at 7PM at the Williston Town**
15 **Hall.** Task Force members are encouraged to attend and spread the word.

16
17 Brian Searles made a commitment to Chris Roy that VTrans understands and shares the concerns of
18 the Williston Selectboard. He also said that the state has a \$35 million deficit in transportation
19 funding that is not easily resolved. That translates into a \$123 million deficit when federal funds are
20 considered. This will have a huge impact on the work of the Task Force members. He suggested the
21 group pay close attention to the discussions in the Legislature.

22
23 The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 PM.

ATTENDEES

Members Present

Last	First	Title	Organization
Amore	Richard	(For Noelle Mackay)	VT Agency of Commerce & CD
Baechle	Tim	Manager of Energy, Environmental	IBM Burlington
Birkett	Meredith	Dir. of Planning & Marketing	CCTA
Carr	Jeff	RPC Representative	Town of Essex
Carter	Curt	Vice President	Lake Champlain Regional Chamber
Kerin	Daniel	RPC Representative	Village of Essex Junction
Landry	Marc	RPC Representative	Colchester
Lashua	Trevor	Assistant Town Manager	Town of Essex
Levine	Sandy	Senior Attorney	Conservation Law Foundation
Macaig	Terry	Selectboard Chair	Town of Williston
McCarthy	Kate	Sustainable Communities Program Director	Vermont Natural Resources Council (VNRC)
McMahon	Matt		Lake Champlain Regional Chamber
Nick	Jeff	Co-Owner	JL Davis Realty
Roy	Chris	RPC Representative	Town of Williston
Searles	Brian	Secretary	VTrans
Tyler	George	Village President	Village of Essex Junction
VanDriesche	Jason	Director of Advocacy and Education	Local Motion
Voegele	Al	Town Manager	Town of Colchester

Staff Present

Bell	Amy	CCMPO Planning Coordinator	VTrans
Belliveau	Ken	Planning Director and Zoning Admin.	Town of Williston
Hoar	Bruce	DPW Director	Town of Williston
Lutz	Dennis	DPW Director	Town of Essex
Osborne	Bryan	Director of Public Works	Town of Colchester
Robie	Ken	Program Manager, Highway, Safety & Design Section	VTrans

Others Present

Anderson	Samara	Member of the Public
Hale	Matthew	FHWA

CCRPC Staff Present: Michele Boomhower, Eleni Churchill, Christine Forde

Consultants Present: Bob Chamberlin, RSG; Cindy Cook, Adamant Accord; Diane Meyerhoff, Third Sector Associates