

MEMORANDUM

April 30, 2021

To: Ravi Venkataraman, AICP, Town of Richmond
Bryan Davis, AICP, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission
From: Lily Ko and Kristen Lohse, ASLA
Project: Richmond Walk, Bike, and Trails Plan

Re: Open House (March 24, 2021) Summary

Overview

The Town of Richmond, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC), and Toole Design held a virtual open house for the Richmond Walk, Bike, and Trails Plan on Wednesday, March 24, 2021 from 6:30 to 8pm. The open house was open to the public and advertised through a flyer (see Attachment A) two weeks in advance in/through the following locations/channels:

- Richmond Front Porch Forum
- Richmond town website
- Richmond social media
- Key locations throughout Richmond - The Town of Richmond Office, the Post Office, and the Richmond Market
- CCRPC website
- Email to Steering Committee (the committee was asked to share with their networks)
- Email to CCRPC project list

The open house was recorded for those who could not be in attendance and the recording and meeting materials are posted on the project website: <https://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/transportation/current-projects/walk-bike/richmond-bike-walk-and-trails-plan/>

The meeting provided an opportunity to share:

- Project background
- Project process and timeline
- Review of existing conditions, along with opportunities and constraints
- Feedback received so far for the Richmond Walk, Bike, and Trails Plan

Attachments

A – Flyer

B - Open House Agenda

- C – Slide Deck
- D – Meeting Attendee Demographics and Priorities Results
- E – Project Opportunities

See the Open House Agenda in Attachment B and the slide deck in Attachment C. Attendees were primarily engaged for a discussion about project opportunities for the Plan. Using Miro, an online whiteboard application, we collected feedback from attendees on where else they would like to see more walk, bike, and trail opportunities on a map (Attachment E and Project Opportunities are summarized below). The meeting was also interactive throughout and engaged attendees with the following prompts through Mentimeter, an interactive online survey:

- Who's in the room? (demographic questions)
 - What gender do you identify as?
 - What is your age?
 - What race/ethnicity do you identify with?
 - What neighborhood do you live in? (only this demographic question had results shared with the attendees)
- What is your favorite place to walk or bike in Richmond?
- Where would you like to be able to walk or bike in Richmond that you can't now?
- What do you hope this plan will achieve?
- Are there other opportunities we should consider?
- Your top 3 prioritization criteria

The results were shared with attendees live during the meeting. With the demographic questions, only the neighborhood results were shared.

Attendees

There were 18 attendees of the open house, not including Richmond, CCPRC, and Toole Design staff. The Mentimeter demographic questions showed that attendees:

- Were about 50/50 male (53%) and female (47%) (n=17)
- Ranged in age from 25-74 years of age (n=16)
 - » Nearly a fifth of attendees were between age 25-34 or 35-44 (19%)
 - » Nearly a third of attendees were age 55-64 (31%)
 - » A quarter of attendees were 65-74 (25%)
 - » Six percent of attendees were age 45-54
 - » No attendees were younger than age 25 or older than age 74
- Were majority White (94%), as well as Black (6%) (n=16)
- Were mostly from The Village – north (5) or The Village - south (4). The rest of attendees were from Fays Corner, Johnnie Brook Rd, Snipe Ireland Rd, Southview Dr / Hidden Pines, and other places. (n=16)

Attachment D shows the breakdown of attendees in charts.

What the Plan Will Achieve

After reviewing the vision framework, attendees provided their own hopes for what the Plan will achieve (results are also in Attachment D):

- Safe pedestrian and bicycle pathways
 - » For all ages; within the Town center for youth to walk and bike
 - » For all bike types/styles
 - » To connect Richmond's trails and parking hubs
 - » Where cars are able to travel, as well as trails off-road
 - » To commute to work
 - » For recreation
- Rideshare and hitching infrastructure
- Prioritization of infrastructure for people, not cars
- Actionable steps and implementable options – this was a comment that we heard from multiple attendees
- Measurable reduction in the number of single occupancy vehicle trips in Richmond
- Connection to Park & Ride
- Advancing equity through providing more transportation options so people are not required to own a vehicle

Place-specific hopes were placed under Summary of Project Opportunities below.

Favorite Place to Walk or Bike in Richmond

The following is a list of responses to the Mentimeter question on favorite places to walk or bike in Richmond (results also in Attachment D):

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| ▪ Cochran's Ski Area | ▪ Cochran Rd |
| ▪ Chamberlain Hill | ▪ Andrews Community Forest |
| ▪ Johnnie Brook Rd and Johnnie Brook Trail | ▪ In neighborhoods |
| ▪ Preston Trails | ▪ Volunteers Green |
| ▪ Warren and Ruth Beeken Trail | ▪ Hidden Pines |
| ▪ Rivershore Trail | ▪ Southview Dr |
| ▪ Southview Trails | ▪ Valley View Rd |
| ▪ The Village | ▪ Old Jericho Rd trail |
| ▪ Riverside Park | ▪ Preston trails |
| ▪ Route 2 | |

Summary of Project Opportunities

The following list of project opportunities were gathered from the Miro exercise (Attachment E), as well as the following Mentimeter questions (results are also in Attachment D):

- Where would you like to be able to walk or bike in Richmond that you can't now? (Some responses included places that people do currently walk or bike but find conditions dangerous)
- What do you hope this plan will achieve? (place-specific hopes)

River Road / VT 117

- Shoulders are not adequate – hard to turn off major roads
- Connect accommodations to housing and business area

Main Street / Route 2

- VTrans is repaving Route 2 through Richmond
 - » Could we offer safer accommodations than just a shoulder?
- Reduce speeds – 50 mph is not safe
 - » There is some info
- Need to connect Village to Park & Ride / Bus Stop
 - » New development requirements for shared use path to connect new potential development (restaurant/brewery) in the Gateway area (between Village and Park & Ride) to the Village.
- From Park & Ride to Village, the shoulder, curve, and grade is an issue on W Main St; there's a short, sharp uphill with guardrail and narrow cracked shoulder
- No safe crossings beyond existing crosswalks around The Village
- Village to Jonesville – tough to bike through
- Temporary sidewalks on E Main St may not last long and will need to be replaced
- Consider eminent domain to widen the right-of-way

Governor Peck Hwy @ River Rd / 117

- Steep grade on Governor Peck Hwy up to the intersection - challenge to turn onto River Rd / 117, particularly with vehicles coming from Rt 2

The Village

- Bridge Street
 - » Add lighting for safety, especially at crosswalks
 - » Add crosswalks and pedestrian signals with pushbuttons
 - Including crosswalk by market (@ Jolina Ct / Railroad St)
 - » Add sidewalk on eastern side
 - » Improve sidewalk conditions of existing sidewalks, including south of the Winooski Bridge which has wide cracks
 - » Wall holding up sidewalk south of the Winooski Bridge is deteriorating
 - » Evaluate backout angle parking, which is a safety concern
 - » Speed control over the bridge
 - » Add bike boxes at intersections
- Perpendicular streets (Esplanade, Church St, Railroad St / Borden St)
 - » Informal connections already exist on the western ends of these streets (Esplanade and Church St and Church St and Railroad St / Borden St) – formalize and mark the public right-of-way for walking loops

School St, Jericho Rd, Southview Dr, Valley View Rd

- Need safe route to school
 - » Dangerous walking conditions from schools from neighborhoods north of schools (Southview Dr, Valley View Rd, Jericho Rd)
- Southview Drive
- Valley View Rd
- Jericho Rd - add sidewalk; alternatively could improve shoulder
 - » Upper Jericho Rd needs sidewalk
 - » Jericho Rd to Village
 - » Jericho Rd to Park & Ride
 - » Desired connection to Old Jericho Rd trail

I-89 ramps and Main St / Rt 2 @ River Rd / VT 117

- Add bike boxes – right hooks are an issue
- Add crosswalks and pushbuttons to prioritize pedestrians and bicyclists
- Left turns onto 117 are hard because right turns always have a green signal

Cochran Rd

- Cochran Rd from Village
- Loop between Cochran Rd and Route 2

Winooski River

- Bridges on western and eastern sides of town are narrow and probably can't be widened, but need to address sharing lanes safely
 - » Western side – West Main St / Rt 2
 - » Eastern side – Cochran Rd
- Seasonal trail along river
- Trail from Volunteers Green along northeast side of river to Verburg Rd
 - » Verburg Rd can easily lead to Johnnie Brook Trail or with more pedestrian and bike friendly treatment, across the river via Route 2 to the Park & Ride
 - » There is already a footpath from Volunteers Green through ball fields to a small rocky beach area

VAST, between Snipe Ireland Rd and Jericho Rd

- Currently allows pedestrian access
- One property owner currently does not allow snowmobile access
- Easement expired and property owner not interested in renewing - VAST should not be on the map
- Talk with Ruff Riders to confirm access/easements

Railroad

- Check railroad corridor for possible accommodation from the Village westward

Cemetery

- Formalize path through cemetery or around the border – may be difficult with owners, but could avoid pinch point with trees on Rt 2 along cemetery
- Informal path from edge of cemetery to Park & Ride / Bus Stop (Tilden to cemetery, down ravine, to Park & Ride)

Volunteers Green

- Longer loops from Volunteers Green

General Comments

- Safer speeds / Speed control
 - » Lower speed limit
 - » Alternatively, local laws and fines needed to control traffic
- Safety issues include debris on shoulders, and broken shoulders and cracked roads from winter conditions
- Support bicycle movement through intersections, especially turns
- Pavement markings
 - » Green bike boxes
 - » Shared lane markings
 - » Paint to increase awareness of bicyclists

- Signage
 - » Passing distance between vehicles and bicycles
 - » Bikes may use full lane
- Education and enforcement
 - » Increase driver awareness of bicyclists and pedestrians
 - » Education that bicyclists may take the lane
 - » Passing distance between vehicles and bicycles (could be included in vehicle registration mailings)
- Bikeshare as a last-mile option
 - » Locations are Park & Ride and Village
- E-bikeshare, charging for e-bikes -- all over
 - » Bike parking at Park & Ride and Village
- Safer walking conditions between sidewalks and trails
- Getting to Williston, Huntington, Jericho via trails
- New and improved sidewalks throughout Village and neighborhoods, including Southview, Valley View, Cochran Rd, Johnnie Brook Trail and Rd
- Get Strava data by applying with account to Strava Metro: <https://metro.strava.com/>
 - » CCRPC has an account

Outside of Project Area and Outside Richmond

- Fays Corner to the Village
- Duxbury Rd

Top Prioritization Criteria

Attendees were offered seven prioritization criteria for the Richmond Walk, Bike, and Trails Plan and ranked them accordingly (results are also in Attachment D):

1. Connectivity to Town Village
2. Connectivity to Park & Ride and for commute trips
3. Projects that improve safety
4. Recreational access to trails or Town forest
5. Connectivity to neighboring towns
6. Connectivity between neighborhoods/areas
7. Connectivity to schools

See the chart of prioritized criteria in Attachment D.

Suggestions for Next Steps

- Meeting with neighboring towns to solidify trail connectivity

Other Transportation Opportunities

The Hitching Post – community-supported transportation; connecting neighbors driving around Vermont (<https://www.thehitchingpost.org/>)