

Addison County Regional Planning Commission

14 Seminary Street Middlebury, VT 05753

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TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, January 20, 2021

Addison: Jeff Nelson	Orwell:
Bridport: Andrew Manning	Panton:
Bristol:	Ripton: Norm Tjossem
Cornwall:	Salisbury:
Ferrisburgh: Steve Huffaker	Shoreham: Karen Shacket
Goshen:	Starksboro:
Leicester:	Vergennes: Shannon Haggett
Lincoln: Will Sipse, Chair	Waltham:
Middlebury: Jilly dos Santos	Weybridge:
Monkton:	Whiting:
New Haven: Mike Audy	

Staff: Mike Winslow **Guest:** Joanne Garton (Urban and Community Forestry Program, VT FPR)

Minutes

- Call to Order: 6:30PM
- Approval of November 18, 2020 TAC Meeting Minutes. Moved by Karen; Second by Norm. All in favor.
- New Tree Warden Statute – Joanne Garton – VT Urban & Community Forest Program. Joanne provided an overview of Act 171 passed in the 2020 legislative session which provided ten substantial changes to the tree warden statutes. The Act:
 - Defined “public places” and “public ways”
 - Defined “shade tree”
 - Authorized development of a Shade Tree Preservation Plan to expand the jurisdiction of a municipal tree warden
 - Resolved conflicts between the Park & Trees (Title 24, Chapter 67) and Town Highways (Title 19, Chapter 9) portions of the statutes
 - Allowed municipalities to manage shade trees threatened by invasive forest pests proactively
 - Established penalties for unauthorized removal of shade trees based on tree
 - Allowed municipalities to appoint non-resident tree wardens
 - Required that tree warden appointments be reported to VT Forest Parks and Rec.
 - Established clear situations and processes for shade tree removal
 - Transferred responsibility for final decisions regarding shade tree removal from tee wardens to the legislative body of the municipality

Outreach and assistance on the tree warden statutes and the duties of tree wardens are available from the [Urban and Community Forestry Program](#), or through the Vermont League of Cities and Towns.

- Process for local participation in statewide transportation planning – VTrans is seeking feedback on the way they solicit input from the public on transportation planning. Mike shared a draft letter for VTrans in support of the continuation of the TAC. The TAC made recommendations for additions:
 - Reference to role of the TAC in promoting the Middlebury rail tunnel project
 - Add a paragraph about the TAC grant program. Note how the program helps strengthen village centers and communities and helps align planning processes between local and state needs
 - Tout the role of the TAC in providing local knowledge and experience
 - Note that the TAC strengthens the democratic process by involving citizens in the planning process
 - Include recognition that the TAC allows small remote communities to plug into larger regional municipalities and feel part of the planning process

The TAC authorized Mike and Will to wordsmith the letter and send to VTrans. Motion by Jeff; Second by Karen. All in favor.
- Transportation Updates from Mike
 - The Governor is sponsoring a Vermont Winter Bike/Walk Challenge – Feb. 1-12. Prizes are available for those that register and participate.
 - Open Grant Opportunities
 - [Small Scale Bike & Pedestrian Grants](#) – Due February 19
 - [Better Connections](#) – Due February 19
 - [Downtown Transportation Fund](#) – Due March 8
 - Public Works Mutual Aid – Mike has been working with municipalities to develop a Mutual Aid agreement that would formalize relationships between towns in the event of emergencies from storm events to Covid striking a public works crew. The agreement would make reimbursement easier in the event of a FEMA declared disaster. To date eight towns have joined. The soft deadline for joining is January 31.
 - Vergennes PEL Study up-date. The RFP seeking consultants closed on 1/20. VTrans anticipates the project starting in March. In the meantime, VTrans and ACRPC have been populating Technical and Policy Advisory Committees. Those committees are mostly full now, though a few towns have yet to nominate members.
 - Vergennes pedestrian crossing Main and Green – The final unfinished task from the paving project this past summer is installation of pedestrian crossing signals. VTrans expects the necessary equipment to arrive on Friday and the project to be completed early next week
 - RFPs for two TAC grants closed last Friday. Four proposals were submitted for work on Orwell's sand and salt storage and one proposal for the Bristol intersection study. Mike is in the process of organizing meetings with the towns to review the proposals
- Adjourn 7:27PM

Note: adopted meeting minutes are also available online at the ACRPC website under agendas and minutes. For your convenience, the latest version of the TAC Bylaws are linked here also: <http://www.acrpc.org/tac/>

2021 REMAINING TAC MEETING SCHEDULE

February 17	July No Meeting
March 17	August 18
April 21	September 15
May 19	October 20
June 16	November 17
	December No Meeting