

Addison County Regional Planning Commission

14 Seminary Street Middlebury, VT 05753 • www.acrpc.org • Phone: 802.388.3141

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, November 20, 2024

Addison:		Orwell:	Andrea Treadway (v. chair)
Bridport:		Panton:	
Bristol:		Ripton:	Norm Tjossem
Cornwall:		Salisbury:	
Ferrisburgh:	Steve Huffaker	Shoreham:	
Goshen:		Starksboro:	
Leicester:		Vergennes:	Brent Rakowski (chair)
Lincoln:	Bill Finger	Waltham:	
Middlebury:		Weybridge:	
Monkton:	Debra Sprague	Whiting:	
New Haven:			
Staff: Mike Winslow		Public: Faith Dall (VTrans), Ken Upmal (VTrans), Bruce Martin (VTrans), Jim Gish (VHB), Trish Waugh (Lincoln)	
Rutland Staff: Ethan Pepin		Rutland TAC: xx, xx, xx, Larry Courcelle, Jan Sotirakis, Sarah Pelkey, Cheryl Murray, Nic Stark	

Note: This was a joint meeting with the Rutland County TAC.

AGENDA

- Call to Order: 6:30PM
- Amendments to the agenda
- Approval October 16, 2024 TAC Meeting Minutes - Moved by Andrea. Second by Norm. All in favor.
- Transportation updates - Mike and Ethan
 - [Better Roads Grants](#) - Due December 27
 - [TAP Grants & Stormwater Mitigation Grants](#) - Due December 31
 - VTrans Highway Design Standards update - Ethan reported that VTrans is updating the standards to provide more context oriented opportunities. There's a series of meetings on-going. Standards were last updated in 1997.
- Updates from VTrans on [VT 22A planned projects](#)
 - Bruce Martin - Benson STP 017-1(17) and Orwell STP 017-1(18)
 - Project scope is widening from 10' travel lanes and 2' foot shoulder to 11' travel and 6' shoulder. The work will require upsizing of culverts and bridges and substantial drainage changes. There will be changes in vertical

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 Lincoln Middlebury Monkton New Haven Orwell Panton Ripton
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- and horizontal geometry to improve site lines. The intersection of Lake Rd. and Mill Pond Rd. in Benson will have turning lanes added.
- The Benson project has completed preliminary plans. Right of Way (ROW) plans are in review with no significant changes anticipated. They hope to finalize ROW plans by January, and then go into document production for the 48 parcels affected. Once plans are completed there is a waiver and appraisal process. They hope to start negotiations in summer of 2025. By 2026 they will have to make a decision about whether or not a hearing will be needed.
 - Documentation for permit submissions is complete. The project will need most every permit possible. They hope all permits can be in place by 2026.
 - Ideally, construction will begin in 2027.
 - Orwell - property owner meetings have begun, in advance of Right of Way plans. Preliminary project plans are in good shape. They hope to have right of way plans in place next summer.
 - The two projects will not be in construction at the same time for cost and logistical reasons. Each project is anticipated to have a two year construction period. Ideally, they will be stacked so when one finishes the next will begin. Benson is the trickiest portion due to smaller and variable rights of way.
 - Cheryl Murray expressed fatigue at the length of the process and reiterated the need for the work to be done. She asked if there has been progress on a pull off for truck inspections? A: it is still moving through.
 - Observation from Cheryl that many properties are changing hands. She recognized that it's difficult for VTrans to keep on top of. VTrans needs support from property owners and towns in order to move the project expeditiously. Bruce acknowledged that some property owners are pushing back.
- o Ken Upmal - West Haven – Benson STP 017-1(16)
- Limited outreach to date. The segment of work is complex and challenging. It includes a significant state bridge (north of Devil's Bowl over the Hubbardton R.), an intersection realignment, and an endangered species whose habitat needs to be connected. Rattlesnakes will drive some significant design features for the project.
 - Ken will be managing the project for six months and then retiring.
 - McFarlane Johnson is the consultant working on the project design.

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- They anticipate conceptual plans in January. Moving from conceptual to preliminary plan development could take at least a year.
- Cheryl expressed frustration that 22A is a major truck corridor that has not been treated as such historically.
- Ken also gave an update on the US 7 corridor. Segment 4 will be advertised for a spring of 2026 beginning. The project will take two years. There are challenges with funding all the work throughout the state that has been programmed.
- o Faith Dall - Vergennes Alternative Truck Route Planning & Environmental Linkages Study (PELS)
 - Planning study for an alternate truck route around downtown Vergennes
 - The PELS is a new approach to try and identify issues early in the process
 - Currently, in year three of study with an April 2025 wrap up planned
 - The consultant team is producing an evaluation matrix to be reviewed by the technical committee soon and then sent to a policy committee in January.
 - The final study will make recommendations about what options should move into NEPA
 - Five alternatives on the table: two on western side of Vergennes with a new Otter Creek crossing, one on the eastern side of Vergennes also with a new Otter Creek crossing, one alternative utilizing 17 and 7 to avoid Vergennes, and a route utilizing the existing Otter Creek crossing and then leaving the current road to the north. There's also a no build option
 - Brent asked what the ultimate outcome would be. A. multiple alternatives to move to NEPA. The consultant team is working on a final evaluation of alternatives, and will make a recommendation. VTrans will be looking for consensus from Policy Committee and a locally preferred alternative.
- o Jim Gish - Vergennes Bridge - BF 017-1(19)
 - The bridge in Vergennes over Otter Creek is reaching the end of its useful life and will need to be replaced
 - There's no other bridge nearby. Truck traffic will need to detour to VT17. Local traffic is a concern in the absence of a second bridge
 - Scoping a new bridge will wrap up summer 2025.
 - VTrans anticipates construction in perhaps 2030.
 - Ideally the PELS project would proceed first, but the bridge needs to be done before the PELS can go to construction.
- (The Roundtable will be put on hold for November)
- Adjourn Joint Meeting

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- **Addison County Only** - discuss changes in TAC grant awards. Middlebury has determined they do not want to pursue the project identified in their proposal.
 - Andrea moved to allocate all funds to the Ripton and Bristol projects. Norm seconded. All in favor.
- Adjourn Addison County TAC meeting
Moved to adjourn Andrea. 7:31PM

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/transportation/>. Video recordings of meetings are available for one month at [ACRPC's YouTube site](#).

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