

Bennington Region TAC mtg
5/26/2021 at 3pm

Attendees:

Cat Bryars (BCRC), Mark Anders (BCRC), Katharine Otto (VTrans), Sommer Bucossi (VTrans), Jim Ware (GMCN), Bruce Lierman (TAC Chair), Fredericka, Cuenca (N. Bennington), Jim Hand (Dorset), Charlie Rockwell (Rupert), Karen Diazalo (Sandgate)

Minutes:

1. Welcome
2. Project Updates
 - Mark: FHWA Alternative Fuel Corridors on Routes 7 and 9. Bike/Ped grant applications for Ninja Path, Shaftsbury sidewalks, Dorset – Manchester Path.
3. VPSP2 (Project Ranking) Project prioritization process – Regionally-driven project proposals were submitted to VTrans May 1.
 - Bennington Double Roundabout at VT 7A/Northside Dr/Orchard Rd
 - Sommer Bucossi of VTrans clarified that as this project moves through the scoping process, a solution other than a roundabout may win out in scoring.
 - Bennington Roundabout at VT 7A/US7
 - Manchester Rte 11/East Manchester Rd
 - VTrans Sommer Bucossi recommends clarifying the problem and need and alternate solutions for the Rte 11/East Manchester Rd project.
 - Arlington Rte 313/Warm Brook Rd
 - Would TAC like to formally approve the list of VPSP2 projects. Other regions have been voting to approve the slate. Two roundabout projects above scored the same in regional scoring, so there is an opportunity to prioritize one over another. Bruce L: double roundabout seems to be higher priority. Dan M. also supports the double roundabout.
 - Nick Z moves and Charles seconds a motion to prioritize the double roundabout above the single roundabout in Bennington as a more important project. Approved.
4. Future Projects and Priorities
 - TAC members are encouraged to be constantly looking for potential projects in the region.
 - Bruce L: Willowbrook Applegate path update requested. The path is under construction and should be done by end of July. Has taken 7 years.
 - Bruce L: Make a bike/ped access from Washington Ave to Grant St by the Tri-state Bank. Would provide much safer access than Main St or Elm St.
 - Nick Z: Bike/Ped solution between Arlington and Manchester along Rte 7A – in demand by bike commuters. The BCRC would like to develop a bike/ped corridor north-south through the entire region, so this could be a piece of this.
 - Jim H: What would be studied under the proposed bike/ped grant for the area between Dorset and Manchester along the former trail bed? An engineer would look at alternative routes to connect end point of existing Manchester rail trail to the center of Dorset Village. A group of Manchester Rail Trail is meeting with Dorset soon to discuss alternate routes.

5. VTransparency Resource online allows people to look up the status of a given project.
6. Asset-Driven Projects from VTrans
 - Northside Drive traffic signal improvements (numerous)
 - Rice/Houghton Lane and Rte 7A
7. Discuss High Crash Locations in Region
 - All are in Bennington
 - We expect to see Rte 7 in Pownal in the next data iteration due to recent accidents and fatalities.
8. Issues and Policies
 - Climate Change – Transportation Climate Initiative has not been supported by the Governor. Should the TAC take a position and share the position with VTrans, legislators, the Governor's office?
 - Freight and Rail Plan- TAC could invite someone to talk about this
 - Electric vehicle charging station locations. There is interest from DPS and VTrans to discuss how charging stations should be sited along highways throughout the state. Also the possibility of co-locating solar development with charging stations in proximity to highways. Alternate option to site charging stations in villages and downtowns where people may be more likely to use them.
 - Charles: Where does aviation fit in? Flight instructor. Possible improvement: runway length is very important to allow greater range of airplanes to use airports, which impacts the economy. Katharine O: Some other airports have recently completed master plans. Could a local airport pursue this process?