

4-9-18 Middlebury Transportation Task Force Summary Notes

Present: David Andrews, Bill Cunningham, ACTR, Chris Robbins, Emma S. and Sebastian, Seniors at Middlebury College, Josh, ARPC, Bethany Menkart, Eric Davis, Nancy Luke, United Way, Mary-Claire Crogan, ACTR, Dorothy Mammen. and Laura Asermily, Co-chairs, Steve Meyers, and Deb Sachs, Go! Vermont and Net Zero Vermont

Round robin quick updates by members

David Andrews, has been researching public transportation and biking in Italy. Comparing other areas of the world to what is happening here, hopeful to share and integrate ideas here at home.

Bill Cunningham, reported that he is working with RSG to set up cameras at Post Office. Initial analysis is underway on traffic and patterns, and staff has set up a meeting with the school district and BET-CHA.

Cameras were out for 4 days on signposts. Transportation professionals from RSG will review the camera. Main impetus is to look at Academy St., review the queue.

Chris Robbins, is on the Planning Commission, an advocate for connections. Looking for neighborhood application for walkability. Hopeful the group might get behind ensuring walkable neighborhood with connections (i.e., connecting neighborhood access and interconnects). What is the happening with the pop-up marketing campaign? Chris suggested relocating the crosswalk to the north side of Creek Road.

Emma is a senior at Middlebury College, is exploring promotion for increased student ridership on ACTR buses. Seniors are launching a survey today, divided the campaign into concrete goals. Photo shoot for posters, this Wed morning. To create posters that will draw the eye and include information. Humanizing it.

Sebastian, another Middlebury senior, suggested the tag line, "ACTR, ride like a local"! Photos of students walking in the town, flagging a bus! Need to get to town, flag us down! Tapping into the Localvore concept. "Ride local, buy Local"

Passport, similar to the brewery passport. Creating a brewery challenge, need to be 21. Mid kid challenge--Bobcat, 3 Squares, students get discounts. Pass gets you perks.

Developing a video--working to train the orientation leaders on what ACTR is. Orientation will learn about ACTR, and then pass it on. Working w/Doug of the ACTR Board.

Discussion followed. How about a bus ride through campus or around town? Take a bus downtown, as an orientation tool.

Josh Donabedian, Addison RPC, reported on the rail platform RFP. Two finalists tied. Asked both the VHB & Dubois and King teams to present. RPC will meet with the finalist teams. Follow-up interviews on Friday, final selections will be determined right away.

Public meeting will be in May. Josh, chair for TAC, noted that everyone would receive notice.

The Addison Regional Transportation Plan, will be voted on Wednesday night 4/11. ARPC functions like a non-profit, we meet once a month. Hopefully the Transportation plan draft will be approved on Wednesday.

Seymour Pulp mill Street Sidewalk project; must get two trees down. April 15th is the deadline.

Exchange street sidewalk, the town rec'd funding for three phases. Extending sidewalk to multi-use path. Opposite of Greg's, crossing point is where it switches from sidewalk to multi-use path. Looking for bus shelter as part of Catamount Park, hopefully the path will go beyond the park.

Josh reported on regional forums, VTTrans has agreed on an 80:20 match, to get truck traffic out of downtown Vergennes. A nine-month project to is anticipated to consider the alternatives.

Bethany Menkart, participated in a meeting with selected members. Partner with the Town Hall Theater about adding art to the chain link fence. Make transportation more appealing, aesthetic, playful, connections. A subgroup of folks met just before this meeting. Several ideas were raised.

Eric Davis, reported on his work with "Neighbors Together", an ad hoc group working on initiatives to mitigate the effects and impact of the tunnel project, a three-year project. With a \$100K+ budget, proposed projects might include: signage, way-finding, parking location assessment, and how to get around town. Discussion followed on a circulator. Looking into future 2020 plan. The emphasis is on marketing and promotion to encourage people to shop downtown. Another idea is to capture folks at Middlebury College. Karen Duguay, BMP, Nancy Malcom, Jim Gish, wrote the grants.

Eric has also been researching existing train stations. He drafted the statement on behalf of the Task Force. Eric looked at other Amtrak stations including Castleton, VT and Fort Edward, NY. Discussion followed on disabilities. The disability community feels that Amtrak could be doing more. The Task Force reviewed the draft and made a few suggested changes. Eric will amend and resend to the Task Force Chairs for distribution.

Nancy Luke, of United Way, read the emails. UW will wrap up grants that will include ACTR funding from United Way. She didn't attend the last Transportation for Vermonters meeting, however, will get an update for next meeting RE: VW settlement funding for rural electrification.

Mary-Claire--has a meeting set up with Superintendent, staff and BETCHA. New school-start and end times have changed. Starting earlier and ending later.

She and her colleagues are also working with Middlebury College students to expand access to migrant worker population. Bi-lingual drivers.

Working with Laura/Dorothy for a dry run on Ride the Bus, walk in your shoes demo. If you were mobility restricted. Hoped to help include partners. Discussion followed on the suggestions of the downtown business group suggesting the stop in front of the Post Office be relocated due to compromising parking spots. Responses and observations of the area are underway. A letter posted on FPF, what about points of origin, could we play with the various travel.

June 21st is "National Dump the Pump Campaign"--encouraging people to curb their car, June 21st, will include Marble Valley. GMT is not expected to participate in fare free day. APTA materials are available online.

Deb suggested that the Task Force might want to review the Addison RPC's--draft Expanded Energy Plan. A final hearing might be June or July. Josh noted that the date of the Public Hearing would be noticed by way of full Commission meeting. Drafts will be distributed to all the Towns.

Vermont's new Open Trip Planner is up for beta testing. Everyone is encouraged to use the OTP and comment online at www.connectingcommuters.org.

Dorothy attended the Health and Safety Committee, wrote a letter to the Editor about the parking.

Laura has participated in many of the projects at the table. April and May are key times to educate people about rules of the road, and train folks to bike and roll, responsibly.

May 9th Kelly Bow Memorial Ride, to raise awareness about bike safety. Smile and Wave signs, look up from your phone before stepping out into the street. It would be good to activate the "Smile and Wave" group again.

Addison Walk Bike Council, met since the Task Force last met. A good meeting. Middlebury students conducted focus group. Safest groups could see a tri-town bike route.

Eric noted that one idea of the Neighbors Together group is a "Mobile Van Post Office". Offering those that need postal services via the van in a convenient location. Simply a place to mail packages and buy stamps.

Vermont Coffee Company is hosting an "Everyday Bike Workshop" to encourage people to feel comfortable. Do a practice ride. Laura has been participating, inventorying and getting ready. Potentially to go to businesses who don't have bike parking. Food coop, the hospital, planning for covered bike parking.

Discussion followed on the review of the draft Task Force Rail Platform Statement.

Eric summarized the statement. What is an RDC, a rail diesel car. Also know as a DMU, diesel multiple unit. Non-electrically powered.

Discussion followed on ideas of a train stop near the post office, could there be two tunnels with a break in the middle for the station?

It was noted that for riders, there is a concern for safety, shelter, and communications. Could there be wifi, emergency blue phone, or comparable?

Safety is defined by Amtrak, typically at minimum would include a shelter and lighting. Protection of elements should be part of the Middlebury train station.

It should include shared mobility (bus, bike, a drop off location, temporary parking)

Third paragraph “expanded mobility options”, please clarify what this means.

Include something that is attractive to downtown businesses. This is not just about what the riders need. Easy access, convenience, and elements that improve connections to community, business and services.

Next Meeting: May 7th, 3:00 p.m. w/optional 2:00 p.m. demo

2:00 Walk in our Shoes Demo

3:00 Transportation Task Force at Town Office or Isley Library

Summary notes drafted by DL Sachs, Go! Vermont and Net Zero Vermont