ATTENDANCE
Jack Cunningham (Wardsboro)  Susan Clark (VTrans)  Kendall Gifford (staff)
Fred Bullock (Rockingham)  Jodi French (Newfane)  Ralf Bullock (VTrans)
Matt Mann (staff)  Edgar Rice (Winhall)  Dominique Haynes
Mary Habig (The Current)  Dora Bouboulis (Brattleboro)

Regrets: Lew Sorenson, Gary Fox, Nicolas Wallaert.

MINUTES APPROVAL
It was pointed out that the Agenda incorrectly identified the previous meeting date as 8 August. Those minutes having been approved at the 12 Sept meeting, the Committee took up the Minutes of the 12 Sep 11 meeting. These were reviewed and approved as submitted.

BUSINESS
Possible Changes to TPI FY12 Work Program

Matt initiated the discussion by reporting on several new or modified tasks in FY12 TPI. These changes are mostly the result, either directly or indirectly, of the response to flooding caused by Tropical Storm Irene:

- Working with all region towns to be certain each has adopted the current road standards and has them on file, and that this information and process documentation is readily retrievable.
- Work with towns to coordinate stream damage mitigation across town and region borders, to assure consistency and avoid undue or surprising impacts downstream.
- Re-inventorying culverts and other infrastructure.

Committee discussion of these issues included:

- Need to rebuild to standards engineered to withstand comparable flooding in the future.
- How will other current standards be incorporated -- such as meeting requirements of Complete Streets legislation; and.
- How to prioritize work. In other words given the likely inadequacy of resources to meet these current standards on all mitigation and rebuilding work – which work gets the most attention or earliest attention.
Discussion of how much money would be forthcoming and when. No one at the meeting was aware of clear or certain answers to these questions. This information is critical for some of our towns in order to obtain “bridge” funding to continue work that really needs to be done before winter. Sue Clark and Ralf Bullock informed the Committee that they have both been out of touch with Montpelier since the Agency stationed them in our Region for flood response operations.

This might be the time to look at the available information on flood risk assessment. Are the current FEMA maps adequate and appropriate for all our communities? To what extent does damage from this flood support the risks identified by FEMA maps. Particular concern was expressed about property in or near the Flood Zone “A” where water levels, by FEMA definition, have not been calculated.

The questions around the issue of displaced persons, and what alternatives there might be to redeveloping in flood areas. Is public purchase of development rights a realistic option?

**Vermont State Public Transit Policy Plan**

Matt gave information on how to find current draft material on line. The process is now approaching the end of the public comment period on this draft. WRC staff will be submitting comments in the next two weeks. Matt invited comments or discussion from the members. Mary Habig said her reading found very little that was new in this update. She wondered if this was an opportunity lost. At least some others present expressed agreement. Matt mentioned a couple of particular items that are new.

- “Complete Streets” legislation enacted this past year has an impact on policy concerns.
- Current draft Plan recommends more involvement by RPCs in Act 250 reviews to make sure public transit impact and connectivity is addressed.
- Plan recommends Federal “earmarks” funding go to VTrans instead of Towns – so more can be directed at public transit projects.

Dora asked if the Committee could invite the consultant that is developing this new Plan for VTrans to attend one of our meetings. Matt said there would be at least one more Public Meeting via interactive TV, which would provide an opportunity to address the consultant. The Committee felt it would be more effective to have the Consultant come to our meeting. Sue Clark asked if attendance by phone would work. It was decided to issue an invitation to attend in person or by telephone.

Mary gave a quick update of progress on the planning grant to improve the BeeLine bus service in Brattleboro. Goal is to improve efficiency, and thereby increase level of service, in order to attract more riders.

**Upcoming Walkability Audit**

Kendall gave a brief account of the background of this AARP workshop led by Dan Burden. It will be assessing Canal Street between the hospital and Fairground Rd. Asked why this particular site had been chosen, Kendall said that the Town already had studies on this area, including a “gateway treatment” with recommendations for traffic calming and bicycle lanes. Dora added that this community had shown support for exploring this type of improvement.

Next meeting will be 14 November.

Meeting adjourned at 5:58

Accepted as submitted, 14 Nov 2011