

Rappahannock Rapidan Regional Commission
Rural Transportation Technical Committee
June 3rd, 2009
Minutes [DRAFT]

Attendees: Fritz Alderman (Town of Culpeper Planning), Marshall Barron (VDOT Culpeper District), Joshua Bateman (Town of Orange Planning), Matthew Bolick (VDOT Culpeper Residency), Rick Carr (Fauquier County Planning), John Cooley (Culpeper County Planning), John Egertson – *Chair* (Culpeper County Planning), Sue Hromyak (RRRC), Patrick Mauney (RRRC), Chris Mothersead (Town of Warrenton Planning), John Shelburne (VDOT TMPD), Jeff Walker (RRRC), Cathy Zielinski (RRRC)

Guests & Speakers: Paul Gilliam (Vision Engineering), Eric Johnson (VDOT), Rob Lanham (Cedar Mountain Stone), Carl Sachs (Culpeper County Economic Development), Wade White (Whitehouse Group)

Welcome and Introductions, Agenda, Minutes, Matters from the Public

J Egertson called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

J Walker requested to add agenda item 3A – Update on Changes at Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation. The agenda was approved with noted changes.

The minutes were approved with no changes.

Presentation on PD9 Regional Freight Study Draft

Paul Gilliam from Vision Engineering and Wade White from The Whitehouse Group presented information on the PD9 Regional Freight Study. Mr. Gilliam discussed the Physical Infrastructure profile compiled by the consultant team, including observed hot spots and deficiencies, existing and potential intermodal locations, and rail infrastructure and access points. Identified existing and future issues included:

- Increased traffic diverting from I-95 to U.S. 29
- Lack of truck stops/rest area amenities
- Signal timing and coordination at hot spot locations
- Growth toward Northern Virginia
- Inadequate turning radii for trucks in downtown locations

Mr. White presented the draft version of the Regional Quantitative Profile, utilizing data from USDOT, Commodity Flow Survey and the Transearch database. While none of the data sources alone can provide an accurate picture of local-level freight dynamics, combining the data with local knowledge can provide some conclusions on a regional level. General observations and findings from the quantitative profile included:

- Trucks account for roughly 90% of goods movement in the region
- Intermodal activities are largely untapped
- U.S. 15/29 and U.S. 17 are the key freight movement corridors, and the economic impacts from these corridors are expected to rise in the future

- Development pressure from the North and East will continue to shape the movement of goods into, through and out of the region

E Johnson asked about air cargo and extent to which it might be currently understated in the numbers presented. Local knowledge indicates that there are a limited number of goods that ship via air to the region and this will need to be investigated further.

C Sachs inquired about referenced county values from the Transearch database and Mr. White agreed to verify the numbers and get back to the group with further detail as why certain counties have higher values with less tonnage.

Freight Study Case Study: Rob Lanham, Cedar Mountain Stone

Rob Lanham of Cedar Mountain Stone presented an overview of his company's freight shipping needs and existing setup. Cedar Mountain Stone operates a quarry in Mitchells and produces a low value, high volume product that supports transportation building, home construction and agricultural uses. Most deliveries are to local markets, within 30 miles of the quarry.

Cedar Mountain Stone's current transportation system includes double switch siding track at its Mitchells and Gainesville locations that have enabled more cost-effective rail transport between two sites. The company worked with Norfolk Southern to develop the siding track and to schedule runs within Norfolk Southern's existing slots. In addition, Cedar Mountain Stone purchased 20 rail cars for their private use. Over the past four years, the company has moved 9,200 rail car loads between its two locations, eliminating an estimated 57,244 truck trips. For its purposes, rail has been 53% more cost effective, reduced time spent by drivers on trips, as well as reduced permitting costs.

Obstacles to an increased reliance on rail for freight movement include the concomitant demand for increased passenger service over the same tracks. While this has not affected Cedar Mountain Stone much at present, it is a noted problem for freight shippers in the I-95/Route 1 rail corridor where commuter rail traffic is given precedence.

Committee members thanked Mr. Lanham for his presentation and C Mothersead stated that the Freight Study would benefit from including case studies on several regional business, including Cedar Mountain Stone. J Walker indicated that the Commission would follow up with Cedar Mountain Stone, along with other regional businesses, in addition to including a summary of survey responses as an appendix to the study.

Preliminary Report on 2009 RRRC Travel Time Corridor Study

P Mauney briefed the committee on the 2009 Travel Time Corridor segments. All corridor runs have been completed, as of the end of May, and the full report will be available before the July 1st RTC meeting. In general, the data collected for the three segments indicated that there are currently few to no points of major delay on these segments, and that the times recorded should therefore serve as excellent benchmarks with regard to the effects on area travel times caused by future development.

Update on Changes at DRPT

S Hromyak noted that there are several upcoming initiatives from the Department of Rail and Public Transportation; among others, the forthcoming and required development by Rideshare

agencies such as RRRC Commuter Services, of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Agency Plans, being referred to as Transportation Choices Plans, as well as a pending study of a proposed Bus Rapid Transit system that would serve the Northern Virginia commuter regions.

S Hromyak also provided an update on the PD9 Regional Commuter Bus that leaves from Culpeper and stops in Warrenton on its way to Northern Virginia and DC each morning, with evening return. She reported that ridership has continued to increase over the past month, and that inclusive of new SmartBenefits allowances, the cost of a monthly ticket for area riders is only \$60 out of pocket for commuters whose employers participate in the SmartBenefits allowance program.

Announcements and Other Business

Upcoming meeting announcements included:

- June 17th: LTAP Highway Safety Fundamentals in Charlottesville (<http://ltap.cts.virginia.edu>)
- June 19th: Route 29 Corridor Study Consultant Studio, 1:30-3:30 at the Regional Commission offices

J Walker also noted that the Route 29 consultant team is in the process of meeting with individual jurisdictions and asked that any PD9 jurisdictions which are interested in hosting such a meeting, but have not been scheduled one, to please contact consultant Joe Springer with Parsons.

Next Meeting and Adjournment

The next meeting of the Rappahannock-Rapidan Rural Transportation Committee will be Wednesday, July 1st at 10am.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.