

Rappahannock Rapidan Regional Commission
Transportation Technical Committee
Minutes of October 3, 2007

Attendees: Marshall Barron (VDOT-Culpeper District); Rick Carr (Fauquier County, Planning); Larry Fanton (VDOT-Culpeper Residency); Patrick Mauney (RRRC); Bob Miller (Madison County Board of Supervisors); Chris Mothersead, *Chairman* (Town of Warrenton Planning); Harriet Parcels (RRRC); Debbie Kendall (Orange County, Strategic Planning); John Shelburne (VDOT Transportation, Mobility and Planning Division, Richmond); Darryl Shifflett (VDOT-Warrenton Residency); Jeffrey Walker (RRRC)

1. Welcome, Agenda, Minutes, Matters from the Public:

Chairman Chris Mothersead called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm. Mr. Mothersead asked for any corrections to the minutes of the September 5, 2007 meeting. Hearing none, a motion was made and seconded, and the minutes were approved.

No members of the public were present.

2. Report on the VDOT Chapter 527-Traffic Impact Analysis

Mr. Walker gave a brief overview of the Chapter 527- Traffic Impact Analysis guidelines that will become effective across the VDOT Culpeper District as of January 1, 2008. Mr. Walker stated that PD9, given its rural/urban diversity is well positioned to provide helpful feedback to VDOT as it works to refine the regulations, as needed. Mr. Walker said that the RRRC would be interested in being added to the distribution list, if possible, to receive copies of the traffic impact analyses after they are completed to look at them from a regional perspective, and as potential 'developments of regional impact', incorporate them as applicable into its upcoming Phase II- Regional Growth Information System, currently under development.

The regulations define from a transportation perspective what constitutes a project of regional significance. There might also be projects with major impacts on the environment, water and sewer that the R-R region considers "projects of regional significance." Mr. Walker suggested that the Transportation Technical Committee would be an excellent body to render such determination and offer its review. There was consensus from the committee that this would be an appropriate role for the committee. Mr. Barron stated that VDOT will sponsor training sessions on the new Chapter 527 regulations in October (October 22 in Culpeper and October 29 in Albemarle). He said he expected a final workshop in December before the regulations take effect for this region on January 1, 2008. Most of the counties in PD9 have been doing these types of traffic impact analyses already but the regulations formalize the process and give definite project thresholds.

3. Phase II Long Range Rural Transportation Planning Draft Guidebook

Mr. Mauney stated that the draft Phase II Long Range Rural Transportation Planning Guidebook had been provided to the committee in their agenda packets for review. He said that Phase II will build upon the data developed in Phase I and involve further analysis of traffic counts and traffic projections. In November, VDOT should be providing each PDC with a new SPS-Lite data CD of updated roadway information, traffic and forecast data. VDOT is expected to hold a workshop on Phase II of the Long Range Transportation Plan process in

Charlottesville in mid-November, tentatively scheduled for November 15. Mr. Mauney stated that RRRC staff, in addition to other items, would provide the committee at its November meeting with an overlay map of elderly and handicapped population, and existing transit service in the region. This will serve as a basis for looking at where transit service expansions are needed, a requirement of the Phase II planning. Mr. Walker added that on October 10, the Commission will host a meeting of elderly and handicapped service providers to begin identifying needs and coordinating efforts for the region. In addition, Chairman Mothersead stated that the region will want to consider how the designated growth areas are expected to impact future traffic growth, as the VDOT numbers are based on straight line trend projections which may not accurately reflect what is taking place in the high growth areas.

4. Identification of Additional Issue Topics for Inclusion in the RTC FY 08 Workplan.

Mr. Walked reported that the rural transportation planning process provides latitude for PDC's to include issues of particular importance to them. He suggested several topics that the committee might want to consider for this region:

- *Freight:* the committee could sponsor a workshop or forum on freight issues, including vehicular and rail, across the region, in conjunction with ongoing development in Richmond of a statewide freight study, with emphases on such considerations, for example, as growth in heavy truck traffic on Route 29 from trucks diverting from I-81.

- *Safety:* the committee might wish to pursue more detailed planning on safety issues at identified locations or major intersections or routes that pose a special safety concern, and tap into such resources as Safe Route to School and/or other safety monies.

- *Airports:* each of the region's airports has its own master plan. The Committee might wish to take the next step following the excellent briefings provided by area airport managers during the last round to examine the interface of the airports with the road network.

- *Utilities:* lastly, the committee could explore what corridors can be expected to experience high traffic growth based on water and sewer expansion plans.

One committee member mentioned that Norfolk Southern Railroad was looking into establishing a terminal location in Orange County and that the committee might want to examine intermodal access points. Mr. Mothersead said that growing truck traffic, with its impact on the roads, should be looked at in coordination with what role the railroads could play in alleviating some of the traffic. Mr. Walker pointed out that a grant application submitted by RRRC on behalf of Culpeper County for bicycle-pedestrian planning was presently under consideration by VDOT, with announcements anticipated to go out shortly, so bike/ped issues and related planning might be considered a topic as well. The committee agreed that safety was an important area, with an examination of critical intersections and coordination with the ongoing, Multimodal Office-funded Route 29 Corridor study.

5. Update on Active Area Transportation Enhancements Projects

Mrs. Parcels distributed a hand-out to the committee with background on the federal enhancements program and a list of active TEA-21 enhancements projects in the region. Mrs. Parcels said that it is not unusual for enhancements projects to receive less than what had been requested, due to limited funding, and that re-scoping of some projects is then required. She indicated that RRRC was working with sponsors of two historic battlefield projects in the region that had been approved and were undergoing a re-scoping. Mrs. Parcels stated that there were three active projects in Fauquier County, two in Culpeper County (both battlefield projects), two in Gordonsville and one each in Rappahannock and Madison counties. Mrs. Parcels said that the next date for submitting an application for a TEA-21 project is November

1st and urged the committee members to let others in their counties know about this and see if there were projects that could be submitted for approval. She indicated that RRRRC staff is available to provide technical assistance with the grant applications. She also noted that VDOT enhancements staff from Richmond will be coming to Culpeper on October 11 to sponsor a Transportation Enhancements workshop at the VDOT Culpeper Auditorium. The workshop is for project sponsors, to provide them with additional information about the process and grant reporting requirements. Finally, Mrs. Parcels noted that the hand-out listed several excellent web sites on enhancements projects that not only provide helpful information but showcase successful projects from around the country.

5. Announcements and Other Business:

--UVA-CRMES Fauquier Rte 29 "Risk-Based Approach to Protecting Accessibility, Mobility and Safety Options Study:" There will be a meeting of the study steering Committee at the RRRRC offices on October 18 at 11:00 am.

--VDOT FY 09-14 Six-Year Improvement Plan (SYIP) Public Officials Briefing on November 1, followed by open house public hearing in Culpeper Auditorium. Mr. Walker said that last year the RRRRC had made a presentation at the hearing and that we could again this year if the committee supported that. Mr. Walker said that as a part of Phase I, the committee had assembled a list of high priority projects in the region which he could present at the meeting with an update on the status of the Regional Long Range planning process. One of the committee members expressed concern that there had not as yet been sign-off by area elected officials (via the Regional Commission) on the regional priority list and that the committee might want to wait before presenting this. Mr. Mothersead said that a list could be sent to VDOT after formal presentation and adoption by the Commission. He said there was a list of regional priorities in the SYIP and that it could be compared with the RTC's Phase I priority list for presentation at the November 7th meeting. It was agreed by the committee members that giving a presentation, upon such time as the priorities have been formally adopted, lends further credence to the regional consensus that is fostered through the committee's work.

--Fall VDOT workshop on Phase II of the Regional Transportation Planning process: as referenced, tentatively scheduled in Charlottesville for November 15; details, t.b.a.

Mr. Mothersead asked if there was further business. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned at 3:05 pm.