

Bennington Region TAC mtg
3/31/2021 at 2pm

Attendees:

Cat Bryars (BCRC), Mark Anders (BCRC), Amy Bell (VTrans), Katharine Otto (VTrans), Rob Faley (___), Bruce Lierman (BCRC Transportation Commissioner), Jim Hand (Dorset), Jim Ware (Green Mtn Community Network), Gordon Black (Manchester), Nick Zaiac (Arlington), Dan Monks (Bennington)

Minutes:

1. Welcome and introductions

- Introductions
- Mark briefed TAC on recent history of TAC in Bennington County and hopes to rejuvenate focus and activity of the group in light of VPSP2. Also new federal emphasis on local decision-making, innovative transportation systems, and climate change.
- Upcoming TAC meetings will be held every fourth Weds at 3pm.

2. Overview of new state project prioritization system (VSP2) and discussion about regional project priorities

- VPSP2 – Project selection and prioritization
 - Category 1: State will send TAC asset-driven projects
 - Category 2: Regionally- or town-driven projects to recommend to VTrans: currently open to traffic safety and paving projects
- Projects will be scored and prioritized based on transportation value weights
- Regional criteria for recommended projects: mentioned in plan or study, town planning process, community value and proximity to community bldgs
- The current year is a pilot year for VPSP2, so TAC can provide feedback on program. Current ideas for program improvement:
 - Regional input on transportation budgets
 - Add induced demand as an evaluation criterium
 - Address urgency of climate change
- TAC needs to propose regionally-driven projects by May 1, 2021
- Asset-driven projects by May 31, 2021
- Bike/Ped-only projects are not currently eligible, but modifications that enhance bike/ped access on existing roads may be considered.
- Lierman: Mobility/Connectivity should be added as a criterium or given more emphasis. VTrans: The VPSP2 process will introduce transparency to scoring and ranking system, so hopefully feedback on how the criteria are weighted will be easier moving forward.

3. Potential Projects for Consideration

- Asset-Driven potential projects (suggested by VTrans)
 - Safety + Traffic projects
 - Roundabout project at entrance to Bennington College

- Updating signal equipment at several sites along 67A
 - Paving projects
 - Various
- Regionally-driven potential projects (suggested by TAC)
 - VTrans recommends TACS select 3-5 projects, though ultimately picked based on how project meets competitive criteria. Also depends on project cost.
 - Manchester: E. Manchester Rd and VT-11
 - Arlington: Warmbrook Rd and VT-313
 - Bennington: Benmont Ave & 7A – some sentiment that this is a priority relative to Kocher Drive. Perhaps include Orchard Rd with this one.
 - Bennington: Route 7 & 7A/Kocher Drive