

Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission

Transportation Technical Advisory Committee

MINUTES

Approved at May 23, 2017 meeting

Transportation Committee Members

Date: TUESDAY, March 28, 2017

Time: 1:30 PM

Location:

**A-NPDC Conference Room
23372 Front Street
Accomac, 23301**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Larry DiRe, Cape Charles representative
Barb Haxter, Accomack Airport*
Granville Hogg, A-NPDC*
Tim Holloway, Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel*
Chris Isdell, VDOT Accomac Residency*
William Kerbin, Town of Onancock
Larry LeMond, ANTDC*, Chairman
John Maher, STAR Transit
Rich Morrison, Accomack County*, Vice Chairman
Jerry Pauley, VDOT, Alt.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Joe Bulin, ESCSB, Alt.
Vanessa Cousineau, ESAAA/CAA representative
Robert Duer, Town of Exmore
Abra Jacobs, Center for Independent Living
Alex Parry, Bay Coast Railroad
Ivan Rucker, FHWA
Lisa Sedjat, ESCSB
Peter Stith, Northampton County*
Eric Stringfield, VDOT District Planner*
Kristen Tremblay, Accomack County, Alt
Jim West, Chincoteague*

OTHERS:

Gary Pusey, Accomack County
Barbara Schwenk, A-NPDC, Secretary
Curt Smith, A-NPDC
Keisha Wilkins, VDOT

*Voting Members

NEXT MEETINGS:

May 23
July 25
September 26
November 28

CONTACT:

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- I. Call to order
- II. Approval of January 24, 2017 Meeting Minutes
- III. Staff Update
- IV. Unfinished business
 - A. "SmartScale" Update
 - B. Bike/Hike Trail Feasibility Study update
 - C. Sidewalk Gap Study update
 - D. Private Unpaved Roads update
- V. New business
 - A. Report – Freight Traffic on Route 13
 - B. Bicycle Plan Update
 - C. 2018 Preliminary Work Program
- VI. Public participation
- VII. Next meeting – May 23, 2017, 1:30 p.m.
- VIII. Adjourn

Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission
23372 Front Street
P.O. Box 417
Accomac, VA 23301



Podemos ofrecer servicios de interpretación para la reunión. Por favor, llámanos tres días de anticipación para que podamos servir mejor a usted. 757-787-2936, ext. 127

- I. Call to Order: Chairman LeMond called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.
- II. Minutes: The January 24, 2017 meeting minutes were approved by motion of Morrison, seconded by Holloway and carried unanimously.
- III. Staff Update: Ms. Schwenk presented the Staff update consisting of the Attendance Record. Mr. DiRe pointed out that he had attended the January meeting, and Ms. Schwenk will correct the record. Ms. Schwenk also mentioned that the Accomack-Northampton Transportation District Commission minutes were attached to the meeting packet for members' information including a complete report from STAR Transit. Also attached to the Staff Report were the latest STAR Transit route schedules.

IV. Unfinished business:

- a. SmartScale Update - Members reviewed a spreadsheet enumerating the cost of ESVA projects submitted under SmartScale along with the other high-ranking projects. The four projects from our region that have survived the first reviews are smaller in scale and cost than many others at \$5,629,840 of the \$72,486,799 in available funding, which might mean that they will remain on the list in the final round. The Cemetery Road project listed by both counties was cut from the list during the first round, as was the Route 13 Eyrehall Drive project. The Cemetery Road projects listed by both counties were probably eliminated because that road doesn't connect to Route 13, as the other four projects do. In addition, three of the four intersections that have remained on the SmartScale list were part of the Route 13 Safety Study completed in spring 2016. The three projects were: 1) Improving the intersection of Route 13 and Chincoteague Road (Route 175), 2) Realigning Temperanceville and Saxis Roads and installing a traffic signal, and 3) Route 13/Stone Road (Route 184) intersection improvements including safer access to Food Lion shopping center and other commercial entities on both sides of the highway. The fourth project that is still included for review is a traffic signal and longer turn lanes at the intersection of Route 13 and the Accomack Airport Industrial Park entrance (Parkway), and modification of the median at the current Eastern Shore Community College entrance on Route 13 to prevent turning north onto Route 13.

Discussion followed about providing support for the projects at the March 29 Six-Year Improvement Projects meeting at 5:30 pm at Hampton Roads TPO in Chesapeake. Curt Smith volunteered to attend and support our projects as he will be continuing on to Richmond that evening.

Mr. Pauley commented that the funds for these projects will not be available until 2021. There might be a possibility that, because our projects are "small" money, they could be moved up in time.

Mr. Smith reviewed how he could express support for the projects and also mention the need to improve Route 602 (Cemetery Road).

- b. Bike/Hike Trail Feasibility Study Update - Ms. Schwenk reported that ownership of all parcels in the abandoned railroad right-of-way has been confirmed as owned by The Nature Conservancy. One parcel had been erroneously recorded as belonging to a private landowner, but this error has now been corrected. Research continues into the best route options for crossing Route 13 and entering the Town of Cape Charles.

Ms. Schwenk and James McGowan, TNC, met with the new owners of Stingray's Restaurant, who were very supportive of the project.

A next steps are to talk with the Bay Coast Railroad about the possibility of a trail with rail between the rails and Stone Road, and to ascertain exactly where the VDOT ROW is Stone Road to see if there is enough room for a bicycle trail on the shoulder. Chris Isdell, VDOT, reported that the ROW information that is now on microfiche will be converted to PDF format in the next weeks.

One of the options being considered for the trail into Cape Charles would be to travel between Stone Road and the RR behind the new brewery, the Cape Charles Museum, the Town's maintenance building, Rayfield's, and terminate on the curve at Fig and Mason. Another option might be to run along the south side of the RR ROW across the Virginia Port Authority dredge spoils parcel, but that route would involve another RR crossing. Mr. Smith mentioned that we should also keep in mind how to build off this trail to continue north to Cheriton and beyond.

- c. Sidewalk Gap Study Update - Ms. Schwenk reported difficulties with the A--NPDC's version of ArcGIS and mapping sidewalks based on aerial imagery. Keisha Wilkins reported that she has a data file for all sidewalks in towns on the Shore and will send that so staff can review it and decide how best to proceed with this project. It was suggested to also include sidewalks that are outside incorporated towns.
- d. Private Unpaved Roads - no progress to report.

V. New Business:

- a. Report - Freight Traffic on Route 13 - Committee members reviewed an Excel spreadsheet prepared by staff that showed the daily average number of heavy trucks crossing the CBBT from 2006 through 2016. Numbers were provided by both the VDOT AADT traffic data and the CBBT. The numbers differed because trucks are classified differently by each entity. However, both sets of numbers showed a drop in truck traffic after 2008 and a gradual increase since then. AADT figures were used for trucks crossing the Maryland state line. Those numbers indicate that much more truck traffic travels north than south over the CBBT. There were also comments that truck traffic fluctuates up and down with the price of diesel fuel. The fuel price over a five-year period was included on the spreadsheet.

While conducting research for this report, Ms. Schwenk reviewed the *VTRANS 2040 Trends Assessment Technical Report: Freight Trends* prepared by Cambridge Systematics Economic Development Research Group for the Virginia Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment in June 2015. In that report, predictions were made that the tonnage of freight through Northampton County (but not Accomack County) would increase dramatically from 47-3000 thousand tons to 22,000 - 71,000 thousand tons (*VTRANS2040 Trends Analysis Technical Report, p. ES-3*). **The Committee instructed staff to further research the basis for this prediction and report back at next meeting.**

- b. Bicycle Plan Update - Staff presented a short history of the Bicycle Plan from 2000 to the present. Committee members discussed how or if the plan should be updated. The

resulting decision was to definitely update the plan by adding pedestrian facilities (sidewalks), to look at areas in both counties where people routinely walk along the roads to get to stores and services, and rethink the whole plan and address small projects that can be achieved. Also look at low volume roads that might be used as bicycle routes if they were minimally improved instead of having to acquire more right-of-way to widen them and install paved shoulders. Phasing the plan and setting priorities could move it forward as well. In addition, soliciting feedback from entities such as CBES that organize bicycle tours could also be useful. (presentation sheet attached to these minutes).

Ms. Schwenk reported that Fish and Wildlife Services has agreed to maintain Phase II of the Bike/Hike Trail that will terminate at Capeville Drive, but it has indicated that it will not do the same for Phase III. Mr. Holloway asked if there was a formal agreement between TNC and F&WS for maintenance of Phase II. Staff will check on this point.

TTAC was asked about how we should proceed with this plan—maintain the status quo, or modify this plan and prioritize ways to build it out. In our rural area, right-of-way constraints are a hindrance for building out the bike plan. It's not just the cost of purchasing ROW, there is "stuff" in the ROW such as septic tanks, etc. that would need to be relocated. Most of our secondary roads have less than 30 feet of ROW, making it impossible to create bicycle lanes. In addition, finding funding for this is very difficult, as SmartScale funding focuses on Route 13 improvements.

Consensus was that there were some things we still need to learn before a decision can be made about how to proceed with updating the plan, but updating it would be beneficial, especially if a pedestrian and bicycle commuting focus was added to the previous recreational bicycling focus.

A question about whether trails need to be paved was asked. Perhaps TTAC should consider multi-modal trails that include four-wheelers and/or horses along with pedestrian and bicycle trails.

- c. 2018 Preliminary Work Program - VDOT has requested a yearly work program by April 14 for the Federal Highway Planning and Research Funds it supplies. Committee members discussed and suggested four projects:
 - i. Update the Bicycle Plan to be more inclusive for pedestrians, especially people without motorized vehicles who must walk or use STAR Transit or bicycles to meet their transportation needs. Look for smaller projects that could be more easily implemented than the huge number of miles included in Plan routes. Prioritize them and apply for funding. Mr. Holloway suggested creating a list of places to put additional bus stops such as store and church parking lots and areas in towns that would be appropriate along STAR Transit routes.
 - ii. Use the Coastal Resiliency Tool developed in 2015 to study those roads that are regularly inundated either by saltwater or storm water ponding and develop recommendations for what to do about them based on predetermined factors related to transportation—a hazard mitigation approach. Prioritize problems identified in the study to develop a list of projects.

- iii. Develop a Northampton County Pilot Project to solve “town edge” problems currently experienced between Cape Charles and Northampton County that affect land uses, parking, signage, lighting, setback regulations, as well as the VDOT apron and line-of-sight requirements that make for serious ROW availability/safety concerns for bikers and pedestrians “sharing the road” along Stone Road (184) and Old Cape Charles Road (642).
 - iv. Address possible ways to improve the many roads in each county that don’t qualify for SmartScale funding such as Cemetery Road from Belle Haven to Occohannock Neck Road. Look for alternative funding sources. Mr. Pauley will send a list of sources he has. Can we shift funds that haven’t been used elsewhere? Turtle back roads need to be addressed as well. State-of-Good-Repair (maintenance funds) can’t be used for improving roads, only repairing them as they are.
- d. Miscellaneous items members brought up:
- i. Questions and discussions about when/how to submit plans to VDOT for review. Accomack County’s Planning Commission submits plans to VDOT before approving any submitted plan as long as it complies with zoning ordinances. One question was whether VDOT can participate with Planning and Zoning commissions to influence changes to zoning that also comply with VDOT regulations. No consensus was reached, and discussion of this topic was terminated in the interest of time.
 - ii. Bus shelter design - from previous year. Question was asked about progress on this project. Mr. Maher reported that what is needed are locations for new shelters along STAR Transit routes. Problems arise due to ROW limitations, etc. If it’s off ROW, could we find locations such as parking lots, church lots, and similar places. We could identify sites and look for funds to purchase and install them. STAR Transit is surveying to identify places that shelters are needed. TTAC can check with STAR Transit on where needs are and work on finding places to put the shelters.

VI. Public Participation: none

VII. Next meeting: May 23, at 1:30 pm

VIII. Adjourn: the meeting was adjourned at 3:20 by a motion from Morrison, seconded by Holloway and carried unanimously.

Attachments:

- 1. Bicycle Plan 2014
- 2. Bicycle Plan short history