



TO: Joe Segale

FM: Dean Pierce

DT: April 12, 2001

SB: Meeting summaries and Issue identification—DRAFT

Pursuant to the scope of work for the MTP update, attached find a summary of issues based on the results of the public meetings we have held to date. I hope you find it helpful.

Please note that we would be happy to revise this summary to address any comments or concerns you might have. Let me know at your convenience.

CCMPO MTP UPDATE PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS

Results/Common themes

Topics meetings

- *Transit*
- *Automobiles and highways*
- *Non-motorized Transportation*
- *Special Needs Transportation*

Interest group meetings

- *Disabled persons*
- *Facility operators and maintainers*
- *Businesspeople*
- *Senior citizens*
- *Environmentalists*
- *Students*

Results/Common themes

Meetings with interested persons and key stakeholder groups were held to support the updating of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. These meetings were organized around general themes or interest areas. Subjects of the meetings included the following:

- ✍ Transit Issues (with representatives from large businesses),
- ✍ Special Needs Populations,
- ✍ Non-motorized transportation,
- ✍ Automobile and Highway Issues,
- ✍ Disability Issues,
- ✍ Environmental Issues,
- ✍ Senior Citizen Issues, and
- ✍ Young Person Issues.

Some “themes” that emerged from the meetings are highlighted in the paragraphs below. Please note that no attempt has been made to order these themes to reflect importance, etc. Also note that many of these themes overlap. Finally, the themes echo many of the comments made at the visioning sessions and also generally support the Plan’s vision statement and goals.

Everything is connected. It is widely recognized among participants that one cannot talk about transportation without talking about development patterns, the economy, the environment, education, and quality of life—and vice versa. Within the transportation realm, it is recognized that modes are interdependent and related (for example, as people use multiple modes to complete a trip).

The link between transportation and land use is especially close. Since few people today work at home, the nature and extent of the transportation system determines whether it is possible for individuals to access employment opportunities and for employers to access the labor force, markets, and suppliers. The transportation system, along with other factors, contributes to changes in land use, by making areas more accessible, just as changes in land use have an impact on the functioning of the transportation.

Transportation decisions have a very significant political dimension. Transportation affects many different interests. Because people and groups view the world differently, transportation issues are often contentious ones that are resolved only through the political process. Even the best technical analyses take place against the backdrop of the political/legislative process.

There are few things that everyone agrees on, but there are some that many people agree on: 1) Change is anticipated—disagreements involve the pace at which it will take place but usually not the underlying premise; 2) Unsafe conditions are bad, and conditions where people lose their lives are particularly bad; and 3) connectivity and mobility are desirable states; in other words, it should be easy and inexpensive for people to get where they want to go; places should be connected, and the transportation system should not have gaps.

Goal setting is part of transportation. As managers of the transportation system we must determine:

- ✍ What do people want? How much transportation choice do people feel is necessary?
What types and levels of service do people want? How much do people need?
- ✍ How do people get what they want? What steps must be taken? Who must take them?

- ✍ Can people afford to get what they want (financially, socially, environmentally, and in terms of human health)? Who will pay for it (saying yes is always easier when someone else is paying)?

Priority setting reflects point of view. How badly people want a transportation investment normally reflects who they are. Business people want investments that help their businesses, users of bike paths tend to want more bike paths or similar facilities. Furthermore, people tend to be unsupportive of projects advocated by others if those projects are expensive and might cause delays to other projects.

Some people like “strong plans” while others like “flexible” plans. Support for transportation plans and planning varies. To paint with a broad brush, people who view the future as something that can be shaped by the public sector seem to favor plans that set firm priorities and establish directive policies. People who doubt the ability of agencies to shape the future or question whether it is appropriate seem to prefer plans that can be interpreted in light of changing conditions.

People are rethinking the desirability of separated land uses. The physical separation of different land use types—especially residential and small-scale commercial/service types—is no longer assumed to be a good thing. (This of course has implications for the amount people must travel.) Many people also are concerned about the financial, social, environmental, and health costs associated with the dispersion of development away from traditional “centers,” a phenomenon known to many as sprawl.

People are also rethinking how their communities must respond to growing volumes of traffic and congestion on their roadways. Many people believe that traffic and delays are increasing and that these developments are undesirable. Some want to divert traffic away from village centers by creating alternate routes for trucks and through travelers, but others oppose rerouting or the construction of new roads. More people agree that if the volume of traffic cannot be changed, at least its impacts can be softened using traffic calming.

When it comes to improvements, everybody likes/dislikes something. Every type of facility has its supporters and detractors... even in Chittenden County. This includes bike-ped facilities (paths, sidewalks, trails, lanes), transit (buses, passenger rail), rail (improvements for freight mobility), and highways and bridges (including new roads like the Circ, improvements of old roads like Route 7, signal systems, etc.).

Taking care of the transportation system we have is important. People widely agree that the facilities we already have should be well taken care of. Unfortunately, sometimes maintenance is deferred or does not take place. This has significant negative long term financial impacts. It also has practical short term impacts, as when, due to lack of attention during or following foul weather, people are not able to get where they must go.

Taking care of people is important, as well. Participants in the sessions generally agree that the needs of disadvantaged populations (poor, elderly, etc.) are important. However, people do not always agree on how to address them.

The project development process takes too long. Many people, but particularly advocates for more complex transportation proposals, feel that the project development process takes far too long. Opinion varies about whether delays are due to a) too little money for implementation and construction, b) onerous permitting requirements, or c) NIMBYism. A number of people believe that the length of the process can be reduced when local governments (as opposed to the state) take responsibility for managing the project.

Information technology will make transportation “smarter.” Computers and information technology will improve transportation by providing tools to make the transportation system more efficient and by helping planners make better decisions. However, information technology will never replace the basic need to move materials and people.

Sometimes the best thing to do is think small. A number of participants in the sessions pointed out the benefits of small, low-tech, or limited scale solutions to problems. Although these modest solutions might not provide all the benefits of more extensive ones, they can be implemented much more readily.

Transit-oriented Issues Meeting
November 14, 2000
Winooski City Hall

In attendance:

John O'Kane (IBM), Michael Muzzy (Good News Garage), Deborah Linehan (CCTA), Ray Pecor Jr. (Lake Champlain Transportation Company), Joe Segale, Peter Keating, Harry Strate, Dean Pierce, Jed Loomis.

Notes:

Joe Segale gave an introduction to the long-range plan and the CCMPO's involvement with it.

What does the long-range plan (for transportation) mean: what's in it for your business?

- ✍ While CCTA does its own short-range planning, it relies on the MPO for the long-range planning. Unfortunately, the goals (of the increase in ridership) of the long-range plan are unrealistic for CCTA without additional funding (DL)
- ✍ Transportation is one factor that shapes the livability of the area. IBM is concerned about growth in the area. The plan should reflect residents' preferences, instead of dictating them. We need to find a way to move people around and still reduce congestion (JO)
- ✍ The Good News Garage fills in the gaps in the long-range plan, so from the plan the GNG is informed where they can operate now & in the future. They balance the availability of public transportation with people's desire for their own transportation (MM)
- ✍ Change is essential for people, policies, businesses...it's important to be able to adapt to change. Long-term planning can stunt (the opportunity for) change, so we need a balance between the two. Plattsburgh is not considered when Vermont transportation planning occurs (RP)

Other comments and discussion points:

- Chittenden County is becoming a regional growth engine for a larger area. External connections (and thus coordination with other RPCs, e.g. to the North, to the South, and Plattsburgh) are essential to growth and improvement
- Housing is an issue, as well – where do people live (affordably)?
- Rail is a possibility to move people in, along with car parks, which would reduce congestion and pollution
- CCTA's future for growth is in niche markets (like park & ride, express service, low-income riders who have a reduced fare, wheelchair riders, senior citizen riders). The park & ride need is due to the unavailability & expense of parking in downtown Burlington. While government entities don't want to tackle these issues, CCTA wants to develop in this direction and wants this business
- Employers can participate in information exchange (and avoid resorting to subsidized, organized programs) to encourage options other than everyone driving their own car
- Employers are concerned about appearing to support favoritism when they promote subsidized services of transportation (to get employees to their workplace without putting undue stress on the roads and their parking lot)
- Employers do not want to be distracted from running their business
- The senior citizen market is one of the latent niche markets that CCTA will target (frugality being an issue)

Are there ways that transportation planning can help recruit and retain employees?

- ✍ The key issue for employees is a job, the next is housing and education in the area. Obviously, the question is later posed, "How do we move people around and still give them choices?" Regulations on growth, however, hurt IBM b/c we can't build more parking spaces. Constraints like these affect our growth, and can affect our decisions about where we build new buildings (in other states, overseas)
- ✍ If growth continues without development, traffic-reduction is sooner or later mandated. When this happens, businesses (like IBM, close to 5 Corners in Essex Junction; like CCTA, whose busses have to share the road with everyone else and lose riders by being late) lose

Land-use issues:

- ✍ Can we find some compromise between residential density and services provided? Some VT residents do not want to live in an high-density area, but they want some municipal services to be provided
- ✍ We need to alleviate the housing crunch

Is there a reasonable level of transit use to which we should aspire?

- ✍ Self-interest has to be the selling point for bus ridership. It has to be convenient, safe, and inexpensive
- ✍ CCTA will attract the niche markets and grow in those directions. We will not increase our "regular" ridership. The big picture is that transit ridership figures are very good for our size. Also, a high percentage of our budget is from municipal sources

Any comments on special projects (like the Burlington – Essex rail project)?

- ✍ It's going the wrong place. A route like St. Albans – Essex would make more sense. There aren't large enough employers in Burlington to warrant this project

The defense of the project is, essentially, "If you build it, they (employers) will come."

How do we measure "need" for transportation money?

- ✍ The issues that are considered possibilities for spending should have their need measured by their impact on overall life, some of which is objective, like employment

However, if we spend all our money on short-term needs (congestion), we ignore the crucial long-term development.

Discussion about Vehicle Miles Traveled index: is there a ceiling for acceptable levels, or is it a trade-off, to be compared with other indices?

When businesses do not grow (or employment levels go sour), 1) businesses make decisions to move other places, and 2) the people at the bottom are the ones left unemployed: cycle of losing private transportation. This is when public transportation is especially crucial for low-income folks to seek employment

Last words from participants:

- ✍ Don't put together a plan of absolutes: flexibility is key (JO)
- ✍ Promote reasonable expectations for growth possibilities, continue to improve transit as a safety net for people without alternatives, and be proactive to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (DL)
- ✍ We respond to the long-range plan by filling in the gaps for low-income Vermonters (MM)

Automobile and highway-oriented Issues
November 14, 2000
CCMPO Office

In attendance:

Chris Reinsfurt (Vermont State Police), Joe Segale, Harry Strate, Dean Pierce,

Notes:

Joe Segale:

- Purpose of MPO plan
- Functioning of MPO – members – representatives of identified towns
- TIP: list of projects

Dean Pierce:

- Talking points
- Goals

Harry Strate:

- Region is heavily dependent on transportation.
- Should it be? What about the Circ? The Essex-Burlington rail? Charlotte-Burlington? Etc.

Chris Reinsfurt:

Safety:

- Accident data very incomplete
- Problem areas: exit 14 interchange (Southbound)
- Back-up of traffic being caused by signals

Needs:

- Accident records

The three "S"s: swift, severe, and certain

Personnel:

Williston barracks:

Chittenden authorized: but actually has:

12 troopers	8	in a 24 hour period
3 supervisors	?	4 in peak shift

Lamoille

- 5 troopers
- 2 supervisors

Bottom line: **Barracks need more resources**

The 3 "E"s: enforcement, engineering, and education

Bikes/Pedestrians: a bigger issue on town roads than state roads

Trucks – trucks have done a good job with enforcement
trucks are heavier and longer, but more in compliance
majority of truckers are professional, courteous, and
conscientious

Breakdown (incident) management: creates ripple effect in traffic

Motorist Aid (should the state police be doing it?)

Route 7 requires lots of attention – many accidents not reported?

Impact of sprawling development

- more domestic disputes
- more accidents in rural locations
- more long-distance commuters = more speeders

Route 15: problem area

As population grows dramatically, the demand for police grows, but many communities create their own police forces, somewhat offsetting demand.
(But then the state reallocates resources to other issues)

Maintenance:

- quality of travel
- roads have improved significantly

Non-motorized Transportation Issues
November 15, 2000
Union Station, Burlington

In attendance:

David Jacobowitz, Donna Leban, Jason Baker, Deb Sachs (CCRPC), Chapin Spencer (Burlington Bikeways), Joe Segale & Dave Roberts (CCMPO), Bruce Hyman, Dean Pierce, Jed Loomis (WSA)

Notes:

Joe Segale gave an introduction to the long-range plan and the CCMPO's involvement with it.

The question was raised: "What would you like to come out of the planning process?"

Comments:

- ✍ Lack of infrastructure: the bus can't go everywhere
- ✍ The MPO's role in coordination, b/c towns won't take the lead role in non-motorized transportation
 - Stronger regional leadership
 - Increased coordination with one point person
- ✍ Reordering of priorities: 1) pedestrians 2) bikes 3) public transportation 4) autos 5) new road projects
 - cost to society: clean air act non-compliance would mean losing funding for new highway construction
- ✍ Link between non-motorized & public transportation
- ✍ Inexpensive options that make a big difference (e.g. bike racks)
- ✍ Land-use & transportation connection
- ✍ Connecting bike-paths & sidewalks (to make a continuous path)
 - Links within towns, between towns
 - Coordination/watchdog
 - Decisions about connecting spaces (connectivity of zones)
- ✍ Bicycles linking places (lack of access in S. Burlington to buses)
- ✍ Acknowledge the notion of growth center planning
 - Avoid building growth center
 - Commitment to sustainability development
- ✍ Safety: how to cross key roads?
 - Developers reluctant to build in high-density or mixed-used zones
- ✍ Maps/Information/Resources: lack of
 - For planning
 - For use
- ✍ Multimodal: rail + bike (for Shelburne rail project)

(possibility of building bike paths beside a rail path by extending the right-of-way)

- ✍ Standardization of signage
 - bike/ped facilities
- ✍ Bike lanes should be considered separately from bike paths
- ✍ What needs to be fixed for bikers
 - Linkages
 - Wide range of people biking: accommodate them all
 - Safety concerns
 - Planning that occurs when new roads are built
 - Making existing major routes bike-safe and accessible
- ✍ Problem of getting businesses interested in promoting public trans.
 - Free bus passes for employees
 - No free parking for employees
- ✍ Communities that do not participate in CCTA planning are not served by it
- ✍ Building regulations might be outdated or poor quality b/c they've been replicated from arbitrary sources
- ✍ Maintenance of bike paths: plowing
 - Bike paths must be usable by the "lowest confidence" user
- ✍ Lighting bike lanes/bike paths
- ✍ Goal for different modes of transportation?
 - Current levels
 - Set a goal (decrease VMT)
- ✍ Use numbers (bicycle, pedestrian, transit ridership) to be able to accurately measure progress
- ✍ How to encourage growth-center growth?
 - Federal or regional money is withheld for road projects unless development is consistent with growth-center guidelines
- ✍ Regional plan vs. local plans
- ✍ How long would a non-motorized system keep us out of non-compliance with the clean-air act?
 - Real consequences if we continue the status quo
- ✍ How do we protect minorities:
 - Senior transportation
 - Kids
- ✍ Is access to mobility a civil rights issue?
- ✍ "Sufficient" infrastructure (as opposed to building overly big)

- Demand-side management, not supply-side m.
- Bottom line: convince the public: "in the end, you'll pay less"
- ✍ LRP Vision Statement clarification: "...supports economic vitality"
 - Does this mean we're going to build everywhere? (No, more that we support Church St. prosperity)
- ✍ Regional Survey

Special Needs Transportation Issues
November 16, 2000
Essex Junction Meeting Room

In attendance:

Michael Muzzy, Good News Garage, John Barbour, Champlain Valley Agency on Aging, Richard Hutchins, State of Vermont Vocational Rehabilitation, Murray Benner, SSTA, Joe Segale & Peter Keating (Chittenden County Metropolitan Planning Organization), Harry Strate & Dean Pierce (WSA)

Notes:

Peter Keating gave a brief introduction to the long-range plan and the CCMPO's involvement with it.

Harry Strate asked participants: "How does transportation affect your organization?"

The following responses were recorded:

- ✍ Vocational Rehab: work for them: (find people jobs)
- ✍ SSTA: organization is a provider; growth industry
- ✍ CVAA: elderly population
- ✍ Good News Garage: transportation for employment purposes

Dean Pierce gave an introduction to transportation trends, transit service areas.

Richard Hutchins of Vocational Rehab. noted that his organization:

- has money available to help clients with vans
- approximately \$150,000/year for purchase & retrofit of vans
- lack of drivers poses a limit to service

Harry Strate asked participants: "What is an ideal system?"

The following responses were recorded:

- ? Can't we use the investment in school transportation - more expensive
- ? In rural areas: Dial-A-Ride?
- ? Seniors: intimidated by the transportation system
 - ✍ Other services:
 - ✍ -access to the airport is pretty good
- ? Rail, ferry: not handicap-accessible
- ? Population trends/land use
 - ✍ -more congregate housing
 - ✍ -some along transit routes, some not
- ? Circ.:
 - ✍ -some down on it: not needed, encourage different growth
 - ✍ -some think the whole thing is needed
- ? Rail: Greater promise for freight – get trucks off the road
- ? Growth: - concern about whether our children will be able to enjoy what we (parents) enjoy
 - Up (building higher) seems be better than out

System operators and maintainers¹
December 7, 2000
CCMPO Conference Room

In attendance: Richard Hosking, Amy Bell, Bob Shattuck, Alan Neveau (all VTrans), Ron Rodjenski (Richmond), Greg Edwards (Dufresne-Henry), Wanda Atkins (Winooski), Jeanette Berry (CCTA), Justin Ravidoux (Burlington), Bill Patrick (Milton), Harry Colombo (DuBois & King, Inc.), Roger Dickinson (Lamoureux & Dickinson), Albert Audette (TAC), Christine Forde, Peter Keating, Joe Segale (all CCMPO), Dean Pierce, Harry Strate, Jed Loomis (all WSA).

Notes:

Joe Segale began the workshop with introductions, a brief introduction to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and the purpose of the workshop.

In general, discussion focused on issues such as maintenance, funding, project management by local organizations, and issues involved with local projects.

Specifics of maintenance discussed include the cost of delaying maintenance, the difference between maintenance and capital investment, data collection, responsibility for maintenance, and environmental regulations for maintenance, insufficient allocation of monies for maintenance, the impacts of exceeding the intended capacity of infrastructure, evaluation of maintenance, and maintenance of equipment and facilities.

Discussion on funding centered on the impacts of lacking baseline information on conditions, use of imprecise indicators to determine funding (Lane Miles vs. Miles Traveled), and permitting follow-up.

Local project management issues include the necessity of community involvement and commitment, and the possibility of "fast-tracking" projects to reduce delays.

Chittenden County project issues were discussed briefly. Included was the issue of the order of permitting and scoping, flexibility in permitting and scoping goals, early coordination with other agencies to increase knowledge about potential snags, and the impacts of land-use decisions on local projects.

A more complete list of items of discussion follows.

Maintenance:

- o Ongoing, as is prevention
- o Realistic lifespan: "Someday things die"
- o Maintenance vs. Capital investment
- o Deferred maintenance leads to higher costs to fix, e.g. bridges, drainage
- o Sufficient budget is a key problem in maintenance
- o Proactive maintenance software tools helpful – but pricey
- o Deferred maintenance includes actions to address system deficiencies
 - ? Can be capital improvements (Kennedy Drive, Circ.)
- o Capacity of infrastructure exceeded (volume & wt.) leads to increasing rate of deterioration

¹ Project Implementation/Infrastructure Maintenance, Management & Operations Workshop

- Rail: bed improvements
- Bike-pedestrian facilities, sidewalks have new safety issues
- Bike-pedestrian facility maintenance has potential to be troublesome (towns' responsibility)
- System evaluation: # of complaints, # of road calls for transit vehicles
- Meet targets for maintenance (transit realm)
- Maintenance Management System
 - ? Vermont system is ongoing
 - ? CCMPO system in development
- Success depends on good data for baseline conditions
- Special problems: unforeseen difficulties (widening of roads)
- Environmental regulations: new ditching requirements
- Few signal maintenance crews
 - ? Potential for municipalities to share service?
 - ? Traffic plans assume optimal signal operation
- Sidewalk deterioration: cracking, roots, change in ADA regulations
- Landscaping
 - ? Maintenance
 - ? Inappropriate materials, plants, trees, site
- Impact of federal water quality regulations on maintenance
- Safety-related impacts of maintenance: signage, lane striping (Catch-22)
- Equipment, facilities need maintenance, as well. Signs of problem:
 - ? Delay from year to year
 - ? Inadequate cost estimates
 - Budget growth, but insufficient % allocated

Funding (problems):

- Funding based on imprecise indicators
- Underfunded – programs with and without base data
- Lack of information: culverts, small bridges – key barrier)
- Problem: prohibition on specifying “products that work”
- Federal requirements: construction vs. maintenance
- Can maintenance equipment be integrated into project costs?
- Permits:
 - ✍ Extensive follow-up reporting required: often not done or falling behind (infrequently reviewed by agencies)

Local management of projects

- Local Transportation Facilities (LTF) goal: reduce time by 50% to reduce habitual postponement/modifications
- Community buy-in crucial
- Local facilities vs. state facilities
- Requires involvement of many players, understanding of issues such as maintenance responsibility
- Educational impact of towns doing a LTF project

Projects in Chittenden County: many are large in scope, expensive, complicated

- Need realistic cost estimates, schedules
- Scoping process should be more flexible, broader
- Permitting: completed at the end of scoping process?
- Issue permits that establish X, +/- 10%
- Early coordination with resource agencies, identification of key issues increases likelihood of success/speedy delivery

- Public participation eased if planning precedes scoping
- Lack of funding
- Land use decisions creating problems
- Capital budgets/plans
- Foresight: incremental impacts

Disabled population
December 18, 2000
VT Health Department, Burlington

In attendance: Stephanie Tomlin (Legal Aid), Janis Pino, Kara Page, Gretchen Elias (COTS), Jason Whitney (VCDR), Jane Marvine, Joe Segale, Dean Pierce

Notes:

Agenda:

- Welcome, Introductions, Why we are here
- The CCMPO update process
- Current Facilities, Services, and trends
- Discussion: What is good, what is bad, and what would you like to change about transportation?

SSTA

- o Cost issues, equity
- o Medicaid coverage
- o Not user friendly?
- o Carpooling
- o Older Buses? (No wheel chair lifts?)
- o Cab reimbursement; incompatible with buses
- o Need for sensitivity training
- o Grocery bag fee?
- o Kneeling buses

"Good"

- o Chittenden County services better compared to other counties

"Not so good/Bad"

- o Difficulty getting on regular SSTA schedule; must arrange in advance
- o Crossing streets difficult
- o Pedestrian phase too short – downtown, e.g. South Winooski Ave.
- o Audible as well as visual cues
- o Lack of crosswalk at Fletcher Allen (FAHC)
- o Crosswalks on all legs of intersections at/near bus
- o Greater cost sensitivity among people who depend on public transit/special services
- o Lack of service convenience, timeliness, flexibility
 - o Lower quality of life
- o Institutional issues: if no bus, no cab, & vice-versa

Changes:

- Frequent service between Burlington & Montpelier
- Interagency coordination locally/regionally as well as statewide
- Barrels drawing attention to driver yield to pedestrian
- More Sunday transit service
- Mileage reimbursement pool to pay for friends giving rides (Howard Services model?)

Changes continued

- SSTA-type service for "social" trips
- Extend hours of service & dispatch
- Address complete lack of crosswalks, e.g. Shelburne Road
- Business-provided transport: grocery stores for customers
- Higher densities (residential), Mixed-use

Poor sidewalks, conditions, lack of "lip".

Business people
December 20,
Chamber of Commerce Building, Burlington

In attendance: Members of and staff for Lake Champlain Chamber Regional Issues Committee; Joe Segale, Dean Pierce, others

Notes:

As this was not the first time the Regional Issues committee had heard about the update of the MTP, the introduction and overview given by Joe Segale was brief. In response to a question, Dean Pierce commented on the schedule for the update. However, the bulk of the interaction concerned the problems/challenges associated with moving projects forward to construction. Considerable frustration was expressed in connection with:

- ✍ Transportation funding
- ✍ lack of authority of the MPO, and
- ✍ permitting

In concluding the presentation, Joe Segale mentioned some of the future opportunities for public input, including attendance at project steering committee meetings.

Environmentalists
January 10, 2001
Lea Terhune residence, Colchester

In attendance: Lea Terhune, Evan Stewart, David Ellenbogen, Marilyn Stolz, John Sowles, Carol MacDonald, Joe Segale, Dean Pierce

Notes:

Joe Segale gave a brief overview of the plan update process and the role of the steering committee. He described the development of the vision statement and the preparation of regional population and employment forecasts, which Dean Pierce explained would be used in the development of different analytical "scenarios" that would examine alternative patterns of growth.

Extensive discussion followed. Comments made and issues raised included the following:

- ✍ It is important for the new Plan and the Transportation Improvement program (which determines where funds will be spent) to "match"; in the past they haven't
- ✍ It is important that the Plan scrutinize the Circ highway (Joe explained that only segments currently in the TIP—segments A and B in Williston—will be considered part of the committed system
- ✍ At least one individual felt that analyses of the benefits of the Circ could be faulty; it is possible that early phases of the Circ will create problems that later phases will be needed to address (this could give a false sense of the need for later phases of the Circ)
- ✍ Many local scale problems can be addressed with spot improvements such as left turn lanes (example in Colchester was cited)
- ✍ The Colchester segment of the Circ could have a negative impact on Colchester since it could lower quality of life in the community
- ✍ Circ is the only transportation concern; it just happens to be a prime example
- ✍ We should not spend more and more money to increase transportation capacity; instead, people need to adjust their behavior (leave for work earlier or later, etc)
- ✍ There is a fear that decisions about transportation investments are unduly influenced by major businesses
- ✍ Our transportation choices assume that energy will be available and cheap; however, this will not always be the case
- ✍ Growth is expensive; who will be 'left holding the bag'?
- ✍ It is unfortunate that Colchester has resisted joining CCTA and in so doing encouraging the expansion of transit
- ✍ More funding should go to pay for transit, commuter lots, car pools
- ✍ Better decisions about transportation investments are made when the transportation process is "De-mystified"
- ✍ Some question projections that say transportation demand will continue to grow higher and higher (Tony Redington figures mentioned as opposing viewpoint)
- ✍ Support was expressed for focusing development in growth centers

Senior Citizens
January 11, 2001
Heineberg Senior Center

In attendance: Esther DeAngelis, Marion Walsh (Burlington), Marguerite Desany, Walter Harris (Colchester), David Spence (Burlington), Robert Howard (Essex), Constance Sweeny, Joe Segale, Dean Pierce

Notes:

Agenda

- Welcome
- Why we are here
- Discussion
- Wrap-up

Joe and Dean offered brief preliminary remarks and asked the participants to share their views about transportation problems, solutions, etc. The following comments were offered.

- ✍ Bus service to Mackenzie House should go directly into complex every day
- ✍ CCTA service needs to be more frequent
- ✍ Better coordination is needed between transportation providers in Essex Town & Essex Junction
- ✍ Are buses safe? Some feel there is a need to improve safety of side-facing seats (or remove them altogether)
- ✍ Poor sidewalk maintenance in winter deters use of transit (e.g., if people can't get to bus stops)
- ✍ Kneeling buses are a good idea, because they help people with handicaps get on and off
- ✍ SSTA is doing a good job w/ seniors in Milton & Jericho
- ✍ "Flexible routing" of CCTA through neighborhoods is a good idea
- ✍ Addressing the issue of the Circumferential Highway & Sprawl, one person indicated that:
 - "Sprawl already exists"
 - Zoning can address worsening of the problem
 - The Circ would help places like 5 corners
- ✍ The coordination of traffic signals can help improve the function of the transportation system
- ✍ Several more comments were offered about non motorized transportation
 - Walking is too often impeded by ice, snow
 - Signal crossing times is not adequate at certain intersections (Examples: Essex, North Avenue)
 - Crosswalks without exclusive pedestrian phases are a problem for older people; at the least, signs indicating "no right on red" should be posted

- ✍ An advance left turn signal is needed at Tracy Drive/North Avenue
- ✍ Congestion is increasing
- ✍ Construction of the Burlington Beltline was positive, as it helped relieve delays at key intersections
- ✍ More funding for buses is needed
- ✍ CCTA service should be extended throughout county: if necessary, the funding system should be regionalized, so that individual communities do not opt out of membership
- ✍ There is a lack of bus service to Wal-Mart
- ✍ The availability of bus service definitely influences decisions about where to shop
- ✍ Efforts to calm traffic need to be better coordinated with public transit (one participant mentioned that the relocation of bus stops because of traffic calming caused some inconvenience)
- ✍ Friends can and do help with transportation

**High School Students
January 30, 2001
South Burlington High School**

In attendance: Students in teacher Bill Minard's Independent Living Class; Bill Minard, Joe Segale, and Dean Pierce.

Notes:

This meeting was structured more loosely than other public involvement meetings. After being given a brief overview of the MPO and the plan, students were asked to offer their opinions about what is good, bad, etc. about the transportation system and to help us understand the needs of young people.

Despite a certain degree of skepticism about our visiting our class, the students offered their comments. The following list encapsulates some of their remarks.

- ? It is good to have more transportation choices and options; right now, choices and options are limited
- ? Cost/ affordability of transportation is important, since some (many?) young people are responsible for much of their own mobility (at least for certain purposes)
- ? Transportation needs increase as life becomes more complex, and students are entering (or have already entered) a much more complex phase of their lives
- ? Bike paths are desirable and are seen as being a healthy/safe
- ? The environmental impacts of transportation are recognized, although young people disagree 'what we need to do about it'
- ? Marketing to young people about participating in planning and decision making is a challenge; they are very sensitive to 'come ons' and would be hard to reach, even via the internet

At the conclusion of the class, Dean Pierce quickly mentioned the need to connect with students at a future date, specifically in connection with a student-focused "design charrette" slated for the fall.