

**MINUTES OF
FAUQUIER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
JULY 28, 2010
7:00 P.M.**

*2nd Floor Conference Room – Warren Green Building
10 Hotel Street
Warrenton, VA 20186*

Members Present: Laurence Mason, Chairman, Peter S. Eltringham, Vice-Chairman, William D. Nace, Sam Poles, Joel Barkman, David Cabbage, Adrienne Garreau and R. Holder Trumbo

Members Absent: Jeffrey Walker

Guests Present: Julie Plant, Citizen, Ben Dronsick, Citizen and Deirdre Clark, RRRC

Staff Present: Susan Eddy, Kristen Slawter and Rebecca Kellert

1. *Approval of June 30, 2010 Committee Meeting Minutes*

ACTION:

On motion made by Sam Poles and seconded by Joel Barkman, it was moved to approve the June 30, 2010 minutes as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

2. *Julie Plant – Traffic on Marsh Road (Route 17) in Bealeton*

Ms. Plant shared her concerns regarding safety along Marsh Road in Bealeton that include truck traffic and the use of jake brakes, red light violations and ignoring school zone speed limits.

Mr. Cabbage clarified that the state may not prevent the use of safety devices such as jake brakes for discretionary purposes like noise reduction.

The committee suggested possible traffic calming solutions such as rough road surfaces, rumble strips north of Liberty High School, additional sheriff enforcement and requesting a VDOT traffic study once school begins.

Mrs. Eddy informed the group of a UDA grant the County will be using to study Route 17 in Bealeton later in the fall to include community meetings with citizen and business involvement.

ACTION: On motion made by Laurence Mason and seconded by Pete Eltringham, it was moved to request additional sheriff presence and a VDOT study for 90 – 120 days and report back. The motion carried unanimously.

3. *Diane Selby – Traffic on Sumerduck Road (Route 651)*

Ms. Selby was unable to attend the meeting. The committee requested clarification of which area along Sumerduck Road she has witnessed accidents. Mrs. Eddy agreed to contact Ms. Selby for clarification and obtain the accident reports for that area.

ACTION: Susan Eddy will confirm area of Sumerduck Road and obtain accident reports for the next meeting. Postponed vote until the next meeting.

4. *Ben Dronsick - Through Truck Restrictions on Moreland Road (Route 724)*

Ms. Slawter summarized the staff report and criteria for a “Restricted Route – No Through Trucks” designation for Moreland Road noting the last traffic count in 2004 had an average annual daily traffic (AADT) of 80.

Mr. Dronsick stated that the School Board feels there is excessive truck traffic on this road therefore cutting this school bus route is under consideration. Mr. Dronsick added that he has not seen trucks traveling on Moreland Road and would like an updated count to present to the School Board. Ms. Slawter stated that she forwarded the staff report for comments to VDOT, Sheriff’s Office and the School Board and received comments back from VDOT only. Mr. Dronsick mentioned the School Board felt the shoulder width was also a problem but has since been repaired.

Mr. Cabbage stated there is no accident history on this road and there will have to be a public hearing to designate an “Alternate Truck Route”. He has concerns that the proposed alternate truck route, Hume Road (Route 635), might not be engineered to standards that meet the criteria.

Mr. Trumbo suggested the committee request an updated annual daily traffic count with classification in order to provide the statistical data for the Board of Supervisors to forward to the School Board.

ACTION: On motion made by Holder Trumbo and seconded by Laurence Mason, it was moved to request a VDOT traffic study of Moreland Road with vehicle classification and report back in up to 120 days. The motion carried unanimously.

5. *Discussion of Farm Equipment Road Safety*

Mr. Mason recommended categorizing actions on the list of suggestions into ones that can be done quickly and easily from those that are more difficult and take more time. Mr. Trumbo agreed that it should be a phased process but would like the committee to keep in mind that fall planting is coming up soon.

Mr. Barkman stated that Ben Cooper with the Farm Bureau agreed to speak to their members about pulling over if possible to ease tension with drivers.

Mr. Eltringham asked Mr. Cabbage if he has any comments that would assist the committee with prioritizing the list. Mr. Cabbage agreed to share his observations and stated that the

tractor signs that target specific negative activity would need to be paid for privately, but other signs such as blind curve or do not pass signs could be considered on a case by case basis. He does not agree with reducing speeds in agricultural areas without analysis of speed or crash history and did not find major tractor farm vehicle accidents in the VDOT database. He continued that outreach is a good idea and the visibility of the farm vehicle is important, like using yellow warning lights, strobes and rotating amber lights. He also suggested limiting farm equipment movement during peak hours would benefit the community.

Ms. Garreau asked what areas in Fauquier County have the most farm vehicle movement. Mr. Trumbo replied that the southern end has the most leased land and produces the most crops. Mr. Poles added that the most activity is during the spring and fall.

Mr. Cabbage stated that VDOT does work zone awareness training at high schools during driver's education programs and suggested that the Farm Bureau do the same, possibly jointly. He added that at times they will set up a mock work zone in the parking lot for students and thought the Farm Bureau could also do something similar.

Ms. Garreau suggested using the fire station marquees to communicate to drivers that it is planting season, harvest season, etc.

The Committee then agreed to the following revised recommendations. The recommendations are in two categories – those that are immediately achievable and those that would require a long-term effort. It is important to point out that the recommendations call for action on the part of the County, the Farm Bureau, VDOT, and other agencies and organizations. The Transportation Committee also recommended that the Public Safety Committee become involved in many of these recommendations.

Immediate recommendations to address the problem of farm equipment road safety:

- Develop a Coordinated Community Response (a sanctioned, endorsed, official response) to include all types of farmers (beef, dairy, horse, grain, wineries, etc.), the Farm Bureau, local and state government (including State Senators and Delegates), surrounding jurisdictions, schools, local groups such as PEC, CFFC, Chamber of Commerce, businesses, law enforcement, etc. to promote awareness and further educate the public and to sustain action;
- Increase VDOT signage in specific areas (tractor sign, blind curve sign, do not pass sign, etc.);
- Add new text to County entrance signs;
- Increase use of slow moving vehicle (SMV) signs. The Farm Bureau would need to take the lead on this suggestion;
- Promote, and perhaps subsidize, use of strobes and rotating amber lights on farm vehicles, including the front of the vehicle;
- Increase enforcement during peak harvesting times;
- Develop a standard procedure for farmers to notify the County sheriff to request help for specific road segments during periods when these segment will experience elevated traffic of slow moving vehicles;
- Develop a standardized form to report SMV movement in advance to Sheriff's Office;

- Increase public education awareness through:
 - a booth at the County fair;
 - articles in newspapers;
 - paid advertisements in newspapers;
 - public service advertisements in newspapers;
 - advertisements in newspapers in surrounding jurisdictions;
 - educating students;
 - educating driver's education students (similar to work zone awareness training conducted by VDOT);
 - educating all County employees (including school department employees) -could be on-line training similar to workplace violence training;
 - educational opportunities on farm tours and wine tours;
 - distributing flyers at commuter lots;
 - distributing flyers with tax bills and/or DMV renewals;
 - placing messages on marquees at local fire stations;
 - designating two weeks a year (spring and fall) to highlight farm equipment road safety;
 - educating all County citizens as to why farm equipment must use rural roads;
 - educating all County citizens on slower vehicles, including older drivers who drive slower, bicyclists who use the public roads and horse drawn carts/wagons, all of which have the right to use our public rural roads. (Helping the community as a whole learn to work together will help all users of our rural roadways.)

Long-term recommendations to address the problem of farm equipment road safety:

- Develop a new sign such as *Entering an Agricultural Zone Do Not Pass on Double Yellow Line*, and have these signs placed in appropriate locations;
- Develop a standard warning sign for slow moving vehicles that would be approved by the County and allowed under the Zoning Ordinance for placement on private property in appropriate locations;
- Improve road markings at crossovers;
- Encourage the Farm Bureau to lobby for fines as opposed to misdemeanors for passing on double yellow lines (would require change to state code);
- Develop opportunities for some face-to-face dialog between the communities, Farm and Non-Farm, (realizing that this could help with County residents but may not help with the commuter traffic).

ACTION: Susan Eddy will prepare a staff report including the revised recommendations to present to the Board of Supervisor's work session on September 9, 2010.

6. *Railroad Crossing at Whiting Road (Route 622)*

Mr. Trumbo summarized that Norfolk Southern had removed the public railroad crossing at Whiting Road from their inventory without notifying Fauquier County. Meanwhile, the

17/66 Business Park has been approved and will soon be developed including a new and safe rail crossing which will keep the industrial traffic from mixing in with residential and school bus traffic. Norfolk Southern has indicated that the county will need to apply to have the crossing reinstated. Mr. Cabbage agreed that VDOT is willing to jointly apply.

ACTION: On motion made by Peter Eltringham and seconded by Joel Barkman, it was moved to recommend to the Board of Supervisors to jointly state their position with VDOT to re-open the existing public crossing, that this crossing be modernized and meets the purpose of the Marshall Comprehensive Plan. The motion carried unanimously.

7. *Requests to VDOT's Highway Helpline*

Mr. Cabbage explained that VDOT has two customer service centers, one in Northern Virginia and one in Salem to handle citizen requests. Fauquier County's requests are handled in the Salem office, assigned a number and entered into a database to ensure each request is addressed. If the call center is unable to assist, it is forwarded to the Warrenton Residency who in some cases directs the citizens to Fauquier County Planning Division. In order for VDOT to perform a study, they now require a written request from the locality.

Members of the committee disagreed that all inquiries should be given to Mrs. Eddy to look through and decide whether it meets the criteria for a VDOT study. Mr. Cabbage gave the example of how requests are handled in Albemarle County. A resolution must be passed by their Board of Supervisors in order for VDOT to perform a study.

Mr. Trumbo suggested that all citizens making a request must attend and address the Transportation Committee in order to filter the serious requests. He added that VDOT's call center could inform the citizen to prepare a written request prior to contacting Fauquier County. Mr. Cabbage recommended the county develop a form to email all requestors to complete.

ACTION: The committee agreed to draft a Transportation Committee Request for Review Form for the next meeting.

8. *Citizens' Time*

No citizens spoke at this time.

9. *Other Items*

Mrs. Eddy presented an additional request made by Supervisor Graham asking the committee to consider initiating a study to improve safety at the intersection of Midland Road and

Bristersburg Road in Somerville by adding a “Stop Sign Ahead” sign. Mr. Cabbage stated that he would not have to do a study and agreed to add the sign.

ACTION: On motion made by Holder Trumbo and seconded by Peter Eltringham, it was moved to request that VDOT add a “Stop Sign Ahead” sign prior to the intersection. The motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Eddy distributed information regarding the Virginia Surface Transportation Plan and a letter addressed to the VA Secretary of Transportation from Fauquier County Board of Supervisors opposing the adoption of the 2035 Virginia Surface Transportation Program.

Mrs. Eddy distributed the new phone number list for Fauquier County Government.

Mr. Trumbo suggested inviting Mr. James Rich, Commonwealth Transportation Board, to the January or February 2011 meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on **Wednesday, September 29, 2010.**