

**MINUTES OF
FAUQUIER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

January 31, 2007

7:00 P.M.

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

Members Present: Matthew Smith, Chairman, Laurence Mason, Vice-Chairman, J. David Cabbage, Holder Trumbo, Harry Atherton, Sam Poles, William Nace, Erich Meding, and Jeffrey Walker

Members Absent: Ray Graham (Alternate)

Guests Present: William Ponn, John Griffin, Bill Weber, John Kip, Phoebe Plank, Michelle Beall, Chuck Medvitz, and Helen Ford

Staff Present: Liz Cook and Stacey Pell

1. Election of Officers

ACTION:

Mr. Trumbo nominated Matthew Smith for Chairman and was seconded by Mr. Nace. Being no other nominations, the vote passed unanimously.

Mr. Atherton nominated Laurence Mason for Vice Chairman and was seconded by Mr. Trumbo. Being no other nominations, the vote passed unanimously.

Mr. Smith took this opportunity to thank Mr. Trumbo for his service to the Transportation Committee, representing the Planning Commission. Mr. Smith stated this meeting will be Mr. Trumbo's last Transportation Committee as he will now assume the responsibilities as Planning Commission Chairman.

2. Approval of October 18, 2006 Committee Meeting Minutes

ACTION:

On motion made by Mr. Atherton and seconded by Mr. Trumbo it was moved to approve the October 18, 2006 Committee meeting minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Consider a Request for a Speed Limit Reduction on Blantyre Road (Route 628) – William Hazel

Mr. Cabbage stated that there is a study in Richmond being reviewed. When the study is approved, the new speed limit will be posted. Mr. Cabbage is just awaiting final approval and anticipates hearing from Richmond prior to the next Transportation Committee meeting.

ACTION: Mr. Cabbage will update the Committee at the next meeting.

4. Discussion with Peter Schwartz, Commonwealth Transportation Board Member

Mr. Schwartz introduced himself and stated he lives in Delaplane, part of the Marshall Magisterial District. He is a Rural, At-Large Member of the Commonwealth Transportation Board. He has worked with Mr. Cabbage, Butch Davies at the Culpeper VDOT Office, and Northern Virginia District VDOT Offices. He advised that he is looking forward to getting to know the committee members and helping any way he can.

5. Consider a Request for Four-Way Stop Signs at Broad Run Church Road (Route 600) and Riley Road (Route 676) – Merle Fallon

Mr. Cabbage stated VDOT is more than midway through its study of this intersection and he is waiting to see if the numbers match the traffic consultant's numbers. Speed, traffic counts, and crash data were all taken into account.

Mr. Trumbo questioned if speed is a factor, would it be reduced.

Mr. Meding stated that in the area surrounding the intersection, there are four different speed limits on the two roads. He also stated that he would like a consistent speed limit of 35 m.p.h.

Mr. Cabbage stated that he is not ready to say a four-way stop is the solution. If a roundabout is installed then the speed limit for that would be 25 m.p.h.

Mr. Meding stated he would support a four-way stop and he believes that it would help commuters.

Mr. Poles asked where the traffic study was done near the school, if the school zone hours affected the study.

Mr. Cabbage stated the school zone did not affect the study.

ACTION:

This item will be held until the February 2007 Transportation Committee Meeting. Mr. Cabbage anticipates having more information on the roundabout for the next meeting.

6. Consider a Request for the Installation of a Traffic Signal at Lee Highway (Route 29) Baldwin Street (Route 673) and the Entrance to Suffield Meadows

Mr. Cabbage stated VDOT did a study on December 7, 2006 and that the intersection was not meeting the necessary warrants for a signal at that time. VDOT can initiate a new study after a year, with new development, or increase in crashes.

Mr. Atherton stated the warrants will be changing a lot with Suffield Meadows and Jamison's Farm bringing in new residents.

Ms. Cook stated the developers for the Suffield Meadows and Jamison's Farm projects have slotted funds for when a signal is warranted at that intersection.

ACTION:

This item did not meet necessary warrants for a traffic signal. A study may be done at a later date.

7. *Consider a Request to Relocate or Mitigate Impacts of the Flashing Light Near the Intersection of Route 55 and Belvoir Road (Route 709) – Michelle Beall*

Ms. Beall stated installation of the flashing lights began last summer. She had been informed by VDOT that her lot frontage would be relandscaped, and then she was informed they would not.. The lights flash constantly and when she is attempting to leave her driveway, the lights shine directly into her vehicle hindering her view which presents a danger to her and neighbors. Ms. Beall requested the lights be removed and rumble strips be installed.

Mr. Trumbo added that the flashing lights reflect inside her house.

Mr. Cabbage stated VDOT was asked by the Transportation Committee two years ago to have the flashing lights installed. The study performed by VDOT showed sufficient reason to justify placing flashing lights near the intersection. Mr. Cabbage stated that speed, traffic, and site distance were determining factors in the placement of the flashing lights.

Mr. Poles inquired into the possibility of using a lower wattage of light.

Mr. Cabbage stated this is feasible.

ACTION:

On a motion made by Mr. Meding and seconded by Mr. Turmbo it was moved to investigate where the flashing lights can be moved while still maintaining VDOT standards. The motion carried unanimously. Mr. Cabbage will look into the matter and report back to the Committee in February.

8. *Consider a Request for Safety Improvements for Crest Hill Road (Route 647) – Ward Ponn*

Mr. Ponn stated his main concern is the school bus stop that is at the bottom of two steep hills. There are around 16 children that get on and off the bus in that area. Vehicles are gaining speed as they go down the hills and have a hard time stopping for the bus. Mr. Ponn was interested in a ‘School Bus Stop Ahead’ sign, mirrors at the top of the hills so drivers could see a bus over the crest of the hill, or lowering the speed limit in this area.

Mr. Cabbage replied that ‘School Bus Stop Ahead’ signs need to be initiated by the School Board Office. A speed reduction study has not yet been done by VDOT and will be needed. He also stated mirrors are not under VDOT jurisdiction and are usually installed by property owners.

Mr. Poles inquired if ‘School Bus Stop Ahead’ signs usually have flashing lights on them.

Mr. Cabbage replied that normally they do not.

Mr. Atherton broached the subject of lowering the speed limit in all the Villages to 35 m.p.h. He inquired if the County can set a broad 35 m.p.h. speed limit across the board for all Villages.

Mr. Cabbage stated the County cannot really do that.

Mr. Atherton stated Service Districts and designated Villages should have a 35 m.p.h. speed limit unless otherwise posted.

Mr. Nace stated the reason this had not been done is that in many cases there are straight roads without many houses.

Mr. Smith inquired if the VDOT study says the speed limit should be 55 m.p.h. why should it be changed to 35 m.p.h.

Mr. Atherton stated all areas designated as Villages are due to density.

Mr. Smith stated he does not agree and that if the VDOT study says the speed limit is okay, then the change is not necessary.

Mr. Meding disagreed with Mr. Smith stating Fauquier County needs the ability to manage speed limits in Service Districts.

Mr. Smith stated if the speed limit change is necessary for safety issues, he is okay with that.

Mr. Nace stated if the speed limits are changed in all Service Districts to be made the same; it is presumed all road conditions are the same.

Mr. Trumbo stated Service Districts have consistent standards across the way.

Mr. Cabbage stated crash history, density, number and placements of driveways, and trip counts are all part of VDOT studies. He also noted that people generally drive what the geometrics of the road allow.

Mr. Poles stated that he lives in the Village of Hume where the speed limit is 35-40 m.p.h and people drive around 45-50 m.p.h.

ACTION:

Mr. Ponn will follow up with Fauquier County School Board regarding placement of a 'School Bus Stop Ahead' sign.

Mr. Cabbage will follow up on the feasibility of a speed reduction on Route 647 and report back to the Committee in 60 days.

9. *Speed Limit Reduction in the Village of Turnbull – Phoebe Tufts Plank*

Ms. Plank lives in the Village of Turnbull off Springs Road. There in now 31 houses on Springs Road in this area. The current speed limit is 45 m.p.h. She had been told by VDOT that the citizens can pay for and install a Village Gateway sign. Ms. Plank would like to request a speed limit reduction to 25 m.p.h. through the Village of Turnbull and a sign stating there will be an additional fine if caught speeding.

Mr. Atherton added that the church in Turnbull is extremely active on Sundays and a lot of the congregation walks to the church. Mr. Atherton stated this is another example of the County lowering speed limits in Service Districts and Villages.

ACTION:

Mr. Cabbage initiated the study but weather has been a factor. He will report back on this agenda item in 60 days.

10. *Citizens' Time*

Ms. Ford stated green busses which are bio-diesel run on soy and reduce traffic congestion. This may be something Fauquier County may want to consider in the future.

11. *Other Items*

Mr. Walker announced there is a Multimodal Grant Opportunity with funds over \$3 million. All application must be submitted by March 1, 2007. There is a 10% in kind fund matching requirement.

Mr. Smith inquired if there were any studies right now that would fit the requirements, primarily Route 605.

Mr. Cabbage replies that the Route 605 effort is already in the Six Year Plan. He also noted that this funding is open from the Charlottesville area to the Prince William County Line.

Mr. Schwartz stated the possibility of putting in a request for the Route 29 corridor-Buckland Bypass area.

Mr. Medvitz noted the section between Charlottesville and Warrenton had some stake holders who could not come to an agreement so there was no recommendation from that study.

Mr. Nace inquired into a county-wide study and if it would take into account the impact of developments. He stated the need for an all-over, all inclusive traffic impact study for the county.

Ms. Cook stated unless an application is for a Rezoning the County cannot ask the developers to do a study.

Mr. Walker stated bike paths are a possibility for this grant as well.

Mr. Smith inquired if bus [commuter] services are eligible for this grant.

Mr. Walker stated the one of the most frequent calls his office receives is regarding the commuter lot at Route 605 and people looking to get a ride on the bus.

Mr. Smith will pass that information along to Larry Miller of Fauquier County Parks and Recreation Department.

Ms. Cook reiterated that applications for this grant are due by March 1, 2007.

Mr. Walker stated the copy this Committee received was the draft version. It has since been finalized with minimal changes.

Mr. Smith stated that any committee member interested in this topic to please contact Jeffrey Walker.

Mr. Trumbo stated Ms. McCarty requested the 25 m.p.h. speed limit in Marshall be extended to the railroad tracks.

Mr. Meding made a motion to change the minutes to show which member has which action item, criteria for the study needed, more detailed information on what action is needed and who will follow-up. Mr. Trumbo seconded.

Mr. Meding stated currently no action items are being stated or deliverables back to the Committee. The minutes should set action items, who has which item and when it will come back to the Committee, and deadlines on action items.

Mr. Nace replied this will necessitate a motion to be made on every agenda item.

Mr. Meding stated a decision should be made each night per item on the agenda, which would include actions and deliverables after that. He suggested a spreadsheet attachment stating the action item, who is responsible for that action, and date of completion. This will enable better accountability.

Mr. Nace requested Mr. Meding to make a more specific motion.

Mr. Meding requested the Committee think about this topic for the next meeting and to include more accountability and better closure of agenda items.

Mr. Nace inquired as to the legality of cars parked in the State Right-of-Way, specifically cars for sale.

Sheriff's representative stated if vehicles are left unattended for over 48 hours, the vehicle will be towed at the owner's expense unless the owner had VDOT's prior permission. He also stated vehicles cannot be parked on sidewalks.

Mr. Atherton stated it is difficult to determine if the vehicle is illegally parked if it is not posted 'No Parking' or less than 24 hours.

Mr. Cabbage stated the Route 681 bridge has been advertised to have the superstructure replaced and will require closure from May-August 2007.

Mr. Cabbage stated crossover work is about to begin on Route 29 for 10 crossovers and adding turn lanes to four crossovers. This project is estimated to be completed by July 31, 2007.

Mr. Cabbage advised that the changeable message sign on Route 29 is up and running.

Mr. Poles stated that the bridge on Route 688 is being redone but that the area after the bridge is an open culvert and water collects in the divot there.

Mr. Cabbage stated if it is an issue with the pipe that it could be a maintenance item. He will have VDOT take a look at this area the following day.

Mr. Atherton stated the Warrenton Training Center agreed to install a 3-way stop sign at the main entrance as well as the construction entrance, but were not willing to fill in the pothole left from the construction work.

Ms. Cook stated that Mr. Filling will be on the agenda next month with Route 17 concerns.

Mr. Smith thanked all of the citizens for attending the meeting. He also thanked Holder Trumbo again for his work on the Committee and stated Mr. Trumbo will be missed.

Mr. Smith stated there will not be a Transportation Committee meeting in August and December 2007.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.
The next meeting will be held February 28, 2007.