

MINUTES SUBJECT TO CORRECTION BY THE SCENERY PRESERVATION COUNCIL. CHANGES, IF ANY, WILL BE RECORDED IN THE MINUTES OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

**SCENERY PRESERVATION COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
NATIONAL LIFE BUILDING
4th FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
MONTPELIER, VERMONT
May 9, 2005**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jill Michaels, Chairwoman

Tordis Isselhardt Matt Langham
Lew Sorenson Sen. Hull Maynard
Diane Gayer Sen. Hull Maynard

MEMBERS ABSENT: Danielle Fitzko Peg Elmer
Rep. Deb Evans Sherry Tolle

STAFF: Peter Gregory
Tom Kennedy
Warren Vail
John LaBarge

OTHERS PRESENT: Bruce Hyde, Commissioner of Tourism
Al Pratt, VTrans
Dan Senecal-Albrecht, CCRPC
Mark Blucher, RCRPC
Susan Schreibman, RCRPC
Marianne Riordan, Recording Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER and APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Jill Michaels called the meeting to order at 1:13 p.m. Introductions were made. Thanks were extended to Warren Vail for his work with the SPC. John LaBarge will be replacing Warren Vail as staff to the SPC.

Approval of Minutes of March 21, 2005

MOTION by Tordis Isselhardt, SECOND by Diane Gayer, to approve the 3/21/05 minutes with the following clarifications:

Page 3, Other Business, Highway in Danville – clarify that Ms. Isselhardt asked for an update on the Danville project;

Page 3, Other Business, Cultural Heritage – clarify that the Champlain Heritage Partnership has been reintroduced.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carried.

2. DISCUSSION OF ROUTE 100 BYWAY EFFORTS

Warren Vail reported Moretown is taking the lead on the designation of Route 100B as a byway. David Raphael is the lead consultant and should be contacted for more information. There have been public meetings. Central Vermont Regional Planning

Commission (Steve Gladezuk) is leading the effort and providing funding (searching for funds to expand the corridor management plan). There has been talk of extending the designation down Route 100 into more of the central Vermont region. Diane Gayer pointed out the SPC is interested in linking corridors, and suggested Middlesex might be interested in being included in conversations about designation. Peter Gregory will find out if Granville might be interested if the expansion plans extend southward. Mr. Vail stated there has been mention of having Route 100 in its entirety designated eventually. There was further discussion of linkages. Tom Kennedy suggested CVRPC could be invited to discuss the Route 100B designation with the SPC. Bruce Hyde mentioned the six miles through state and federal land leading into Granville could readily be designated.

3. DISCUSSION OF THE TOWN OF FAIRLEE BYWAY GRANT

Peter Gregory reported the Town of Fairlee is having second thoughts about the train station being a waypoint center (Fairlee received a scenic byway grant to rehab the train station into a waypoint center and also received an enhancement grant for the project). Fairlee does not feel they can staff the building to keep it open as required. The project has been scaled down, but the town does not want to lose the funding. The Connecticut River Scenic Byway Council feels Fairlee is not a waypoint center so the grants may be in jeopardy. There was mention of the possibility of securing permission from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to redistribute the federal highway funds designated for the Fairlee project for use elsewhere in the state (the Fairlee grant was in excess of \$160,000).

4. UPDATE ON SCENIC BYWAY GRANTS

Al Pratt gave an update on the status of scenic byway projects in the Local Transportation Facility (LTF) and noted outstanding issues/points of interest as follows:

Fairlee

Mr. Pratt reported Fairlee has been advised a revised scope of work for the grants can be submitted. There is some confusion on the level of public use of the building. Fairlee wants to lease some of the building for commercial use (antique shop), however, federal funding can not be used for restoration of a commercial venture. Also, the requirement of a handicap bathroom facility is a sticking point, even though there is promise to build the facility outside of the building.

Chittenden County – Lake Champlain

Dan Senecal-Albrecht, CCRPC, showed a sampling of the signs to be posted and described the locations (Route 7, Route 2, Burlington, Winooski, South Burlington). The same font will be used on the signs that appear on signs in the Connecticut River Byway. The signs meet MUTDC standards for “trail blazer” signs. Volunteers in each of the eight communities are working on text for the interpretive panels. Mia Smith is the designer. The goal is continuity and consistency in style. The content should note points of interest in each area. It is hope to have the signs in production in the next six weeks.

Ripton

Al Pratt noted the change in the project to include a footbridge (named the “Bridge of Flowers”) across the stream. Access management was done in the parking lot (there will be three islands in the parking lot planted with flowers).

Stowe (Smugglers Notch)

The graphic panels will be in place by mid-June. The composting toilet will be constructed in the next eight weeks and in place before winter. Phase 3 of the project includes the design (at 80%) of a composting unit for the Notch Proper (remainder to be done as funds become available).

Vergennes

Work continues on right-of-way clearances and homeland security issues. Some issues were not anticipated at the start of the project.

Windsor

The issue of ownership of Railroad Avenue needs to be settled. Negotiations continue. It is hoped to have the matter resolved in next two weeks, then advertisements can be published for work on the building and streetscape design.

St. Johnsbury

There has been no response on the new scope of work detailing what the town wants to do. St. Johnsbury is trying to determine how to interlink without overlaying federal funding.

5. UPDATE MIDDLEBURY/VERGENNES RECERTIFICATION EFFORTS

Peter Gregory reported the recertification package is being compiled for action by the SPC at the 6/13/05 meeting.

6. DISCUSSION OF ROUTE 30 BYWAY CLASSIFICATION

Mark Blucher, Rutland Regional Planning Commission, and Susan Schreiberman briefed the SPC on support for the Route 30 designation. Most businesses along the proposed byway support the designation, however, there are a couple of major property owners who are not in favor of the designation. Of concern are the volume of traffic and the narrowness of the road. Letters of support have been received from all the towns in the byway except Castleton. Castleton has historically been a challenge to get people to work with each other, even on a local level. A couple of individuals not in support of the designation attended informational meetings with the Castleton Selectboard. There appeared to be much misunderstanding and miscommunication from the dissenters, but the Castleton Selectboard seems to be responsive to people who are vocal, especially in a negative tone, and rejected the proposal. Questions about Act 250 came up at the informational meetings. According to the Act 250 coordinator, byway classification has not had a negative impact on properties or the permit process.

Warren Vail mentioned there is effort being made to get support for designation of Route 30 in its entirety to Brattleboro. Jim Sullivan, Bennington Regional Planning Commission, is taking up an effort to extend the Route 30 designation. If there is a larger

corridor management plan, Castleton can do what it wants. Diane Gayer stressed the SPC's support of a corridor for continuity and linkages, rather than "spot" designation. Lew Sorenson mentioned the need to have support of the proposal by all towns along the route before the matter is given to the Transportation Board. Mark Blucher pointed out there will always be a traffic problem on Route 30 even with the corridor extending southward. People are driving the roadway now because of the scenic nature of the area. The designation will make visible what is already occurring. There was mention of doing a study to determine if traffic increase is attributable to byway designation (a study could be done of the Connecticut River Byway once the national designation is in place for comparison to other roads and byways in the state). Sen. Maynard volunteered to speak to Sen. Ayer about extending the designation of Route 30 (Middlebury to Brattleboro). Plans of action include pursuing the designation on a shorter segment or working with other towns to expand the byway, and doing the byway connections in phases.

MOTION by Diane Gayer, SECOND by Lew Sorenson, to table the Route 30 application for byway designation pending further information. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

Reauthorization for Scenic Byways

Staff reported the reauthorization for federal funds has been extended to May 30th. To date, 8/12 of the appropriation has been received. Byway grant money has not yet been received.

Joint Resolution for National Nomination of Connecticut River Byway

The Vermont House of Representatives passed the joint resolution for the national nomination of the Connecticut River byway. FHWA notified the coordinators that the applications have been received. Comments of support for the Vermont applications have been forwarded by the local FHWA office.

Work Plan

Staff reviewed the work program and completed work to date. Much work time and effort has been spent on the Route 30 designation and the Lake Champlain Byway. The newsletter has not been done yet. Byways groups are providing information for the newsletter. The website needs to be updated.

Lake Champlain Byway into Grand Isle

Ruth Wellman, citizen of Grand Isle, is working to expand the Lake Champlain Byway into the islands.

Molly Stark Trail Informational Article

Tordis Isselhardt reported she wrote an informational article on the Molly Stark Trail as a free handout to the public.

National Byways Conference

The National Byways Conference will be on October 19, 2005, in Cleveland, OH.

8. NEXT MEETING and AGENDA ITEMS

June Meeting: Monday, June 13, 2005, 1 p.m.-3 p.m., Montpelier

Agenda Items:

- Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission re: Route 100B
- Work Program and Budget
- Recertification of Middlebury/Vergennes

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Diane Gayer, SECOND by Lew Sorenson, to adjourn the meeting.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:53 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by M. Riordan, Recording Secretary.

“To Do” List from 5/9/05 SPC meeting:

1. Peter Gregory will find out if Granville might be interested if the expansion plans extend southward.
2. Sen. Maynard volunteered to speak to Sen. Ayer about extending the designation of Route 30 (Middlebury to Brattleboro).