

**Transportation Technical Advisory Committee
of the
New River Valley Planning District Commission**

Minutes of the Meeting
Held on **January 21, 2003**, at the
New River Valley Competitiveness Center
Fairlawn
1:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE

Chairman James Hurt called the meeting to order.

Members Present: James Hurt, Chairman, City of Radford; Ron Coake, Vice-Chairman, Pulaski County; David Clarke, VDOT-Christiansburg; Nick Glenn, NRV Airport; Barry Helms, Town of Christiansburg; Herman Hollins, VDOT-Richmond; Bill Pedigo, Town of Pulaski; J. B. Sutphin, Virginia Tech.

Others Present: Paul Dellinger, Roanoke Times; Marty Gordon, WFNR Radio; Erik Johnson, VDOT-Richmond.

Staff Present: Patrick Burton, New River Valley PDC.

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER MINUTES

Chairman Hurt asked if there were any comments or corrections concerning the minutes of the November meeting. Ron Coake moved that the minutes be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by Nick Glenn and carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No members of the public addressed the Committee at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

Staff Report

Patrick Burton updated the Committee on several projects in the current work program: trail connection group; access management; web site; and trail map. He also reported that the Commonwealth Transportation Board's Pre-Allocation Hearing for the Salem District would be held on March 25th.

It was also noted that the deadline for submitting I-81 improvement proposals under the revised guidelines of the Public Private Transportation Act had recently passed. David Clarke reported that two conceptual proposals were submitted to VDOT. The consortiums which submitted the proposals are known as Fluor Virginia and Star Solutions.

NEW BUSINESS

Draft Transportation Work Program for FY 2004

Patrick referred to the draft work program that was included in the meeting package mailed to the Committee members. He noted that the projects included in the draft program were based on input received from localities and Committee members. He went through draft and briefly described the projects and elements of the proposed work program. He asked for questions, comments, or suggestions regarding the draft work program.

Chairman Hurt asked for a motion to forward the draft work program to the Planning District Commission for consideration.

Motion: J.B. Sutphin moved that the draft transportation planning work program for FY 2004 be forwarded to the Planning District Commission for consideration. The motion was seconded by Nick Glenn.

Action: The motion was unanimously approved by the Committee.

Herman Hollins suggested that the PDC may want to make the “Transportation Planning Development and State Process Assistance” element an item under “New River Valley Regional Projects” category to allow more flexibility.

Mr. Hollins mentioned the possibility of Rural Transportation Planning Grant (RTGP) funds, a competitive category of funds available to PDCs through VDOT’s Rural Transportation Planning Assistance Program. He noted that these competitive funds are intended for worthwhile transportation planning projects which are separate from the standard PDC work programs and may lead to a beneficial study or approach that could be used in other parts of the state.

Regional Transportation Comments for 2003

Patrick referred to the draft comments included in the meeting package mailed to Committee members. He noted that the draft comments reflect modifications suggested and discussed at the November meeting. He went through the draft comments and described the changes. He stated that the draft comments now reflect the following: completion of the Rt. 460 Bypass connector; the soon to be completed Memorial Bridge replacement; the removal of Rt. 100 four-laning (segment in Giles County from approximately Rt. 692 to the Giles-Pulaski County line) from the Six Year Program in 2002; and the removal of Rt. 114 four-laning (segment in Montgomery County from the Christiansburg corporate limit to the Radford Arsenal) from the Six Year

Program in 2002. He asked for suggestions and modifications concerning the draft comments.

Barry Helms suggested that the second sentence in item 1(g) be modified to address some awkward wording and more clearly convey the purpose of the project.

In relation to item 3(b), Mr. Helms noted that the Town of Christiansburg had submitted a Transportation Enhancement funding application.

Nick Glenn suggested that the term “TransDominion Express” be inserted in item 3(a).

Chairman Hurt asked for a motion to forward the draft regional transportation comments, as amended, to the Planning District Commission for consideration.

Motion: Barry Helms moved that the draft regional transportation comments for 2003, as amended by the Committee, be forwarded to the Planning District Commission for consideration. The motion was seconded by Ron Coake.

Action: The motion was unanimously approved by the Committee.

Chairman Hurt noted that the draft work program and the draft regional transportation comments would be on the Planning District Commission’s February meeting agenda.

Other Business

Chairman Hurt set the next TAC meeting for March 18, 2003, 1:30 p.m., at the New River Valley Competitiveness Center in Fairlawn.

Chairman Hurt asked if there was any further business to be brought before the Committee.

Nick Glenn suggested that the chairman of the TransDominion Express Steering Committee be invited to speak at the March TAC meeting.

Chairman Hurt responded that such an invitation would be extended.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Hurt adjourned the meeting.

**Transportation Technical Advisory Committee
of the
New River Valley Planning District Commission**

Minutes of the Meeting
Held on **March 18, 2003**, at the
New River Valley Competitiveness Center
Fairlawn
1:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE

Chairman James Hurt called the meeting to order.

Members Present: James Hurt, Chairman, City of Radford; Ron Coake, Vice-Chairman, Pulaski County; Dan Brugh, VDOT-Christiansburg; Barry Helms, Town of Christiansburg; Herman Hollins, VDOT-Richmond; Bill Pedigo, Town of Pulaski; J. B. Sutphin, Citizen Rep.; Charlie White, New River Community College.

Others Present: Erik Johnson, VDOT-Richmond; Dail Stancill, VDOT-Christiansburg; Charles Warren, TransDominion Express Steering Committee.

Staff Present: Patrick Burton, New River Valley PDC.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY MINUTES

Chairman Hurt asked if there were any comments or corrections concerning the minutes of the January meeting. Barry Helms moved that the minutes be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by Herman Hollins and carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No members of the public addressed the Committee at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

Staff Report

FY 04 Work Program - Patrick reported that the draft Work Program approved by TAC at the January meeting was reviewed and approved by the Planning District Commission. The Commission also passed a resolution of support for the Work Program, which was submitted to VDOT by the March 17th deadline.

FY 04 Competitive Grant - VDOT makes additional planning funds available to PDCs on a competitive basis. This funding opportunity was discussed at the January TAC meeting. Following that meeting, City of Radford staff came forward with a project to analyze traffic flow in Radford's Main Street corridor and to develop recommendations for improving flow in the corridor. A proposal summary was distributed to TAC members in attendance. Patrick reported that the Commission approved the Competitive Grant proposal and passed a resolution of support for the pre-application, which was submitted to VDOT by the March 17th deadline.

Regional Transportation Comments - Patrick reported that the draft regional transportation comments for 2003, approved by TAC at the January meeting, were reviewed by the Planning District Commission and approved with one significant amendment. The amendment involved identifying replacement of the currently closed Rt. 114 westbound bridge over the New River as a priority project need. Patrick also indicated that PDC Chairman Brad Stipes would be presenting the comments at the Commonwealth Transportation Board pre-allocation hearing in Salem on March 25th.

Transportation Enhancement Grants - Patrick noted that VDOT and the Commonwealth Transportation Board have decided to hold a regular funding application process for the FY 04 funding year. The deadline for submitting applications to VDOT is July 1, 2003. He reported that VDOT's Local Assistance Division would be holding "how to apply" workshops around the State in April. Two of the workshops were scheduled for western Virginia: April 3rd in Marion; and April 4th in Salem at the VDOT Salem District office.

Commuting Pattern Data - Patrick reported that the PDC had just received new commuting pattern information from the Virginia Employment Commission, which analyzed/processed 2000 Census data to generate the information. He indicated that the commuting pattern information for the four counties and one city in the Planning District had been extracted and was available for those who are interested.

NEW BUSINESS

TAC Member Changes

Chairman Hurt recognized the following TAC members: Charlie White, new representative of New River Community College; Bill Pedigo, new representative of the Town of Pulaski; and J.B. Sutphin, who will now serve on the Committee as a citizen representative. Chairman Hurt also reported that Roy Saville of Radford University and Steve Mouras of Virginia Tech, who were not in attendance, would be the new representatives of those institutions on the Committee.

TransDominion Express

Chairman Hurt introduced Dr. Charles Warren of the Committee to Advance the TransDominion Express.

Dr. Warren noted that the Committee to Advance the TransDominion Express formed in early 2000 and identified advocate “spark plugs” and partner groups. The Committee continues to advocate rail service with some staff support from the Lynchburg Regional Chamber of Commerce. He noted that the Committee successfully lobbied the General Assembly for \$9 million for preliminary engineering and capital improvements for passenger rail service between: Richmond and Bristol; and Lynchburg and Washington.

Dr. Warren reported that his group’s steering committee had met the previous week with Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) Director Karen Rae. He reported that DRPT would be hiring consultants to develop a state rail plan for the Commonwealth. He also indicated that a separate team of consultants would begin work in late spring on an environmental assessment and study of financial and technical details for the Bristol passenger rail service (i.e., TransDominion Express). In conjunction with this environmental assessment and financial/technical study, Dr. Warren stated that DRPT would be establishing a corridor advisory group sometime in late spring and that a first meeting would be held by early summer.

Dr. Warren noted that Ms. Rae believes that Amtrak will remain a viable potential operating entity for the TransDominion Express. He also noted a recent legislative proposal in the Virginia General Assembly to create a state rail authority.

Dr. Warren then discussed a fact-finding trip by several members of his group’s steering committee to Washington state to see and experience the “Cascade Line” passenger rail service in that state. The “Cascade Line” passenger service links Portland, Seattle, and Vancouver, as well as the small towns in between. The Committee to Advance the TransDominion Express obtained funding from a private foundation to support the fact-finding trip.

Dr. Warren showed a brief informational video which focused on the experience of the Cascade Line service. The Cascade Line emphasizes convenience, customer service, and reliable on-time service. In implementing the service, the State of Washington took freight rail needs into consideration and made sure that the level of freight service was maintained along with implementation of passenger service in the corridor. The video highlighted public-private cooperative efforts related to the Cascade Line and volunteer staffing of some stations in small towns/cities. The video documents the importance of the Cascade Line passenger service to the economy of Centralia, Washington. Tourists, shoppers, and day-trippers using with the Cascade Line service are attracted to the community’s vibrant downtown commercial district.

Dr. Warren left a copy of the video (approx. 15 minutes in length) with the PDC. If you would like to borrow the video, please contact Patrick Burton at the PDC office.

Dr. Warren noted the importance of expressing support for the TransDominion Express service to members of the General Assembly. In response to a question about DRPT’s effort to develop a state rail plan, Dr. Warren said that the effort would focus on both freight and passenger rail needs.

Dr. Warren distributed copies of a brochure on the TransDominion Express. A TAC member asked if a projection in the brochure, which (based on DRPT's 1998 Bristol Rail Passenger Study) says that operating costs of the service should be covered by ticket sales within 12 years of the implementation of service, was still accurate. In response, Dr. Warren noted that he thought it would take longer to reach the break-even point with regard to operating costs.

Dr. Warren was asked if the number of stops (i.e., 19) in the 1998 DRPT study would be maintained. He responded that DRPT's plans still call for the same number of stops, but noted that nothing has been finalized and it is conceivable that a fewer number of stops might be found to be more practical during the development of final/implementation plans.

Other Business

Chairman Hurt set the next TAC meeting for May 20, 2003, 1:30 p.m., at the New River Valley Competitiveness Center in Fairlawn.

Chairman Hurt asked if there was any further business to be brought before the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Hurt adjourned the meeting.

**Transportation Technical Advisory Committee
of the
New River Valley Planning District Commission**

Minutes of the Meeting
Held on **May 20, 2003**, at the
New River Valley Competitiveness Center
Fairlawn
1:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE

Vice-Chairman Ron Coake called the meeting to order.

Members Present: Ron Coake, Vice-Chairman, Pulaski County; Barry Helms, Town of Christiansburg; Erik Johnson, VDOT-Richmond; Jeff Kessler, VDOT-Salem; Ken Vittum, Town of Pearisburg; Charlie White, New River Community College.

Others Present: Nichole Hair, Town of Christiansburg.

Staff Present: Patrick Burton, New River Valley PDC.

APPROVAL OF MARCH MINUTES

Vice-Chairman Ron Coake asked if there were any comments or corrections concerning the minutes of the March meeting. Barry Helms moved that the minutes be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by Ken Vittum and carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No members of the public addressed the Committee at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

Staff Report

Competitive Grant (RTPGP) Application Status - Patrick reported that, in response to a pre-application, VDOT had requested a detailed proposal which was submitted in mid-April. VDOT staff have indicated that the proposed "Radford Main Street Corridor Congestion Management Study" will be funded and that written notification will follow soon.

FY 2003 Project Status - Patrick reported that the transportation web-site development, access

management document, and trail connections facilitation activities were on-track for completion in the summer.

Preallocation Hearing and Tentative Six-Year Program - The Preallocation Hearing for the Salem District was held on March 25. The PDC's comments were presented by PDC Chairman Brad Stipes. A tentative Six-Year Program was adopted by the Commonwealth Transportation Board on May 15. The tentative program includes funding for replacement of the Rt. 114 westbound bridge over the New River. Copies of the PDC's final comments were distributed to those in attendance.

Rail Study Status - Dr. Charles Warren, member of the TransDominion Express Steering Committee, reported at the March TAC meeting that the State would soon be hiring a consultant team which would begin, in late spring/early summer of this year, an environmental assessment and study of financial and technical details related to the proposed Bristol passenger rail service. He also reported that the State would be assembling a corridor study advisory group to provide input during the study.

Patrick reported that he had sent an e-mail message to Alan Tobias, Rail Passenger Project Manager at the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), to check on the status of this effort. Alan Tobias responded that DRPT has not moved this study forward at the pace that was suggested to Dr. Warren's committee back in March. He noted that, as of May, DRPT had not yet begun work on a study scope-of-work and had not assembled an advisory committee. As of May, DRPT was still having an internal discussion about the shape and focus of the study. Mr. Tobias indicated that DRPT will definitely be moving forward on a detailed study of financial and technical requirements.

Commuting Pattern Information Follow-Up - Patrick noted that, at the time of the March TAC meeting, the PDC had just received new commuting pattern information for Virginia counties and cities based on data from the 2000 Census. He reported that the PDC had extracted the in- and out-commuting pattern information for New River Valley Planning District counties/city, as well as for counties/cities bordering the Planning District, to create a commuting pattern reference booklet for the New River Valley Planning District. Copies were distributed to those in attendance.

NEW BUSINESS

Presentation on FY 2002 Work Products

Patrick Burton presented the package of Rural Transportation Planning Program products as follows:

Franklin Pike Study - This corridor study focused on Franklin Pike (Rt. 681/640) in Floyd County between U.S. Rt. 221 and the Floyd/Franklin County line. In addition to connecting outlying areas of Floyd County, Franklin Pike serves as a connector between the Town of Floyd

and Franklin County. A variety of land uses exist along the road, ranging from more urbanized near Rt. 221 to agricultural and rural residential in other areas. Among the recommendations were spot improvements to address a one-lane bridge and sight distance issues, and the need to examine/consider land use controls to address agricultural land conversion, development density, and access management.

Radford Area Bikeway/Walkway Connections - Lying at the point where Bike Route 76 crosses the New River, Radford is a logical starting point for exploring options for trail connections throughout the area. Using concepts included in the City of Radford's Bikeway/Walkway Master Plan and the joint Radford-Montgomery County Route 177 Corridor Study, as well as some other connection opportunities, this report documents several possibilities for connecting Radford's trail system to points outside the City.

New River Valley Park and Ride Study Phase 2 - Through this effort, several locations identified in the phase 1 Park and Ride Study were selected for further examination. For each of these "vicinity" locations near primary highway intersections or interstate interchanges, parcel data was collected and parcel maps prepared.

Radford Parking Study - This effort focused primarily on occupancy and turnover rates for Radford's on-street parking in three areas: along Tyler Avenue; along East Main Street in downtown; and in west Radford along West Main Street. Notable for high occupancy and low turnover was the parking along Tyler Avenue, which suggests usage by university students and need for increased enforcement. In the downtown study area, the heaviest usage was in the block of East Main Street between Virginia Street and Third Avenue and also in the Virginia Street parking lot. Patrick noted that since the time that data was collected, two new food service establishments have located in the block of East Main Street between Virginia Street and Third Avenue. These two businesses have likely increased the demand for parking in this block of Main Street. Patrick noted that any change in demand due to these two new businesses is not reflected in the study results and that the study data for the downtown study area most likely is not an accurate representation of the current parking usage/occupancy/demand for that area.

Preliminary Planning Issues Related to Development of the New River Link Road in Pulaski County - This project, requested by Pulaski County, documented preliminary planning issues and background information/data related to the concept of an alternate east-west connector road in Pulaski County. Among the items included are: descriptions of traffic generators and employment centers; commuting pattern data; land use and zoning information; large institutional and commercial property owners in the study area; current regional transportation comments developed by the New River Valley PDC; and excerpts from VDOT's 1999 initial feasibility study of this concept.

Other Business

Vice-Chairman Coake set the next TAC meeting for July 15, 2003, 1:30 p.m., at the New River Valley Competitiveness Center in Fairlawn.

Vice-Chairman Coake asked if there was any further business to be brought before the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Vice-Chairman Coake adjourned the meeting.

**Transportation Technical Advisory Committee
of the
New River Valley Planning District Commission**

Minutes of the Meeting
Held on July 15, 2003, at the
New River Valley Competitiveness Center
Fairlawn
1:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE

Chairman James Hurt called the meeting to order.

Members Present: James Hurt, Chairman, City of Radford; Ron Coake, Vice-Chairman, Pulaski County; John Hawley, Town of Pulaski; Barry Helms, Town of Christiansburg; Herman Hollins, VDOT-Richmond; Ray Pethtel, Virginia Tech Transportation Institute; Joe Powers, Montgomery County; Dail Stancill, VDOT-Christiansburg; J.B. Sutphin, Citizen Representative; Ken Vittum, Town of Pearisburg; Charlie White, New River Community College.

Others Present: Kelly Boyers, Montgomery County; Nichole Hair, Town of Christiansburg; Erik Johnson, VDOT-Richmond; Jeff Kessler, VDOT-Salem.

Staff Present: Patrick Burton, New River Valley PDC.

APPROVAL OF MAY MINUTES

Chairman Hurt asked if there were any comments or corrections concerning the minutes of the May meeting. J.B. Sutphin moved that the minutes be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by Barry Helms and carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No members of the public addressed the Committee at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

Staff Report

PDC Comments for Final Hearing on Six-Year Improvement Program - Patrick Burton reported that the Planning District Commission, at its May meeting, had decided to write a letter concerning replacement of the Rt. 114 westbound bridge over the New River for submission under the public comment process for the Commonwealth Transportation Board's (CTB) final

public hearing prior to adoption of a Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program for FY 2004-2009. Copies of the letter were distributed to those in attendance. The letter thanked the CTB for putting the Rt. 114 westbound bridge replacement project back in the tentative Six-Year Program and allocating some initial preliminary engineering funds, but stressed the vital role of Rt. 114 in the region and the need to replace the bridge in a timely fashion. According to the tentative Six-Year Program, a replacement bridge would not be complete until FY 2008 or FY 2009, by which time the existing Rt. 114 westbound bridge over the New River will have been closed for 6 to 7 years.

FY 2003 Rural Planning Projects - Patrick reported that the transportation web-page project was complete. A few final report preparation/publication tasks remained for the access management project, but the project is essentially complete.

VAPDC Transportation Committee Meeting - A meeting of the Virginia Association of PDCs Transportation Committee was held in mid-June. At that meeting, Ken Lantz, Director of VDOT's Transportation Planning Division, reported that an interagency working group, with representation from all of the State's modal agencies, was meeting to coordinate and discuss the development of the State's long-range multi-modal transportation plan, known as "VTrans 2025." Patrick distributed copies of a VTrans 2025 process diagram with milestones and dates to those in attendance.

Patrick reported that Mr. Lantz also discussed the effort to revise the Subdivision Street Requirements (SSR). A draft revised SSR will likely be prepared for review for by other State offices in the fall of this year. A 90-day public comment period for the draft revised SSR would likely be initiated in December 2003 or January 2004. Copies of a summary of the SSR revision process, including a timeline and brief description of a few significant revisions, were distributed to those in attendance.

NEW BUSINESS

I-81 Improvements, TEA-21 Reauthorization, and Statewide Multi-Modal Long-Range Transportation Plan

Chairman Hurt introduced Ray Pethtel, University Transportation Fellow and Associate Director of the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTI).

Mr. Pethtel started with the issue of **TEA-21 reauthorization**. The current Federal transportation funding legislation (i.e., TEA-21) expires on September 30, 2003. The next authorization bill, known as "Safetea" or "Nextea" will likely not be passed by Congress until sometime in 2004. There is some likelihood that a one- or two-year extension of the current funding legislation will be enacted by Congress in the meantime. The Administration, House of Representatives, and Senate each support a different funding level for the new transportation bill. There are two prominent alliances of state and special interests concerning funding formulas and the percent of Highway Trust Fund contributions returned to states. The VDOT

coordinator/contact for reauthorization issues is Mary Lynn Tischer.

Statewide Multi-Modal Long-Range Transportation Plan. Mr. Pethtel discussed the “Vision Plan” track of the VTrans 2025 development process. The purpose of the visioning effort is to obtain public participation and input. The visioning track involves eight steps/tasks: (1) review public outreach and involvement during phase one discussion group meetings (held in 2001); (2) develop strategies to reach under-represented stakeholders; (3) examine plans of other states; (4) hold issue-framing sessions; (5) identify issues and policy perspectives; (6) prepare an issues booklet; (7) obtain public and stakeholder views on alternative visions; and (8) develop a single vision statement. The vision development effort is in the final stages. The final stakeholder forums and identifying/drafting a recommended vision are the remaining tasks and will be completed by late 2003. Mr. Pethtel distributed copies of a discussion guide and brochure prepared for the public forums.

I-81 Improvements. Mr. Pethtel’s comments on I-81 improvements focused on the Fluor conceptual proposal for improving I-81 under the Public Private Transportation Act (PPTA). VTTI is a member of the Fluor PPTA consortium. Fluor’s proposed improvements can be summarized as follows: one additional lane in each direction for cars only; truck climbing lanes in 10 areas; installation of a wireless spine for safety, communication, and traffic monitoring technology to make I-81 a model intelligent transportation system safety corridor; and finance improvements to the Norfolk Southern rail line between Front Royal and Manassas to divert an estimated 150,000 truck loads from I-81 each year.

Under the Fluor proposal, most construction will be to the inside and will not require significant modification of most interchanges, according to Mr. Pethtel. Two lanes of traffic can be maintained during construction. The Fluor proposal calls for a construction timeframe of 6 years.

Fluor maintains that its proposal is financially feasible and does not require State or Federal funds. The estimated cost of the Fluor proposal, including debt service, is \$2.5 billion over 30 years. The cost can be financed through low-interest bonds. The Fluor proposal calls for a 3-cent per mile toll for cars and a 10-cent per mile toll for trucks. Fluor maintains that this revenue stream will be sufficient for a longer-term improvement program for bridges, interchanges, bypasses, and other needs. According to the Fluor proposal, much internal commuting traffic can be allowed to use I-81 without tolls.

Mr. Pethtel mentioned the “Rail Transportation Development Authority” bill sponsored by Senator Edwards. He noted that the bill could influence state investment in rail infrastructure for freight and passenger uses. The bill was approved by the General Assembly during the 2003 session and must also be approved during the 2004 session to become effective.

Mr. Pethtel also acknowledged the recent Federal ruling that requires environmental review work to be completely done before construction agreements can be issued. He reported that VDOT is contracting with both I-81 PPTA consortia to do environmental review work under

VDOT's supervision. The environmental review process will likely take three to five years.

Joe Powers asked that, with a larger, wider road, would it be more difficult and more expensive to add interchanges to I-81. Mr. Pethtel responded that it can potentially be more expensive, depending on topography and the conceptual improvement plan that is eventually selected. He noted that such costs would be minimized under the Fluor proposal which calls for placement of additional lanes in the existing median, thus keeping the expanded road within the existing right-of-way footprint.

Other Business

Chairman Hurt set the next TAC meeting for September 16, 2003, 1:30 p.m., at the New River Valley Competitiveness Center in Fairlawn.

Chairman Hurt then recognized Ken Vittum for his service to the Committee and the Planning District Commission while serving as Chairman of the TAC during 2002. Mr. Hurt presented Mr. Vittum with a Certificate of Appreciation, signed by PDC Chairman Bradford J. Stipes.

Patrick Burton indicated that he would provide a demonstration of the new transportation web-page following the meeting for anyone who was interested.

Chairman Hurt asked if there was any further business to be brought before the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Hurt adjourned the meeting.

**Transportation Technical Advisory Committee
of the
New River Valley Planning District Commission**

Minutes of the Meeting
Held on **September 16, 2003** at the
New River Valley Competitiveness Center
Fairlawn
1:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE

Chairman James Hurt called the meeting to order.

Members Present: James Hurt, Chairman, City of Radford; Kelly Boyers, Montgomery County; Barry Helms, Town of Christiansburg; Buddy Kast, Town of Narrows; Bill Pedigo, Town of Pulaski; Walter Pribble, VDOT-Richmond; Dail Stancill, VDOT-Christiansburg; Ken Vittum, Town of Pearisburg.

Others Present: Dan Brugh, Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Montgomery MPO; Paul Dellinger, Roanoke Times; Jeff Kessler, VDOT-Salem; Nelson Newton, VDOT-Richmond.

Staff Present: Patrick Burton, New River Valley PDC.

APPROVAL OF JULY MINUTES

Chairman Hurt asked if there were any comments or corrections concerning the minutes of the July meeting. Barry Helms moved that the minutes be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by Dail Stancill and carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No members of the public addressed the Committee at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

Staff Report

Transportation Enhancement Funding Decisions - Patrick reported that the Transportation Enhancement Program web-site indicated that project selections would be made at the September 18th Commonwealth Transportation Board meeting.

Herman Hollins' Retirement; New VDOT Rep. - Patrick reported that Herman Hollins, VDOT transportation planning liaison to the New River Valley region for a number of years, recently retired. He noted that Mr. Hollins was very helpful to the PDC in his role as an administrator of VDOT's Rural Transportation Planning Assistance Program and that his wit and wisdom would be missed.

Patrick introduced Walter Pribble and Nelson Newton, who will be the new representatives from VDOT's Transportation and Mobility Planning Division.

Safety Initiative - Patrick indicated that he had received some information via e-mail about a program offering small grants to counties for pedestrian and traffic safety projects. He stated that he would forward the message to county contacts in the Planning District.

Patrick Burton asked that "I-81 PPTA Comments" be added to the agenda as an item under New Business. Chairman Hurt put the request before the Committee. There was a consensus among the Committee to add the item to the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

Trail Connections

Patrick referred to the draft trail/greenway document included in the mailing for the meeting. He noted that, during an effort to update the regional bikeway/walkway plan a few years ago, the concept of connecting the New River Trail in Pulaski with the Huckleberry Trail in Christiansburg was identified as a desired connection. This concept is consistent with a connection opportunity identified in the Virginia Outdoors Plan concerning linkage of the Huckleberry and New River Trails.

Patrick reported that the document grew out of several meetings with local government staff and citizen representatives held over the past year focusing on the Huckleberry-New River Trail connection concept. He indicated that the issue seems to resonate with some citizens and that local government staff were supportive of a regional approach to initial planning for such a link. He noted that there seems to be increasing interest in connecting communities via trails.

He pointed out that a map to accompany the document has not been completed. The map will include features such as roads, streams, public facilities, secondary road six year plan elements, and county bicycle plan routes.

The purpose of the document is to raise visibility and awareness of the trail connection concept and to seek approval from the Planning District Commission for PDC staff to do some additional concept planning work, which may result in a product that is useful to localities.

I-81 PPTA Comments

Patrick asked the Committee members if there was any interest in drafting regional comments to forward to the Planning District Commission for consideration concerning the Interstate 81 Public Private Transportation Act (PPTA) proposals. Based on the response, it appeared that few local governments had taken up the issue at the time of the meeting. VDOT's local government comment period closes on November 4, 2003. Since there was sufficient time remaining in the comment period, Patrick indicated that he would try to get some feedback from the Commission at its meeting the following week concerning whether the PDC wishes to provide comments to VDOT.

Dan Brugh pointed out that a concept plan for I-81 improvements was developed by VDOT a few years ago and was approved by the Federal Highway Administration.

Walter Pribble noted that an environmental review process was being undertaken for I-81 separate from the PPTA process. He indicated that the environmental review process would include a public involvement component through which local governments and citizens would have the opportunity to comment.

FY 05 Comments on Regional Transportation Needs

For the State's next (i.e., FY 2005) Transportation Six-Year Improvement Program, the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) and VDOT will begin public meetings this fall. The Salem District hearing/meeting will be held on November 12, 2003, at Christiansburg High School, with a drop-in style VDOT public meeting from 5 to 7 pm and a formal public hearing beginning at 7 pm. Patrick referenced the note in the meeting mailing that the Commission's Comments on Regional Transportation Needs document for the FY 2004 Six-Year Program Pre-Allocation Hearing was available on the PDC web-site. He also passed out copies of the document to the Committee members who were present.

Chairman Hurt asked about the purpose of the time-of-year and format change for the FY 2005 hearing/meeting. Walter Pribble responded that the changes were made so that planning functions could be better incorporated into the programming process.

Patrick asked the Committee members if there were any changes or modifications to the FY 2004 document that were needed for FY 2005. He indicated that the Route 114 bridge item on page 1 would need to be modified to reflect inclusion of the bridge replacement project in the FY 2004 Six-Year Plan, as well as the Commission's letter to Secretary Clement dated May 28, 2003.

Ken Vittum suggested that item 3 b., on page 5, be modified to reflect that VDOT's Transportation Enhancement Program will have completed the project selection process for FY 2004 by the time of the public hearing/meeting. Patrick said that the change would be made.

Chairman Hurt asked that the FY 2004 comments be e-mailed to Committee members that were not present and that their comments/modifications be requested. Patrick indicated that he would e-mail the document to all the Committee members for whom he had e-mail addresses.

Other Business

Chairman Hurt set the next TAC meeting for November 18, 2003, 1:30 p.m., at the New River Valley Competitiveness Center in Fairlawn.

Chairman Hurt asked if there was any further business to be brought before the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Hurt adjourned the meeting.

**Transportation Technical Advisory Committee
of the
New River Valley Planning District Commission**

Minutes of the Meeting
Held on **October 14, 2003**, at the
Montgomery County Government Center
Christiansburg
1:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE

Chairman James Hurt called the meeting to order.

Members Present: James Hurt, Chairman, City of Radford; Ron Coake, Vice-Chairman, Pulaski County; Kelly Boyers, Montgomery County; Barry Helms, Town of Christiansburg; Dan McKinney, Town of Blacksburg; Walter Pribble, VDOT-Richmond; Dail Stancill, VDOT-Christiansburg; Ken Vittum, Town of Pearisburg; Charlie White, New River Community College.

Others Present: Dan Brugh, Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Montgomery MPO.

Staff Present: Patrick Burton, New River Valley PDC.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER MINUTES

Chairman Hurt asked if there were any comments or corrections concerning the minutes of the September meeting. Walter Pribble moved that the minutes be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by Barry Helms and carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No members of the public addressed the Committee at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

Staff Report

Transportation Enhancement Funding Decisions - Patrick reported that Wade Chenault indicated that project selections would likely be finalized at the October meeting of the Commonwealth Transportation Board.

I-81 Forum - Patrick reported that a forum on the Interstate 81 PPTA improvement proposals would be held at New River Community College on October 15, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Each of the two groups which submitted a PPTA proposal was scheduled to make a presentation.

I-81 PPTA Comments

In early September, VDOT requested comments from local governments on the Public Private Transportation Act (PPTA) I-81 Improvement Project proposals. VDOT set November 4, 2003, as the deadline for submission of comments.

This item was discussed briefly at the September TAC meeting. At that meeting, staff indicated that some direction would be sought from the Planning District Commission concerning whether the Commission wished to provide comments to VDOT.

At its September meeting, the Commission referred the issue to TAC and asked that the Committee develop a set of comments for consideration by the Commission at its October meeting.

A set of draft comments, for consideration by TAC was included with the mailing for this meeting. Chairman Hurt asked for comment on the draft document and noted the need to provide draft comments to the Commission for its October meeting. During the discussion, the Committee settled on the following modifications to the draft document:

- add to introductory section a sentence noting that any selected PPTA proposal should satisfy the 2035 Level-of-Service capacity needs of the I-81 corridor;
- add language to final part of “environmental protection” item to read “and encourage regional cooperation with localities in addressing stormwater management”;
- add language to “incorporate truck parking” item to address separation of rest areas for truck and automobile traffic;
- under the “Maintenance of Traffic Flow During Construction” section heading, delete the two existing items and replace with an item which states that there should be no reduction in number of open lanes during construction; and
- under the “Funding Considerations” section heading, delete the “maintain VDOT funding contribution” item and, in the “adequate bonding and assurance of performance” item, delete the reference to maintenance funding.

Chairman Hurt asked for a motion to approve the comments, as amended, and forward to the Commission for consideration. Ron Coake moved that the draft “Comments on Interstate 81 PPTA Improvement Project”, as amended, be approved and forwarded to the Planning District Commission for consideration. The motion was seconded by Barry Helms and carried.

Chairman Hurt requested that, when the Committee’s modifications had been incorporated into the document, the revised draft be e-mailed to the Committee. Patrick Burton indicated that he would distribute the revised draft to the Committee members via e-mail.

FY 05 Comments on Regional Transportation Needs

Chairman Hurt referenced the draft comments document included in the mailing and asked for comment and discussion. He noted that the Salem District transportation meeting/hearing for the FY 05 Six Year Plan would be held in Christiansburg on November 12.

Patrick Burton described changes in the draft, as compared to the document adopted in spring 2003 for the FY 04 Six Year Plan public hearing. The changes included updated information for the Route 114 bridge item on page 1 and updated information in the I-81 item (1.c.) on page 2.

The Committee decided that the last sentence (i.e., referring to withdrawal of VDOT maintenance funding) the second paragraph in item 1.c. should be deleted.

Ken Vittum moved that the FY 05 Comments on Regional Transportation Needs be approved, as amended. The motion was seconded by Barry Helms and carried.

Trail/Greenway Document

Patrick Burton discussed the revised draft document which was included in the mailing for this meeting. He noted that the document includes a proposal for development of a concept plan concerning a New River Trail-Huckleberry Trail connection. Such a planning effort would include a focus on community meetings/workshops to gather citizen input.

Patrick indicated that some initial mapping remains to be done to accompany the document. He asked for approval of the Committee to present the document to the PDC at some point in the future when the initial mapping is complete. Patrick agreed to submit the document and maps to (and meet with) TAC representatives from the affected localities prior to presenting to the PDC.

Ron Coake moved that the trail/greenway document be approved for future presentation to the PDC, with further review/consultation with locality representatives prior to such presentation. The motion was seconded by Barry Helms and carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Committee Officers for 2004

Chairman James Hurt and Vice-Chairman Ron Coake each indicated willingness to serve another year in their respective officer roles.

Ken Vittum moved that the current TAC officers, James Hurt - Chairman and Ron Coake - Vice-Chairman, be approved to continue in their respective offices during 2004. The motion was seconded by Barry Helms and carried.

Other Business

Chairman Hurt set the next TAC meeting for January 20, 2004, 1:30 p.m., at the New River Valley Competitiveness Center in Fairlawn.

Chairman Hurt asked if there was any further business to be brought before the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Hurt adjourned the meeting.