



V
Vermont



Governor's Commission on Climate Change

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Transportation & Land Use Technical Work Group

Meeting Summary, Call #7

April 17, 2007, 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

Attendance

• TWG Members

Gina Campoli
Catherine Dimitruk
Chuck Gallagher
Polly McMurtry
James Moore

• VT DEC Staff

Jeff Merrell

• CCS Staff

Will Schroeer
Wendy Messenger

• Public/Friends

Charley Mark
TJ Poor
Elaine Wang

Introductions

- Will Schroeer conducted roll call.
- Will Schroeer reviewed the agenda and purpose of the call.

Review and Discussion of Call 6 Summary

- Request to correct spelling of Scott Bascum's name

Review of Plenary Meeting

Plenary Meeting held on March 22nd.

Concern was raised that the goals were not clearly identified or far enough along. TLU TWG was not alone in this. This is reflected in the purpose of the meeting today, which is to establish ambitious, numerical goals for the policy options.

Process discussion

There was broad general discussion about how to improve participation in both meetings and in written contributions.

CCS reiterated that the TWG and PG process is intended to facilitate the development of options by Vermont stakeholders; the intent is not to have a consultant-driven process. It is not envisioned that CCS would facilitate sub-group work on individual policy options. No objection was raised to having CCS get more involved with facilitating creation of objectives. CCS will discuss further with DEC.

Review and discussion of policy options

TLU-1

TLU 1 needs an overall target for “reduction in VMT”, or the group will have to analyze the reductions produced by each TLU-1 implementation mechanism. The latter approach is likely to be very difficult. In CCS’ view, it would be more effective to set a goal and take a top down approach – say 15% VMT reduction – and see if implementation mechanisms reasonably serve this goal.

The TWG discussed the meaning of “reducing the increase in VMT”.

CCS led a discussion of a possible goal 15%. CCS reminded the TWG that the direction from the Governor’s office is for ambitious goals. Several other states have goals of 10% reduction in VMT growth. Given Vermont’s more aggressive GHG targets, a 15% reduction in growth was suggested as moderately more aggressive.

Some TWG members expressed concern that it would take time to get infrastructure in place to reduce VMT and get people out of SOVs. CCS clarified that the goal would be to reduce growth; most of the change then could be aimed at changing how growth happened; and as a result fewer current drivers would need to “get out of SOVs.”

A question was raised as to whether 15% reduction in the projected increase is enough of an impact to make a difference. Other TWG members suggested that the TWG may not need to go down that path quite yet. It is the Plenary Group’s responsibility to make final determination on whether the policy option makes a difference. As the TWG, we should set a goal and move the process forward.

After further discussion, there was no objection to using 15% as a starting point.

The TWG wondered what goals are set in the long-range transportation plan, as well as what actual projections are for VMT increase.

ACTION ITEM: Charley Mark will try to develop a VMT forecast to present to the TWG

CCS reminded the TWG that goals are expected to be set today, and can be refined later based on additional information.

Another implementation mechanism was suggested for the policy option: to work with the towns to incorporate smart growth principles into their plans, particularly parking strategies. It was suggested that this would be most appropriate under Mechanism 4, but not might be realistic.

ACTION ITEM: Polly McMurtry will draft language to add

Concern was raised regarding Mechanism 2, under letter b: in suggesting to strengthen criteria 5, the TWG needs to be careful how we draft the language, so the suggestion is not interpreted to focus on widening roads, but on making multi-modal improvements.

ACTION ITEM: CCS to add language regarding strengthening criteria 5 “by including multi-modal options”

TLU-6 & Process discussion

TWG members offered TLU-6 as an example of the process working well: TWG members gathered themselves informally for a meeting about the policy option, which led to a more robust language and consensus.

TWG members envision a process that includes focused meetings (longer than the current TWG meetings), where consensus is reached and which produces a write-up reflecting the group process.

TWG members generally agreed that the group has a good list of policies, which now not need to be finished. The full options need to come through a robust collaborative process. Dialogue is part of the process – facilitation needs to be a part of this. It was asked, who is responsible for this process and facilitation?

Concern for the need for the robust process was mentioned for TLU options 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 9 in particular.

CCS offered that in NC, the group had an all-day meeting to focus exclusively on TLU options. The group discussed the feasibility of this approach, and suggested that the larger group could be canvassed for a date.

TWG's input to the Plenary Group needs to be ready 2 weeks in advance of the PG meeting, but the 1st of May is a short time to pull everything together. Suggested May 15th, to allow one day before PG meeting, and still combine CCS' trip to VT.

TWG will continue discussion of an in-person meeting at the April 24 TWG meeting

Public Input

- None

Next Steps for VT TLU Working Group

- Potential for in-person, all-day TLU TWG meeting on May 15th or 16th
- Future TLU TWG meetings:
 - April 24, 2007: 3:00 pm–4:30 pm
 - June 5, 2007: 3:00 pm–4:30 pm
 - June 26, 2007: 3:00 pm–4:30 pm
- Plenary Group Meeting on May 17