

Community Planner Forum

Thursday, June 10, 2021
9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.



Virtual Meeting Summary

Attendance:

Audrey Burneson, NYSDOT
Mark Castiglione, CDRPC
Peter Comenzo, Town of Rotterdam
Kristin Diotte, City of Schenectady
Ross Farrell, CDTA
Anna Feltham, Town of East Greenbush
Lindsey Garney, CDTA
Brad Glass, City of Albany
David Harris, Town of Schodack
Brent Irving, CDTA
Liz Kormos, Village of Ballston Spa
Doug LaGrange, Town of New Scotland
Teresa LaSalle, CDTC
Sean Maguire, Town of Colonie
Kate Maynard, CDRPC

Sandy Misiewicz, CDTC
Jaime O'neill, Saratoga County
Kathi Quiles, CDTC
Paul Reuss, Village of Menands
Ryan Riper, Town of Wilton
John Scavo, Town of Clifton Park
Joe Seman-Graves, City of Cohoes
Rima Shamieh, CDTC
Steve Strichman, City of Troy
Andrew Tracy, CDTC
Jen Viggiani, Town of Clifton Park
Linda von de Heide, Rensselaer County
Monique Wahba, Town of Colonie
Mike Williams, CDTA
Adam Yagelski, Town of East Greenbush

1. Welcome and Introductions

Sandy Misiewicz welcomed participants to the Zoom meeting and reviewed the agenda.

2. CDTC/CDRPC Technical Assistance Program Presentation

Mark Castiglione, CDRPC, discussed the purpose of the Community Planning Technical Assistance Program and ways they are getting the word out to engage communities in the planning process. Project products have been used to assist with applying for Linkage Planning applications, CFA grants and other program resources.

Kate Maynard, CDRPC, discussed the program history. CDRPC and CDTC provide small scale, short duration planning support for local project needs. Since the program started, CDRPC and CDTC have assisted with more than 15 projects including existing condition reports, zoning code analysis, assistance with Community Surveys, comprehensive planning and traffic and crash data analysis. A few completed projects include the Bethlehem Growth Analysis, Glenville Route 50 Analysis, and Menands Food Access Study. Current projects include the City of Troy's Sanitary Sewer Inter-Municipal Analysis and the Village of Ballston Spa's Comprehensive Plan RFP guidance.

Andrew Tracy, CDTC, discussed the East Greenbush Gilligan Road Bike and Pedestrian project. The study area is about 4600 ft. long connecting US 9 & 20: Columbia Turnpike to Hays Road. They worked with local stakeholders to identify potential alignments for trails, side paths, and bike/ped connections. Staff reviewed all intersections and identified potential constraints to trail crossings relating to side streets. The project also included input from the Town's Traffic and Safety Committee, reviewed the Town's Complete Streets Policy, crash data and traffic count data from the NYSDOT Traffic Viewer and CDRPC provided elevation maps. A design

consultant was hired by the Town to design Phase 1, which is located by Golf Middle School. For more information about the program, visit www.cdtcmpo.org/techassist or email techassist@cdrpc.org. Applications are accepted now thru December 1, 2021.

3. CDTA Micro Transit Flex Pilot Update

Lindsey Garney and Mike Williams, CDTA, shared an 18-month update CDTA FLEX pilot, an on demand ride-sharing program. Flex Microtransit, which launched in January 2020, is a curb to curb “uber pool” in a 16 square mile service area in Colonie and Guilderland. Flex is currently making 90-100 trips a day and covers larger areas when fixed routes are not running or can’t efficiently provide transit service in an area. To request a Flex ride, download Transloc’s mobile app to your phone. Current service hours are Mon-Fri 6 a.m.-10:45 p.m. and Sat & Sun 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Flex service is coming late summer to Southern Saratoga County, linking Mechanicville, Halfmoon and Clifton Park. This new service will run Mon-Fri 7 a.m. - 8 p.m. and Sat & Sun 10 a.m.- 6 p.m. Flex costs \$3 per ride or \$25 for a 10- trip pass with half fare available for eligible customers. For more information on the Microtransit Flex Pilot or the Transloc mobile app, visit CDTA’s website.

4. Transit Access Toolkit Update

Sandy Misiewicz, CDTC, discussed some relationships between Land use and Transit and how providing transit in low-density areas can be challenging since higher density areas have more employment, a density of residents and paid parking policies. COVID had impacted congestion, which disappeared, and transit ridership declined throughout CDTA’s system. At well-known locations such as SUNY Albany, Crossgates Mall, and Gateway Plaza in Schenectady, ridership was reduced significant. Overall system ridership was reduced by roughly 23%. Considerations to developing a Transit Access Toolkit include:

- Multi-Modal Transportation options
- Developing transit corridors & transit supportive built environments
- Mixed land uses
- Access management

Some guiding principles for the Toolkit might be:

- Increasing densities around Transit stations and stops to increase ridership
- Establishing regional transit supportive density goals based on local data
- Promoting employment at station areas in transit corridors

CDTC staff will research toolkit materials and provide an update at the next Planner Forum meeting. CDTC is seeking volunteers to participate in a small group discussion about the toolkit. If interested, contact Sandy at smisiewicz@cdtcmpo.org.

5. 2020 Census Update

Sandy mentioned the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, in partnership with a number of national organizations like the National Association of Counties, sent a letter in response to the Federal register request for comments on proposed changes to the definition of urban area boundaries. Moving to a housing unit density metric is going to be challenging depending to regions like CDTC’s that are more sprawling in nature. The letter made a comment relating to the lack of data to analyze the impact of the change so it was requested that a final decision be put on hold until MPOs and others are better able to review the impact when Census data is released.

6. CDTC Planning Updates

- Bus Lane Feasibility Study. The first technical meeting will be held with the consultant and CDTA this week.
- The Smart Community Guidebook project has begun and will be discussed at future meetings.
- CDTC's Local Bridge Study and ADA Self Evaluations have been completed.
- CDTC is working with partners on the Patroon Creek Greenway Study in Albany County and later this year the NYSDOT Route 378 Bridge Study and the Regional Truck Parking Study.

7. Training/Workshops

- CDTC's Complete Streets Summer Webinar Series will be held June 15th, July 13th and August 17th, all Tuesdays, at 3.30 p.m. Register at www.cdtcmpo.org/news/nv-webinars

8. Other Regional, State and Local Planning Updates

Rima Shamieh noted CDTC will be launching a Ditch the Car Campaign over the summer in place of Bike to Work Day. A webpage is in development that will allow participants to register, track progress and earn virtual badges. Encouraging non-recreational trips is a priority.

9. 2021 Meeting Schedule – Start time: 9:30 AM

- Wednesday, September 15, 2021
- Thursday, December 16, 2021