

On May 6th the CCRPC hosted a roundtable discussion on rural transit needs, both in the region and statewide. The thirty attendees included staff from towns, State agencies, transportation organizations, legislative representatives, other interested groups, as well as members of the public. The meeting was convened to further on-going discussions between CCRPC staff and the Tri-Town Alternative Transportation Committee of Jericho, Underhill and Cambridge.

The several premises behind the meeting included:

- The lack of transit to rural populations that are getting older and want to remain in their homes,
- Rural populations with disabilities, too young to drive, or no car available
- The inefficiencies of traditional transit to serve these populations,
- The confusing assortment of programs and organizations that are involved in trying to address the issues

The roundtable conversation was designed to identify the services, operational skills and resources needed to address these transportation needs in a coherent, coordinated and simplified manner. The meeting was divided into three parts:

1. Discuss the services that already exist,
2. Define the service gaps/limitations of those services, and
3. Identify solutions to address the gaps and limitations.

The meeting demonstrated the significant concerns and efforts made to address the well-recognized needs, and that the meeting was more the beginning of an on-going, and needed, discussion. One potential solution discussed and moving forward will be a pilot program involving VTrans, GMT and the Tri-Town group involving the lease of a van for community transportation. The details to put this into place are just beginning to be sorted out.