

EGC Parcel Workgroup Meeting

5/20/14

National Life Building, Montpelier

Present: Johnathan Croft, VTrans; Gary Smith, VTrans; Leslie Pelch, VCGI; Ginger Anderson, FPR; John Adams, ACCD; Nina Safavi, VTrans; Ryan Cloutier, VTrans; Melissa Prindiville, ACCD; Ivan Brown, VCGI; Dan Currier, CVRPC; Franco Rossi, CAI Technologies; Susan Boswell, CTI; Dean Russell, Russell Graphics (via phone).

John and Leslie gave an overview of this statewide parcel data effort, how it came about and where it is at currently.

Dan asked whether VCGI's recent legislatively mandated move to ACCD (scheduled to happen July 1) will have an impact on this project. Leslie said no.

We asked our Mapping Consultant guests to share their thoughts.

Franco:

- Parcel Data Standard is helpful to them
- They already maintain 70-80 towns
- They would be happy to pass the data directly to VCGI
- What is the incentive for towns to make sure the data meets the standard?
- He suggests that we should offer more training to towns, that would help them be more invested in quality of their parcel data
- Any funding that can be available along with requirement to follow the standard will make it easier
- They have been doing this for 30 years

Susan:

- She seconds Franco's comments
- More town officials are aware of GIS and usefulness of the maps and map data
- Money is tight in the towns, so financial incentives are definitely helpful
- Would like to see a statute to require that surveys be recorded
- Current Tax Dept. rule that requires towns to treat adjacent lots with same owner as one parcel is difficult for towns to manage and may actually skew values if they are also appraising as one parcel rather than two.
- They focus on smaller to mid-sized towns, only in VT, for 19 years

Dean:

- Agreed with most of the comments already made

- Clarification on potential state program: would the state actually make maps for the towns or just update the data? (only data is the group's response)
- About 10% of his towns receive GIS data along with the maps
- Works with 50-55 towns, mostly long-term clients, has been doing this for 30 years

There was a brief discussion about the idea of requiring some sort of graphic depiction of boundary changes when they are made. Most agree that it would be difficult to require a survey due to cost, but perhaps some other level of mapping?

Gary encourages the consultants to plan for the future in case things change in a way that makes it difficult to stick to their current business model.

Leslie **passed out a copy of a template letter** that she is asking mapping consultants to adapt for their own use with their clients. It describes the statewide effort briefly, then asks the town which of the following changes they would be willing to make to their current contract or relationship with their mapping contractor:

- Follow the current GIS Parcel Data standard (it then highlights the changes that might cause, so that the consultant can identify costs)
- Send a copy of the data and metadata to VCGI directly when it is updated.

Franco asked if there was any funding to support the changes identified. Not yet is the answer.

Leslie gave an update on the NBRC project and the fact that she would not recommend that the state set up individual contracts with each town and usher them through this process (as VCGI is doing with 14 towns). A more realistic scenario would be to issue an RFP seeking a handful of consultants to work with the towns that don't already have contractors. A determine a simple/streamlined way to issue funding to towns that already do have mapping contractors.

We talked about Gary's idea regarding improving the town boundary data layer. He suggests that we ask for "donations" of surveyed corners from Licensed Land Surveyors. It seems likely that many or most town corners have been found and surveyed in the course of surveying people's land, so why not ask that those corners be donated for the greater good of a vastly improved town boundary layer?

Leslie did propose this idea to the VT Society of Land Surveyors' Executive Committee and there was support, but a bit tepid. Surveyors are very concerned about how data gets used, so we might need to flesh the idea out a bit to get more enthusiastic support.

Johnathan asked how the parcel mapping consultants resolve town boundaries now. They said they don't generally deal with making town's match each other unless they are starting from scratch, in which case they may use existing data as a starting point. Or if a discrepancy is brought to their attention by a client they would try to resolve it.

The idea that outreach and information about parcel data are very important was brought up. This will help towns understand how they can use the data.

Everyone agreed that **cartography should not be included in the standard**, but rather referred to in the guidelines. What about UVA mapping standards? VCGI hopes to be involved the next time the UVA mapping standards are updated.

The consultants encouraged us to use them to perform outreach!

We had a brief discussion about the GIS Parcel Data Standard. The following suggestions were made:

- Line source info should include survey information
- Include legal precedence for acreage in the guidelines? A ruling from the secretary of state clarified the order of precedence:
 - Survey
 - GIS Map
 - Deed
- Leslie needs to find a copy of this decision
- Include info about calculated acreage in standard (and guidelines)
- Should data format be geodatabase? – YES
- ROW info from VTrans – identify what is available and provide contact info
- Solicit stories and descriptions from the consultants for our outreach efforts