

# Missed deadline for CMAQ funding

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*By Kara Herlihy*

The deadline for CMAQ grants for increased public transit to and from The Valley has passed without a commitment for matching grant funding from three Valley towns.

Waitsfield, Warren and Fayston all agreed to include the request for some portion of the \$30,000 required from the Valley to match the CMAQ grant funding as articles to be voted on at Town Meeting 2009.

Because the vote would not happen until 2009, the opportunity for increased public transit would likely be pushed back further -- at least until 2010.

Because the three towns did not commit to the matching funds in time, the city of Montpelier was offered the funding instead.

“Montpelier, who had also shown interest in additional service, was offered the FY09 CMAQ opportunity after it became clear that the Mad River Valley was unable to commit to the substantial matching funds needed to proceed,” said GMTA representative Tawnya Kristen.

“Montpelier was able to vote in favor of the matching fund requirement, thus allowing GMTA to move ahead with the CMAQ application and meet the closing deadline,” she continued.

While the three Valley towns were unable to commit this time around, Kristen said, “There will be a coordinated meeting this winter among the three town select boards to outline how funding may be split among the municipalities for a FY10 CMAW application and if the towns wish to continue the consideration of this service option.”

At their last meeting, Fayston Select Board member Ed Reed said that if the request for funding was going to appear as an article for the town to vote on, a representative from GMTA should be present to explain its implications.

Kristen confirmed that “a representative from GMTA will be present at town meeting” and also at the coordinated meeting scheduled for the coming winter.

GMTA is funded with a mix of federal, state and local money. Currently, the local funds from The Valley are being provided by Sugarbush (\$67,500), the Valley Chamber of Commerce (\$9,440), and the towns of Fayston (\$588), Waitsfield (\$923), and Warren (\$943), according to GMTA.