

# Addison County Regional Planning Commission Full Commission Meeting

*Wednesday, March 14, 2001*

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission Meeting on March 14, 2001 was held at the Kirk Alumni Center at Middlebury College with Thea Gaudette and Harvey Smith presiding.

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## **ROLL CALL:**

<i>Addison:</i>		<i>Monkton:</i>	Thea Gaudette
<i>Bridport:</i>	Ed Payne		Charles Huizenga
	Kent Wright	<i>New Haven:</i>	Harvey Smith
<i>Bristol:</i>	Peter Grant	<i>Orwell:</i>	
<i>Cornwall:</i>	Don Shall	<i>Panton:</i>	
<i>Ferrisburgh:</i>		<i>Ripton:</i>	
<i>Goshen:</i>		<i>Salisbury:</i>	
<i>Leicester:</i>	Joan Witteman	<i>Shoreham:</i>	
<i>Lincoln:</i>		<i>Starksboro:</i>	
<i>Middlebury:</i>	Fred Dunnington	<i>Vergennes:</i>	
	Karl Neuse	<i>Waltham:</i>	Thomas Yager
	David Smith	<i>Weybridge:</i>	Jan Albers
		<i>Whiting:</i>	Ellen Kurrelmeyer

## **CITIZEN INTEREST REPRESENTATIVES:**

<i>AC Chamber of Commerce:</i>	
<i>AC Community Action Group:</i>	
<i>Otter Creek Audubon Society:</i>	Judy Kowalczyk
<i>AC Economic Development Corp.:</i>	George Foster

**STAFF:** Adam Lougee  
Brandy Saxton  
Tim Bouton

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## **Public Program**

Tim Bouton of the ACRPC staff spoke regarding emergency management in Addison County. Tim gave an overview of the five programs he is currently working with in the area of emergency management and mitigation.

The EMPG (Emergency Management Preparedness Grant) is a combination of FEMA and state funds in the amount of \$18,000 (with an \$18,000 match) which are used for Rapid Response Plans countywide, the staffing of the LEPC (Local Emergency Planning Committee), assisting National Flood Insurance adoption efforts, coordinating regional emergency/highway meetings, updating the Emergency Database, assisting town adoption of highway standards, and coordinating the County Disaster Exercise, which is coming up at the end of the month at the Vergennes Fire Station.

The DOT (Department of Transportation) Hazardous Materials Planning Grant is \$8,475 (with a 25% match) used to assist towns in the writing of All-Hazards Emergency Operations Plans.

The FMA (Flood Mitigation Assistance) is a brand new grant. The commission is asking for \$10,000 (with a 25% match) to develop a countywide All-Hazards Mitigation Plan. This money is primarily for flood mitigation based on damages incurred by the Ripton Fire Station, and the project has been expanded to include the entire county and all hazards.

The VDRI (Vermont Disaster Recovery Initiative) furnishes \$362,044 for the purchase and installation of back-up generators. Addison, Lincoln, Middlebury, Monkton, New Haven, Orwell, Ripton, Shoreham, Starksboro, Weybridge, and Vergennes have already requested and received generators through this initiative.

Project Impact is a \$300,000 grant (with a 25% match) for the development of awareness of mitigation concepts and mitigation partnerships. There has already been a meeting to gather suggestions for projects to implement with these funds.

Tim alerted the commission to the fact that the snowpack is currently the equivalent of 6-12 inches of rain. The river ice has been measured at 1-2 feet thick. Last year at this time, the high temperature was 68 degrees. Tim asks that the representatives take this information back to their towns with the warning that they keep an eye on the rivers, the snowpack, the culverts, and the weather in general. The weather service suggests that highway crews should be digging ditches and clearing culverts of blockages.

Questions: David Smith asked what the worst and best scenarios are for the weather in the next few weeks regarding the flooding. Tim responded that a cold rain would be the worst scenario, while warm days and cold nights would be more favorable. David Smith asked if there was any kind of inventory of inadequate culverts which may cause problems if there is flooding. Tim responded that the commission is just beginning to gather this information. Jan Albers asked if towns which has been flooded in the recent past have done anything to prevent the same thing from happening again. Tim responded that a lot has been done to not only replace the damaged culverts, but to upgrade them at the same time so that they can handle more flow. Fred Dunnington asked if the weather service had made any long term forecasts. Tim responded that the temperatures should be about average and the precipitation is expected to be above average. Judy Kowalczyk asked what we should be doing now to alleviate the situation. Tim responded that ditch and culvert work are the most important preventative measures at the moment.

## **Business Meeting**

### **Approval of Minutes: 2/14/01**

Fred Dunnington asked that the Act 250 committee report be altered to reflect that citizens do not oppose the wind generator due to a “lack of effort to mitigate the aesthetic impact” but rather they “claim an undo adverse aesthetic impact” from the project.

**Don Shall moved to approve the minutes of the monthly meeting on February 14, 2001, with the change indicated by Fred Dunnington. Peter Grant seconded the motion. The motion passed with Thea Gaudette and Ellen Kurrelmeyer abstaining.**

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### **Treasurer’s Report**

Adam distributed the Treasurer’s Report and announced that the commission is in good financial shape. There is \$99,000 in the Vanguard account, \$52,000 in the Money Market Account, \$14,000 in Accounts Receivable.

**Peter Grant moved to accept the Treasurer’s Report. Don Shall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

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### **Committee Reports**

Local Government Committee: Ed Payne announced that the Middlebury Town Plan will be revised and a hearing will be scheduled soon.

Transportation Advisory Committee: Adam reported that there are several projects in the works, such as a corridor study of route 22A, a truck traffic study in Ferrisburgh, Vergennes, and Panton. There were meetings last week in Middlebury and Vergennes regarding the possibility of bring the commuter train to these towns. Most people expressed their approval of the idea, although a few were concerned about the price per rider. The project could be implemented using existing equipment, there will be significantly less traffic on route 7, and federal funds can be obtained for upgrading the rail beds. Jan Albers asked about ridership in the north. Adam replied that there have been about 100 riders per day, well above the estimated projections. They have recently expanded the schedule to include weekends and more trains. Karl Neuse commented that he has ridden the train recently and was very satisfied with it. He further commented that the commission should take steps to offer support for this project as the funding could be in jeopardy. Adam commented that he believes the money to be available, as the upgrading of the rail beds is federal.

**Fred Dunnington moved to pass a resolution to support the funding of the Vergennes/Middlebury commuter rail and direct letters in favor of this project to the legislators of Addison County. Jan Albers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Act 250: Fred Dunnington reported that the committee has not met lately as there have only been minor applications, such as the proposed additions to Vermont Sun.

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## **Joint Partners Report**

George Foster reported that the CEDS update would come later in the meeting.

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## **Delegate/Staff Recognition**

The commission recognizes Tim Bouton for his presentation tonight and his proactive emergency mitigation work that has put Addison County ahead of other surrounding communities.

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## **Old Business**

Discussion Relating to the CEDS: Adam reported that the Executive Boards of the respective Joint Partners have come together to continue to create a set of guiding principals to clarify the rules under which the project will move forward. Ed Payne commented that everyone seems to be on the same page now with the idea that none of the partners wish to rush a project this extensive. Harvey stated that to continue working in good faith towards establishing the

common language to make the project work, it would be a good idea to officially obtain the support of the commission.

**Fred Dunnington moved to support the Executive Board in their efforts to support the application of CEDS consistent with the regional plan. Ellen Kurrelmeyer seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Mid-Year Budget Adjustment: Adam highlighted the changes to the budget, mainly the increase in grant money coming in. Karl asked if the rates for the meeting have increased, and Adam responded that the Middlebury College space has increased in price. Fred asked what PTTR stood for, and Adam responded that the PTTR is the Property Transfer Tax Returns.

**Thea Gaudette moved to accept the revised budget, and Fred Dunnington seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Housing Summit: Adam reported a good turnout at the housing summit last month at the Geonomics House on the Middlebury College Campus. The group had a very productive discussion regarding the rewriting of the housing section of the Middlebury Town Plan and ways to ease the current housing crunch.

Other: Adam distributed the latest population information in Addison County based on the 2000 census information recently received. Fred commented that the percentages were very misleading on the handout and stated that he was bothered by the lack of adjustment for the added college population. Adam commented that the outlying towns grew more significantly than the larger towns of Bristol, Middlebury, and Vergennes.

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## **New Business**

Nomination of Delegates from Towns/Attendance: Harvey Smith stated that it is time to ask for reappointment to the commission. The commission will send a packet to each town with attendance records included. Adam asked that any mistakes in the attendance report be brought to the attention of a staff member in the next few weeks for correction. Judy asked what would happen in the towns that had zero attendance for the year. Harvey replied that it would be up to the town whether or not to choose a new delegate.

Proposed Approval and Confirmation of the Goshen Town Plan: Thea stated that the Local Government Committee met with the town of Goshen to review their town plan. Because of their unique location and situation, there are many interesting issues addressed in this plan that have not been addressed in others, such as the contracting out of most town services to neighboring areas and the emphasis upon the protection of the natural forest that borders this area of the county. The committee recommends acceptance of the Goshen town plan and confirmation of their planning efforts.

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**Don Shall moved to accept the Goshen Town Plan and confirm their planning efforts. Karl Neuse seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Selection of the Nominating Committee for Executive Board Elections: Harvey stated that the nominating committee is made up of a few Executive Board members who put together a panel of nominees for the April Meeting. The full commission then makes the final decision at the annual meeting in May.

**Tom Yager nominated Ellen Kurrelmeyer, Ed Payne, and Thea Gaudette for the nominating committee. Peter Grant seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Annual Meeting May 9th: Adam asked for suggestions regarding a location for the annual meeting, reminding the commission that in the past, the facility and the program have had a common theme. Don Shall suggested the Starry Night Cafe in Ferrisburgh. Other suggestions included having the meeting on the commuter train or at the Blueberry Hill Inn.

Other: Thea asked that any individuals interested in serving on the Executive Board get in touch with one of the Nominating Committee Members soon.

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## **Member's Concerns/Information**

Comments from the Delegates: Ed Payne directed attention to a letter to the editor in the Addison Independent which offered a nice discussion of the Shoreham Sewer Project.

Don Shall announced that the time capsule general store in Cornwall has been donated to the town. The store has remained untouched since it closed during the Depression.

Comments from the Chair: none

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## **Adjournment:**

**Peter Grant moved to adjourn the meeting. Tom Yager seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.**

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Submitted by: Stacy Johnson

