

Addison County Regional Planning Commission

Full Commission Meeting

Wednesday, October 9, 2002

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission's Full Commission Meeting was held on October 9, 2002, at the Vergennes Opera House with Harvey Smith presiding.

ROLL CALL:

<i>Addison:</i>		<i>Orwell:</i>	David King
<i>Bridport:</i>	Ed Payne	<i>Panton:</i>	
	Andrew Manning		
<i>Bristol:</i>	Jim Peabody	<i>Ripton:</i>	Jeremy Grip
<i>Cornwall:</i>	Don Shall	<i>Salisbury:</i>	
	Bill McQuillan		
<i>Ferrisburgh:</i>		<i>Shoreham:</i>	Bill O'Neill
<i>Goshen:</i>		<i>Starksboro:</i>	
<i>Leicester:</i>		<i>Vergennes:</i>	Randy Friday
<i>Lincoln:</i>	Steve Revell	<i>Waltham:</i>	Tom Yager
	Rick Good		
<i>Middlebury:</i>	Fred Dunnington	<i>Weybridge:</i>	
	Karl Neuse		
	William Perkins		
<i>Monkton:</i>		<i>Whiting:</i>	Ellen Kurrelmeyer
<i>New Haven:</i>	Harvey Smith		

CITIZEN INTEREST REPRESENTATIVES:

AC Chamber of Commerce:
AC Community Action Group:
AC Economic Development Corp:
Otter Creek Audubon Society:

STAFF:

Adam Lougee
Brandy Saxton

Public Program

The public program began at 7:35 with a discussion of the process by which the Town of Shoreham created a municipal sewer system for its village area. Val Demong, chair of the Selectboard in Shoreham was on hand to tell the commission how the decision to act was made, how the town decided upon the scope of the system, how they secured financing, how the system is performing, and what opportunities and/or problems the system has created for the town.

Val was first notified by the state that the town had to address the sewer situation about five years ago. The Selectboard and the wastewater task force took a proactive approach and as a result, they had a lot of community support. Val also gave credit to Otter Creek Engineering, Rural Development folks, Tom Clark (w/ Rural Community Assistance Program), and the office of Sens. Leahy and Jeffords.

The 2.5 million project has been operational for over a year. Of that amount, \$2 million was granted to Shoreham and they bonded the remaining \$450,000 spread across the entire town. The bond passed 5 to 1, which was very strong support. Val said that it is a very innovative system using a recirculating sand filter, which had never been used before in a municipal system in Vermont. The system uses the Cedar swamp for discharge, and it uses UV light

rather than chlorine for treatment. The user fee will be \$400/year, and the tax increase is 4 cents. There are 65 to 70 “users,” most of who are residential, but others include the municipal office, the elementary school, churches, and a few small businesses.

Val also mentioned that the town’s sewer project was part of a pilot project that the state legislature had set up for towns to try a non-point phosphorous removal plan.

Gary Fern, project engineer with Otter Creek Engineering discussed the type of system that was designed, its capacity, the treatment, the plant life, and the cost of installation and operation. Gary agreed that the taskforce wanting to solve the problem made the process much easier and cheaper for the town. The schedule was very aggressive. Gary broke down the costs of the project and where the funding came from. The town bought 327 acres of mostly farmland for the project at a cost of \$60,000. Construction cost roughly 80% of the project. ANR and USDA Rural Development funded or loaned the majority of the money.

Randy Friday asked how the town is going to deal with the old septic systems no longer in use. Gary said they were all either filled in or removed during the construction process, which cost somewhere between \$500 and \$1700 per unit (covered in the total cost).

The collection system comprises 11,500 ft. of 8-in. gravity sewer, 65 manholes, 4 residential grinder pump stations (for homes that could not use gravity), 1 pump station, and 70 residential, business, and municipal connections. The wastewater treatment system has a 35,000-gal/day capacity, influent bar screen, 3 recirculating sand filters, UV disinfection, and a control building. The annual user fee starts at \$400 (slightly more than the state average of \$375).

The solids are separated and the effluent is then sent to a sand filter where it is recirculated until it can be discharged. Someone in the town began dumping large amounts of motor oil into the sewer that has caused some problems. The discharge after UV disinfection flows underground into a trench system and then percolates up through the ground and then into the swamp.

Randy asked what they’ve done to find out the cause of the oil dumping. Gary said that monitors were installed in the manhole covers. A letter was also sent out to the residents urging them against dumping oil and other hazardous materials into the system.

Gary said the facility eliminated the public health hazard, eliminated the environmental degradation of Cedar swamp, it plans for future development, and it increases town services.

Bill O’Neill asked about the annual budget. Gary answered that it’s \$29,000, most of which is spent on personnel. The town also instituted a flat fee of \$1500 for hook-up.

Michael Dolce, a community and business outreach specialist with USDA Rural Development discussed how the town was able to finance the plant, what federal or state programs are available to help lessen the financial burden, and other financing options available to towns interested in building a sewer system. Michael said that his organization finances municipal projects through grants and loans. Successful projects require a shared vision in driving the project forward. Finding the money is the easy part, he said. Getting to the point where the money is ready to be used is the difficult part.

Harvey concluded by mentioning the legislature’s involvement in the process in Shoreham, including the institution of the pilot project in which the town participated.

Business Meeting

The business meeting began at 9:00 pm.

Approval of Minutes: September 11, 2002

Fred moved to approve the minutes from September 11, 2002. Bill seconded the motion. Jim Peabody wanted to amend the section of the minutes regarding the discussion of the transportation committee meeting to read: “Randy asked whether ACTR had a strategic plan.” Deleting the transportation agency. Also, in the section of the minutes dealing with the TAC, Jim suggested that we delete “as amended” from Peter Grant’s motion to approve the project list suggested by the TAC. We did not amend it. And in the Act 250 amendments section, Jim asked that we clarify the reference to “Cabot” to the “Cabot Cheese facility”. Fred also clarified that the Cabot Cheese application is a power line extension and is regulated under Act 248, not Act 250. **The motion to approve the minutes as amended above passed unanimously.**

Executive Board Minutes

No discussion

Treasurer’s Report

Adam passed out an updated report from September 25th. He said the commission is in good financial shape and in line with expectations.

Ellen moved to approve the Treasurer’s Report as amended. Ed Payne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

TAC: Rick said a forestry representative came to discuss the forest-free roads study being worked on by the U. S. Forest Service.

Local Government: Ed said the Bristol Town Plan has been submitted to the planning commission for regional approval and confirmation.

Act 250: No activity.

Natural Resources: No activity.

Housing:

Economic Development: Jim said the next meeting would be Oct. 22nd at 3 pm at the planning office.

Utilities and Facilities: Ellen said there have been two organizational meetings and a tentative schedule has been made. The next meeting will be held on Oct. 21st at 7 pm at the planning office (and the third Monday of each month thereafter). Agendas will be posted on the commission’s web site, and the meetings are open to the public.

Joint Partners Report

Harvey said the joint partners steering committee met Monday to continue work on the draft sections. Fred and Thea were in attendance.

Old Business

Report Regarding Onsite Rules: Harvey said the recent meeting drew a lot of attention. They invited folks from ANR to come down to help clarify the new regulations. He said it gave the county a chance to be heard directly. Between 150 and 200 people attended. Karl said the state is listening. The Implementation and Education Committee was set up to make sure the new regs are implemented according to the law and consistently throughout the state. Steve said that the biggest problem with the new regs lies in the implementation, specifically regarding the criteria used to evaluate a site. **Harvey asked that Adam get a list of the committee members to circulate to the commission so the members can give them feedback.**

New Business

Municipal Planning Grant Application's Update: Adam said they've received five or six county applications totaling \$32,000. Towns that applied will likely get the amount they requested.

Other: Harvey brought up the farm vehicle pilot project for dealing with agricultural traffic. A meeting was held in Bridport as part of the public input process. Commissioner Graves is chairing the task force. Harvey also noted that the Farm Bureau will sponsor its annual farm tour on Tuesday, October 15th from 9 to 3. They will meet at Catamount Park and then tour some farms. Harvey said that the tour is well attended and offers an excellent opportunity to learn about commercial agriculture here in Addison County, some of the problems they face, and how they are working to solve them. Harvey noted this year's tour would focus on environmental issues, primarily water quality.

Ed mentioned the Bridport planning commission held a meeting and the question was raised about having a town planning commission considering the new onsite regulations. Harvey responded that he's optimistic there's still a need.

Adjournment

Karl moved to adjourn. Steve seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Submitted by Ursula Jones