

Addison County Regional Planning Commission

Full Commission Meeting

Wednesday, March 10, 2004

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission's meeting was held on March 10, 2004, at Middlebury's Porter Hospital with Don Shall presiding.

ROLL CALL:

<i>Addison:</i>	Alden Harwood	<i>Orwell:</i>	David King Andrea Ochs
<i>Bridport:</i>	Edward Payne Andrew Manning	<i>Panton:</i>	
<i>Bristol:</i>		<i>Ripton:</i>	Jeremy Grip
<i>Cornwall:</i>	Jim Peabody Peter Grant Don Shall Bill McQuillan	<i>Salisbury:</i>	
<i>Ferrisburgh:</i>	Bob McNary	<i>Shoreham:</i>	Meg Barnes Elizabeth Golden
<i>Goshen:</i>		<i>Starksboro:</i>	
<i>Leicester:</i>		<i>Vergennes:</i>	Neil Kamman
<i>Lincoln:</i>		<i>Waltham:</i>	
<i>Middlebury:</i>	Fred Dunnington Karl Neuse Brian Bauer	<i>Weybridge:</i>	Jan Albers
<i>Monkton:</i>	Thea Gaudette Charles Huizenga	<i>Whiting:</i>	Ellen Kurrelmeyer Jonathan Heppell
<i>New Haven:</i>	Jerry Smiley		

CITIZEN INTEREST REPRESENTATIVES:

AC Chamber of Commerce:
AC Community Action Group:
AC Economic Development Corp:
Otter Creek Audubon Society: Judy Kowalczyk
AC Farm Bureau
OC NaturalResource Conservation District

STAFF:

Adam Lougee
Kevin Behm

Public Program

The public program was devoted to a discussion of Porter Hospital, its role in serving the region as the primary medical provider and its expansion plans for the future. Ron Hallman, Vice President of the Hospital thanked the commission for coming to the hospital. He went through a brief history of the hospital and explained the need for a planned edition to the surgical ward and to the maternity ward. He noted that the existing surgery was built in the 1970's over 30 years ago for 2 surgeons. Today approximately 20 surgeons operate out of the hospital. The new

surgery suite will allow for more outpatient care, more efficient use of the space, and more recovery facilities. This improvement will not allow for expanded service, it will merely allow the current staff to function better.

Similarly, the maternity ward needs to be updated to accommodate current family needs. Childbirth is an essential element to a community hospital. The project provides for 4 patient birthing rooms. Currently, the mother is moved 4 times during the birthing process. This addition will allow for a much more stable birthing environment and experience. The last portion of the addition is devoted to the pharmacy.

Ron noted that the plans he passed out also include a future rehabilitation department. For budgetary purposes, currently they will only build the shell and fill in later. He explained that they wanted to make sure that the budget worked before bringing any proposal to Montpelier for a Certificate of Need. They now hope to go forward this year, get through the regulatory process in about a year and build the following year.

Bob McNary asked whether the expansion would create more jobs. Ron replied that as planned, it would only create one new job. As he noted previously, the hospital sees this as providing existing services better and more efficiently, not expanding services.

Brain Bauer asked if a local company would do construction.

Ron responded that Breadloaf would manage the project and bid it out to reputable firms.

Peter Grant asked how the new project would affect emergency services and ambulance transportation issues. Ron explained that the ambulances deliver to the first floor in the back and all of these improvements will take place on the second floor.

Kevin Behm asked if the hospital had figured out what caused a recent cycle of “good health” that drove down business at the hospital. Ron explained that they had not, but felt that they had been on budget since then and was prepared for this expansion.

Kevin Behm asked if all the rooms were planned to be single rooms. Ron noted that yes they were.

Ed Payne asked how Fletcher Allen’s past situation had affected the application. Ron acknowledged that it had. The public oversight commission that approved Fletcher Allen is scrutinizing applications much more closely, especially for small community hospitals.

Andrew Manning asked about the birthing rooms and whether a mother would need to move. Ron responded that unless they needed surgery, they would stay in the same room.

Ellen Kurrelmeyer asked whether the number of birthing rooms is based on past numbers or anticipated births. Ron noted that generally the numbers were based upon past numbers. He also noted that currently, only 50% of the women in Addison County give birth in Porter.

Andrew Manning asked about New Yorker’s coming for birthing or care. Ron responded that a lot of folks from Essex County come to the hospital, but he did not have exact numbers.

Adam asked about a second bridge across the Otter Creek. Jim Daily, the President of the hospital, noted that a second bridge would benefit the hospital and its patients, but did not express a preference for a location.

Don closed the presentation portion of the agenda.

BUSINESS AGENDA:

- I. **Approval of the Minutes:** Both Peter Grant and Brian Bauer noted that they were present for the February meeting and that this was not reflected in the minutes. **Peter moved the minutes as amended, which were duly seconded and passed unanimously.**
- II. **Executive Board Minutes:** Distributed in the package. Don thanked Kevin for the minutes.
- III. **Treasurer's Report:** Adam distributed the treasurer's report. He noted that the major item on the treasurer's report, a \$50,000 payment to Middlebury, would be transferred to help purchase an emergency response mobile command post. Karl noted that Middlebury had some insurance concerns over the vehicle, but was happy to have it. Don suggested that we incorporate the vehicle into our emergency management training that will be developing under the new HSU grant. Don also noted that discussing the use and capabilities of the new vehicle would be a good program. Jeremy asked if there was a way to split the cost of insurance among the towns. Jerry Smiley asked whether information was distributed equally among towns and delegates. Ed Payne responded that he was on the committee that helped to award grants and that the committee reviewed all applications using a blind rating system open to all members of the community to pick the best project. Karl responded that delegates to the commission need to communicate with other officials in town Karl **moved to accept the treasurer's report, which was duly seconded and passed unanimously.**

IV. Committee Reports:

Act 250: Adam noted that Middlebury College had submitted an application today to reconstruct the Starr Shelter at the Middlebury

Economic Development Committee: Bob McNary spoke for the committee. He noted that the committee had met last night and worked on a statement to the Attorney General and the Secretary of Agriculture regarding the use and misuse of the Vermont name for product labeling. Bob distributed a letter that the committee had drafted. He requested that the commission authorize Adam to send the letter commenting upon the proposed rules during the current comment period. Ed Payne moved to authorize Adam to send the Committee's letter on behalf of the regional planning commission. Thea Gaudette seconded the motion. After some discussion, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the motion. Don noted that he wanted to ask the economic development committee to look at community investment opportunities. He noted that alternative ways to finance local businesses that would serve the public good is a very interesting idea.

Natural Resources Committee: Judy noted that the committee had not met this month because of town meeting. Ed noted that it would meet in the near future and was working constructively together.

Transportation Advisory Committee: No minutes presented.

Local Government: Thea noted the committee would be better handled under new business later in the agenda as it was reporting and recommending the confirmation and adoption of the Shoreham Town Plan.

Utilities and Facilities: Brandy noted that the committee is meeting next Monday.

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- V. **Joint Partner's Report:** Adam noted there would be a meeting of the Joint Partners next Thursday in Montpelier with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to discuss the 05 Agenda and prospective Workplan Elements.
 - VI. **Delegate/Staff Recognition:** Adam noted that he had hired a new Secretary for the Full Commission meetings. Her name is Peggy Connor. She currently works at the county court house, has experience as a stenographer and takes minutes for the Middlebury Selectboard. Karl Neuse spoke favorably of her. Adam noted that he would be happy to have her on board.
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VII. Old Business:

Presentation of the Proposed Utilities and Facilities Plan Section Regarding Healthcare: Ellen presented the section and explained the process the committee is going through to create a comprehensive plan, including speaking to a number of experts in each topic area. She expects to have all of this section completed by this fall. Ellen highlighted policies and recommendations that the committee had adopted and explained why the policy had changed. For example, Emergency management is a new topic since the last re-write. Ellen asked that technical corrections be sent to Brandy Saxton as soon as possible. She asked that Commissioner's note, but hold, policy concerns until the public hearings anticipated this fall. Ellen also noted that the committee has been very careful to promote balance and cooperate in drafting. Don thanked the committee for its good work.

Northwest Vermont Transportation Project: Adam gave an overview of the Northwest Vermont Project. He noted that the work involves the cooperation of Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (Transportation Planning in Chittenden County) and all the regional planning commission's adjacent to Chittenden County. ACRPC plans to study Route 7 north of Middlebury, Route 116 north of Bristol and the Silver Street and Monkton/Bristol Road corridors in conjunction with the impacted towns as part of its planning process.

Green Mountain National Forest Outstanding Water Resource Designation Summary. Kevin Behm noted that CLF and VNRC had recently entered a petition to designate certain waters in the Green Mountain National Forest as Outstanding resources. The Commission entered an appearance to support the Towns of Goshen and Ripton who were concerned about their roads and forestry. Currently there are more questions than answers about the petition. Green Mountain National Forest ("GMNF") has stated that they felt that they currently manage the water for water quality. Several industry groups were concerned regarding their respective land uses. Kevin also noted that Nancy Burt and Steve Roy of GMNF will come to the next Natural Resources Committee to explain current GMNF practice.

Jeremy noted that CLF and VNRC felt this was a preemptive move to combat perceived national policy shifts. Karl noted that the Executive Board felt that there were no real concerns in this area to fight. Ed Payne added that CLF and VNRC working together make him suspicious.

VELCO Summary: Adam noted that the first round of hearings ended March 5th. ACRPC, in conjunction with the Town of Middlebury and other towns in Addison County has been participating in the proceedings before the Public Service Board. Adam noted that we have been cooperating with other towns in the region and representing the interests of the region. Adam noted that he was very impressed with the Public Service Board. He believes they will do a good job in weighing the evidence before them and making a decision in the public good. Bob noted that he was concerned about the precedent of the Town of Ferrisburgh in allocating money to oppose this project. Jerry Smiley noted that a lot had happened in the Town of New Haven. He felt that Jim Dumont had been doing an excellent job in New Haven. He also noted that New Haven was looking at hiring Jean Vissering to move the substation in New Haven and challenge the VELCO corridor.

Ellen noted that this has been a hot topic at the legislative breakfasts and that both our partners had testified in favor of the upgrade.

Other: None.

VIII. New Business:

Town Selection of Delegates and Alternates: Adam noted that shortly the RPC will send a letter to each of your municipalities asking that they appoint/re-appoint delegates to the regional planning commission with attendance figures. We will also be sending out other requests for information regarding appointments, emergency plans, town roads etc. If you would like to serve on the RPC and we hope you do, please speak with your Selectboards.

Election of Nominating Committee for Executive Board Elections: Adam noted that this is the meeting is the meeting that we elect the nominating committee. Don noted that traditionally we have looked to members leaving the executive board to serve on the nominating committee. He noted that Harvey and Ellen will be moving off of the Executive Board and moved that they and Fred Dunnington, a past chair, serve as the nominating committee. **The motion was duly seconded and after a brief discussion, suggesting Thea Gaudette as an alternate if one of the others could not serve, the motion passed unanimously.**

Shoreham Town Plan: Thea Reported that on February 19th the Committee met with Shoreham and can confirm that Shoreham is engaged in a planning process. She noted that there were a couple of problems with the plan including a failure to have a section regarding the extraction of earth resources. Thea did note that there were several statements addressing the extraction of earth resources. The committee recommended that Shoreham make a specific statement regarding the extraction of earth resources as soon as possible. Based on that condition, the committee voted to recommend approval of the Shoreham Town Plan. **Don entertained that as a motion to confirm the Town of Shoreham's planning process and approve the Town Plan. Karl seconded the motion. After further discussion, Don called a vote. The motion passed unanimously.** Thea requested that the committee meet to discuss our approval process and see if we could revise our process to help address potential problems in a timelier manner.

Other. None.

IX. Members Concerns/Information: Adam handed out the Economic Development Section of the Plan, which will be subject to its first public hearing just prior to the next Full Commission Meeting.

Adjournment

Peter Grant moved to adjourn. Ed Payne seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 pm.

Submitted by Adam Lougee