

Addison County Regional Planning Commission

Full Commission Meeting

Wednesday, January 12, 2005

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission held its Full Commission Meeting on January 12th at Middlebury College's Kirk Alumni House, with Don Shall presiding.

ROLL CALL:

<i>Addison:</i>	Alden Harwood	<i>Orwell:</i>	
<i>Bridport:</i>	Edward Payne Andrew Manning	<i>Panton:</i>	Michael Herman
<i>Bristol:</i>	William Sayre Jim Peabody	<i>Ripton:</i>	Jeremy Grip
<i>Cornwall:</i>	Donald Shall	<i>Salisbury:</i>	
<i>Ferrisburgh:</i>	Bob McNary	<i>Shoreham:</i>	Meg Barnes Elizabeth Golden
<i>Goshen:</i>		<i>Starksboro:</i>	Elissa Close
<i>Leicester:</i>		<i>Vergennes:</i>	Neil Kamman
<i>Lincoln:</i>	Steve Revell	<i>Waltham:</i>	Thomas Yager
<i>Middlebury:</i>	Karl Neuse Fred Dunnington Brian Bauer	<i>Weybridge:</i>	Jan Albers
<i>Monkton:</i>		<i>Whiting:</i>	Ellen Kurrelmeyer
<i>New Haven:</i>			

CITIZEN INTEREST REPRESENTATIVES:

**AC CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE
AC COMMUNITY
ACTION GROUP
OTTER CREEK
AUDUBON SOCIETY:** Judy Kowalczyk
**AC ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT CORP
AC FARM BUREAU
OC NATR. RESOURCE
CONSERVATION DIST**

ADDISON COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

ACRPC EXECUTIVE BOARD

CHAIR: Donald Shall
VICE-CHAIR: Tom Yager
SECRETARY: Thea Gaudette
TREASURER: Karl Neuse
Bill Sayre
Renny Perry
Andrea Ochs

STAFF:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Adam Lougee
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/GIS DATA MANAGER: Kevin Behm
EMERGENCY MGT PLANNER/SENIOR PLANNER: Tim Bouton
SENIOR/TRANSPORTATION PLANNER: Garrett Daque
PLANNER/GRANT WRITER: Brandy Saxton
WATERSHED PLANNER: Neil Fraser
OFFICE MANAGER/BOOKKEEPER: Pauline Cousino

TELEPHONE: 388-3141

FAX: 388-0038

Public Program

Representatives from International Paper's (IP) Ticonderoga Mill in New York conducted a presentation and entertained questions about the mill's controversial proposal to conduct a test burn of tire derived fuel ("TDF"). The mill plans to submit an application requesting permission from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to use TDF as a petroleum supplement to operate its boilers in its mill across Lake Champlain in Ticonderoga. Mill Manager Chris Mallon began the program by providing an outline of the mill, including its history, community activism, economic drivers, environmental performance, and spending.

Chris made reference to the recent media coverage regarding installation of an electrostatic precipitator, an emissions control device many advocates believe the mill should install before it conducts a test burn. He stated that the mill does not believe the device is necessary. He also explained that IP could not legally install the device prior to a test burn to determine the operating parameters needed to control the device. Chris pointed out that the plant's net emissions are currently nearly half of what is permitted by law, and that he anticipates no net increase in emissions from the tire burn test. In fact, he stated that emissions of certain pollutants might even be reduced, with the possible exception of zinc or zinc oxide.

Project Engineer Larry Phillips defined some of the plant's emissions as sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, particulate (smoke), and Form R chemicals derived from wood alcohol (a combination of hazardous and toxic air pollutants). Larry also described the plant's current wet scrubber system. He noted that the current configuration of the stack and the wet scrubber would render it impossible to install an electrostatic precipitator after the scrubber. He explained that the scrubber increases the moisture in the stack and that hot, dry air is required for the electrostatic precipitator to work. He conceded that one might be able to put an electrostatic precipitator on before the scrubber, but he was unaware of any mill in the country that had that configuration and felt that it would be prohibitively expensive.

Judy Kowalczyk cited an article on International Paper stating that the company was awarded the 'Dirty Dozen Award' in 2004 for its poor environmental record. Judy also noted that the company had been fined for a number of environmental violations over the years, and she asked the mill's representatives to further address the issue.

Larry advised that the mill's current emissions data is real and accurate, and that the mill is required to submit its findings on an annual basis to the EPA. Chris added that TDF has proven to be successful in hundreds of other plants across the country, which is why IP wants to go forward with the two-week test burn at its Ticonderoga mill.

Chris pointed out that the Ticonderoga Mill employs almost 700 people with hourly wages ranging from \$17-\$26. It is the smallest of International Paper's mills yet the highest cost mill in the country. Since TDF is critical to the mill's future, the company has invested nearly \$250,000 of direct costs to pursue using TDF. He noted that the lost opportunity cost resulting from not being allowed to use TDF totaled approximately \$1.4 Million Dollars, which would constitute a significant contribution to the overall profitability of the mill.

Chris also noted that there are presently three billion tires in landfills in this country, and that an uncontrolled tire burn will produce 15,000 times the number of pollutants that are produced in a controlled burn within a boiler.

Bob McNary asked how many tires would be burned on a daily basis should the permit for TDF at the mill become permanent.

Chris anticipated that 72 tons of tire chips would be burned for processed fuel per day, but was unsure of the actual number of tires involved.

Judy asked if the mill has seriously considered other alternative fuel options.

Larry responded that International Paper continually researches various energy options and cited quebarko, distilled resin from eucalyptus trees, as a potential alternative fuel that is presently being considered.

Bill Sayre asked what the experience has been for populated areas throughout the nation with nearby paper mills; specifically as it relates to Form R emissions.

Communications Manager Donna Wadsworth relayed that she had recently visited the Georgetown mill in South Carolina where the community has consistently demonstrated a high level of support for the mill. She noted that the

Georgetown mill operates within all emission standards but does not utilize TDF.

Jan Albers expressed her concern over the foul odor that has been associated with the paper mill over the years and was unconvinced that burning tires would further improve the air quality.

Chris explained that the odor comes from the treatment plant in Crown Point, not the stacks and stated that IP continues to work to address the problem.

Elizabeth Golden stressed the health effects of hazardous chemicals and sought reassurance that should the test show emissions from that category, it will be addressed immediately. Elizabeth expressed serious reservations with EPA's standards -- standards that may be permissible but not acceptable to citizens.

Chris responded that if early in the test burn any emissions are determined to be close to the emission limits in IP's permits for IP to retain a reasonable margin of safety against violating those permits, IP would cancel the test and the company would walk away from the idea. Larry added that the company feels strongly about complying with the emissions standards set forth, and will be accountable to a number of government agencies, including the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), and Vermont's Agency of Natural Resources (ANR).

During the first week of the two-week test burn, Larry explained that the process would involve slowly ramping up to 3 tons/hour as a target amount, beginning with 1 ton/hour. Emissions testing will be conducted following the first ton, second, and third ton. During the second week, measurements will be taken of metals, dioxins, PCP's, etc.

Referring to an EPA study of TDF, Neil Kamman noted that the results were very site specific to each facility. He asked IP whether they knew which site in the EPA study they expected would be comparable to their own results in terms of mix, control technologies and TDF.

Larry advised that because the mill is unique, a comparison couldn't be made until such time a trial test burn is conducted. Chris added that he felt the cumulative results of all case studies in the EPA's study demonstrated that TDF constitutes an acceptable fuel choice to investigate.

Judy cautioned that families, especially with children, in the surrounding region of the paper mill should leave the area during the two-week test burn since certain air pollutants never leave the body.

Bill Sayre offered that levels of emissions have steadily declined over the last 10 years at the Ticonderoga mill, and suggested that comparing the mill's emissions with those of the McNeil Plant and other manufacturing operations in the Burlington area would be an interesting way to gain perspective.

Tom Yager pointed to the direct relationship between the paper mill and the forest products industry in both New York and Vermont, noting that the mill's closing would have a devastating impact on a number of related businesses.

Jeremy Grip reiterated the importance of researching alternatives to tire-derived fuel such as natural gas, or the cost associated with a multi-fuel boiler. Jeremy also asked what amount of oil is projected to be replaced by TDF.

Chris advised that a natural gas pipeline extends only as far as Glens Falls, and that several alternative studies the mill has conducted show no economic payback for the mill. He added that TDF would replace 10-12% of oil burned at the mill.

Bob McNary asked Adam to explain what ACRPC's role has been and will be in the mill's permitting process for the test burn.

Adam noted that one of the Commission's functions is to provide its members and other residents of Addison County with educational and informational opportunities to discuss issues important to the region. He noted that he felt that this meeting was helping to fulfill that goal. He also noted that at the Commission meeting last July, after the Commission had met with several citizens concerned about IP's proposed test burn, that the Commission's Natural Resource Committee had created and the Commission had adopted a resolution regarding the proposed testing. The Commission sent that resolution to Gov. James Douglas in September. This meeting constituted a follow-up to the information presented earlier. Adam noted that he does not anticipate any further action on this

issue, but noted that the Commission will continue to provide venues to disseminate accurate information to the community.

Chris thanked ACRPC for the opportunity to speak and noted that IP is willing to meet with other community groups.

Business Meeting

The Business Meeting commenced at 9:40 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: December 8, 2004

Jim Peabody moved to approve the minutes of December 8, 2004. Steve Revell seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Minutes approved as presented.

Treasurer's Report

Adam distributed and reviewed a revised Treasurer's Report dated January 12, 2005 (copy attached). He noted that balances are in good shape, and invited members to contact him with any questions or comments.

Treasurer's Report unanimously accepted as presented.

Committee Reports

Local Government

Don advised that the committee is scheduled to meet in Ripton on January 18th to review its revised town plan.

Act 250 Committee

Fred Dunnington reported that the committee received two new applications from Bristol, and issued three permits: Livingston, Parks, and for Porter Hospital's expansion.

Ed Payne asked for an update on pending litigation regarding the Ochs apple orchard in Orwell.

Adam explained that the commission entered its appearance as an interested party to offer support on behalf of farms without becoming involved in the specific factual dispute. He explained that the District 9 Commissioner has ruled that the Ochs' operation is not exempt from Act 250. The Ochs appealed that determination to the Environmental Board. Currently, a motion for summary judgment filed by another party, the Trickett's, in favor of the District Commissioner's ruling, is pending.

Economic Development Committee

No action.

Natural Resources Committee

The next meeting will be held in February.

TAC Transportation Committee

The committee will meet the third week in January.

Utilities, Facilities & Service Committee

Report noted under “New Business” below.

Joint Partners Report:

None.

Delegates/Staff Recognition:

Garret Dague is leaving his post as ACRPC’s Senior Transportation Planner, and was recognized for his four years of service to the commission.

Old Business

VELCO Summary

Adam reported all evidence has been submitted and the PSB is expected to render its decision by January 27th.

2004 Audit Update

Adam distributed a summary of the report, noting that it was generally favorable and showed a small operating surplus at the end of the year. He also noted that a copy of the entire report would be made available upon request.

New Business

Set Schedule for Public Meetings for the Proposed Utilities and Facilities Section and other Updated Sections of the Regional Plan

Ellen reported the Utilities, Facilities and Services Committee has met an additional three times to consider the 75 comments and suggestions received in regard to the committee’s draft of the largest section of the Regional Plan. A report summarizing the committee’s responses to the comments received was distributed to members (copy attached).

Fred Dunnington moved to accept the work of the committees and authorize the Executive Board to warn public hearings; Karl Neuse seconded the motion.

Neil Kamman asked why a number of the comments submitted had not been incorporated into the draft.

Ellen explained that the committee was careful to ensure comments were addressed individually and evaluated. The section was highly scrutinized, setting a precedent in amending the Regional Plan. Andrew Manning added that committee members reviewed every suggestion, affording each a fair hearing.

Fred Dunnington repeated his motion to adopt amendments for warning for the public hearing process and called the question. The motion passed unanimously.

Members’ Concerns/Information

Don Shall referred members to the attachment in their packets and invited them to read and reflect on Article IV pertaining to the duties of the commission.

Adjournment

Tom Yager moved to adjourn; Bob McNary seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Submitted by Peggy Connor