

Addison County Regional Planning Commission

Full Commission Meeting

Wednesday, January 10, 2007

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission met at the Middlebury Inn on January 10, 2007, Fred Dunnington presiding.

ROLL CALL:

<i>Addison:</i>		<i>Orwell:</i>	Andrea Ochs
<i>Bridport:</i>	Andrew Manning Edward Payne	<i>Panton:</i>	Michael Herman
<i>Bristol:</i>	Peter Grant William Sayre	<i>Ripton:</i>	Jeremy Grip
<i>Cornwall:</i>	Donald Shall Annie Wilson	<i>Salisbury:</i>	
<i>Ferrisburgh:</i>	Stephen Gutowski Bob McNary	<i>Shoreham:</i>	Jeremiah Parker Elizabeth Pidgeon
<i>Goshen:</i>	Bruce Webster	<i>Starksboro:</i>	
<i>Leicester:</i>	Kathleen Ramsay	<i>Vergennes:</i>	Renny Perry
<i>Lincoln:</i>	Jason Oleet Steve Revell	<i>Waltham:</i>	
<i>Middlebury:</i>	Fred Dunnington Brian Bauer	<i>Weybridge:</i>	
<i>Monkton:</i>	Thea Gaudette	<i>Whiting:</i>	Ellen Kurrelmeyer Jonathan Heppell
<i>New Haven:</i>	Harvey Smith Milo Schaefer		

CITIZEN INTEREST REPRESENTATIVES:

Addison County Farm Bureau: Kent Wright
Otter Creek Audubon Society: Marcia Parker
OC Natural Resource: Jonathan Chamberlain

ADDISON COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

ACRPC EXECUTIVE BOARD

CHAIR: Fred Dunnington
VICE-CHAIR: Elissa Close
SECRETARY: Andrew Manning
TREASURER: Andrea Ochs
Renny Perry
Thea Gaudette
William Sayre

STAFF:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Adam Lougee
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/GIS DATA MANAGER: Kevin Behm
EMERGENCY MGT PLANNER/SENIOR PLANNER: Tim Bouton
SENIOR/TRANSPORTATION PLANNER: Richard Kehne
PLANNER/GRANT WRITER: Jeffrey Owen
WATERSHED PLANNER: Amy Diller
OFFICE MANAGER/BOOKKEEPER: Pauline Cousino
TELEPHONE: 388-3141 **FAX:** 388-0038

Public Program

The public program focused on storm water and permitting issues with guest speakers Mathew Probasco, analyst for the Stormwater Section of the Vermont Water Quality Division; Bernie Gagnon, Director of Public Works for the Town of Shelburne; and engineer Doug Hewitt of Summit Engineering.

Mr. Probasco presented an overview of the storm water permitting process, noting four separate programs: 1) Operational: redevelopment, expansions, and individual storm water permits; 2) Construction: required by the Federal Clean Water Act and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Phase II, in which 5-acre projects have necessitated permits since 2002; 3) Multi-Sector: federal permits to prevent pollution from industrial activities; and 4) Municipal Separate Storm water Systems (MS4), and “orphan” permits: infrastructure tied to expired permits for which grants are available. The jurisdictional threshold, as outlined in Titles 18 and 22 of Vermont Statutes, is based on impervious surface area. Any new impervious surface greater than one acre requires a storm water permit. Mr. Probasco noted, however, that agriculture, timber, and single-family homes are exempt from the permit process.

Milo Schaefer asked what were the water quality division’s most important goals regarding the permitting process, and how regional planning commissions might help meet them.

Mr. Probasco explained that one of the biggest challenges is awareness; getting people to understand the process, and what triggers the need for a storm water permit.

Marcia Parker asked why loggers should be exempt from obtaining storm water permits.

Mr. Probasco pointed out that regulations are in place for the timber industry, and that jurisdiction lies with Forests & Parks. For additional information on storm water permits, visit the State’s Agency of Natural Resources website at: www.anr.state.vt.us

Bernie Gagnon explained that the Municipal Separate Storm water Systems (MS4) program, which includes public outreach and education, was the driving force behind the adoption of a storm water ordinance in the Town of Shelburne. The ordinance incorporates bylaws governing storm water management plans and public works specifications; regulates non-storm water discharges in the town; and extends authority to the town in overseeing construction sites over which the state has limited manpower. Shelburne’s storm water ordinance, bylaws, and public works specifications can be found on the web at: www.shelburne.vt.org

Doug Hewitt offered the perspective of developers on the topic of storm water permitting, both private and commercial. As a consultant to developers, Mr. Hewitt has found that the newest and greatest challenge is the process of applying for required storm water permits. What once consisted of a one-page TR-55 model application form in 1985, has evolved into a process requiring a comprehensive review of documents contained in two separate volumes. According to Mr. Hewitt, developers often choose to redesign their plans in an effort to limit the impervious surface area to less than one acre in order to avoid the entire permitting process, turning what should be a simple plan into a very complicated development. Mr. Hewitt contended that the arduous process of storm water permitting is responsible for driving up construction costs in recent years.

The public program concluded at 8:45 p.m.

Business Meeting

The Business Meeting began at 9:00 p.m.

I. Approval of Minutes: December 13, 2006

Peter Grant moved to approve the meeting minutes for December 13, 2006; Andrea Ochs seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

II. Executive Board Minutes:

No Executive Board meeting held during holiday break.

III. Treasurer's Report

An updated Treasurer's Report was distributed to delegates present (copy attached).

Ellen Kurrelmeyer moved to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented; Peter Grant seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Milo Schaefer requested that the Treasurer supply delegates with an aging report for their review.

IV. Committee Reports

Act 250 and 248

Ellen Kurrelmeyer reported that two new permits were issued: 1) for a 67-acre parcel in Monkton; and 2) a 9.5-acre lot in Bristol. In addition, a jurisdictional opinion was issued regarding Act 250, and the Lathrop Limited Partnership appeal is ongoing.

TAC Transportation Committee

No report.

Natural Resources Committee

Andrea Ochs reported that, prior to the commission meeting, committee members met with Ethan Swift, coordinator for the Natural Resources Department of Environmental Conservation, who spoke on impaired waterways and stream bank erosion. The committee will next meet on March 14th.

Brownfields Committee

Amy reported that the committee has tentatively selected a consultant and will make their final decision next week, at which time members will also meet with state representatives to discuss assessments. *The Addison Independent* recently published an article introducing the Brownfields program, and Brain Bauer noted that Amy was interviewed on MCTV for an opportunity to explain the program and available grant opportunities. Adam encouraged anyone who is in need of an assessment to contact Amy at the regional planning office.

Local Government

No report.

Energy Committee

Harvey Smith invited all those interested to attend the kickoff meeting for the newly formed Energy Committee on Friday, January 12th.

V. Joint Partners Report

Adam announced that, after 24 years of service, Linda Stearns will retire as Director of the Addison County Chamber of Commerce. Andrew Mayer will take over the position as of March 1st.

Noting the recent closing of Specialty Filaments and subsequent loss of over 175 jobs, Brian Bauer asked if the commission as a group could offer any assistance to the displaced workers. Don Shall pointed out that the Economic Development Corporation in our region is addressing the situation, and that there has been some discussion of partial recovery.

VI. Delegate/Staff Recognition

On behalf of the commission, Thea Gaudette extended congratulations and a gift from the Vermont Teddy Bear Company to Adam and his family in recognition of the latest addition to the Lougee family.

VII. Old Business

Essentials of Planning Manual and Orientation Packages

Land use planning manuals for planning commissions and zoning boards of adjustment are now available at the regional planning office. Up-to-date orientation packages containing bylaws, acronyms, committees, and email addresses of delegates were distributed to those present, and are also available at the ACRPC office.

Strategic Vision and Mid-Year Review of the Workplan and Budget

Fred encouraged delegates to share their ideas and suggestions on how best the regional planning commission can be more effective in terms of serving the towns of Addison County. Milo Schaefer recommended that the commission focus on issues of elderly care, affordable housing, and sprawl. He added that communities look for assistance from ACRPC whose goals should be defined and organized in order to provide high-quality systems for towns to utilize.

Adam noted that workplan and budget revisions will be presented at next month's full commission meeting. Any questions or comments to date should be forwarded to his office.

VIII. New Business

Regional Emergency Management Exercise

Saturday, January 13th. Hurricane Tabletop Exercise: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., Holiday Inn in Rutland.

IX. Members' Concerns/Information

Fred received a request from the New Haven Planning Commission to speak before the New Haven Select Board regarding a zoning change on Route 7. New Haven delegate Milo Schaefer explained that a 400-acre stretch of land along Route 7 has been in and out of commercial use for many years. However, the present owner wishes to use the land in a different manner, proposing a variance and change in the zoning bylaws. Milo contended that, as the holder of planning knowledge, ACRPC could offer guidance to the New Haven Select Board in better understanding the planning process, and the significant impact of re-zoning the section of Route 7 from rural agriculture to highway commercial.

Brian Bauer questioned the timing of the request, and asked why a representative from ACRPC was not consulted before New Haven's town plan went into effect.

Harvey Smith expressed his concern with sending the commission's chair as spokesperson, suggesting Fred may be perceived as a representative of Middlebury. Instead, Harvey recommended that Adam contact the New Haven Select Board and ask how the regional planning commission can assist them. Bill Sayre echoed Harvey's concerns, and cautioned against the regional planning commission interfering in the affairs of individual towns.

Noting that the executive director represents all delegates of the commission, Bob McNary objected to Adam representing him as the delegate from Ferrisburgh in offering an opinion to the Town of New Haven regarding its zoning decisions.

As a matter of consistency, Renny Perry suggested that ACRPC only become involved if Route 7 is part of the regional plan.

Adam pointed out that the petition to expand the commercial zone on Route 7 in New Haven is a matter of interest to the regional planning commission by virtue of the highway's significance. Route 7 is listed as a regional asset in the regional plan, and access management is an ongoing issue for the regional transportation planner and TAC.

Bob McNary suggested that Adam provide the New Haven Select Board technical advice, but would object to him offering an opinion.

Regarding the New Haven Select Board's request, Andrea Ochs moved to authorize Adam to serve as spokesman on behalf of ACRPC; Bruce Webster seconded the motion.

Thea Gaudette expressed her concern with one government body asking for guidance from the regional planning commission on behalf of another.

Brian Bauer offered a friendly amendment to authorize Adam to provide technical assistance on the zoning matter, only if asked by the Town of New Haven. Both Andrea Ochs and Bruce Webster accepted the friendly amendment. Motion passed by a show of hands: 11 in favor; 6 opposed. MOTION PASSED.

X. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Submitted by,
Peggy Connor
