

**Addison County Regional Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday June 11, 2008**

The ACRPC June meeting was held at ACRPC's office on June 11, 2008 with Fred Dunnington, Chair, presiding.

ROLL CALL:

<i>Addison:</i>		<i>Orwell:</i>	Andrea Ochs David King
<i>Bridport:</i>	Andrew Manning Mike Gamache	<i>Panton:</i>	Michael Herman
<i>Bristol:</i>	Peter Grant	<i>Ripton:</i>	Jeremy Grip Ted Dunakin
<i>Cornwall:</i>	Mary Dodge	<i>Salisbury:</i>	
<i>Ferrisburgh</i>		<i>Shoreham:</i>	Elizabeth Pidgeon Jeremiah Parker
	Bob McNary	<i>Starksboro:</i>	Jim Lockridge
<i>Goshen:</i>		<i>Waltham:</i>	
<i>Leicester:</i>		<i>Weybridge:</i>	
<i>Lincoln:</i>		<i>Whiting:</i>	Ellen Kurrelmeyer
	Dave D'Allienne	<i>Vergennes:</i>	
<i>Middlebury:</i>	Fred Dunnington		
<i>Monkton:</i>	Thea Gaudette		
<i>New Haven:</i>	Harvey Smith		

CITIZEN INTEREST REPRESENTATIVES:

<i>Addison County Farm Bureau:</i>	Kent Wright
<i>Addison County Economic Development Corp:</i>	
<i>Otter Creek Audobon Society:</i>	Marcia Parker
<i>Otter Creek Natural Resources:</i>	
<i>Addison County Chamber of Commerce:</i>	

ACRPC EXECUTIVE BOARD

Chair: Fred Dunnington

Vice-Chair:

Secretary: Bill Sayre

Treasurer: Andrea Ochs

At Large: Renny Perry

Bill Sayre

Bruce Webster

Assistant Director/GIS Manager: Kevin Behm

Emergency Management/Senior Planner: Tim Bouton

Transportation/Senior Planner: Richard Kehne

Watershed Planner: Amy Diller

Planner/Grant Writer:

Office Manager/Bookkeeper: Pauline Cousino

STAFF

Executive Director: Adam Lougee

June 11, 2008 MEETING

Program: Peak Oil and Climate Change

Fred Dunnington opened the meeting. He welcomed our guest speakers for the evening: Ron Slabaugh, Netaka White, Jeff Jones and Laura Asemily of ACoRN. He invited them to speak on their topic this evening.

Ron opened the program by describing his interest in Peak Oil and defining Peak Oil. He also noted that most people who discuss “peak oil” also address “climate change”. He described peak oil as simply the fact that at some point, he would contend in the relatively near future, that the amount of oil the earth can supply will peak and then begin to decline. It will not go away, but it will no longer be cheap or abundant relative to demand. He believes that to buffer against the peak, we need to start planning now because so much of our world is based upon cheap, plentiful oil. Oil has already begun to affect food and other costs.

Ron distributed the summary to a US government report on peak oil and a one sheet noting that the response to both peak oil and climate change would be very different than to either of them individually. He noted that one of the conclusions was to re-localize trade, especially food. That is one of the goals of ACoRN.

Ron handed the floor to Netaka White, the Biofuels Director at the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund. Netaka explained that he has been working to develop alternatives to oil from bio-fuels for the past 5 years. He notes oil prices are already having a dramatic impact on businesses and lifestyles. He believes we must plan to help buffer the impact from the time when oil will begin to decline. The number one cause of rising food costs is the cost of energy, oil. We need to work to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and increase our local agricultural production of food. Failure to plan for peak oil puts our communities at risk.

What can be done on the local level?

1. Stateline farm can supply 100,000 gallons of bio-diesel to neighboring farms. It will take oilseed from its own fields and from neighboring farms, produce a bio-fuel, produce high quality food oil, and produce feed for animals from the remains after crushing.
2. Other farms are following.
3. 130 acres in Addison County are currently in seed production and selling oil to ACoRN.
4. 6,000,000 gallons per year could be produced in VT, enough to run Vermont’s farm equipment.

Jeff Jones took over the conversation. He asked for any questions. Jim Lockridge asked about steps that individuals could take to address peak oil. Jeff answered that he came to Vermont as a result of peak oil. Individual families can do a lot. He noted he intends to grow a simple kitchen garden, use wood heat, add solar capacity.

Netaka is looking at weatherization and how to sure up his own supplies.

He noted that National Geographic in June 2008 had a great article about peak oil and what might happen.

Jeff then proceeded to discuss localization of the food network. Jeff noted his business, food distribution, was very transportation and oil dependent. He noted for example that the price to ship a refrigerated 45 foot container has gone from \$1,200 to \$7,500. Independent truckers are parking their trucks.

He noted Vermont has one of the best local food producer markets. However, we still import 90% of our food. Our local farmers have a long way to go. Jeff's company sells local food to larger supermarket chains. He believes local demand will strengthen this business model.

Jeff noted that China's demand for oil had grown tenfold in the past ten years. India has done the same thing.

Peter Grant asked whether state government had done anything to begin preparing for peak oil.

Ron Slabaugh noted that ACoRN is a part of a statewide organization. It is beginning to have an impact. He noted that Connecticut had recently completed a good study on peak oil.

Netaka answered that while there is some movement in State Government, at the local level there are good significant planning or projects occurring, including the work of Addison County Regional Planning Commission's Energy Committee.

Jeremy Grip asked about rail as a means to transport food stuff. Jeff answered that it is a great option, but its current capacity is limited. He noted that Warren Buffett is investing heavily in rail. He shares the belief that rail will be the future.

Andrea Ochs noted that her family bought a cord wood burning furnace and saved a lot of money this winter. She also noted that the independent trucker that serves their farm has parked 7 of their 10 trucks and may not serve them at harvest.

Jeff noted that company after company is adding fuels assessments every week, but are not keeping up with the price increases and are losing money.

Jeremiah noted efficiency should come first. Laura Asermily answered that is one of her roles at MAGWAC. She noted the "Low Carbon Diet" is a good way to get groups to save. She noted "Efficiency First" is an educational program she teaches about efficiency. She noted that each Department in the Town of Middlebury is participating.

Fred Asked how much heating oil is used in the State of Vermont. Netaka answered that 176,000,000 million gallons are used annually in Vermont. Given current bio-fuel crop technology, Vermont will not contribute any ethanol and about 3% of its diesel fuel

needs. Cellulosic ethanol should be available in about 5 years. With this technology Vermont could probably produce \$50,000,000 gallons of bio-diesel in 20 years. Netaka noted that the 25/25 Commission looked to farm and forest solutions meeting 25% of current energy demand by 2025. Netaka also believes Algae holds great promise.

Fred noted that we have done a lot of emergency planning in the past few years; he felt it is embarrassing that we have not done more planning in this area.

Jeremiah asked what the difference in btu's was between pure bio-diesel and petrol. Netaka responded bio-fuel was about 3-5 % less, but noted that many engines get better mileage per gallon from bio-fuel because it has less residual solids than petroleum based fuel.

Ellen noted that she thought about switching to bio-diesel, but replacing equipment would be required. Netaka noted that this was correct. It can be done, but needs to be done carefully.

Harvey asked the panel whether they were aware of some of the things our energy committee is doing. He noted Elizabeth and Bob have been organizing trainings for town energy coordinators and trainings on renewables, he also noted the Commission was administering a pilot project for pellet fuels, and other projects.

Fred noted that ACoRN has created a coop for pellet buying.

The meeting ended on a positive note. A lot of good things are happening in Addison County, but we also need to do much more to plan for our energy future.

Business Meeting:

Call to Order: 8:15pm

Fred Dunning, Chair of the ACRPC called the meeting to order. He welcomed all in attendance and moved quickly to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes:

Fred asked for a motion to approve the May minutes. Andrea Ochs made a correction, revising the minutes to reflect that Andrea was not resigning as Treasurer, but had completed her term on the Executive Board and that she thanked all of the opportunity to serve. Peter Grant moved the minutes as amended. Harvey Smith seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously approved the minutes.

Treasurer's Report:

Adam gave the Treasurer's Report. He noted that revenues and expenses are running very close, but that the commission remained in sound financial shape. Thea Gaudette moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Bob McNary seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Committee Reports:

Act 250: Adam reported for the committee that there had been very little Act 250 activity since the last meeting. No new applications had been filed.

Brownfields: Jeremy Grip reported that the committee would meet shortly. They have one big project, the Shade Roller factory underway and are looking for other projects.

Energy: Harvey noted that the Energy Committee continued to do a lot of good work. He noted that the committee continued to meet and would view Middlebury Colleges wood chip facility at its July meeting. He invited Elizabeth and Bob to speak about their outreach activities. Elizabeth invited all to the wood energy meeting at ACRPC tomorrow night at 7:00p.m. Bob noted that last month they had done a seminar on Geothermal that was very well received.

Elizabeth noted town energy coordinators meeting training town energy coordinators on May 20th. It was a good start getting town energy coordinators started

Fred noted he would be interested in hearing what the energy Committee would suggest for ACRPC's workplan.

Local Government: Deferred to New Business.

Natural Resources: Andrea announced that the committee will meet June 24th and will be discussing forestry.

TAC: Andrew reported that the TAC was working on prioritization.

Old Business:

Commissioner's Thoughts on FY 2007/2008:

Bob noted that moving into a new facility and having a home was a good thing. It has solidified the commission and given us a venue in which we can conduct a lot more public outreach and improve our public presence.

Andrea suggested getting program for the entire year.

New Business:

Regional Confirmation of Bristol's Planning Process and vote on regional approval of the Bristol Town Plan: Thea noted that the local Government Committee visited Bristol last week. She noted that Bristol is engaged in a planning process. However, she also noted that the Plan that Bristol re-adopted and is asking ACRPC to regionally adopt is deficient on 3 of the 10 required items. It does not address education, child care and natural and cultural resources. Thea also noted that Bristol is moving forward with its planning process. It has a significant portion of a new plan drafted. Thea then noted that the Committee was not making a recommendation to the commission.

Peter Grant noted that he was the chair of the Committee that re-adopted the old plan. He noted that he did it because the Plan was about to expire and they need grant money to work on new zoning. He requested that the commission approve Bristol's Plan.

Bill Sayre also asked for the Commission's support. He offered that Bristol re-adopted the Town Plan in total because even small amendments were being voted down because of the fear by the litigants over the gravel pit that a change would impact their legal position. He noted that taking no action was the only way the Town could send a message to the litigants that they were not changing the Plan. He noted that Bristol was in the middle of a massive revision.

Jeremy asked whether we would have an opportunity to look at the new plan. Thea noted that Bristol will require a town vote on the new Plan. Once it goes through that process, Bristol will bring it back within a year.

Jeremy wondered if the Commission could approve things conditionally. Thea responded it was an up or down vote.

Ellen noted that she could understand why the town did not comment on the Plan,

Elizabeth moved to confirm Bristol's planning process and regionally approve the Bristol Town Plan. Bob McNary seconded the motion. On a show of hands, the motion passed 10-4, with 3 abstentions.

Town selection of Delegates and Alternates: Adam reminded all that our new fiscal year starts in July. He handed out a form showing we still had not received delegate information from several towns. He reminded delegates that they would not be allowed to vote unless they were officially appointed. He requested that delegates or alternates representing towns that had not responded to speak with their Selectboards or City Councils and to send the appointments to Pauline so we could record them.

Committee Assignments: Adam asked the delegates and alternates to think about the committees upon which they would be willing to serve. He noted that at the July meeting he would be asking every one to select at least one committee on which they would serve. He noted that the Executive Board would take those requests and do their best to assign them their preferred Committee choices.

Programs: Given the lateness of the hour, Fred skipped this item until the next meeting.

Adjournment:

Upon a motion and second duly made, the Commission voted to adjourn at 9:40pm

Respectfully submitted,
Adam Lougee