

Addison County Regional Planning Commission Meeting Minutes Wednesday, July 9, 2008

The ACRPC July meeting was held at ACRPC's office on July 9, 2008 with Bob McNary, Vice Chair, presiding.

ROLL CALL:

<i>Addison:</i>	Tim Davis	<i>Orwell:</i>	Clyde Park
<i>Bridport:</i>	Andrew Manning Ed Payne	<i>Panton:</i>	
<i>Bristol:</i>	Peter Grant William Sayre	<i>Ripton:</i>	Jeremy Grip Ted Dunakin
<i>Cornwall:</i>	Mary Dodge Ralph Teitscheid	<i>Salisbury:</i>	
<i>Ferrisburgh</i>	Larry Keyes Bob McNary	<i>Shoreham:</i>	Jeremiah Parker
<i>Goshen:</i>	Bruce Webster	<i>Starksboro:</i>	Jim Lockridge
<i>Leicester:</i>	Charles Makovec	<i>Waltham:</i>	
<i>Lincoln:</i>	Steve Revell Dave D'Allienne	<i>Weybridge:</i>	
<i>Middlebury:</i>	Brian Bauer	<i>Whiting:</i>	Ellen Kurrelmeyer
<i>Monkton:</i>	Thea Gaudette Charles Huizenga	<i>Vergennes:</i>	

New Haven:

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: Bob McNary
Secretary: Bill Sayre
Treasurer: Andrea Ochs
At Large: Renny Perry
 Bill Sayre
 Bruce Webster

STAFF

Executive Director: Adam Lougee
Assistant Director/GIS Manager: Kevin Behm
EMS/Senior Planner: Tim Bouton
Transportation/Senior Planner: Richard Kehne
Watershed Planner: Amy Diller
Land Use Planner/Energy Coordinator:
 Elizabeth Golden
Office Manager/Bookkeeper: Pauline Cousino

JULY 9, 2008 MEETING

Program: Recreational Planning - Joshua Phillips, MALT

Josh began by telling us about the many opportunities to link trails in Addison County through National Forest Land, conservation land, private property and town land. Middlebury Area Land Trust (MALT) did a study, which will be updated this fall, with public input, about conservation land, beginning with Middlebury and then putting it out to all the towns. They are thinking more strategically about their recreational conservation focus. They use a careful decision making process to avoid disturbing sensitive places, yet give the public an experience to enjoy it. Guided hikes are used where trails are inappropriate to bring people in for gentle use. Properties that are donated to MALT can be sold, or part may be sold around the dwelling, and they put a conservation easement on the remaining property. It is challenging when private property owners want to put a trail on their property but limit use. An easement and limited use is usually sufficient. Town land and Federal Wilderness Areas are very restricted. The Forest Service would have jurisdiction over Wilderness Areas.

MALT's mission is trails, land acquisition and conservation. Their group was founded by local citizens, who found a need to protect sensitive land and trail access. Their budget is \$200,000 a year, which includes staff and projects. Funding comes from donations, VT Housing Conservation, and others. There are no studies on usage; only anecdotal evidence. The Sea-to-Sea Trail includes Federally mandated trails, and local people see the need for connections between Crown Point and the Long Trail, as they are only 30 miles apart. MALT is a nonprofit organization that also owns property. Trail links between towns allow recreation and non-motorized access, to avoid highway use of bicyclists, as well as winter cross-country skiing. A pedestrian and bike trail would be very useful between Middlebury and Vergennes and to other towns.

Todd Taylor, Local Motion Trail Finder in Addison County

Local Motion is a Greater Burlington non-profit which promotes biking and walking as a form of recreation and travel, and for improved health. They started with a bike trail. Their most recent project is the Trail Finder, a free online map resource, to show all public trails in the greater Burlington area (Chittenden County). Volunteers went out with hand-held GPS units, to create central on-line resource for trail mapping, for use by Vermonters as well as visitors to Vermont, who want to plan where they will go. They have data for 75 trails, collected by 50 volunteers over two years. The Trail Finder is available at www.localmotion.org/trails. The site uses Googlemaps. Color markers indicate type of trail uses, and the site includes data on the trail, who manages the trail, links to websites, and photos along the trails. Data includes a description, history, facilities, handicapped access, trail surface, tree species, suitability of the trail for particular uses, covered bridges, views, and other features. People can leave information about the trail and stories about their experiences along the trail. Phase Two is to expand the trail data to Addison and Grand Isle Counties, and include on-road cycling trails. The

trail owners have the final say to include or remove information on their trails, at their discretion. They will collect recreation data and catalogue it in one place, at the RPC, which is a great planning and marketing tool. They are looking for trail data, inventories of trails and volunteers in our area. They circulated a sign-up sheet for volunteers.

Their funding is for only non-motorized trails, but there is room to show “vast” trails for snowmobiles, ATV’s and mini-bikes. Horseback riders would see clearly where the ATV trails are to avoid them. A commissioner recommends they include the difficulty of the trail, availability of protective areas, suitable ages and skill levels, cell phone coverage and safety concerns. Another recommends caution notices to on-road bicyclers about winding and narrow roads, and safe riding methods. A third recommends they lobby for funding for on-road cycling lanes. Todd replied that a state Local Motion group does lobbying. Hiking and bicycling adds to Vermont’s tourism economy. A Commissioner recommends linking to VTsports.com. The Green Mountain Club, Audubon, and county trail groups have all contributed information. VT Recreation Trails has funded their collection work, which will begin this fall and be completed next spring. It will be 12 months for the data to be available on the website.

A volunteer can choose whatever trail they want to map, and how long they want to spend on the trails. It’s fun thing to do! They provide kiosks about their site at B&B’s, and local stores. They indicate which trails are closed, such as for mud, and for hunting season. Ski trails are included. The site is totally flexible, allowing trails to be removed during certain seasons, or never shown at all.

Business Meeting:

Call to Order: 8:45 p.m.

Bob McNary. Vice-Chair of ACRPC called the meeting to order. He welcomed all in attendance and moved quickly to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes:

Thea Gaudette moved to approve the June minutes. Steve Revell seconded the motion. Bob McNary made two corrections to the June minutes, that “the motion passed 10-4,” not 0-4; and that the line “Committee assignments” ends “to get the committee they asked for.” The Minutes as amended passed unanimously.

Treasurer’s Report:

Adam gave the Treasurer’s Report. He noted that we have a lot of money in the bank. He also noted that the Financial Report he distributed is for the end of the fiscal year. It contains all of our payables, but not all receivables, as billings for June have not been sent out yet. Once we get billings out for June, we should catch up and be in good shape for the year. ACRPC generally bills after the fact, by the 15th of the month. A Commissioner asked why rent was over budget for the year. Adam explained that the Financials have not been adjusted. The rent is adjusted to the CPI, thus it will go up 3.9% this next year. The Financial Report indicates that we are over-budget because we put down a security deposit, which means we are prepaid ahead for next year. Heat is

included in our rent, so our rent did not increase as fast as fuel prices. Ellyn Kurrelmeyer moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Bruce Webster seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Committee Reports:

Act 250: Ellen Kurrelmeyer: There were no new Act 250 Applications this month. The District 9 Commission issued two permits and amendments:

1. To Middle Road Ventures, John Illick in Middlebury, amending the previous permit to allow Middle Road to convert five single family lots to eighteen town homes.
2. A permit to Raymond Danyow for Booth Woods in Vergennes, to allow an additional four lot single-family subdivision. Booth Woods has subsequently requested that the permit be amended slightly, tweaking property lines.

Steve Revell answered questions from the commissioners about septic regulations. If you are on a small lot that qualifies for an in-ground or at-grade design, and don't have enough room for a primary and replacement area, you could look at the possibility of building a system capable of accommodating 150% of the design flow, and not need the replacement area. For old lots that were permitted for the old regulations with primary and replacement mounds, the changes to the regulations may allow another subdivision opportunity, as one could use the old replacement area for a new lot. The project would need to be properly permitted through the State review process as well as the local process. Planning issues are under local control, but wastewater is under State control, which sometimes doesn't match up. PUD's could be affected by this change.

Brownfields: Jeremy Grip reported that the committee met and decided that they needed to issue another RFQ for a contractor, to keep everyone performing appropriately.

Energy: Bob McNary noted the Energy Committee sponsored a pellet and wood stove program by Gary Barnett in June, which was well attended and well done. Bob and Elizabeth met with Mark Young about financing for alternative energy projects, with a program planned for October. A Commissioner commented that funding for insulation projects at the Federal and State levels is non-existent. Bob said that they plan to meet with local bankers and credit unions prior to the presentation in order to do the program properly.

The Committee is offering a program on solar hot water and space heating on Thursday, July 24 from 7-9 pm. The program will be presented by Dori Wolfe of groSolar, an engineer and co-owner. The Committee has scheduled energy programs through March 2009.

Local Government: Nothing to report at this time.

Natural Resources: The Committee is working on the forestry section. Connectivity of forest habitat is an issue. There is a publication, Conserving Vermont's Natural Heritage,

published by the Agency of Natural Resources available on the table, for anyone who wishes a copy.

TAC: Thea reported that the Committee reviewed applications for the town and regional planning studies at their last meeting. They will take action on the proposals at their next meeting.

Delegate/Staff Recognition: Adam announced that Elizabeth Golden, long-term and very active Commissioner from Shoreham has been hired as the new Planner. She will be working on Land Use Planning and in support of the Energy Committee, as well as other projects. He also noted that Amy Diller, the Watershed Planner, has given notice that she will be leaving the ACRPC to work with Catamount Trails. He asked the Commissioners to thank Amy for her diligent work.

Adam told the Commission that delegate and TAC assignments have been received from most towns. Adam introduced Mary Dodge, a new Commissioner from Cornwall. Mary commented that she was amazed at what the Commission accomplishes.

Old Business:

Workplan and Budget: Adam requested that the Commission approve two small amendments to the Workplan and Budget that was approved at our Annual Meeting. He noted our budget from DHCA had increased by \$271 and that the Workplan should have included an additional task involving working with DHCA to promote DHCA's recent publication on community wastewater systems. After a motion was made and duly seconded, the Commission voted to amend the Workplan and Budget to reflect the changes discussed. Jamie Stewart of Economic Development is starting a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and approached us about being a partner to help him go to towns with a staff person. Adam commented that it looks like a good project. It has a budget of \$12,000. Ellen commented that we had participated in the previous process.

Other: For the September meeting, we will have name tags for all of our Commissioners, and introduction packets for the new Commissioners.

New Business:

Committee Assignments: Adam asked the delegates and alternates to select at least one committee on which they would serve. He noted that the Executive Board would take those requests and make committee assignments at their upcoming meeting. Assignments will be announced at the September Full Commission meeting.

Election of new Executive Board Member: With Elizabeth Golden's appointment as our new Land Use Planner, she is not permitted to serve on the Commission or Executive Board. Thus, Thea read Section 904 which covers vacancies, announced the Executive Board's nomination of Ellen Kurrelmeyer as an at-large member of the Executive Board

and called for any further nominations. There being none, the Commission voted unanimously for Ellen's appointment to the Executive Board.

Programs: Bob asked the Commissioners for suggestions for programs for the coming year. Suggestions included a discussion on the aging of Vermont and what we can do to plan for it; and a program on GPS technology, which Adam suggested Kevin Behm present. Commissioners recommended workshops on 'best practices' for providing affordable housing, especially with elderly services in rural towns; and information from the Addison County Community Trust on grants or low interest loan programs it makes available for first time homeowners.

Other:

Adam reported that we received a request to write a letter in support of an application to recertify the Addison County solid waste district transfer facility in Middlebury. Tim Bouton has reviewed the application and said it was a good application. Thea Gaudette moved that we write a letter of support, and Ed Payne seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Tim Davis reported that Addison is working on a new Town Plan and that they have issues with septic. He suggested that Addison needs more than farming business to support its tax revenues, and that a small industrial park area is being considered. He asked for the member towns to offer information on the pros and cons of allowing a small industrial park. Adam suggested that he contact the VT League of Cities and Towns for information on the tax implications of locating industry in towns in rural communities.

Adjournment:

Mary Dodge moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Golden