

Meeting Minutes
Addison County Regional Planning Commission
Wednesday, June 9, 2010

ACRPC held its monthly Meeting at its offices at 14 Seminary Street in Middlebury on June 9, 2010 with Thea Gaudette, the Chair, presiding.

ROLL CALL:

Addison:

Bridport: Andrew Manning
Ed Payne

Panton:

Ripton: Jeremy Grip

Bristol: Peter Grant

Salisbury:

Shoreham:

Cornwall:

Starksboro: Richard Warren

Ferrisburgh:

Goshen: Jeff Cathcart

Vergennes: Alyth Hescocock

Leicester: James Maroney

Waltham:

Lincoln:

Dave D'Allienne

Weybridge:

Middlebury: Fred Dunnington
Pat Peters

Whiting: Ellen Kurrelmeyer

Monkton: Thea Gaudette
Charlie Huizenga

New Haven: Harvey Smith

Orwell: David King

CITIZEN INTEREST REPRESENTATIVES:

Addison County Farm Bureau:

Kent Wright

Addison County Economic Development Corp:

Harvey Smith

Otter Creek Audubon Society:

Margaret Lowe

Otter Creek Natural Resources:

Addison County Chamber of Commerce:

ACRPC EXECUTIVE BOARD

Chair: Thea Gaudette

Vice-Chair:

Secretary: Fred Dunnington

Treasurer: Jeremy Grip

At Large: Ellen Kurrelmeyer

Steve Revell

Harvey Smith

STAFF

Executive Director: Adam Lougee

Assistant Director/GIS Manager: Kevin Behm

EM/Senior Planner: Tim Bouton

Transportation/Senior Planner: Richard Kehne

Land use Planner: Claire Tebbs

Office Manager/Bookkeeper: Pauline Cousino

PROGRAM: Adam introduced our speakers for this evening, Don Gilbert, the President of VT Gas and Tim Lyons, Vermont Gas's Vice-President of Sales. Don began his presentation and offered to cover three topics:

1. Natural Gas as a fuel;
2. The Vermont Gas Systems Company; and
3. His vision for the future.

Natural Gas as a fuel. Natural gas is mostly pure methane with very little carbon in its chemical structure. This is why natural gas has the lowest CO₂ combustion emissions of the fossil fuels. It also has very low particulates when burned. The natural gas being sold by VT Gas is from Canada. They are not connected to a U.S. pipeline. After processing in Canada the gas is essentially pure methane. Natural gas can be stored as a liquid but it is expensive. Peter Grant asked about trucking natural gas – Don stated that it can be done, but not at a price that is competitive. In addition to being relatively clean-burning the industry predicts 100 yr reserves. Extraction techniques have recently changed to access to new supplies. Vertical drilling into gas pockets has been replaced by horizontal drilling into shale deposits with subsequent injection of material to hydro-fracture the shale and release natural gas. Due to the slow economy, manufacturing is also using less gas. Prices have remained relatively constant and in the recent decade have moved in the opposite direction from liquid petroleum and gas. Historically, oil and gas prices moved in a similar fashion, but the relative abundance has kept current prices low. Jeremy Grip asked where Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) originates. Don responded that LNG is mostly from Trinidad & Tobago or Russia. VT Gas's product is from Alberta. Peter Grant asked what was the 'full cost cycle' of natural gas production – or how many BTU's of energy are consumed to produce 1 BTU for use. Don recalled studies noting that it was a positive relationship, but he didn't have the exact numbers – he would look-up the figures.

Vermont Gas Systems Company. Vermont Gas has over 45,000 customers in the NW portion of the state. Their pipelines come down from Canada through Franklin County and into Chittenden County stopping in Shelburne at about the Teddy Bear factory. They have also recently expanded eastward into Hinesburg, Jericho and Underhill. Next year they will be expanding into Richmond. Don notes Vermont Gas has the franchise for the entire State of Vermont and was established in 1965 to encourage economic development. He envisioned the possibility of a pipeline into Addison County to Vergennes and possibly Middlebury. The necessary users would have to be available to justify the \$1.5 million cost per mile of a transmission pipeline. There would need to be considerable study to determine the potential usage, but he considered it worthy of study. The recent expansion into Hinesburg serves 450

customers and cost approximately \$2.5 million. Richard Warren noted that the installation of pipelines using horizontal boring leaves very little evidence after installation.

Vermont Gas's Vision for the future. Don noted that in order to do well in the future, one must learn from past mistakes. Don discussed three previous major pipeline expansion projects that were canceled. These were a Montreal to Maine pipeline in the NE Kingdom, the Southern VT Project to service a power plant in Rutland and The Champlain Pipeline to move natural gas to southern New England. Don noted that these were canceled for various business reasons, but also stated that there was very little outreach to the communities along the routes. In contrast, VT Gas has endeavored to sign-up residential and small-business customers while attracting major industrial users. If an economical expansion into Addison and Rutland Counties is possible, he foresees a potential linkage with the US network.

Don feels strongly that natural gas is an economic, safe and relatively clean fuel that is available for future growth. Expansion of their pipelines into Addison County will largely be dependent on the potential customer base.

BUSINESS MEETING:

Thea called the Business Meeting to order to address the agenda before the Commission.

- I. **Approval of Minutes: April 14, 2010 and May 12, 2010** – Thea asked for a motion on the Minutes. Peter Grant moved the adoption of both sets of minutes; Charlie Huizenga seconded the motion. Jeff Cathcart of Goshen requested that he get on the distribution list. James Maroney noted he had attended the April meeting and requested that he be added to the attendance sheet. The Commission unanimously approved both sets of minutes as corrected.
- II. **Executive Board Minutes: May 26, 2010** - Thea explained that the Executive Board Minutes are provide for information only, and asked if anyone had any questions. There were none.
- III. **Treasurer's Report** – Adam reported on the Treasurer's Report dated June 9, 2010. He reported that our cash balance is still strong. He also reported that the monthly statement shows expenditures slightly greater than revenues, but explained he believed this was because May's expenses were paid and posted, but not all of the invoices have been sent out. Fred moved acceptance of the Treasurer's Report. Harvey seconded the motion. The motion to accept the Treasurer's Report carried by voice vote with all in favor, except Jeff Cathcart from Goshen, who abstained.

IV. Committee Reports:

Act 250 – Ellen Kurrelmeyer reported on the Committee’s activities.

New Applications:

1. On May 28, 2010 R.L. Vallee, Inc. filed an application to expand its existing parking lot at the Maplefields in New Haven on Route 7 to provide for additional truck and passenger vehicle parking. On June 4, 2010 the District 9 Environmental Commission issued notice that it plans to treat the application as a Minor application unless a party requests a hearing prior to June 18, 2010.

Approvals or Denials:

1. On May 5, 2010 the District 9 Environmental Commission issued a Land Use Permit to Middlebury College, Porter Medical Center and East View at Middlebury, Inc. to construct a retirement community on a 40 acre lot next to Porter Medical Center in Middlebury. (The permit came after Eastview had prevailed in the Vermont Supreme Court.)
2. On May 20, 2010 the District 9 Environmental Commission issued a Land Use Permit in favor of Agri-Mark to expand its warehouse facilities by 15,000 sq. ft. at its existing 70,000 sq. ft. Middlebury plant on Exchange Street.
3. On June 7, 2010 the District 9 Environmental Commission issued an administrative permit in favor of Vermont Industrial Parks and Foster Real Estate Development, Inc. to amend the boundaries of their respective properties by about 1.54 acres near Pond Lane in Middlebury.

Other: In August, 2007 Latrop Limited Partnership filed an application for a sand and gravel pit near the village of Bristol, Vermont. At that time, ACRPC’s Act 250 committee conducted a thorough review of the application. After an open hearing, and at the unanimous urging of the Bristol Delegation, ACRPC determined that the impacts of the project were local rather than regional and ACRPC chose not to participate in the Act 250 process. In January 2010, after time in Environmental Court, Lathrop Limited Partnership refilled its Act 250 application for a sand and gravel pit. At the March Executive Board meeting, the Board requested that Staff re-view the new application as compared to the old filing to determine whether the scope of the application had increased or changed in a substantive manner that might dictate ACRPC participating in the Act 250 review. ACRPC staff has completed its review of the new application. Staff limited its review to the scope of change in the new application versus the old application. Staff concludes that the scope of the new application is reduced from the scope in the old application. The area of extraction is smaller. The extraction road is shorter. A second extraction road previously planned closer to the village on South Street has been abandoned. More screening and reclaiming of existing pits are proposed. Nothing in the application significantly increases any impacts larger than those proposed in the previous application. Instead, many of the impacts have been reduced. Accordingly, based upon the limited scope of review requested by the Executive Board, staff finds no new impacts that would dictate ACRPC reversing its previous findings.

Brownfields – Adam reported on the two projects running.

The Shade Roller Mill Phase II investigation is in the final sub-phase. They have completed their investigation and should produce the final report in about a month.

MUHS Legion Field Phase II investigation is nearly complete. They issued a report calling for one more very small sampling round under the boiler room to determine whether any contamination existed under the building. They are waiting for EPA's approval of the new testing, should complete it quickly and will issue a final report also in about a month.

I will convene the committee when I have both reports.

Energy- Dave D'Alliene reported the committee had not met this month. Both tonight's program and July's program on outdoor lighting feature energy related topics.

Local Government Committee – Thea requested to defer the local government committee to later in the program under new business.

Natural Resources – Kevin reported that the committee is working on the last section of the plan. They meet again on June 29th.

Strategic Planning – Fred reported that the committee will be meeting next Tuesday.

TAC – The TAC did not meet this month.

V. Joint Partners Report – Harvey reported that the Economic Development Corporation was Working to address the Challenges for Change legislation and its impacts on ACEDC.

VI. Delegate/Staff Recognition Project Highlights – Adam noted that the staff project highlights had been handed out before the meeting and that he was happy to answer any question. Kevin noted that we should pay special attention to all the towns that are in process for regional approval of their town plan.

VII. Old Business:

1. Annual Meeting May 2010 or other reflections on the past year- Thea asked for any thoughts and hearing none, moved the agenda forward.
2. Town Selection of Delegates and Alternates- Thea reminded all delegates and alternates to make sure their Selectboards re-appointed them for next year and requested that Adam bring a list of those that we had not received an appointment from for next meeting.
3. Other- None.

VIII. New Business:

1. Vote to confirm the planning process in the Town of Waltham and to regionally Approve the Town of Waltham Town Plan: Thea noted that the local government Committee had conducted its hearing with the Town of Waltham Planning

Commission and that after the hearing, the committee voted to recommend that the full commission confirm the Town of Waltham's planning process and regionally approve Waltham's Town Plan. Thea therefore moved confirmation and approval of the Waltham Town Plan. Andrew Manning seconded the motion. After discussion concerning the plan, all approved the confirmation of Waltham's planning process and approval of its plan by voice vote, except for Richard Warren, who abstained.

2. Committee Assignments. Adam requested that Commissioner's please think about Committee Assignments. I will ask for requests in July.
 3. Programs for next year (Beginning September): Adam requested that the Commissioners speak with him regarding programs they believe it would be important for the commission to educate themselves about next year.
 4. Other: Adam brought a citizen's proposal for a bi-state park in the vicinity of the new Champlain Bridge to the Commissioner's attention. The resolution expressed the idea of using the existing parks and amenities in the vicinity of the new bridge and combining them into one visiting experience so that each benefits from its proximity to the others. At this point it is early in the process, and the information is informational, but in the future, the Commission may be asked to support the new Park concept.
- IX. Members Concerns:** Richard Warren raised a question regarding how and when the full commission acted to endorse projects. He continues to be concerned about the commission acting without its members having complete information in front of them. Thea noted his concern and asked Adam to speak with Richard to address commission operations.
- X. Adjourn:** There being no further business, Harvey Smith moved to adjourn the meeting; Kent Wright seconded. Thea adjourned the meeting at 9:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Adam Lougee
Executive Director