

Meeting Minutes
Addison County Regional Planning Commission
Wednesday, March 9th, 2011

ACRPC held its monthly Meeting at its offices at 14 Seminary Street in Middlebury on March 9th, 2011 with Thea Gaudette, the Chair, presiding.

ROLL CALL:

Addison:

Bridport: Andrew Manning
Ed Payne

Panton:

Bristol: Peter Grant
Chris Lathrop

Ripton: Jeremy Grip

Salisbury:

Cornwall:

Shoreham:

Ferrisburgh:

Starksboro:

Goshen:

Vergennes:

Leicester: James Maroney

Waltham:

Lincoln:

Weybridge:

Middlebury: Fred Dunnington
Pat Peters

Whiting:

Monkton: Thea Gaudette

New Haven: Harvey Smith

Orwell: Andrea Ochs

CITIZEN INTEREST REPRESENTATIVES:

Addison County Farm Bureau:

Addison County Economic Development Corp:

Otter Creek Audubon Society:

Otter Creek Natural Resources:

Addison County Chamber of Commerce:

Margaret Lowe

Paul Wagner

ACRPC EXECUTIVE BOARD

Chair: Thea Gaudette

Vice-Chair: Harvey Smith

Secretary: Ellen Kurrelmeyer

Treasurer: Jeremy Grip

At Large: Steve Revell

Andrew Manning

Bill Sayre

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

Regional Planner: Kevin Lehman

Thea Gaudette, Chair of the Addison County Regional Planning Commission (“ACRPC”) opened the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

PROGRAM: Adam welcomed our guests for the evening, Heidi Willis, the Addison County Riverwatch Collaborative (“ACRWC”) Watershed Coordinator, Kristen Underwood, South Mountain Research and Consulting; Ethan Swift, VT DEC, Water Quality Division, Monitoring, Assessment and Planning Program and Marty Illick, Executive Director, Lewis Creek Association. Adam noted that the speakers will discuss ACRWC’s work over the past 15 years in monitoring the health of each watershed in Addison County, observations they have made, projects they have implemented and their goals for improving water quality in the region in the future.

Heidi Willis began the discussion. She described ACRWC’s monitoring efforts in the past. She noted ACRWC’s current monitoring plan involves 72 sampling points in Addison County on most rivers or creeks. They measure Phosphorus, nitrates, sediment, e-coli. They take the measurements mostly in the summer with some spring or fall events also covered. They use the measurements to gage the health of the rivers in the region and to serve as a baseline for any corrective actions to be undertaken.

Kristin Underwood, a hydrologist with South Mountain Research and Consulting, spoke next. Kristin addressed the results of the data and highlighted different sets of recommendations ACRWC developed for the region or affected municipalities or individuals within any given watershed within the study area. She explained that different types of rivers may require different management techniques and used a handout to explain the recommendations for each watershed.

Ethan Swift provided a statewide perspective. He noted that the data supplied by ACRWC provides a scientific basis for the State to use when measuring changes in water quality. Ethan noted that with shrinking budgets, the State of Vermont needs to engage in tactical planning and remediation efforts that provide the best remedy for the least cost. This data provides the baseline that allows the state to engage in its cost/benefit analysis to target and prioritize its resources. He noted that many policies and plans could be used to improve water quality in addition to physical improvements. These include:

1. Ordinances
2. River Corridor plans and protections
3. Wetland Protection
4. Stormwater ordinances
5. Floodplain protection

Ethan also spoke briefly about the Lake Champlain TMDL for Phosphorus. He noted that portions of the Lake Champlain TMDL had recently been overturned in a lawsuit and that the State of Vermont was re-working its plans to address Phosphorus inputs into the Lake. ANR needs to increase the margin of safety found in the existing recommendations (i.e., reduce the amount of Phosphorus allowed in each section of the lake to provide a greater margin of safety against things like algae blooms and other detrimental impacts to water quality resulting from too much phosphorus) and must provide additional “reasonable assurances” that the money it spends will actually meet the allocations.

Marty Illick spoke last. She focused on the planning goals for water quality that ACRWC had created and suggested that ACRPC's Natural Resources Committee should review them and include information regarding water quality that ACRWC had collected in the Addison County Regional Plan. Likewise, she discussed ACRWC's goals and requested that ACRPC consider including the goals and objectives in its plan.

The members of the Riverwatch Collaborative then answered Commissioner's questions concerning the group's activities and plans. In particular, the questions centered on a study done in Little Otter Creek by UVM and NRCS on specific farms quantifying the water quality results achieved by different farming land management techniques in different fields. **A complete copy of the handouts concerning water quality and goals and actions the Riverwatch Collaborative presented are available on ACRPC's website for those desiring more details on the presentation.**

Thea and the Commission thanked our guests from ACRWC for their presentation.

8:45 p.m. BUSINESS AGENDA:

- I. Approval of Minutes: February 9, 2011** – Thea asked for a motion on the Minutes. **Peter Grant moved the adoption of the minutes of February 9, 2011; Andrea Ochs seconded the motion. The Commission approved the minutes on a voice vote with all voting for approval except Chris Lathrop who abstained.**
- II. Executive Board Minutes: February 23, 2011** - Thea explained that the Draft Executive Board Minutes are provide for information only, and asked if anyone had any questions. No one asked a question on the Executive Board minutes.
- III. Treasurer's Report** – Adam reported on the Treasurer's Report dated March 9, 2011. He reported that our cash balance is still strong. He noted that revenues lagged expenses. He also explained that all of February's bills are paid, but invoices have not yet gone out. He offered that he would be reviewing billing closely and hoped to get back on track by the next meeting. Adam offered to answer any questions. **Andrea Ochs moved acceptance of the Treasurer's Report. Peter Grant seconded the motion. The motion to accept the Treasurer's Report was unanimously approved.**
- IV. Committee Reports:**
 - a. **Act 250.** Adam noted there had been only one Act 250 permit granted within the last month. CVPS has received permission to extend power lines on Lake Street in Shoreham.
 - b. **Local Government.** Thea reported the committee met in Shoreham last month and would report under new business.

- c. **Natural Resources.** Kevin noted that the committee had finished a draft of the Natural Resources Section of the Addison County Plan, that it had considered comments received on the draft and that the committee would discuss the comments and its response later in the program under old business.
- d. **TAC.** Andrew Manning reported that the TAC had met with Jon Kaplan from the Bike/Ped Program at VTrans and discussed project priorities.
- e. **Energy.** Jeremy reported that the committee had met on February 15th and would meet again on March 14th. Jeremy reviewed each of the projects that the Commission is working on under its State and Federal Contracts. He discussed the PACE legislation and the letter of support the committee had given to a Renewable Energy Resources, Inc., a company desiring to use grass pellets to fuel commercial enterprises.
- f. **Brownfields.** Jeremy reported that the Committee had not met, but expected to get two new projects underway shortly.

V. Joint Partners Report: None provided.

VI. Delegate/Staff Recognition Project Highlights: Adam presented staff's project highlights for the month. He handed around one of Claire's projects, a map of farms that sell food locally in the region. The report is attached as Exhibit A.

VII. Old Business:

1. Draft Natural Resources Section of the Plan. Andrea Ochs, the Chair of the Natural Resources Committee, announced that the committee had completed their review of all comments made on the natural resources section of the plan as drafted. The committee decided which comments it chose to include in the plan and which it rejected. A memorandum prepared on the committee's behalf noting all of the comments, all of the changes and the committees' rationale behind their decisions went out in the package to commissioners before the meeting. Thea asked if anyone had comments on the changes. Adam spoke up and noted that he had submitted comments and respectfully requested that the Committee and the Commission reconsider including some of his comments in the plan. Adam focused on his comments on "significant resources" specifically wetlands and to a lesser extent archeological resources. Adam noted that he believed the plan should focus on preserving the valuable functions of any natural resource. If a natural resources did not possess any of the functions making it valuable, it should not be protected or deserved lesser protection. He was concerned that in its current form, the Plan made blanket statements about all wetlands rather than focusing protections on significant wetlands. After some discussion, the Commission requested that Adam speak with Andrea to create some language to present at the next Commission meeting. They also decided they would take up the other issues at the next meeting after more commissioners had the opportunity to review the comments received in more detail and consider the water quality discussion earlier in the evening. It will again provide comments back to the full commission for further discussion and a vote regarding going to public hearing.

2. Self-assessment Survey. Adam noted that ACRPC had asked all commissioners to take an online survey to help it complete some of the promises it committed to during the Challenges for Change Program. The survey is an opportunity for us to improve our work. Adam urged all the commissioners to take the time to complete it and noted he would have a computer available at the office if any needed help.
3. Other- None.

VIII. New Business:

1. Vote to Confirm the Planning Process of the Town of Shoreham and to regionally approve the Shoreham Town Plan. Thea noted that the Local Government Committee had held a public hearing jointly with the planning Commission of the Town of Shoreham. At the meeting they reviewed the Shoreham Town Plan. Thea noted that the Committee felt Shoreham had worked very hard on its plan and that the plan contained all required elements except for a section concerning the extraction of earth resources. After discussion with the planning commission, in which the Planning Commission noted the requirement and agreed to amend its plan to include it, the Local Government Committee decided to recommend a vote in favor of confirming the planning process and approving the Shoreham Town Plan. After discussion, Ed moved to accept the Committees recommendation to Confirm Shoreham's Planning process and regionally confirm the Shoreham Town Plan. Andrea seconded the motion, which then passed on a voice vote of the commission with Margaret Lowe abstaining.
2. Election of a Nominating Committee for ACRPC Executive Board Officers. Thea noted that each March the Commission elects a nominating committee to help it elect a slate of officers for its annual meeting. She noted that the Nominating Committee would announce its slate of officers for the Executive Board at the April meeting and then open the floor up to alternative nominations. The floor would also be open to nominations at the annual meeting in May, at which time the Commission would elect a board of directors. Harvey noted that the Executive Board had discussed a nominating committee and had the following recommendations:
 - a. Thea Gaudette – Harvey noted that Thea is leaving the Executive Board at the end of this year and traditionally ACRPC has asked the Executive Board's departing member to serve on the nominating Committee.
 - b. Fred Dunnington
 - c. Bill Sayre

Thea asked if anyone else was interested in serving on the Nominating Committee. Andrea moved to accept the nominating Committee members recommended by the Executive Board. Peter Grant seconded the motion, which passed unanimously on a voice vote.

3. Annual Meeting and Program. Adam noted that our annual meeting is coming up in May. He shared some of the topics, ideas and locations the Executive Board had suggested at its last meeting and asked for a vote by the commission on whether or not they would like an afternoon program or evening speaker. By a vote of 5 to 3, the commissioners present chose an afternoon program. The Commission also expressed an interest in visiting Blue Spruce Farm for the program and then having dinner catered at a nearby hall. Adam will pursue lining up the program.
4. Report to the State of Vermont. Adam noted that our latest contract with the State of Vermont expired at the end of January. He explained that at the end of February he submitted a report, based upon ACRPC's Workplan and Budget to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development. He offered to provide a copy of the report to anyone interested in a copy.
5. Other. The Commission noted that the Roll Call needs to be included in the internet package. Thea also noted that people should begin to think about nominees for the Bertha Hanson award. Any nominations they have can be given to a member of the Executive Board or Adam.

IX. Members Concerns: None.

X. Adjourn: There being no further business, Andrea moved to adjourn the meeting; Fred seconded the motion and Thea adjourned the meeting at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Adam Lougee
Executive Director

Monthly Highlights for Commissioners – March 2011

Tim: Tim's main focus for the month will be divided between getting updated emergency plans out to emergency managers and selectboards for their subsequent corrections and

adoptions and providing assistance to VT Emergency Management in a series of Vermont Yankee drills to be held in the coming months.

Kevin B: Kevin Behm has been helping the Town of Weybridge on their plan maps. He has also been working with the Addison County Riverwatch Collaborative reviewing this last year's water quality sampling results and helping prepare the grant application for sampling in 2011. He is also beginning work on a Forest Stewardship Planning initiative with the County Forester and the Middlebury Area Land Trust. In addition, Kevin and Tim met with the Environmental Studies class at Middlebury College and presented different work projects for them to undertake.

Rick: Rick announced three initiatives he is working on:

- The Starksboro Village Pedestrian Study using a "Complete Streets" planning approach.
- The selection and kick-off of the Bristol Village-Rockydale Pedestrian Study
- The completion of the High Risk Rural Roads accident data assessment.

Claire: Last week Claire sent the final draft of the local food producer's map to the Addison Independent. This will be published mid-month in the Ad. Co. Local Farms and Food guide. Claire also noted she has started her MPG work with Cornwall, Waltham and Leicester and will be meeting with Salisbury shortly.

Adam: Adam notes that tomorrow evening he will be one member of a three member panel presenting information concerning a municipalities role in Public Service Board proceedings. Adam will discuss how and whether municipalities or regions should seek party status to participate in Section 248 proceedings and share tips for municipalities. This training opportunity is available via Vermont Interactive Television from 6:30 p.m. -8:30 p.m. and is presented by Vermont's RPCs and the Vermont League of Cities and Towns.

Kevin L: Kevin Lehman's outreach efforts led to a new Brownfields project, as well as a couple new energy audit projects on municipal buildings. Currently, there are three municipal audits in the works in the towns of Shoreham, Ripton and Goshen. The Brownfields project is for a hazardous material site in Middlebury. Kevin has also been researching and reaching out to communities concerning the financing options available to towns who wish to implement the recommendations that were made in last year's energy audits. This includes bonding, leasing, USDA loans, and grants. If your town had an audit and is looking for ways to implement it, please speak with Kevin!