

Meeting Minutes
Addison County Regional Planning Commission
Wednesday, March 11, 2015

ACRPC held its monthly meeting at ACRPC's office on 14 Seminary Street in Middlebury with the Chair, Thea Gaudette of Monkton, presiding.

ROLL CALL:

<i>Addison:</i>		<i>Orwell:</i>	
<i>Bridport:</i>	Edward Payne	<i>Panton:</i>	James Dayton
<i>Bristol:</i>	Peter Grant William Sayre	<i>Ripton:</i>	Jeremy Grip
<i>Cornwall:</i>	Jim Duclos Holly Noordsy Stan Grzyb	<i>Salisbury:</i>	Mary Anne Sullivan Tom Scanlon
<i>Ferrisburgh:</i>	Tim Davis	<i>Shoreham:</i>	Nick Causton
<i>Goshen:</i>	Jim Pulver	<i>Starksboro:</i>	
<i>Leicester:</i>	Diane Benware	<i>Vergennes:</i>	
<i>Lincoln:</i>	Steve Revell	<i>Waltham:</i>	
<i>Middlebury:</i>	Ted Davis David Hamilton Ross Conrad	<i>Weybridge:</i>	Ron Crawford
<i>Monkton:</i>	Thea Gaudette Wendy Sue Harper Steve Pilcher	<i>Whiting:</i>	Ellen Kurrelmeyer
<i>New Haven:</i>	Harvey Smith Susan Smiley		

CITIZEN INTEREST REPRESENTATIVES:

<i>Addison County Farm Bureau:</i>	Kent Wright
<i>Addison County Economic Development Corp:</i>	Harvey Smith
<i>Otter Creek Audubon Society:</i>	
<i>Otter Creek Natural Resources:</i>	Paul Wagner
<i>Addison County Chamber of Commerce:</i>	

ACRPC EXECUTIVE BOARD

Chair: Thea Gaudette
Vice-Chair: Jeremy Grip
Secretary: William Sayre
Treasurer: David Hamilton
At Large: Ted Davis
Andrew Manning
Chico Martin

STAFF

Executive Director: Adam Lougee
Assistant Director/GIS Manager: Kevin Behm
EM/Senior Planner: Tim Bouton
Transportation Planner: Josh Donabedian
Land use Planner: Claire Tebbs
Office Manager/Bookkeeper: Pauline Cousino

7:30 p.m. Presentation:

Thea Gaudette, the Commission's chair opened the meeting at 7:30 and welcomed the Commission's guest for the evening David Mears, Vermont's Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation. Commissioner Mears thanked Thea and noted that he had come to speak about water quality. He also noted he had already enjoyed an interesting meeting with ACRPC's partner organization the Addison County Riverwatch Collaborative.

Commissioner Mears explained that four major sources of Phosphorus pollution exist in Vermont:
Agricultural runoff
Stormwater runoff from developed areas
Runoff from roads; and
Wastewater treatment plant discharges.

Commissioner Mears explained that generally wastewater treatment plant discharges constitute the smallest and already the most heavily regulated source of this wastestream. He also noted that most of the work in this area that can be accomplished in a cost effective manner has already taken place. The proposal in the legislature largely looks to address the other three phosphorus sources.

Agriculture: The bill looks to regulate small farms in addition to the large ones.

Stormwater: The bill seeks to require more stringent standards to get as much water as possible to infiltrate into the ground before reaching our streams. He explained doing so reduces erosion and sediment transport. DEC is looking to address existing stormwater problems as cost effectively as possible.

Roads: Vermont must reduce the runoff from its road networks.

Vermont is looking to replace and upgrade its 2002 plan, rather than have EPA do it under mandate. Commissioner Mears explained that it is important for Vermont to develop its own plan because it can be much more proactive and cost-effective. EPA only has jurisdiction over things that have also largely been addressed. Therefore, an EPA plan would be a very expensive and not a very effective plan.

Commissioner Mears noted that the State plan will focus on less expensive alternatives. He also noted that in addition to raising state funding, the state is looking to federal, local and private partners to help fund the cleanup. He acknowledged that municipal costs to maintain roads will increase in the short term. He hopes this short-term increase will be offset by longer term maintenance savings.

Commissioner Mears opened the floor to questions.

Mary Martin raised the issue of combined sewer/stormwater overflows from wastewater treatment plants on Otter Creek and noted she believed that work still needed to be done in this area.

Commissioner Mears noted that he believe the most cost-effective solutions at the wastewater treatment plant had been addressed and while there was still work to do, it was not the most cost-effective solution to the Wastewater problem.

Ted Davis asked how Vermont's plan compared to that being developed by the State of New York.

Commissioner Mears noted that Vermont had moved ahead of New York in the process to clean the Lake, but that Vermont also contributed a greater source of the Phosphorus pollution.

Ed Payne asked whether it was true that cleanup in the south lake would take 30 years and commented that developed areas needed to contribute, noting that he felt a broader range funding plan was more appropriate to the problem.

Commissioner Mears acknowledged that the south lake will take a long time to clean up, but noted no excuses exist not to start now. David also spoke about the clean water fund he envisioned. He wanted it to be a stand alone fund. He felt that this would make it transparent, so people would understand where and how funds were being spent. He also noted that the Administration favored a broad tax on developed land, not taxes on either rooms and meals or gas.

Steve Pilcher asked about enforcement mechanisms for small farms.

Commissioner Mears responded that one of the central pieces of the legislation involved the oversight of small farms.

Susan Smiley asked how we measure success.

Commissioner Mears responded clean water needed to be boatable, swimable and drinkable. He noted that the State's plan intended to be tactical, and identify specific stresses and address those stresses. He also noted that DEC was working much more closely with federal partners such as the Natural Resource Conservation Districts and UVM Farm Extension Agency to ensure they devote resources to the priority stresses identified in the State's plan.

Ron Crawford suggested that we can learn more quickly and efficiently on small programs and then scale them.

Commissioner Mears agreed that the state must make strategic investments. One of the reasons they want to partner with the RPCs is so they have local input into their strategic priorities and make strong connections with local municipalities.

Jeremy Grip asked how emergency management measures would be coordinated with the legislation.

Commissioner Mears noted that they would be and that both VTrans and DEMHS were partners.

Thea thanked Commissioner Mears for his presentation and offered a 5 minute break before the business meeting.

8:45 p.m. Business Meeting:

Thea opened the business meeting at 8:45 p.m.

- I. Approval of the February 11, 2015 minutes:** Harvey Smith of New Haven moved approval of the February minutes. Wendy Sue Harper of Monkton seconded the motion. The minutes passed by voice vote with Holly Noordsy abstaining and Kent Wright voting against.
- II. Executive Board Minutes:** Thea noted that the Executive Board minutes for the month of February are in the package for the information of the Commission. Thea noted that anyone with questions regarding the Executive Board minutes could speak with a member of the Executive Board or to Adam and moved on to the next item on the agenda.
- III. Treasurer's Report:** Adam noted that the Treasurer's report dated as of March 11, 2015 (The Balance Sheet listed current balances as of March 11, 2015; the monthly budget reflects activity through the end of February 2015). Focusing on this year through February, Adam noted that revenues are slightly ahead of expenses. However, Adam noted that we had included the Agency of Commerce's payment for the quarter ending in March as a receivable and included the dues received for the entire year. Given these prepayments, revenues should be further ahead than they are. Adam offered to take any questions on the Treasurer's report. **Ed Payne of Bridport moved to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. Wendy Sue Harper seconded the motion, which passed by a unanimous voice vote.**

IV. Committee Reports:

Act 250: Ellen gave the Act 250 report as follows:

New Applications:

1. On February 18, ACRPC received an application from River's Edge Associates for a 50 lot PUD on 95 acres in Vergennes. The average lot size will be just over ½ acre and 63 acres will be held in common. The project will be built in 4 phases and is located east of Route 22A, starting at the intersection of Hopkins Road and extending to the Otter Creek.
2. On February 18, ACRPC received a copy of an Act 250 application to construct a 380 Sq Ft primitive hut on the Breadloaf Campus of Middlebury College in Ripton. The hut will serve as a Middlebury College Mountain Club cabin, Rikert warming hut and extended college community. It will be served by a moldering privy only. (February 26 update: Board has determined this to be a minor application, provided a draft permit and will issue same unless issues surface)

Approvals or Denials:

1. On February 18, an administrative amendment was issued to allow the applicant to extend the completion date by 3 years and allow construction of a 10 foot access driveway to access a planned solar farm. This amendment applies to Permit # 9A0312-1 Peter and Deloris Norris and is located in New Haven.

2. On February 23 the District Environmental commission issued a permit amendment for permit # 9A0308-4 to Middlebury South Village for a change of use from a previously approved commercial lot into a residential lot. The approval authorizes construction of 16 residential townhouses on this lot. ACRPC received a correction to this amendment on March 4 amending condition #21 of the earlier decision addressing energy efficiency.

Other:

1. On February 23 ACRPC received a hearing recess order on the Phoenix Feeds application to expand their plant in New Haven Jct. A hearing opened on January 23 was recessed to allow the applicant to provide ANR Stormwater information and evidence of property ownership.
2. On February 26 ACRPC received a 45 Day notice for construction of a 500kw solar array by Encore Development. The proposed site for this array is north of the American Legion in Vergennes on Rte #7.
3. Another DC Transmission line may be in the works for Addison County. This one proposes to lay a transmission line under Lake Champlain which would exit the lake, (Probably in Addison) and extend underground to the VELCO substation off Town Hill Road in New Haven.

At the conclusion of the report Ellen noted that the Committee was interested in a traffic study on the proposed River's Edge development in Vergennes.

Energy: Jeremy noted the Committee met on February 19, 2015 to finalize a proposed template on aesthetic criteria towns may consider to encourage good solar siting within their municipalities. Those guidelines have been distributed. The Committees next meeting will be on March 19th when they will host a meeting on how to create community and /or municipal solar facilities with Town Energy Coordinators.

Local Government: No meeting.

Natural Resources: The Natural Resources Committee met immediately prior to the full commission meeting. It reviewed the regionally significant resources map. It intends to recommend that the map be amended to include ANR's stream corridors, deer wintering areas and clayplain forest blocks as regionally significant resources.

Transportation Advisory Committee: Andrew Manning reported that the TAC met on January 21, 2015. Its primary item of business was to prioritize state roadway and other infrastructure projects. The March meeting will be dedicated primarily to prioritizing town highway bridge candidate projects.

Plan Re-write: Thea noted that the committee did not meet tonight. It is working on the Future Land Use section of the plan. It will continue to work on that section at its next meeting.

V. **Joint Partner's Report:** Adam noted that Addison County Economic Development will be hosting a meeting on Monday, March 23rd focused on pitching ideas for improvements to Vermont's economy to Lieutenant Governor Phil Scott.

VI. **Delegate/Staff Recognition/ Project Highlights: None.**

VII. **Old Business:**

Vermont Gas Pipeline Update: Adam discussed the status of the Vermont Gas pipeline. Adam noted that at the end of December, Vermont Gas had announced its second significant cost increase on Phase I of the pipeline. The Supreme Court has remanded that case back to the Public Service Board. No schedule has been set, but there is a status conference scheduled for March 18th. Vermont Gas has also announced that it would cancel Phase 2 of the project. Several Commissioners reiterated that they felt ACRPC should participate in the Phase 1 remand. Adam noted that the Commission needed to wait to see what happened procedurally, but that he was inclined to follow the Department's lead. Commissioners suggested that ACRPC should do its own due diligence, not follow the Department of Public Service too closely and look into things like new comparative pricing, the introduction of cold climate heat pumps, the number of customers proposed to be served. Steve Pilcher noted that Monkton was concerned about its distribution system and wanted to make sure the new gate station and distribution network proposed for Monkton would be included in the budget.

New Business:

Election of a Nominating Committee: Thea noted that this is the meeting the Commission selects a committee for the nomination of officers to the Executive Board. She noted that the bylaws direct the current executive Board to propose a slate to serve as the committee. Thea noted the Executive Board would propose to nominate:

1. Andrew Manning, Chair
2. James Dayton; and
3. Mary Anne Sullivan

Ross Conrad spoke up and questioned whether the sitting Executive Board should nominate the nominating committee. Thea noted Ross had a valid concern, but stated that we needed to follow the bylaws this evening. Steve Pilcher nominated Ross to serve on the nominating committee. Ross agreed he would run. Prior to an election, Jamie Dayton agreed to withdraw from the field, leaving the slate as:

1. Andrew Manning, Chair
2. Mary Anne Sullivan; and
3. Ross Conrad.

Ron Crawford moved the new slate. Ellen Kurrelmeyer seconded the motion. All approved by Voice vote.

Discussion of Annual Meeting Location and Speaker: Thea noted the Executive Board had started to consider locations and places for our annual meeting. Adam noted several suggestions. He asked anyone with further suggestions to please share them with him or a member of the Executive Board.

Nominations for the Bertha Hanson Award: Thea noted that it was also time to nominate a Commissioner for the Bertha Hanson award. She noted that the Bertha award was given annually to a commissioner that consistently contributed to the commission in a thoughtful manner.

Other. None.

VIII. Member Concerns and Information: None.

IX. Adjourn: Tom Scanlon moved to adjourn. Wendy Sue Harper seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The Commission adjourned its meeting at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Lougee