

Meeting Minutes
Addison County Regional Planning Commission
Wednesday, January 13, 2016

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 Andrew Manning	<i>Panton:</i>	Jamie Dayton
<i>Bristol:</i>	Peter Grant Chico Martin	<i>Ripton:</i>	Jeremy Grip
<i>Cornwall:</i>	Holly Noordsy Stan Grzyb	<i>Salisbury:</i>	Tom Scanlon
<i>Ferrisburgh:</i>	Tim Davis Robert Peisch	<i>Shoreham:</i>	
<i>Goshen:</i>	Jim Pulver	<i>Starksboro:</i>	
<i>Leicester:</i>	Diane Benware Ron Fiske	<i>Vergennes:</i>	Mel Hawley Shannon Haggett
<i>Lincoln:</i>	Steve Revell	<i>Waltham:</i>	
<i>Middlebury:</i>	Karl Neuse 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 Jim Walsh		

CITIZEN INTEREST REPRESENTATIVES:

<i>Addison County Farm Bureau:</i>	Bill Scott
<i>Addison County Economic Development Corp:</i>	Harvey Smith
<i>Otter Creek Audubon Society:</i>	Ron Payne
<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: Ted Davis
Treasurer: David Hamilton
At Large: Chico Martin
Diane Benware
Nick Causton

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

Addison County Regional Planning Commission

14 Seminary Street Middlebury, VT 05753 www.acrpc.org Phone: 802.388.3141 Fax: 802.388.0038

7:30 p.m. Hearing on Regional Plan Amendments:

Thea opened the hearing at 7:30 p.m. to comments from the public or Commission members.

Ross Conrad asked several questions and made comments on proposed amendments including:

1. Ross noted that in the Future Land Use section, it mentions that the towns bordering the lake had approximately 20% of their land conserved in two separate places. Ross suggested that one should be edited out to eliminate unnecessary redundancy.

Adam agreed that this suggestion appeared appropriate.

2. Ross requested that “energy efficient housing” be added to the list of goals for Housing in the Implementation Section of the Plan.

Adam agreed that this suggestion appeared appropriate.

3. Ross asked why SARA reporting was included as a task for the implementation section as he believes the fire departments already do the work.

Adam responded that ACRPC collects the data under contract for the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (“DEMHS”).

4. Ross noted that both the village and rural agriculture sections in the Future Land Use plan promote agricultural service and value added businesses and questioned whether this was redundant.

Adam responded that the sections are similar, but felt businesses of different scales were appropriate in both areas and therefore the language was intentional, not redundant.

Thea thanked Ross for his comments, recessed the public hearing and opened the program at 7:45.

7:45 p.m. Program, Improving Water Quality under the Clean Water Act and its requirements of municipalities.

Thea welcomed the Commission’s guests for the evening, Rebecca Ellis, Kari Dolan and Neil Kamman all of the Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Environmental Conservation. Rebecca, Kari and Neil thanked Thea for an opportunity to speak.

Kari Dolan began with a presentation on Act 64, the State’s implementation of the Clean Water Act. The PowerPoint presentation contained in their discussion can be found on ACRPC’s website under [resources/presentations](#).

The presentation covered 4 areas:

1. Stormwater management: Roads – Town permitting requirements;
2. Stormwater management: Existing impervious surfaces >3 acres;

Addison	Bridport	Bristol	Cornwall	Ferrisburgh	Goshen	Leicester
Lincoln	Middlebury	Monkton	New Haven	Orwell	Panton	Ripton
Salisbury	Shoreham	Starksboro	Vergennes	Waltham	Weybridge	Whiting



3. Stormwater management: Ag runoff;
4. Resources

Neil noted that all work will need to coordinate with the tactical basin plans. Addison County generally has land area in two basins, the South Lake Plan, initially completed in 2014 and the Otter Creek Basin completed in 2012. Because of the priority placed on the south lake, that plan is scheduled to be amended early, by 2017 and the Otter Creek Plan by 2019.

Peter Grant asked what information he should bring back to his home town of Bristol.

Rebecca Ellis referred Peter to the handout given with the agenda:

<http://cleanwater.vermont.gov/cwvt/docs/CWI-municipalities-fact-sheet-9-8-15.pdf>

It contains a lot of information for towns on programs that will be implemented.

Bob Peisch of Ferrisburgh expressed skepticism regarding the plan. He noted Vermont had already invested millions of dollars in water quality and had little improvement to show for it. He also noted that disasters tended to show that we could do little to prevent their power.

Kari responded by acknowledging that extreme weather is impossible to control, but we can be successful in mitigating its impacts through smart designs and proper culvert signing.

Mel Hawley asked if ANR had maps depicting existing lots with greater than 3 acres of impervious surfaces and a database of owners and contact information.

Kari responded that ANR is in the process of drafting a map intended to depict existing lots with greater than 3 acres of impervious surfaces linked to a database of owners and contact information.

Chico Martin asked how many road permits a municipality will need, how will they budget for road improvements and who would set the priorities for improvements?

Kari responded that each town will apply for one general permit. They will be given time to create their priorities and budget for implementation measures over 20 years. She noted that ANR is setting the rules, but the towns will create priorities within those rules.

Ron Crawford noted that towns are in the middle of setting their budgets for next fiscal year. Municipal budgets are already stretched and property tax rates are already expensive. How will municipalities be expected to fund these mandated improvements?

Rebecca Ellis responded that municipalities should prioritize improvements based upon the stormwater generated. Roads that are eroding should be fixed first. Between the long timeframe allowed, maintenance savings over time from improved roads and culverts and some state incentives, she hopes towns will be able to do the work required near their current budget parameters.

At 8:45 Thea asked for a five-minute recess, thanked ACRPC's guests and closed the program so the Commission could move to the remainder of its hearing and business meeting.

8:50 Reopen Hearing on Hearing on Regional Plan Amendments:

Thea reopened the hearing to additional comments or questions. Adam noted that he had received comments from both Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission and the Agency of Commerce and Community Development. The Plan Rewrite Committee had reviewed them prior to the meeting and agreed to incorporate many within the draft amendments. They include:

1. Changing the name of the “High Density Residential District” to “Rural Residential District” to more accurately describe the densities (< 2 acres) contained in the areas so designated;
2. Amending the Rural and Agricultural District within the Future Land Use Section to include a statement of support for agricultural related land uses in the discussion;
3. Amend the Village Regions within the Future Land Use Section to include a discussion supporting the village center designation program;

Mel Hawley referenced the Future Land Use Map and suggested that the southern portion of the City of Vergennes should be reclassified from “Rural and Agriculture to Rural Residential as that district better reflected the City’s land use within that portion of the City.

Holly Noordsy suggested that the Historical, Cultural, Municipal and Recreational Sub-section of the Implementation Section of the Plan should include a priority to protect historic resources.

Holly also noted that the Regional Future Land Use Map depicted West Cornwall Village in the Rural Residential Region rather than in the Village Region and suggested the designation was inaccurate based upon Cornwall’s plan.

Adam noted that he would bring the comments provided to the Plan Re-Write Committee and incorporate appropriate suggestions provided by the members making comments during the public hearing and re-circulate each section as amended to reflect the comments received and approved by the committee.

Hearing no further comments, Thea closed the public hearing, reminded the commission that it would hold the second of its two hearings at its February meeting and, depending upon the results of that hearing be prepared to vote on the plan amendments at the March meeting.

BUSINESS MEETING:

- I. Approval of the December 9, 2015 minutes:** Ellen Kurrelmeyer moved approval of the minutes. Ron Crawford seconded the motion. The minutes passed by voice vote with Andrew Manning, Jamie Dayton, Shannon Haggett, Mel Hawley, Steve Revell, Holly Noordsy and Nick Causton abstaining.
- II. Executive Board Minutes:** Thea noted that the Executive Board did not meet in the previous month because of the holidays.
- III. Treasurer’s Report:** Adam noted that the Treasurer’s report dated as of January 13, 2015 (The Balance Sheet lists current balances as of today; the monthly budget reflects activity through the end of December 2015). Adam noted that cash balances are good and that revenues are ahead of expenses, even though we have not sent out December’s bills. Adam offered to take any questions on the Treasurer’s Report. **Karl Neuse moved to accept the**

Treasurer's Report as presented. Ellen Kurrelmeyer seconded the motion, which passed by a unanimous voice vote.

IV. Committee Reports:

Act 250: Ellen gave an Act 250/Section 248 report as follows. Ellen noted that the Act 250/Section 248 Committee had met on January 5 to review proposals before the Region. She noted that the committee had received 9 solar applications including 3 in New Haven, 2 in Whiting and 1 each in Ferrisburgh, Addison, Vergennes and Panton. The Committee also met with representatives of Green Mountain Power to discuss the constrained distribution area in Addison County as depicted on the GMP solar map. GMP noted that all of the applications ACRPC is seeing now before the Public Service Board had already been approved and accounted for in its system by GMP before it produced the map. GMP implied that few new systems, other than homeowner supplied systems should be able to be built within the constrained area without the solar developer being responsible for improving the sub-transmission distribution system or the substations.

Stan Grzyb noted that Addison County has more solar systems than anywhere else in the state. He noted that tourism is one of the largest economic drivers in the region and that Addison's tourism is based largely on its aesthetics and open rural landscape. We must work to ensure that solar is sighted well and properly to preserve our tourism brand.

Steve Revell responded that the Region has been working hard on this issue. We are getting recognition at the department and since we have sent our letter to developers are getting more thoughtful siting plans on most new applications.

Ross Conrad noted that he is concerned about out of state companies developing power for their needs, not Vermont's and using lots of available land.

Paul Wagner noted that the state took control of this issue from the municipalities.

Jim Walsh stated that the legislature needs to act to protect the countryside and that we should all be contacting our legislative delegation.

Jeremy Grip noted that at the meeting with the Act 250/248 committee GMP stated that northwest Addison County is built out and that we should not see a lot of new commercial applications in that area.

Energy: No meeting to report, but Jeremy as Chair of the committee did attend the Act 250/248 committee meeting for the discussion on solar.

Local Government: Thea deferred this item until later in the agenda.

Natural Resources: Wendy Sue Harper reported that the Natural Resources Committee would meet next month.

Transportation Advisory Committee: The TAC did not meet in December.

Plan Re-write: Karl noted that the committee met immediately prior to the meeting and its recommendations are summarized in the hearing minutes above.

V. **Joint Partner's Report:** None.

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

VII. **Old Business:**

Other: None.

VIII. **New Business:**

Vote on confirmation of Ripton's planning process and regional approval of the Ripton Town Plan. Thea noted that the Local Government Committee had a good meeting in Ripton. She noted that the committee had reviewed both the planning process and the plan and that the committee recommended that the commission confirm Ripton's planning process and regionally approve the Ripton Town Plan. **Chico Martin moved confirmation and approval as recommended by the committee. Ellen Kurrelmeyer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.**

Other: Stan Grzyb brought up the issue of Anbaric Energy's planned Green Line to the New Haven sub-station. Stan expressed concern that Anbaric could not definitively state that the project would not require substantial upgrades to the transmission lines serving that sub-station. Stan expressed his opinion that this would be a substantial regional issue and requested that we discuss undergrounding transmission lines in the future and would like a presentation on the issue in March.

IX. **Adjourn:**

Peter Grant moved to adjourn. The Commission unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Lougee