

ACRPC News

February 2002



REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Bike-Ped Update

The final public hearing for the Addison County Regional Bicycle & Pedestrian Report was held on January 24. Some constructive comments were received for improving the document. Following the incorporation of these comments and revisions, the document will be ready for publication and distribution to the towns.

Maja Smith from Lake Champlain Bikeways (LCB) discussed plans to apply for a Vermont Recreational Trails Grant to implement more bicycle theme loops in Addison County. Currently there is a network of 27 bicycle loops around Lake Champlain. Two of these loops, Rebel's Retreat and Otter Creek Wandering, are in Addison County.

LCB has identified 12 additional locations for potential loops in the region. Pending funding, LCB will be working with the towns, Chamber of Commerce and ACRPC in identifying six potential routes, developing and printing a guidebook, and installing bike racks.

For further information, contact Garrett Dague at 388-3141, or Maja Smith at 802-372-3213.

New ACRPC Staff Member to Work on Watershed Planning Issues in the Region

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission welcomes a new staff member, Hilary Spitz. She started in January as our Watershed Planner and will be working to ensure that the basin planning effort in the Addison Region reflects the needs and interests of the residents that use its water for drinking, recreating and working.

Hilary hopes to strengthen and support community-based watershed activities within the region. Her goal is to build support and interest among many people and organizations and get all interested parties involved in watershed planning and working towards a cleaner watershed.

In a few months, Ethan Swift from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation will make his way up north from the Poutney-Mettowee watershed

to our region in the Otter Creek Basin to begin work on the State of Vermont's watershed plan.

Hilary intends to work closely with both Ethan and local residents so that our plan will be a collaborative, inclusive effort with input from every member of the basin that wants to get involved. Hilary will be a resource and a strong voice for the region leading up to and during this planning process.



Hilary's background and skills in water resources will substantially benefit the Commission and its member municipalities as we begin the basin planning process.

Please feel free to contact Hilary to get involved in watershed issues in the region or to let her know of any watershed activities she could participate in.

February

Calendar

March

- 1 Recreation Trails Grant Deadline
- 13 7:30 p.m. Full Commission Meeting. Kenyon Lounge, Middlebury College.
- 20 7:00 p.m. Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting. ACRPC Office.
- 27 7:00 p.m. Executive Board Meeting. ACRPC Office.

- 12 5:00 p.m. Fire Grant Open House. ACRPC Office.
- 13 7:30 p.m. Full Commission Meeting. Location TBA.
- 14 5:00 p.m. Fire Grant Open House. ACRPC Office.
7:00 p.m. Lewis Creek Association Watershed Assessment Presentation. Charlotte Town Hall.
- 20 7:00 p.m. Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting. ACRPC Office.
- 27 7:00 p.m. Executive Board Meeting. ACRPC Office.

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Junkyard Regulation

Municipalities now have the authority to cleanup junkyards through 24 VSA § 2201.

This state law prevents junk and refuse from being placed within 300 feet of neighboring property or a waterbody, as well as within view from a public road.

A municipality can designate someone as its enforcement officer. Once the name is submitted to the Judicial Bureau, that person can issue tickets. The town attorney and law enforcement officers can also issue tickets.

Violations carry a penalty of up to \$500. The penalty is civil and violations are enforced by the Judicial Bureau in much the same way as traffic tickets.

Vote on Regional Plan Amendments

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission has completed several updates to the Regional Plan and will be voting to adopt those amendments and then readopt the entire plan at its February meeting.

The plan or amendments must be adopted by not less than a **60 percent vote** of the commissioners representing a majority of the municipalities.

This means that **23 votes from commissioners representing 11 municipalities** are required to pass an amendment or readopt the plan. In January, there were only 18 commission members present, so a vote was not held. If a delegate is unable to attend, an alternate can vote instead.

Once it is approved, the plan is then immediately submitted to the municipal legislative bodies of the region. The plan or amendment takes effect within 35 days of adoption unless a majority of the region's municipal legislative bodies veto it.

The plan was mailed out to all commission members and to municipalities with November's monthly mailing. The plan sections are also available for review at the ACRPC office or online (http://www.acrpc.org/pages/publications/reg_plan.htm).

Please feel free to contact either Brandy Saxton (bsaxton@sover.net) or Adam Lougee (alougee@sover.net) with any questions or concerns (388-3141).

Fire Grant Workshops

FEMA will be making grants to local fire departments again this year. \$360 million will be available in Fire Act Grants nationally in 2002. There have been some changes to the program since last year.

In preparation for the March application period, the Vermont Fire Academy and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will be hosting four workshops around the state.

The workshops will give fire departments a chance to ask questions and receive updated information about the application process from FEMA representative Bob Waters.

The three-hour workshops will all start at 6:30 p.m. Workshops will be held in:

St. Johnsbury on February 4

South Burlington on February 25

Rutland on February 27

Brattleboro on March 5

Attendance is limited to two people from each department. Please contact the Vermont Fire Academy with the names of those attending. (Phone: 800-615-3473, Fax: 802-483-2464, Email: emcgee@vfst.state.vt.us)

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission will host two open house sessions like we did last year, to assist departments with their applications.

Unlike last year, FEMA will require online submission. So we will have computers set up here at our office during the open house sessions to file applications. The two open house sessions will be held from **5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on March 12 and 14.**

We encourage departments to attend one of the statewide workshops in February and then come to our sessions in March prepared to complete applications. Please contact Tim Bouton (tbouton@sover.net) or Brandy Saxton (bsaxton@sover.net) (388-3141) with any questions.

2002 Bike-Ped Grants

The 2002 Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant applications are now available, and a copy will be mailed to each municipality.

The program has undergone some changes again this year. The construction funding category has been suspended and this year's funds will be for feasibility studies only.

If a town has a conceptual idea for an alternative transportation facility that promotes bicycling or walking to and from activity centers within a community, they can apply for funding to complete a feasibility study. Such a study includes a review of the environmental, historical, right-of-way, permitting, and technical issues associated with the proposed project.

A feasibility study, or conceptual alignment analysis (CAA) is required before any construction funds can be awarded.

The application deadline is April 8, 2002. If your town has a potential project, or to receive further information, contact Garrett Dague at 388-3141.