



ACRPC

update June 2012

ACRPC Hosts Forums for Municipalities on Energy Retrofits and Municipal Solar

ACRPC recently hosted two forums to assist towns with energy projects. The first forum on April 25th focused on the feasibility and economics of installing solar electric systems on municipal or school owned property. AllEarth Renewables of Williston and the Acorn Renewable Energy Coop of Middlebury presented two financing models designed especially for municipalities and schools.

The presentations focused on site selection, system sizing, and economics. Due to innovative financing

offered with these models, towns and schools with appropriate sites have the opportunity to install a solar electric system with no upfront cost and save on their utility bills and carbon emissions.

A half dozen Addison County towns are exploring this opportunity further. Talk to ACRPC Planner Kevin Lehman to find out more (388-3141, kevinl@acrpc.org) or refer to the May 31 article in the Addison Independent (<http://addisonindependent.com/201205four-acsu-schools-eye-solar-arrays>).

The second forum on May 24th focused on implementing energy audits. Over the past two years ACRPC assisted eighteen Addison County towns with energy audits on public buildings. There is an opportunity for towns to save money and energy on their public buildings while improving their safety and comfort, but there are also challenges in tackling these projects. Experts from Efficiency Vermont, EPA, and Structural Energy Conservation were present to address the key hurdles in implementing municipal energy audits:

- How to pay for the project, ROI and cashflow
- How to benchmark and track energy usage/savings
- How to decipher and prioritize the audit

ACRPC will also be working with other Regional Planning Commissions around the state on a similar initiative in other regions. Talk to ACRPC Planner Kevin Lehman to find out more (388-3141, kevinl@acrpc.org).

Thanks to everyone who attended these forums!

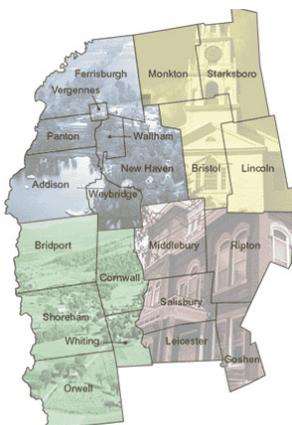
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Commission Calendar

June 2012

13	7:30pm	Full Commission Meeting
18	7:00	ACORN Energy Coop Board
20	7:30	Energy Committee
21	7:00	Addison County Solid Waste Management District Meeting
25	5:00-6:30	ACORN Network Board
27	6:30pm	ACRPC Executive Board
27	5:00	Local Emergency Planning Committee, VT State Police Barracks

Meetings are held at ACRPC, 14 Seminary Street, Middlebury, and are open to the public.



Addison County Regional Planning Commission
14 Seminary Street
Middlebury, VT 05753

Phone: 802.388.3141
Fax: 802.388.0038

Recent flooding results in FEMA damage assessments

Storm and flooding damages are being evaluated in three Addison County communities following the storms and flooding in late May. Shoreham, Cornwall and Ripton all submitted reports to Vermont Emergency Management officials in the wake of those storms which helped raised the awareness up in Waterbury.

State officials initially thought the damages would not meet the required thresholds for a federal declaration until receiving reports from our towns and from other reports in Lamoille, Orleans and Windham Counties. In response to those reports, VEM officials requested preliminary damage assessments be conducted by FEMA personnel. Since total damages in Addison County only need to meet approximately \$125,000, to be included in any state declaration request, every little bit helps.

If successful, communities in our region could stand to receive up to 85% reimbursement for costs associated with the damaging storms. If damages do not meet the minimums, efforts by local emergency managers and town officials are an effective training for future incidents and will provide great documentation for future grant proposals. Well done!

ACRPC to Conduct Traffic Counts

This summer ACRPC will conduct traffic counts for municipalities that desire speed limit engineering studies to support changes to their local traffic ordinance and respective posted speed limits. Speed data derived from the traffic counts are a necessary part of an engineering study, which is used as the legal justification for speed limit enforcement whenever municipal traffic ordinance is challenged in court.

ACRPC is available to conduct counts from now until October 15, 2012. Traffic count requests from municipalities will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, contact ACRPC Transportation Planner Daryl Benoit.

ACTR awarded \$100,000 Grant

Addison County Transit Resources (ACTR) was recently awarded a \$100,000 grant by Jane's Trust of Boston, Massachusetts. These funds contribute towards the 20% local match requirements of a \$2.85 million Federal Grant previously awarded to ACTR for the construction of the Community Transportation Center.

"We are honored to receive this gift recognizing our contribution to the economic, social and environmental health of the Addison County region," said Jim Moulton, Executive Director of ACTR. "We have now raised nearly 97% of the funds needed to create this center, which will enable us to continue meeting the growing community transportation needs in the region."

The county's "transit-dependent" population, i.e., those who are most likely to be unable to transport themselves due to economic, physical or cognitive barriers, is growing more quickly than ACTR's current resources can accommodate. Demographically, in 2000, 15% of the county's population was age 60 or older. In 2010, that number had risen to 20% and, by 2020, it is projected to rise to 27%. As people age, they often become less able to drive and tend to need more medical services. They also often live on limited incomes, with fewer dollars available for owning and maintaining personal vehicles.

Economic trends are also increasing the demand for more comprehensive community transportation services. In 2010, 11.7% of Vermonters lived in poverty in 2010, up from 9.4% in the 2000 Census. Meanwhile, fuel prices remain near \$4.00 per gallon and the average annual cost of owning and operating a car in Vermont has risen to nearly \$8,000, placing greater pressure on household budgets. ACTR cannot meet these growing demands, however, without transforming the infrastructure from which it operates.

ACTR plans to be operating out of the new Community Transportation Center by March 2013, shortly after

Grants / Events

reaching its 20th anniversary of service to the community. To learn more about ACTR's services, and/or contribute to the capital campaign for the Community Transportation Center, go to www.actr-vt.org or call 388-1946.

VTrans to Provide Bike Racks to Municipalities

The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) has just released a grant application for Vermont municipalities to obtain free bicycle racks.

VTrans will purchase and ship bicycle racks directly to successful applicant communities. Successful applicants will be responsible for the installation of the device.

Communities may seek bicycle racks for their public buildings, such as; town offices, libraries, parks, etc. upon municipally owned property or road right of way only. VTrans will not provide any funding to construct any receiving surface, foundations, etc. for the bicycle racks. Applicants must provide a map or sketch indicating the bicycle parking location and also will be required to certify that the bicycle parking is on publicly controlled property. Applications are due by 29 Jun 2012.

To find out more, contact Daryl Benoit, ACRPC Transportation Planner at 388-3141 or dbenoit@acrpc.org. Additional details and application can be found at <http://www.aot.state.vt.us/progdev/Sections/LTF%20Info/BikePed62011.htm>.

Tax Credits for Building Projects in Village Centers

The Vermont Legislature created three tax credits described to support redevelopment of older and historic properties within Designated Downtown and Designated Village Center districts. The tax credits are targeted at general rehabilitation work, code compliance work, and exterior improvements to the façade of buildings. It is expected that any changes to buildings will respect the historic character of the Designated Downtown or Village Center district.

To find out more, visit <http://www.central-vt.com/legis/incent/TaxCreditGuidelines10.pdf>. The deadline to apply is August 6th.

Homeland Security Grant Program

The Vermont Homeland Security Unit (HSU) is seeking applications from local municipalities for interoperable communications equipment through the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP). The primary focus for this funding will be to provide narrowband capable radios to municipal departments currently using non-narrowband capable radios to enable interoperability with other municipal departments and emergency dispatch services. Applications will be considered for new and/or replacement mobile radios, portable radios, base stations, repeaters or radio re-programming. The cost of requested radios, available funding and number of applicants will be contributing factors in determining awards.

Find out more at <http://hsu.vermont.gov/funding/municipalities>.

Flood Hazard Regulations Workshop: What every town needs to know

*Thursday, June 21, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Rutland Regional Planning Commission*

67 Merchants Row, Third Floor, Downtown Rutland

Rebecca Pfeiffer of the State's Rivers Program will present the actions required for administering flood hazard regulations. This workshop will cover how to determine whether a permit is necessary, how to evaluate an application, and when to use an Elevation Certificate. Rebecca will also address flood insurance rate maps and keeping track of past permits as mandated by the National Flood Insurance Program.

Please RSVP by June 18 to Philip Picotte (775-0871 ext. 205 or ppicotte@rutlandrpc.org). Light refreshments will be served. All are welcome (town clerks, zoning administrators, planning commissioners).

Events

**Federal Coordinating Officer Nick Russo to
speak at Annual LEPC meeting**

Wednesday, June 27, 5:00 PM

Vermont State Police Barracks, Middlebury

The Addison County Local Emergency Planning Committee will be hosting Nick Russo the current FEMA Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) at its annual meeting. Mr. Russo has been the FCO in Vermont for much of the past year which has included the worst year for disasters that Vermont has seen in recent memory. Mr. Russo will speak on Irene and her aftermath as well as how Vermont will continue to be affected into the future from the disasters of 2011. All town emergency managers are encouraged to attend.

SolarFest - The Power of Positive Energy

July 20 - 22, 2012

Tinmouth, Vermont

This year SolarFest is offering workshops in Renewable Energy, Green Building, Sustainable Agriculture, Thriving Locally, The Solar Generation (workshops specifically designed for young people) and a brand new track - Business to Business Friday - geared toward industry professionals and the more technically interested attendee. For more information visit <http://solarfest.org>.

Events

