

ACRPC

update March 2016

River Watch Training in Middlebury

A training for Addison County river monitors will be held on Saturday, March 19th, from 8:30 - 11:00am at the Addison County Regional Planning Commission. The Addison County River Watch Collaborative (ACRWC) has been working for over 20 years to monitor the quality of area rivers, streams and creeks. Volunteers collect water samples – which then go to the Vermont Dept. of Environmental Conservation laboratory – once a month from April to September. Sample days are usually one Wednesday morning per month (about 7:00-9:30) during spring & summer.

We welcome volunteers to help sample on the Otter Creek, Middlebury River, Lemon Fair, New Haven River, Lewis Creek, and Little Otter Creek. If you have an interest in the health and well-being of our local watersheds, and would like to assist in collecting samples, please join us for this training session. Local Bagels & Coffee will be served. For more information, call or email ACRWC Director Matthew Witten at: (802) 434-3236 or mwitten@gmavt.net.

FREE webinars at CCRPC and VTrans!

Jon Kaplan VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Manager for Municipal Assistance Bureau has announced an upcoming FREE webinar series on bike and pedestrian topics. VTrans and the CCRPC will host the following webinar series presented by the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP, <http://www.apbp.org/>).

People can participate for free at the CCRPC office. If Montpelier is more convenient for you, VTrans is also hosting the webinar series in Room 413 of the Davis building at the National Life building.

The next webinar is “Understanding the Funding Process” on Wednesday, March 16 from 3:00 to 4:00 pm.

The webinar series runs through December 2016, with webinars taking place the third Wednesday of each month (except December) from 3:00-4:00 p.m. Upcoming webinars include:

- Mar 16: Understanding the Funding Process
- Apr 20: Shared and Separated Off-street Paths
- May 18: Aspects of Equity

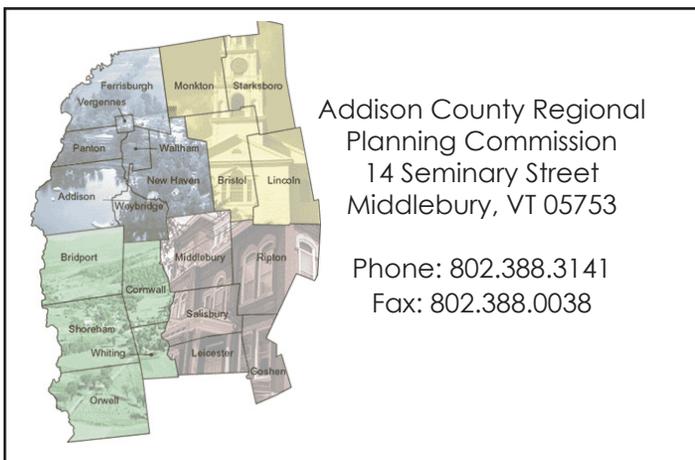
This newsletter is financed through the State of Vermont Dept. of Housing and Community Affairs. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the State of Vermont. All programs of the Addison County Regional Planning Commission are handicapped accessible.

Commission Calendar

March 2016

9	7:30pm	Full Commission Meeting
16	7:00pm	TAC Meeting
17	7:00pm	ACSWMD Meeting
23	6:30pm	Executive Board Meeting
April 7	4:30pm	Act 250/Section 248 Committee Meeting

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



Addison County Regional Planning Commission
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Grants, Events & Workshops

Agency of Ag Releases 2nd Draft of Required Agricultural Practices for Public Review

Today, the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAFAM) has released a second draft of the Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs) for public review. This draft, to be presented to the legislature and the public over the coming weeks, has been substantially revised to incorporate public input. The second draft is available today on the Agency website: <http://agriculture.vermont.gov/water-quality/regulations/rap>

As a result of Act 64—the Vermont Clean Water Act—signed into law in June 2015, the Agency of Agriculture was tasked with updating the Accepted Agricultural Practices (AAPs) to further reduce the impact of agriculture on water quality across the state. The RAPs are an updated version of the AAPs, the rules which regulate farms in order to protect water quality, re-written to a higher level of performance. The Agency sought public input on its first draft of the new regulations, to ensure the RAPs reflected the realities of farming and the legislative intent of Act 64.

The public meetings and public comment period held in 2015 are not required by law, however this informal process was conducted by the VAAFAM to ensure rule development which will provide a realistic, workable framework for agricultural management in our state that effectively protects Vermont's lakes and rivers. The first draft public comment period opened on October 20, 2015, and ended on December 18, 2015. During this period, 10 public meetings were held throughout Vermont – the first on November 12, 2015, at the St. Albans Historical Society and the last on December 10, 2016, at the Chandler Music Hall in Randolph. Twenty-one small focus group meetings were also held throughout the state with various stakeholders. Since the close of the first public comment period, the Agency has spent nine weeks to thoroughly review and consider all public comment—over 800 people attended more than 30 meetings throughout the state to voice their opinions and 169 Vermonters submitted written comments.

“VAAFAM wishes to thank all members of the community who took the time to provide comments or otherwise participate in this public process,” said Vermont's Ag Secretary, Chuck Ross. “This is a clear indication that Vermonters, particularly farmers, care very deeply about water quality and getting this right. When the RAPs are eventually finalized, I know they will be stronger and more effective, as a result of all the input we received.”

Act 64 specifies that the RAP rules will be finalized before July 1, 2016. In March, the Agency intends to begin formal rulemaking to meet this deadline. The public will again have the opportunity to attend public hearings and provide written comment on the RAPs during the formal public hearing and comment period, tentatively scheduled to begin in May. VAAFAM will continue to encourage public feedback and engage with stakeholders throughout the late winter prior to the formal comment period.

Jim Leland, Director of the Ag Resource Management Division at VAAFAM explains, “Significant changes have been made throughout the second draft of the RAPs. We began by revising and reformatting the RAPs, in an effort to provide clarity.” Leland continues, “In addition, three areas which received the most extensive public comment and have been revised from the first draft include: the small farm certification threshold, proposed standards around manure stacking sites, and proposed manure spreading restrictions on steep slopes and high phosphorus fields.” Leland continues, “Be sure to read the responsiveness summary we've provided which highlights 30 major changes in the second draft of the RAPs which resulted from public input.”

The Agency's response to comment, as well as a summary of written public comments received before Jan 1, 2016, are both available on the Agency RAP website.

For more information about the RAPs, and the Agency's efforts to implement Act 64, please visit <http://agriculture.vermont.gov/water-quality/regulations/rap> or

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contact the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets at (802) 828-3478.

Questions and comment about the RAPs can be directed to AGR.RAP@Vermont.gov

Vermont Better Roads Program Workshops

VTrans has announced a series of Better Roads Program workshops around the state throughout March and into early April. This workshop provides updated information on the VT Better Roads Program and the grant application process. The programs goal is to promote the use of erosion control and maintenance techniques that save money while protecting and enhancing Vermont's lakes and streams.

The objectives of the workshops are to help participants understand the VT Better Roads Program and changes for FY2017, comprehend expectations for standards and procedures associated with receiving grant funding, and gain a better understanding of the procedures and timeline involved in processing grant requests. The intended audience for the workshop includes town road foreman, administrators, selectboard members, and engineers.

Class Running Time

8:30 - 9:00 am: Registration

9:00 am: Workshop Begins

11:30 am: Workshop Ends

Locations

- TUESDAY - MARCH 15, 2016, PANTON TOWN HALL
- Wednesday - March 16, 2016, Putney Fire Station
** 10 am Start time
- Tuesday - March 22, 2016, Enosburg Public Safety Building
- Thursday - March 24, 2016, Derby AOT Garage
- Tuesday - March 29, 2016, Hyde Park Town Garage
- Thursday - March 31, 2016, Peacham Town Garage
- Thursday - April 7, 2016, Arlington Town Office

FY2017 Vermont Better Roads Grant Program

The Vermont Agency of Transportation is pleased to announce the 19th year of funding to support projects on municipal roads that improve water quality and result in maintenance cost savings. The grant funds are provided by the VT Agency of Transportation with partnership through the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. The Vermont Better Roads Program's goal is to promote the use of erosion control and maintenance techniques that save money while protecting and enhancing Vermont's lakes and streams. Funds, subject to availability, will be distributed as grants to municipalities to address town erosion problems.

Program Changes for FY2017

Additional funding is anticipated from the Transportation Bill through Act 40 and from the Clean Water Fund through Act 64. This year's grant application features additional categories to reflect this additional money as well as increased grant amounts. With these changes the Better Backroads Program has undergone a slight name change to the Better Roads Program to reflect the inclusion of paved roads into the program for the first time.

Applications due by 5pm on Friday April 15th, 2016.

The application may be downloaded here: <http://vtrans-engineering.vermont.gov/bureaus/mab/better-backroads>. Paper copies of the applications will be mailed to all towns. Please contact Alan May, Better Roads Coordinator at (802) 828-4585 or alan.may@vermont.gov if you have any questions.

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Cultural Facilities Grant Seeker Workshop

The Vermont Arts Council will host free workshops for Vermont nonprofit organizations and municipalities interested in applying for FY2017 Cultural Facilities Grants.

Through the Cultural Facilities Grant program, grants up to \$30,000 are awarded to Vermont nonprofit organizations and municipalities to enhance, create, or expand the capacity of an existing building to provide cultural activities for the public. Projects such as wiring, heating, adding accessibility features (e.g. elevators, lifts, assistive listening systems, ramps, and bathrooms), lighting, and stage improvements are eligible for consideration. This program is administered by the Vermont Arts Council in conjunction with the Vermont Historical Society and the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. The deadline for applications is Monday, May 2, 2016.

Is your organization planning to apply for a Cultural Facilities Grant this year? If so, we encourage you to attend a grant seeker workshop.

The workshop schedule is as follows. All workshops will be held from 2:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.:

- Thursday, Feb. 25: Morristown Centennial Library, 7 Richmond Street, Morrisville
- Wednesday, March 2: Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster Street, Bellows Falls
- Monday, March 7: Vermont Folklife Center, 88 Main Street, Middlebury

Applicants are encouraged to attend one of the workshops. RSVP to Troy Hickman at thickman@vermontartscouncil.org 802.828.3292.

2016 Vermont Walk/Bike Summit

The Rutland Regional Planning Commission is set to host the 2016 Vermont Walk/Bike Summit on April 1st and 2nd at the Paramount Theatre in downtown Rutland. This year's summit will include interac-

tive mobile workshops, peer exchanges, a highly-acclaimed keynote and a variety of dynamic presentations and topics.

This year's keynote speaker is David Chernushenko, who serves as Councillor of Capital Ward, Ottawa, Ontario and is also a film director and sustainability consultant. Other guest speakers include Harry L. Chen, M.D., Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Health and Chris Cole, Secretary of the Vermont Agency of Transportation. Attendees will have four track topics to choose from, which include:

- Built Environment
- Advocacy & Education
- Economic Development
- Public Safety

The registration cost ranges from free to \$25 depending on the activities you choose to partake. For full details and to register for the event, please visit: <http://walkbikesummitvt.com/>.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Kimberly Griffin at kimberly.rapac@gmail.com.

2016 Vermont Coverts: Woodlands for Wildlife Woodland Owner-Cooperator Training

Do you love your woodland? Enjoy seeing birds and other wildlife and want to learn how a healthy forest can enhance wildlife habitat, provide recreational and timber benefits? Are you interested in reaching out to others in your community? Then join us for the Coverts 3-day Woodland Owner Training. It will allow you to connect with resource professionals and other landowners just like you while learning how you can improve your woodland. The training program is offered in the spring and fall. The spring dates are May 20-22 and will take place at the Farm and Wilderness Camp, Plymouth, VT. The fall dates are September 9-11 and will be held at Kehoe Conservation Camp in Hydeville, VT. Space is limited so register now! To learn more, see a sample agenda or download an application visit our website at www.vtcoverts.org. You

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can also contact us by calling Lisa Sausville at 802-877-2777 or e-mail lisa@vtcoverts.org.

DHCD Publishes 2016 Planning Manual

The purpose of this manual is to provide a guide for municipal planning commissions in fulfilling their role and responsibilities as set forth in 24 V.S.A. Chapter 117, the Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act. A major role of the municipal planning commission is to develop the municipal plan. The 2016 Planning Manual provides information that will help the planning commission with this complex task, from designing the planning program to adopting the plan.

The 2016 update includes two modules:

1. Module 1 is The Municipal Plan that includes new concepts on developing a shared community vision, more concise and user-friendly plans, and effective implementation strategies. It gives advice on how to work with existing plans and includes a section on the role of the municipal plan in state Act 250 land use permits and Section 248 proceedings for electric generation facilities.
2. Module 2 details all five of the State Designation Programs (downtown, villages, etc.) and includes case studies that show how cities and towns have used the programs to implement their plans and achieve their goals.

The 2016 Planning Manual is available for download here: http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/planning/manual

2016 Addison County Legislative Breakfast Schedule

Date	Location	Town
March 7	Rikert Ski Center	Ripton
March 14	<i>**Governor's Lunch**</i> American Legion	Bristol
March 21	Congregational Church	Maple Street, Salisbury
March 28	<i>**AG Lunch**</i> Community Hall	Bridport
April 4	Congregational Church	Weybridge
April 11	American Legion	Middlebury
April 18	Parish Hall	King Street, Vergennes
June 6	Grange Hall	Bridport

- All events are sponsored by Bridport Grange #303 and Addison County Farm Bureau, with support from Addison County Chamber of Commerce and Addison County RPC
- All breakfasts start at 7:00am, with programs running 7:30 - 8:45am
- Luncheons begin at 12:00pm and end at 1:45pm.
- Purchase of breakfast is not required to attend, but helps defray costs incurred by event hosts

Other Important Dates & Deadlines

April 1st & 2nd	2016 VT Walk/Bike Summit
April 15th	Better Roads Grant Program application deadline
	Class 2 & Town Highway Structures grant application deadline