

ACRPC

update

November 2016

Full Commission Meeting Time Change

Just a reminder that the Full Commission voted at its October meeting to change its meeting dates moving forward from 7:30p.m. to 7:00 p.m. This change becomes effective at the November 9th Full Commission meeting.

Also a reminder that VTrans Director of Policy, Planning, & Intermodal Development Michele Boomhower will be in attendance at the November Full Commission meeting.

Final Energy Planning Standards Released

The Department of Public Service today released the final energy planning determination standards and recommendations called for in Act 174, the Energy Development Improvement Act.

These standards will be used by the Department and Regional Planning Commissions to make determinations as to whether regional and municipal plans are consistent with state energy policy. Plans that receive an affirmative determination will receive substantial deference for their land conservation measures and specific policies when the Public Service Board considers orderly development in its review of siting applications. Act 174 details a set of planning requirements to receive a determination, including consistency with Vermont's energy and climate goals and the inclusion of energy analysis across the building, transportation, and electrical sectors.

The standards published today consist of a checklist of required analyses, goals, and actions. The checklist approach is intended to enable municipal and regional planners to conduct planning with a determination of energy compliance in mind.

Act 174 establishes three pathways for a plan to receive a determination of energy compliance: 1) regional plans will be evaluated by the Department; 2) once their region's plan has received an affirmative determination, municipal plans will be evaluated by their regional planning commission; and 3) until July 1, 2018, a municipality in a region that has not received a determination may apply to the Department for evaluation.

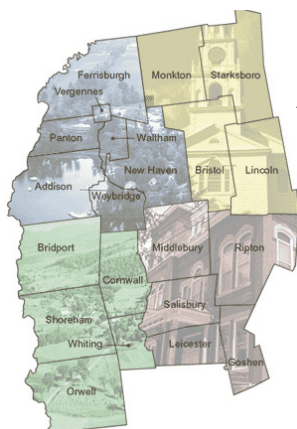
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Commission Calendar

November 2016

9	7:00pm	Full Commission Meeting
16	7:00pm	TAC Meeting
17	7:00pm	ACSWMD Meeting
23	6:30pm	Executive Board Meeting (subject to change due to Thanksgiving holiday)

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

“With the publication of these final standards, the path forward is now clear for those municipalities and regions seeking to better integrate their planning efforts with statewide energy goals and planning,” noted Department of Public Service Deputy Commissioner Jon Copans. “These standards provide municipalities and regions with a roadmap as we come together on the local, regional, and statewide level to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and generate more renewable energy here in Vermont. All eleven of Vermont’s Regional Planning Commissions, supported by the Department of Public Service, are in the process of revising energy plans in accordance with these standards. I would encourage all Vermonters to engage in the regional and local planning process. Greater public participation will result in better plans.”

To inform development of the standards, the Department conducted substantial public and stakeholder outreach. This included a half-day public forum on August 30, several topical stakeholder focus groups, an online survey (which received nearly 150 responses), a public hearing, numerous meetings with individual stakeholders and organizations, and a formal comment period. Comments received on the draft standards the Department released in September are available at <http://publicservice.vermont.gov/content/act-174-recommendations-and-determination-standards>.

“I appreciate that the Department consulted frequently with Regional Planning Commissions and other interested stakeholders as they developed these energy determination standards,” noted Jim Sullivan of the Bennington County Regional Commission. “As the Bennington County Regional Commission and others around Vermont continue with our energy planning efforts, I encourage all interested Vermonters to get involved. Our success is dependent on active engagement from our member municipalities and community members.”

“I am optimistic that this process will help support a good, needed balance,” said Warren King, Chairman of the Ripton Planning Commission and member of

the conservation commission and energy committee. “A balance that ensures the state transitions to a more clean, reliable and affordable energy grid but does so in a way that empowers communities and regions in particular to shape how that happens.”

The standards build upon regional energy planning work already underway at all Regional Planning Commissions under contract with the Department. Regions will furthermore be providing analyses and maps that will enable municipalities to easily meet the Analysis & Targets and Mapping standards. Regions will also conduct at least two trainings in each region, will each be offering in-depth technical assistance to at least three municipalities, and will be compiling best practice language from those efforts, which will aid future municipalities in meeting the Pathways standards.

The Department will also be issuing guidance documents for regions and municipalities to use as they write their plans, which will offer standard-by-standard guidelines, resources, and potential language, and which will incorporate the Recommendations as excerpted from the 2016 Comprehensive Energy Plan. This guidance is expected to be complete by the time each region offers its first training in December.

The final standards and recommendations, along with an overview, can be found here: <http://publicservice.vermont.gov/content/act-174-recommendations-and-determination-standards>.

Natural Shoreland Erosion Course Certification

The Department of Environmental Conservation invites you to join them and help spread the word about the one day Natural Shoreland Erosion Control Certification trainings offered statewide:

- November 7th – Rutland
- November 9th – St. Johnsbury
- November 14th – Essex Junction
- November 16th – Montpelier

The Natural Shoreland Erosion Control Certifica-

Grants, Workshops & Other Opportunities

tion Trainings will cover shoreland best management practices, including erosion control, stormwater management, and wildlife habitat protection. Case studies, project designs, permitting considerations and preferred project materials will be covered by different presenters.

Partnering with the Associated General Contractors of Vermont, the Rutland Natural Resources Conservation District, Lake Champlain Sea Grant, and the Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium, this course provides training to local landscapers, site workers, engineers, and contractors to ensure that they are aware of the techniques for managing lakeshore property in ways that effectively protect the lake.

To register and view other relevant documents and supporting info, please visit here: <http://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes-ponds/lakeshores-lake-wise/events>.

Since there is limited space at these trainings, it is best to register sooner than later.

For more information about registration and general questions, contact David Addeo in the Watershed Management Division at David.Addeo@vermont.gov. For more information about the course curriculum, contact Amy Picotte in the Watershed Management Division at Amy.Picotte@Vermont.gov.

Better Connections Grants

VTrans and DHCD are pleased to announce \$200,000 in available planning grant funds to expand transportation options while fostering economic vitality for our businesses and communities. The program is open to municipalities and grant applications are due January 13, 2017. All applicants must participate in a pre-application meeting with program staff by December 16, 2016.

The Better Connections Program (formerly known as the Strong Communities, Better Connections Pro-

gram) seeks to align state and local investments to increase transportation options, build resilience, and strengthen economic vitality in Vermont's community centers, through an annual grant program administered by Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans), in partnership with the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD). Municipalities annually compete for approximately \$200,000 in projects funds. A 10% local cash match is required.

The program supports implementation-focused, municipal planning initiatives that:

- Provide safe, multi-modal and resilient transportation systems that supports the Vermont economy
- Support downtown and village economic development and revitalization efforts
- Lead directly to project implementation

For more information, visit here: <http://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/projects-programs/better-connections>.

For other ACCD funding opportunities, visit here: <http://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding>.

New England Stormwater Finance Forum *Water as a Resource: Financing Opportunities and Challenges for Municipal Stormwater Management*

Date & Time:

Tue, Nov 15, 2016, 8:30 AM –
Wed, Nov 16, 2016, 12:30 PM

Effective stormwater management is a challenging, yet increasingly important, component of municipal water systems. Municipalities can realize long-term savings and achieve social benefits with an integrated water management approach. This forum will highlight tools, financing options, and local examples to address stormwater compliance costs and help municipalities become more financially and environmentally resilient.

Grants, Workshops & Other Opportunities

Forum topics will cover integrated stormwater management for municipalities including:

- Maximizing the economic and social value of municipal water resources, and minimizing the costs of stormwater control;
- Creative financing strategies that leverage a variety of funding sources to augment municipal stormwater budgets;
- Practical steps to accurately estimate short- and long-term municipal stormwater needs.

Who Will Benefit from Attending? Municipal administrators, planners, public works officials, community leaders, technical assistance providers, and regional funders.

Registration is Free! For more information, visit here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/water-as-a-resource-financing-opportunities-and-challenges-for-municipal-stormwater-management-tickets-27293611928>

Lake Champlain Basin Program Seeks Local Grant Proposals

The Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) seeks proposals for local grants to support the implementation of the long-term management plan for Lake Champlain Opportunities for Action.

LCBP's local grant program is a key component of its work to coordinate and fund efforts that benefit the Lake Champlain Basin's water quality, fisheries, wetlands, wildlife, recreation, and cultural resources. Since 1992, LCBP has awarded more than \$7.3 million to more than 1,000 projects in New York and Vermont. LCBP Director Eric Howe said, "These grants target the need for on-the-ground work at the local level that addresses water quality and habitat improvement priorities in the Basin."

The LCBP anticipates awarding more than 50 grants totaling more than \$750,000 dollars. Two grant categories remain open for the Lake Champlain Basin

Program's 2016 Local Implementation Grant program:

Grant Applications due December 15, 2016:

- Pollution Prevention & Habitat Conservation Grants (up to \$20,000 per award),
- Aquatic Invasive Species Spread Prevention Grants (up to \$15,000 per award)

Grant guidelines and applications for each category are found on the Lake Champlain Basin Program's website at <http://www.lcbp.org/grants>. Volunteer peer reviewers will evaluate and rank the proposals, and will develop the funding recommendations for the Lake Champlain Steering Committee to consider.

For further information about these grant opportunities or to obtain hard copies of the guidelines and applications, please contact the Lake Champlain Basin Program office, 54 West Shore Road, Grand Isle, VT 05458 or call at (802) 372-3213 or call (800) 468-5227.

Regional Transportation Plan Update ~ Last Call for Public Input! ~

ACRPC continues to work with DuBois & King in updating and rewriting the Addison County Regional Transportation Plan. The current Addison County Regional Transportation Plan was completed and adopted in May of 2008. This updated transportation plan will be adopted and incorporated into the updated regional plan.

After a series of three public meetings in Middlebury, Monkton, and Shoreham, we are still looking for feedback from residents, commuters and businesses in Addison County on how our region's transportation system is working and where changes or improvements are needed. With that in mind, we have created an interactive "wikimap" intended to solicit public input on issues of regional concern. The wikimap can be accessed here:

<http://wikimapping.com/wikimap/Addison-County-Transportation-Plan-Update.html#.V8B84vkrJD8>.

Grants, Workshops & Other Opportunities

While any input is welcome, some of the types of input we are looking for includes:

- Where are poor conditions on our highway network detracting from efficient and safe transportation (i.e. congestion, restricted bridge, bad pavement)?
- Where is it unsafe or uncomfortable to walk or bike?
- Where does speeding or noisy traffic impact the quality of life?
- Where would you want to ride a bus if service was available?
- What are some of the recent changes in the transportation network that you think really help?

Please take some time to consider how you use the transportation network in your community and leave a comment or a route that matters to you! If you have any further questions or are having difficulty leaving your comments, please send them to acrpc@dubois-king.com.

Please also feel free to email Josh Donabedian at ACRPC directly with any comments or concerns you might have: jdonabed@acrpc.org.