



ACRPC

update

September 2011

Hurricane Irene Recovery

Dear members and Friends:

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) has dedicated this issue of our newsletter and much of our time recently to the recovery effort from Hurricane Irene. While most of Addison County was spared from significant damage, many of our

towns still suffered extensive damage to homes, farms businesses and infrastructure. I want you to know what ACRPC has been doing on your behalf.

Tim Bouton, ACRPC's Emergency Planner, has been working in the Planning Section of State of Vermont Emergency Operations Center nearly every day since Irene first struck Vermont. Tim helps collect the information to allocate resources to provide aid where it is most needed.

Rick Kehne, ACRPC's Transportation Planner, has been serving as FEMA's local guide to the area. Rick has been taking FEMA personnel around the region to observe and visit with businesses and individuals impacted by the flooding. His work helped FEMA assess the extent of the damage to businesses and individuals in Addison County and resulted in the disaster declaration to provide individual and business relief.

Kevin Behm, ACRPC's Assistant Director and GIS (mapping) Manager, has been working with private individuals and the Emergency Operations Center to create and provide mapping and data to individuals and responders.

Kevin Lehman, ACRPC's Energy Planner, has worked to gather the content and provide the information contained in this newsletter. We hope you find it useful in your efforts to serve your community or neighbors.

Lastly, I have been working with FEMA to ensure that Addison County's municipalities, individuals and businesses have access to all the resources they need to recover and rebuild from this disaster. As such, we have worked with FEMA and VTrans to hold an Ap-

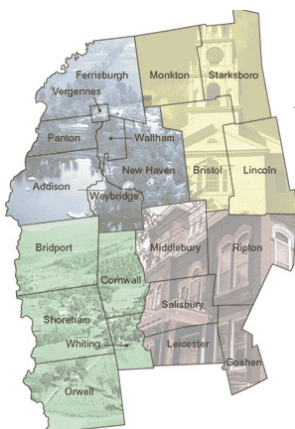
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Commission Calendar

Sept. 2011

9	8:15-10:00am	ACTR Board
10	10:00am	FEMA Public Assistance Applicant Briefing, American Legion, Vergennes
12	4:00	Energy Committee
14	7:30pm	Full Commission Meeting
15	1:00-3:00	Regional Technology Team project
21	5:00pm	Local Emergency Planning Committee
26	5:00-6:30	ACORN Network
28	1:00-3:00	Local Emergency Planning Committee, VT State Police Barracks
28	6:30pm	ACRPC Executive Board
28	4:30-6:30pm	Addison County River Watch Collaborative Meeting

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

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News

plicants Briefing this Saturday, September 10, 2011 at the American Legion in Vergennes for Municipalities and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to apply for FEMA funding to help them recover from the damage. We are also working with FEMA to establish a Disaster Recovery Center in Addison County for individuals and businesses impacted by this disaster. We hope to have that center set up and operational for next week and will provide more details by e-mail as they become available.

To all those who have suffered losses, we offer our heartfelt condolences and best wishes. We shall continue to provide services to help individuals and communities rebuild the special community we serve.

Sincerely,

Adam Lougee, Executive Director

Post Irene Resources

Below is a list of resources that we hope will be useful to communities in Addison County in response to Hurricane Irene. Please call the ACRPC office at 388-3141 if you have questions or concerns.

- Vermont League of Cities and Towns (<http://vlct.org>): Good list of online recovery resources.
- UVM Extension has a similar list for farms, schools, businesses, etc. (<http://www.uvm.edu/extension/?Page=emergency.html>)
- The Vermont Division of Emergency Management (<http://vem.vermont.gov>): FEMA assistance.
- The Vermont Agency of Transportation (<http://www.aot.state.vt.us>): Road Closures.
- NOFA-VT (<http://nofavt.org/flood>): Farm-related resources.
- The Vermont Irene Flood Relief Fund (<http://www.facebook.com/VTIreneFund>): A fund to help

people and communities affected by flooding.

- VT Irene (<http://vtirene.crowdmap.com>): Map-based, crowd-sourced information on road closures, incidents of damage, and recovery efforts.
- VT Response (<http://vtresponse.wordpress.com>): Informational resource for volunteers ready to help, listing the who, what, when, where and how of everything related to this natural disaster. This site is also crowd-sourced.

Flood Relief: Guidelines for Instream Work

The Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) recognizes that recovery from this state-wide flood disaster will require extensive in-stream work. Rivers Program engineers will provide technical and problem-solving assistance to help landowners, municipalities, and other agencies accomplish their recovery goals while reducing loss and safety hazards during the next flood.

ANR's technical assistance is meant to help communities:

1. Relocate streams to a former location.
2. Reestablish channel capacity.
3. Facilitate stream stability.
4. Reestablish stream crossings.

The following practices require ANR review and advance approval:

- Berming.
- Rechanneling streams in unstable dimensions
- Creating straightened river channels.
- Bank stabilization

State laws governing stream alterations are not suspended during flood recovery. Particular in-stream practices will be regulated during this time and are listed above. Emergency in-stream work may proceed under emergency provisions set in statute and will be expedited under the Stream Alteration General Permit.

To find out more, visit: http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/waterq/rivers/htm/rv_assistance.htm

Solar Addison County

In July, a new program was launched here in Addison County that's helping homeowners and businesses go solar. The program is called Solar Addison County, and it's a program of the Vermont Public Interest Research Group (VPIRG).

Lots of folks have wanted to go solar for a long time, but it was never quite feasible — between taking the time to figure out the technology to finding the money for a big up-front payment. Through this program, which is a partnership between VPIRG and Vergennes-based Sunward, a solar hot water system now costs about the same as what you were already paying for fuel oil, propane, or electricity to heat your water, with no up-front payment. VPIRG has also streamlined the process to make it as simple as possible for homeowners.

Solar Addison County builds on the success of VPIRG's existing solar communities. In Montpelier, where there had been just 13 solar hot water installations in the last decade, VPIRG has helped 80 families go solar in just 4 months. The Addison County program is off to an even stronger start -- within the first 3 weeks, more than 200 families had signed up for site evaluations across the county. Solar Addison County lasts until December, when VPIRG will move on to other communities. To find out more or to sign up for a free site evaluation, go to <http://www.SolarAddison-County.org> . If you have any questions, you can direct them to the program's coordinator, Dan Conant, at dan@vpirg.org.

Opportunity to support Front Porch Forum Expansion in Addison County

Front Porch Forum (<http://www.frontporchforum.com>) helps nearby neighbors connect and build community by hosting regional networks of online neighborhood forums. Started in Burlington in 2006, FPF now serves nearly 30,000 member households across more than 60 Vermont towns.

FPF is currently in Starksboro, Bristol, and Vergennes and would like to expand to other towns in Addison County. To do that, they need one-time start-up capital to cover their launch expenses.

Most people use FPF for the straight-forward business of everyday life among neighbors: finding lost cats, borrowing ladders, recommending plumbers, reporting car break-ins, sharing bear sightings, debating school budgets, announcing farmers' markets, and more.

But it's the indirect results from witnessing a daily flow of mostly civil and constructive postings from clearly identified nearby neighbors over months that can carry a big impact.

In a recent, independent survey of Front Porch Forum subscribers who live in Burlington, 90% think FPF improves their neighborhood and 60% feel that FPF makes local government more responsive to neighborhood needs.

Here are a few other findings:

- 52% feel that FPF makes the neighborhood safer
- 77% think FPF is a good place to voice opinions
- 64% have gotten involved in meetings and events due to FPF
- 93% feel more civically engaged since joining FPF

In order for FPF to expand, they are seeking sponsors to cover start-up and year-one operational expenses. A regional chamber of commerce has done this in five towns, a community foundation in another. A town, college, a local philanthropist, and school district have paid in other towns.

FPF can expand to a single small town for \$2,500. The price/town drops considerably if FPF takes on several towns at once.

To find out more, please contact Jeff Gangemi at jeff@frontporchforum.com.

Events / Grants

FEMA Public Assistance Applicant Briefing

*American Legion, 100 Amory Lane, Vergennes
Thursday, September 10, 10:00am*

The Vermont Agency of Transportation will be holding applicant briefings for communities in counties granted a Public Assistance disaster declaration following floods from Tropical Storm Irene. Attendance at this meeting is required to receive FEMA funding.

Representatives from Vermont communities in counties affected by Tropical Storm Irene are invited to meetings to learn how to apply for federal reimbursement for flood response and recovery costs for eligible public infrastructure such as debris removal, emergency protective measures, and the repair, replacement, or restoration of disaster-damaged, publicly owned facilities and the facilities of certain Private Non-Profit (PNP) organizations.

Regional Energy Forum on PACE

*ACRPC Office, 14 Seminary St., Middlebury
Thursday, October 27, 7:00pm*

Mark your calendars for the Addison County Regional Energy Forum on Oct. 27th. The main topic of the evening will be PACE (Property Accessed Clean Energy), an innovative financing mechanism for financing energy efficiency and renewable energy projects on homes. In April the state legislature passed a bill H.155, which brings PACE to Vermont in 2012. The PACE program creates a mechanism by which towns can raise revenue using its bond authority, then loan the money to home owners to put towards an energy retrofit or renewable energy project. The loans are repaid over a 15 - 20 period via an annual assessment on their property tax bill. The program is voluntary to towns and there is no cost to residents who choose not to participate. The long repayment period can make the economics of such energy projects much more attractive to home owners. And unlike a traditional loan, the PACE assessment is tied to the home, not to the home owner.

At this forum PACE experts will explain how the program works, how towns can participate, and what

the costs and benefits are for towns. There will also be ample time for information sharing and networking among the participants. Although the form is designed for community energy leaders and town officials, it is free and open to the public. To find out more, contact ACRPC energy planner Kevin Lehman at 388-3141 or at kevinl@acrpc.org.

Grant Application Workshop

*Capitol Plaza, 100 State Street, Montpelier
Wednesday, September 14, 8:30am*

On Sept. 14th the Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) will be hosting an application workshop to help communities pursue grant opportunities.

Attendees should come prepared to talk about their project and are encouraged to bring photographs or drawings or any related documents that will help better convey the project.

To register or find out more, visit <http://www.dhca.state.vt.us/VCDP/Application/Workshops.htm>.

Transportation Grant for Energy Committees

VTrans Public Transit Section is offering grants to municipalities to assist in building a statewide outreach and advocacy network for the Go Vermont Program (www.connectingcommuters.org).

Local Selectboards and Energy Committees are a logical partner in this effort as they can bring local credibility, energy, and innovation to the ongoing effort to expand the reach of the Go Vermont Program. Through a partnership with ACRPC, VTrans will provide a \$500 grant to participating municipal energy committees.

The framework and services have been established for Go Vermont, and now the focus has shifted toward building program participation to achieve the necessary critical mass for rideshare matches, and toward facilitating efficient transportation options versus continued operation of single occupancy vehicles. To this end, the project objectives are as follows:

Grants

- Broaden Go Vermont outreach efforts
- Build relationships with local committees and advocates
- Identify local and regional transportation priorities and activities
- Build local and regional program capacities and awareness
- Increase the number of registrants in the Go Vermont database
- Increase traffic to the Go Vermont website (www.connectingcommuters.org)
- Focus regional and local initiatives and advocacy efforts

The letter of interest is due Sept. 16th. To find out more and get an application, go to <http://207.136.225.68/Downloads/RFPs/GoVT.pdf>

Last Call for 2012 Municipal Planning Grant Application Assistance!

Due to Hurricane Irene, the Department of Housing and Community Affairs will be announcing an extension to the MPG deadline. Please check their website for details.

We have heard from three Addison County Towns interested in applying, two of which are in the process of applying. Prior to Sept. 15th, contact Claire Tebbs (388-3141 or ctebbs@acrpc.org). After September 15th please contact Adam Lougee (388-3141 or alougee@acrpc.org) if you are still seeking technical assistance for this application process. Wendy Tudor at the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Affairs can also answer questions (828-5249 or Wendy.Tudor@state.vt.us).

For more details, visit <http://www.dhca.state.vt.us/Planning/GMS/OnlineApplication2012.htm>