

Addison County Regional Planning Commission

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Memorandum

To: ACRPC Commission members

From: Adam Lougee

Re: Plan Re-write

Date: December 2, 2015

All:

This memorandum accompanies four Sections of the Addison County Regional Plan that your Plan rewrite committee, with help of other committees, has been working on and proposes that the commission take to public hearing for adoption. The Sections include:

1. Section 1, Introduction;
2. Section 2, Substantial Regional Impact;
3. Section 2A, Implementation (new);
4. Section 8, Future Land Use

ACRPC is responsible for producing and approving a regional plan every five years. ACRPC adopted its current plan on December 14, 2011 after updating the Natural Resources Section of the Plan. ACRPC has been working to update the plan for the past year. It chose to update the Sections noted above for two reasons. First, since ACRPC has had a policy of updating and reapproving its plan incrementally, it wanted to address some of the elements of its plan that had not been updated recently and to make sure all tied together consistently. In many cases ACRPC was not looking to make major policy changes, but to update and reconcile its existing plan. Second, in 2013, the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies, "VAPDA", of which ACRPC is a member, had hired a consultant to review all regional plans and make recommendations for improvements. ACRPC agreed to update certain elements of its plan in response to that consultant's report. Many of the changes to Sections 2, 2a and 8 respond to the consultant's report.

Specifically, the Committee revised Section 2, Substantial Regional Impact, to reflect how ACRPC reviewed and responded to regulatory permit applications within the Region. It uses whether a proposed project has a "substantial regional impact" as a bar to determine how it will participate. It also defines "substantial regional resources" to determine whether a project may have a substantial regional impact. If ACRPC finds a substantial regional impact, the section lays out the process ACRPC follows to participate in the proceeding.

Section 2A is a new Section. The Consultant expressed concern that while ACRPC's plan contained a number of implementation steps in every chapter, it priorities were not laid out in

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one place. This Section takes the highest priorities from each section and aggregates them in one place that establishes the work ACRPC will pursue.

ACRPC rewrote portions of Section 8, ACRPC's Future Land Use Section, to detail how it planned for the Region. Specifically, ACRPC works with its municipalities to help create and support their plans. To date ACRPC has chosen not to create a regional land use section separated from its municipalities. ACRPC believe this approach allows it to plan regionally in a thoughtful manner recognizing substantial regional resources, but also acknowledging local interests and minimizing the probability of disagreements with its member municipalities.

Please review the proposed sections. We hope you will find them concise, easy to understand and reflecting the values of the region. We also hope that after this meeting you will allow them to move to public hearings in January and February and ultimately a vote in March.