

1                                   **CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
2   **MINUTES**  
3   **September 13, 2016**  
4

5 Commissioners:

- |                                     |               |                           |                                     |              |                            |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Barre City    | Janet Shatney             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Montpelier   | Tina Ruth, Secretary       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Barre Town    | Byron Atwood, Chair       | <input type="checkbox"/>            |              | Kimberly Cheney, Alt.      |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            |               | Mark Nicholson, Alt.      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Moretown     | Dara Torre                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Berlin        | Robert Wernecke           | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Northfield   | Laura Hill-Eubanks         |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            |               | Karla Nuissl, Alt.        | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Orange       | George Malek               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Cabot         | Dick Payne                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Plainfield   | David Strong,<br>Treasurer |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Calais        | Paul Rose                 | <input type="checkbox"/>            |              | Robert Atchinson, Alt.     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            |               | John Brabant, Alt.        | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Roxbury      | Gerry D'Amico              |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Duxbury       | Brian Fitzgerald          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Waitsfield   | Don La Haye                |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |               | Alan Quackenbush,<br>Alt. | <input type="checkbox"/>            |              | Harrison Snapp, Alt.       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | E. Montpelier | Julie Potter, Vice Chair  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Warren       | Camilla Behn               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |               | Jack Pauly, Alt.          | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Washington   | Gary Winders               |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Fayston       | Carol Chamberlin          | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Waterbury    | Steve Lotspeich            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Marshfield    | Ivan Shadis               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Williamstown | Larry Hebert               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Middlesex     | Ron Krauth                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Woodbury     | Michael Gray               |
|                                     |               |                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Worcester    | Bill Arrand                |

6  
7 Staff: Bonnie Waninger, Laura Ranker, and Eric Vorwald

8 Guests: Michael Snyder, Commissioner, VT Dept. of Forests, Parks & Recreation; Ann Smith,  
9 Executive Director, Friends of the Winooski River; Bill Moore, Central Vermont Chamber of  
10 Commerce  
11

12 **CALL TO ORDER**

13 Chair B. Atwood called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm. The meeting began with introductions.  
14 Atwood asked for a moment of silent reflection for thoughts and prayers on behalf of Laurie Emery.  
15

16 **ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA**

17 None.  
18

19 **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

20 None  
21

22 **FOREST HEALTH AND INTEGRITY**

23 Chair B. Atwood introduced Commissioner Michael Snyder of the Vermont Department of Forests,  
24 Parks & Recreation who presented on the 2015 Vermont Forest Fragmentation Report, Forest Health  
25 and Integrity recommendations in response to Act 61, and actions from the 2015-2016 Legislative  
26 session. The reports are available at <http://fpr.vermont.gov/> under "Forests & Forestry."

1  
2 Commissioner Snyder gave a brief history on the role of forestry in the state and pre-2014 legislative  
3 activity. Vermont experienced an interest in forestland use, which was building over time. In 2014,  
4 Senate Bill 100 was introduced to address large-scale ridgeline wind turbines and forest integrity.  
5 Commissioner Snyder reported that despite the use of good forestry practices, the Act required new  
6 thresholds, new Act 250 triggers and permits. However, the bill was changed and a report was to be  
7 made in 2015 that gave the status of the Vermont Forest, defined forest fragmentation, defined the  
8 values and benefits of the forest and how fragmentation/parcelization threatened these values and  
9 benefits, and finally the report made recommendations.

10  
11 In summary, the report noted 78% of Vermont was forest-covered land. The majority of the forest-  
12 covered land was in private ownership (85%) and primarily owned by aging persons greater than 60  
13 years of age. The elder population in ownership of the majority of the forest-covered land is of  
14 concern due to the threat of transfer in ownership and the resulting change in use that traditionally  
15 happens. Commissioner Snyder highlighted the value and benefit of the forest land as the foundation  
16 to the rural Vermont economy providing over 11,000 jobs and 1.5 billion dollars in forest products.  
17 He reviewed the numerous values ranging from job creation to ecosystem services to human health  
18 and quality of life and the connection of Vermonter's to and from the land as part of our cultural  
19 heritage and deep appreciation for the rural landscape. Vermont is beginning to see a change in the  
20 landscape with the loss of forest in Vermont due to parcelization that leads to fragmentation; a loss of  
21 function, a loss of value. More lots are created with smaller segments and more owners resulting in  
22 increased changes in use and different needs.

23  
24 Commissioner Snyder summarized the three main recommendations and the five main areas for  
25 concentration. The report recommends a list of options to promote forest integrity; it recognized  
26 Vermont's strong forest is happening by chance and not because there are real regulations or rules in  
27 place, and it recommends to set policy to address trends happening where forest decline is occurring,  
28 including the occurrence by insect infestation and fragmentation. The five areas of concentration  
29 include education and outreach; land conservation; incentivizing landowners to keep forestland  
30 forested; regional planning and land use initiatives; and the support for sustainable forestry in the  
31 forest economy (insurance, fuel, transportation). The working forest is a sustainable forest where  
32 trees are cut and good silvicultural and sustainable silvicultural practices are used. Land use Planners  
33 need to think about how development will affect the forest.

34  
35 Act 61, a product of the 2015 Report, vetted the options in the Report and refined the  
36 recommendations leading to recommended policy and Act 171, the Forestry bill. Municipalities  
37 must plan for forests locally and by 2018 Municipal Forestry Bylaws are required. The Act formed a  
38 Legislative Study Committee. Bonnie Waninger serves on the committee as the VAPDA  
39 representative. Questions were taken from the Commissioners.

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1 **FRIENDS OF THE WINOOSKI RIVER**

2 Atwood introduced Ann Smith, Executive Director of Friends of the Winooski River and a regional  
3 partner. Smith reviewed the mission and work of her non-profit organization that promotes  
4 watershed protection and restoration with three part time employees. The Winooski River has the  
5 largest drainage area in Vermont that feeds into Lake Champlain. She highlighted the eight main  
6 program areas and provided examples of projects such as the Streamside Protection program that  
7 provides riparian buffers with the planting of trees and shrubs and the Fish Passages and Retrofits  
8 program that performed work in Duxbury and is currently looking for more projects to do. Smith  
9 noted the current purchase of a water simulation table that is available through their loaner program  
10 and will be used in schools and other venues. She highlighted cooperative projects with CVRPC.  
11 Questions were taken. Smith provided a breakdown of the organization’s funding through a variety  
12 of sources. Cabot Creamery provided base funding for the past ten years.

13  
14 **JULY 12, 2016 MEETING MINUTES**

15 C. Behn was present at the July 12, 2016 meeting.

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17 *J. Potter moved to approve the July 12 2016 minutes as amended; T. Ruth seconded. Motion carried.*

18  
19 **STAFF REPORTS**

20 B. Waninger noted the medical leave of S. Gladczuk will likely continue through November. E.  
21 Vorwald announced the opening of the Municipal Planning Grant cycle with an October 31  
22 application deadline. Chair B. Atwood expressed appreciation to L. Ranker for the 100% LEOP  
23 status. Ranker recognized the work municipalities completed for that status.

24  
25 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT and any updates**

26 B. Waninger reported on the Act 171 Committee activity noting the initial meeting was held that  
27 morning. The Committee is charged with looking at Act 250 and Chapter 117 to determine if any  
28 changes are needed with respect to forest integrity. Commission members shared their thoughts.

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30 **REGIONAL PARTNERS’ REPORT**

31 Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation Report - No report.

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33 **ADJOURNMENT**

34 *D. Strong moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 pm; D. La Haye seconded. Motion carried.*

35  
36 Respectfully submitted,  
37 Laura Ranker