



February 2013 Newsletter

CVRPC Commissioners

Barre City - Michael Miller
Barre Town - Byron Atwood
Berlin - Robert Wernecke
Cabot - Richard Payne
Calais - Vacant
Duxbury - Vacant
East Montpelier - Tim Carver
Fayston - Vacant
Marshfield - Michael Schumacher
Middlesex - Ronald Krauth
Montpelier - Tina Ruth
Moretown - Deb Sargent
Northfield - Arlington Supplee
Orange - George Malek
Plainfield - David Strong
Roxbury - Vacant
Waitsfield - Don La Haye
Warren - Craig Klofach
Washington - Vacant
Waterbury - Gunner McCain
Williamstown - Larry Hebert
Woodbury - Janet Shatney
Worcester - Bill Arrand

Flood Resiliency Work Continues

Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission, in conjunction with the other 10 regional commissions in Vermont, has been awarded a grant from the Water Quality Division of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. CVRPC's grant is for flood resiliency work with the Towns of Marshfield and Worcester. This work involves assisting with the compilation of existing studies and reports, mapping of identified hazards, development of an online tool showing the location of hazards, and working with the Towns to identify the historical costs of repairs made. The overall objective is to have resources available in the event of future flooding events, and to provide the Towns with access to the resources as they need them. More information is available at the CVRPC web site and blog at www.centralvtplanning.org

On-line Data Map Viewers

The Vermont Center for Geographic Information (VCGI) and the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) have each launched new on-line data map viewers. These viewers provide the public with access to geographic data without having to invest money and time acquiring and learning GIS software. VCGI's Vermont Interactive Map Viewer and ANR's Natural Resources Atlas can be accessed at VCGI's website at <http://vcgi.vermont.gov/maps/interactive>. Data layers include aerial photographs, topographic maps, E911 sites, wetlands, floodplains, and more. CVRPC's GIS staff is available to provide an overview of these interactive map viewers. If your town would like to learn how to use these on-line mapping tools, contact Dan Currier at CVRPC. Dan has helped develop the map viewer website for the City of Montpelier and is working with East Montpelier on theirs.



Vermont 2013 Home Energy Challenge (HEC)

Efficiency Vermont, in partnership with the Vermont Energy Climate Action Network and Regional Planning Commissions, launched the Vermont Home Energy Challenge this January, a year-long effort to increase the number of homes completing comprehensive energy improvements in Vermont. Currently, there are over 65 towns that have joined in the challenge (13 in the Central Vermont Region).

The VT Home Energy Challenge requires no financial commitment from a sponsoring town. In 2010 Vermonters paid more than \$600 million to import and use fossil-based heating fuels. According to the Public Service Department's Thermal Energy Report, the average Vermont home uses half the heating fuel it did in the 1970's. Nonetheless, Vermonters fuel bills are nearly twice as much today as they were a decade ago. Saving energy saves dollars for Vermonters.

Here is how the VT Home Energy Challenge works. Town energy committees and other local partners will compete with other municipalities to weatherize 3% of the entire housing stock in their community by the end of the year. Prizes will be



awarded to the top towns in each region. In addition, the town that weatherizes the highest percentage of homes will win \$10,000 from Efficiency Vermont to be used toward a municipal energy-saving project. The goal is to achieve the statewide objective of 25% energy savings in 80,000 homes by the year 2020.

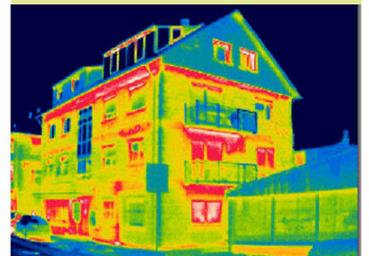
In addition, homeowners are encouraged to "take the pledge" to save energy in their homes. A pledge might be to install low flow shower heads in your home, weather strip doors and windows, or schedule an energy audit with a certified contractor. Do you know someone who is renovating or building or looking to reduce energy bills? Those projects count!

To promote this effort, Efficiency Vermont is offering a \$100 discount on all home energy assessments/audits this year—a necessary first step in the home weatherization process. In addition, some "Home Performance with Energy Star" auditor contractors are providing an additional discount off home energy audits to homeowners. This is an excellent opportunity to save money on home heating bills and protect the environment by making your home more energy efficient. For more information on any of these programs, contact Paul Markowitz at pmarkowitz@veic.org or Jackie Cassino at cassino@cvregion.com or 229-0389.



Central Vermont Towns Participating in the HEC

- Barre City
- Barre Town
- Duxbury
- East Montpelier
- Fayston
- Marshfield
- Montpelier
- Moretown
- Northfield
- Plainfield
- Waitsfield
- Warren
- Waterbury



Regional Highway Safety Forum

On April 17, 2013 in Waterbury, the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission and the Lamoille County Planning Commission will host a regional forum to find workable solutions for improving highway safety. The forum is sponsored by the newly-formed Vermont Highway Safety Alliance, a public-private partnership that brings together stakeholders to address safety issues with a “unified, consistent message,” according to Kevin Marshia, VTrans and Chair of the Alliance. One of the Alliance’s strategies is to use what’s been successful and “take it to the next level.”

Seven critical areas are identified in the current Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Keeping Vehicles on the Roadway & Minimizing the Consequences of Leaving the Road; Young Drivers; Improving the Design and Operation of Highway Intersections; Increasing Seat Belt Use & Improving Airbag Effectiveness; Reducing Impaired Driving - Alcohol related; Curbing Speeding and Aggressive Driving; and Keeping Drivers Alert. Five of the 7 are behavior related which poses a particular challenge to improving the safety culture since changing culture takes time. Regional highway safety forums are a means to implement the Strategic Highway Safety Plan. Invitees will represent municipalities (foremen, supervisors, managers, town clerks, TAC members), VTrans, DMV, legislators, VT Local Roads, AARP, state/county/local law enforcement, fire departments, EMT’s, VT Bike and Ped Coalition, driver educators, and the Youth Safety Council of VT.

The morning will be devoted to short presentations explaining resources available to municipalities to help stop/curb highway crashes. Resources fall into the categories of Education, Enforcement, Engineering and Emergency Response commonly known as the “4 Es.” Each presenter will spend a brief amount of time describing what their program is; who may participate; how a community participates (contact information); and why it is important. One of the featured speakers will be Senior Sgt. Michael Roj of the State Police who is articulate and heartfelt when talking about his personal experience with the human side of crashes and their aftermath. Another speaker will be Mary Spicer, VTrans Highway Research, who will make people aware of how data has improved in both quantity and quality to aid in objective decision-making. Amy Gamble, VTrans Traffic Safety Engineer, will discuss considerations in setting speed limits. David Antone, Director of the Vermont Local Roads Program, will discuss their educational initiatives. There will be many others presenting and displaying exhibits.

Armed with data from case studies in the regions, breakout groups will apply what they learned in the morning. All groups will be charged with answering the following: 1.) Does the data give us any commonalities? 2.) What local groups or personnel could be mobilized to address the issues? 3.) What outside resource (state, private) groups can be leveraged to assist the community? 4.) Who will be the local champion? 5.) Develop a strategy—what are the next steps? 6.) What obstacles can you identify that might impede implementation of the strategy? 7.) Other comments. The group facilitators will then report the findings to the entire group for discussion of the themes that emerged. It takes everyone working together to advance the goal of FHWA’s “Zero Deaths on American Highways.”

For more information on the forum, please contact CVRPC’s Senior Transportation Planner, Steve Gladczuk, 229-0389, gladczuk@cvregion.com.

highwaysafety.vermont.gov



You are invited!

Town Plan Benefits

In addition to the Act 250 project review process where projects need to meet the vision of an adopted town plan, the adoption of your town plan can assist in getting grant funding, such as a Municipal Planning Grant from the Agency of Commerce and Community Development. It 's also interesting to note that as of July 2012, municipalities are only eligible to apply for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds under the Vermont Community Development Program if they have an adopted town plan (24 V.S.A. § 4382). (This new rule does not apply to CDBG Disaster Recovery funds.) CDBG funds are useful for housing, community facility, economic development, or infrastructure planning and implementation projects. Please contact Jackie Cassino (cassino@cvregion.com) to discuss your plan if it is expired or will expire soon.

Small & Inspiring Grant Opportunities

Vermont Community Foundation has a new category of grants that may be of interest to municipalities or volunteer groups. The Small and Inspiring grants program is intended to foster the spark and hope that keeps Vermonters healthy and happy in various ways. VCF wants to fund and support projects in every town in Vermont where a small grant can make a big difference. This program will fund projects that: connect people to each other through volunteer work or community-building efforts; connect people to the environment around them in new ways; and bring people together and provide opportunities for positive social interaction and benefit. The program will not fund: capital campaigns, debt reduction, individuals, expenses that have already been incurred, programs with religious purposes, or indirect expenses for a project. Applications will be considered from nonprofit organizations, schools, municipal entities, or groups with a fiscal sponsor for projects that address the above purposes. Organizations must be tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or be a public agency or municipality in Vermont. Nonprofit organizations or community groups who do not have 501(c)(3) status may apply for grant awards if another tax-exempt organization acts as a fiscal sponsor. Typically, applications will be accepted from groups or organizations working in one community. Some examples include: a volunteer transportation program for seniors and house-bound individuals, a group of people working to restore a town building for community use and benefit, a project that aims to increase civic participation in Town Meeting efforts, a group of people working to protect a parcel of land for community benefit, a landscape painting class for town residents taught outdoors in a field, and a community dialogue about diversity in a town experiencing changing demographics. Applications can be submitted each month (except June and July) by the 15th with notification in about 2 months. Visit the VCF Online Grants Center. All applicants, including those who have previously applied, will need to create an account. You can view or download the application questions now. Grants range from \$500 to \$2,500.

A list of other grant funding sources can be found at www.vpic.info/fundingsources/.

CentralVermont Communities Awarded PlanningGrants

Congratulations to the City of Barre, Cabot, Moretown, Warren, and Fayston who were awarded municipal planning grants from the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development!

The City of Barre is updating their zoning bylaws and creating a downtown, form-based code to streamline permitting and implement the goals of the Municipal Plan. Cabot is updating their zoning bylaws and subdivision regulations into a single unified development code. Moretown is updating the Town Plan to address flood recovery by incorporating strategies for flood resiliency and fluvial erosion hazard protection. Warren and Fayston are conducting an economic development study for the Mad River Valley to help diversify the workforce and improve the local economy.

Energy Generation Siting Commission and the PSB Process

Governor Shumlin created a special policy commission to survey best practices for siting approval of electric generation projects and for public participation and representation in the siting process. The Commission will report to the Governor and Vermont Legislature on their findings by April 30, 2013. The Commission will also look at alternative dispute resolution processes for project siting, permit coordination opportunities, study how cumulative project impact is considered and whether generic siting guidelines should be developed. Regional Planning Commissions are actively participating in the Siting Commission's effort. The Commission is currently deliberating recommendations made in late 2012. Dates, times, and locations of Commission meetings and public hearings are subject to change. Interested parties are encouraged to consult the Siting Commission's website, <http://sitingcommission.vermont.gov>, for any updates. All meetings of the Commission are open to the public

Geomorphic Studies Continue

CVRPC has been awarded a grant from the Ecosystem Restoration Program Watershed Management Division of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources for a study of the Great Brook in Plainfield. CVRPC's grant is for the creation of a River Corridor Plan and associated river corridor and landslide hazard maps that will highlight strategies for river corridor protection and flood hazard mitigation. This will serve the dual purpose of protecting water quality and supporting the Region's goal to assist communities with natural

CVRPC Staff

Susan Sinclair
Executive Director

Laurie Emery
Office & Grants Manager

Steve Gladczuck
Transportation Planner

Jackie Cassino
Regional Planner

Dan Currier
GIS Manager

Ashley Andrews
GIS Planner

**Central Vermont Regional
Planning Commission**

**29 Main Street, Suite 4
Montpelier,
Vermont 05602**

**Phone:
802.229.0389**

**Email:
cvrpc@cvregion.com**

**Website:
www.centralvt-planning.org**

resource planning and protection.

The Great Brook suffered severe damage from two flooding events in 2011. The most severe of these occurred in May 2011 washing large amounts of debris and sediment down the Great Brook into Plainfield Village. Large amounts of fine sediment still continue to be washed downstream. CVRPC, Plainfield, and other partners are in the midst of a mapping effort to help the Town understand its future flooding risks and opportunities including the collection of geomorphic data along 5 miles of the Great Brook. To help understand these risks more fully the grant will fund further geomorphic assessment work on an additional 3.5 miles of the Great Brook so that a River Corridor Map may be created for all alluvial reaches of Great Brook. CVRPC will also develop a River Corridor Plan for Great Brook and a map of landslide locations so that a landslide hazard zone may be mapped. Once these are developed, CVRPC will create an overarching river hazard zone that integrates recommendations from the river corridor plan and map, NFIP special flood hazard areas (SFHA), and the landslide hazard zone for the Great Brook in Plainfield. This information will help lead to understanding and possible actions that mitigate flood risks to public safety and infrastructure and promote stream equilibrium conditions.

