

**Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission**  
**September 9, 2014**  
**Unapproved Minutes**

Present were:

Barre City: Janet Shatney

Plainfield: David Strong

Robert Atchinson-absent

Barre Town: Byron Atwood

Roxbury: David McShane-absent

Mark Nicholson-absent

Waitsfield: Don La Haye

Harrison Snapp-absent

Berlin: Bob Wernecke

Warren: Craig Klofach-absent

Cabot: Dick Payne

Dan Raddock - absent

Calais: Renee Carpenter-absent

Washington: Gary Winders-absent

Duxbury: Brian Fitzgerald

Waterbury: Steve Lotspeich

East Montpelier: Julie Potter

Williamstown: Larry Hebert-absent

Tim Carver

Woodbury:

Fayston: Carol Chamberlin-absent

Worcester: Bill Arrand

Marshfield: Faeterri Silver-absent

Middlesex: Ronald Krauth-absent

Montpelier: Tina Ruth

Kim Cheney-absent

Moretown: Dara Torre

Northfield: Laura Hill-Eubanks

Orange: George Malek

Staff: S. Sinclair, L. Emery, K. McKee, S. Smith, E. Norse-Leirer

Others: Barre City Planning Commission members J. Hart, A. Pastore, D. Sichel, J. CFalder

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

The minutes of the July 8, 2014 CVRPC meeting were accepted as written.

Staff Report Additions: The CVRPC Executive Committee and CVEDC Executive Committee will be meeting jointly on September 10, 2014 at 12:30 at 137 River Street, Montpelier (Noyle and Johnson conference room).

CVEDC Report: S. Andersen updated members on the Community Development Block Grant additional \$1 million available to meet unmet needs of businesses impacted by Tropical Storm Irene in August 2011. The deadline for this round of applications is September 30. CVEDC is holding its annual meeting on October 16, Capitol Plaza, Montpelier and titled "Fire in the State House." More information on both topics is available by contacting CVEDC.

Appointment of the Personnel Policies Review Committee: The committee currently consists of T. Ruth and J. Potter. It would be good to have three additional members. The Policies were last updated five years ago and it's time to review them for their relevance, etc. Laura Hill-Eubanks volunteered to serve on the Committee. It was agreed that a committee of three commissioners was sufficient.

Public Hearing on the approval of the Town of Roxbury Municipal Plan and confirmation of the Town's planning process: The hearing was convened at 7:10 p.m. Staff reviewed the recommendation from the Town Plan Review Committee to approve the Plan. Staff commented that the Roxbury Plan includes a thorough child care section,

presents significant data in the housing element, incorporates the Regional Housing Distribution Plan, and includes an extensive flood resilience element. It was suggested that future updates to the Plan include more specific action steps to realize its objectives and address how far Roxbury has come in achieving each objective. It was moved, seconded, and unanimously approved to adopt the resolution approving the Roxbury 2014 Municipal Plan and confirming the Town's planning process.

The public hearing on the Roxbury Municipal Plan approval was adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

Public Hearing on the approval of the City of Barre Municipal Plan and confirmation of the City's planning process: The hearing was convened at 7:15 p.m. Staff reviewed the recommendation of the Town Plan Review Committee to approve the Plan and commented that the Plan incorporates required information on the Regional Housing Distribution Plan, child care, economic development, and flood resilience. The economic element represents a comprehensive approach to the “vital, balanced, and resilient local economy.” Future updates of the Plan could use more specific data and strategies regarding workforce training since workforce development is referenced as a key challenge. The Plan presents a strong vision of a healthy Barre City and is supported by specific, near-term action steps and indicators to measure progress. It was moved, seconded, and unanimously approved to adopt the resolution approving the City of Barre 2014 Municipal Plan and confirming the City's planning process.

The public hearing on the City of Barre Municipal Plan was adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Review of the draft Economic Element for the Regional Plan: Staff presented an overview of the process used to develop the elements of the Regional Plan update acknowledging the hard work of the working groups and the Regional Plan Draft Review Committee. The economic element is an assessment of the Region's economy and identified programs and projects that are important to the economy of the Region. The five over-arching goals include: employment, wages and income, agriculture and forestry, creative economy, and downtowns, village centers and scenic byways.

Discussion raised the following points:

- The element language feels like it's written from the “perfect” environmental world that business clashes with rather than how do we create jobs.
- We should be dealing with the impacts of energy cost, , unnecessary regulations, taxes, and the permitting process; the items that impact the cost of doing business in the Region.
- The working group had robust discussions and all of those comments were presented to Regional Plan Draft Review Committee for consideration.
- The data in the profile is outstanding.
- The working group wanted more emphasis on all sectors of business/employment and not just agriculture.
- It makes it seem that Central Vermont is an agrarian economy when it isn't. All employment sectors should be in balance to one another; all have impacts on each other.
- Quantifying in the data how many jobs are full time and how many are part time would be important to know as it has an impact on whether the sector's wages are “livable” wages.
- Data only includes data from employers that report; it doesn't include sole proprietors, for example.
- The agriculture sector is what makes Vermont what it is. The number of farms and number of acres in farming have increased.
- It would be good to add more goals and objectives on manufacturing.
- How is public administration (the sector with the highest number of jobs) addressed in the sense of the future of the Region's economy and impact if fewer Federal or State dollars are available for employment in this sector.

- It was recommended that additional strategies be developed to support manufacturing.
- It was suggested by staff that some of the goals and objectives from the 2008 Regional Plan be provided to Commissioners and that they provide feedback to staff on which ones to include or what language to edit.
- In Goal 1, 2.b, use “support” rather than “implement” since the Regional Planning Commission has no authority to “implement” beyond the Act 250 conformance requirement in land use permitting.
- Substitute “retention” for job “preservation.”
- It's important to reference the economic element in the other elements of the Plan, such as the transportation element, where one has an impact on the other and/or shares similar concerns.
- Add detail on Goal 2 # 7—implementing the goals among the other elements.
- The use of highlight boxes in the other elements for crossover purposes is a good idea and well done.
- Goal 2 # 8 needs to be in the environmental element/land use or modify the language to be more reflective of its economic value.
- Goal 3, # 9A—What as a regional planning commission can we do to encourage businesses to pay wages of any kind? The wording seems to cast negatively on businesses as if they are not doing what's best for their employees. Even “franchise” type businesses are owned and operated by local residents so modifying the language to reflect other than local ownership would still be a negative statement.
- The goal really doesn't have a place in a Regional Plan.
- The working group was trying to address the cost of living in Vermont.
- The cost of living really is a government issue over which government has influence.
- Perhaps the statement could be “encourage paying livable wages for full time employment.”
- Planning needs to allow for all kinds of jobs at all pay levels, and it isn't appropriate for the Plan to try to direct what a business entity should pay its employees. If the statement appears in the Plan, then it could be used against a development project in the Act 250 permitting process.

It was agreed to continue the discussion of the economic element at the October Commission meeting. People with comments, deletions, or goals that should be added were requested to provide them to staff in two weeks.

Next CVRPC Meeting: The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 14, 2014.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Emery