

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
DRAFT MINUTES
September 13, 2016

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

Staff: Bonnie Waninger, Laura Ranker, and Eric Vorwald

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

CALL TO ORDER

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

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

FOREST HEALTH AND INTEGRITY

Chair B. Atwood introduced Commissioner Michael Snyder of the Vermont Department of Forests,
Parks & Recreation who presented on the 2015 Vermont Forest Fragmentation Report, Forest Health
and Integrity recommendations in response to Act 61, and actions from the 2015-2016 Legislative
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.

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.

16
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.

29
30 **REGIONAL PARTNERS' REPORT**

31 Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation Report - No report.

32
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