

**Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission
October 14, 2014
Draft Minutes**

Present were:

Barre City: Janet Shatney-absent

Plainfield: David Strong-absent

Robert Atchinson-absent

Barre Town: Byron Atwood-absent

Roxbury: David McShane-absent

Mark Nicholson-absent

Waitsfield: Don La Haye

Harrison Snapp-absent

Berlin: Bob Wernecke

Warren: Craig Klofach-absent

Cabot: Dick Payne-absent

Dan Raddock - absent

Calais: Renee Carpenter

Washington: Gary Winders-absent

Duxbury: Brian Fitzgerald-absent

Waterbury: Steve Lotspeich

East Montpelier: Julie Potter

Williamstown: Larry Hebert

Tim Carver

Woodbury:

Fayston: Carol Chamberlin-absent

Worcester: Bill Arrand-absent

Marshfield: Faeterri Silver-absent

Middlesex: Ronald Krauth

Montpelier: Tina Ruth-absent

Kim Cheney-absent

Moretown: Dara Torre-absent

Northfield: Laura Hill-Eubanks

Orange: George Malek

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

Others: S. Andersen, CVEDC; K. Nelson, VT Department of Health

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

There being no quorum of Commissioners, the Executive Committee, with four present, acted on behalf of CVRPC.

The minutes of the September 9, 2014 CVRPC meeting were accepted as amended to add Sam Andersen, CVEDC, as present.

Staff Report Additions: D. La Haye announced that Susan Sinclair, Executive Director, is retiring as of April 3, 2015, after 28 years as CVRPC's Executive Director. He stated that Sue has been with CVRPC for more than half of its existence. Sincerest thanks for a job well done were expressed.

Central VT Economic Development Corporation: S. Andersen reported that the second Community Development Block Grant for disaster recovery has received applications from 20 businesses that have un-met financial needs from the impact of Tropical Storm Irene in 2011. The application requests total just under \$1 million. The applications will be reviewed and awards made in the next month or so. S. Andersen also reminded Commissioners of the CVEDC annual meeting "What's Hot What's Not" in the State House scheduled for October 16, 2014.

Town Plan Review Committee: Northfield has requested approval of their 2014 municipal plan. The Town Plan Review Committee is comprised of five members representing East Montpelier, Middlesex, Orange, Barre City,

and Worcester. Other Commissioners were asked of their interest. Larry Hebert was added to the Committee. The public hearing for the Northfield Town Plan review is scheduled for the November 11, 2014 Commission meeting.

Regional Plan Draft Review Committee: *The Committee could use the addition of two Commissioners who will be able to actively participate. The Committee meets once a month from 4 to 6 pm. at CVRPC's office. Please contact staff if you would like to be added to the Committee.*

"A Garden in Every School": Karen Nelson of the Barre office of the VT Department of Health presented on the philosophy and success of the program "A garden in every school." The focus of the project is to improve the health of children, and the work is accomplished through coordination with the Central Vermont Food Systems Council. The Food Council has been developing and implementing this project for ten years. The gardening project is also incorporated into the school curriculum "gardening across the curriculum" with the mission to have a garden in every school in the State. All Washington County schools have a garden, as do some Orange County schools. To get more information, one could "like" VT Department of Health-Barre office on Facebook and also check out the Central VT Food Systems Council blog at cvfsc.wordpress.com. You can also contact Karen at karen.nelson@state.vt.us

Draft Economic Element of the Regional Plan: The goals, policies and strategies draft was revised as of October 7, 2014 and was provided for further comment by Commissioners and local officials. The strategies were revised to identify potential organizations that could lead implementation efforts outlined in individual strategies. The forest and agriculture goals were re-worked and broader goals were put into the business section. The livable wage statement was re-worded to better reflect support of working toward a livable wage.

The following comments and suggestions were made:

- Goal 2, Policy 3, G--make it A so it's first on the list.
- Goal 2, Policy 4: delete "small" in all references to businesses; all businesses have the same issues whether they have the same resources or not. Alternatively, if this goal is solely for small businesses, then where are the specific goals for medium and large businesses? Also, delete "public" in F.
- Policy 4 addresses supporting small businesses because of their local nature and resilience and that most of the businesses in Central VT are defined as small.
- Services and resources to smaller businesses could use more support which the larger businesses already have.
- 80% of the businesses in Central VT are already defined as small; 10 or fewer employees.
- Goal 2, Policy 4, D--There are other organizations besides Capstone to assist local businesses and funding for start ups. It was noted that this policy was proposed by Capstone staff, but we are not entirely sure of the intent. However, Capstone is a willing partner already working on these types of programs. Staff is discussing with Capstone whether these programs are grant funded and the timing of when the work has to be completed.
- It was suggested that the wording be changed to "work with organizations" to explore....
- Reword the strategy to be more general, and could say "such as...."
- Goal 2, Policies, 6, 8, and Goal 3, Policy 9: Is CVRPC capable of doing these strategies or are partners needed, and if so, who?
- Some Commissioners expressed reluctance at identifying one organization over another and would prefer that the partner statements were more general.
- The Plan should be clear that we are looking for specific partners.
- Many of the strategies say "explore, support, encourage" because we know we cannot do all of them.
- Goal 2, Policy 4, D--Insert "identifying potential partners that have the capacity to explore" .. rather than identifying a specific organization.
- The Statewide Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) plan has been approved by the U.S.

Economic Development Administration. Our Plan could say we support the Central VT projects that are identified in the Statewide CEDS. Having the CEDS referenced in the Regional Plan adds strength to the projects that are identified in the CEDS.

- It was suggested that wording be added to Goal 3, Policy 11 adding reference to the CEDS.
- We ought to be careful about being too specific since the Regional Plan will be valid for 8 years and some groups or projects may come and go in that period; would prefer that the specific names were left out.
- Wording was suggested: "seek partners and funding for specific projects" that would implement the strategy; the strategy does not have to identify the projects or the organizations.
- In Policy 3, G, leave the names of the specific organizations in the policy.
- Goal 2, Policy 4: Policies should not act as if the policy can only happen in small businesses; should apply universally.
- Add a policy about "smaller businesses may need more help than larger businesses"
- Policy 4: Change the wording to "promote entrepreneurship and innovation" and delete the rest.
- Combine policy 5 with policy 10; they are the same.
- Reword Policy 4 to "promote business entrepreneurship and innovation recognizing that small businesses may need more assistance"
- Are we encouraging small business development because we believe they are more resilient? What are we trying to promote?
- Are we going to encourage and promote other sized businesses or only small business? That's how the current policy would be interpreted.
- The purpose of the Plan is not what can and cannot, but is about a place for people to live and work and want to be here. It should not look as if we don't want big business.
- The Committee was commended for policies 6 and 7, but could add "assist commercial and industrial businesses to find space downtown"
- Leave everything broad, except access to capital for small businesses. They have fewer resources.
- Policy 4 C could say "recognizing that small business may need special consideration" at the end
- The Federal definition of small business is "fewer than 500 employees." Vermont's definition is 10 or fewer employees.
- Goals 3 and 4 are really strong goals.

Staff would welcome additional comments. Commissioners commended staff for the great work of putting these policies together.

Next CVRPC Meeting: The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 11, 2014.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Emery