

Executive Committee

Draft Minutes

June 1, 2015

Present were: J. Potter, D. La Haye, R. Wernecke, T. Ruth, B. Atwood, G. Malek, L. Hill-Eubanks, B. Waninger by phone, L. Hebert, L. Emery, G. Aloisio, and D. Currier.

There were no members of the public in attendance and no public comments were made.

The minutes of the May 4 and May 12, 2015 meetings of the Executive Committee were accepted as written.

Northfield Storm Water Contract with the Town of Northfield: This contract is to do some storm water restoration work on Central Street in Northfield. Requests for proposals were sent out with the initial responses being significantly higher than the amount of funds available. A second request for bids was sent with two responses received. The Town of Northfield was the low bidder with the remaining bids being over the available \$31,647. This work is being funded through an Agency of Natural Resources Ecosystem grant. It was moved, seconded, and unanimously approved to authorize the Chair to sign the contract with the Town of Northfield for \$31,647.

Project Review Procedures and Guidelines Amendments: The Project Review Committee has been working on amending the procedures and guidelines for when CVRPC comments on Act 250 or Section 248 projects and determining conformance with the Regional Plan. It was queried whether higher weight was given to parts of a project that are in conformance versus parts that might not be. Not all aspects of a project may meet all the policies of the Regional Plan, but a project can be in conformance if the parts not meeting the policies are mitigated. The Regional Plan used to say that there could be "trade off's" and that's how the Plan conformance would get resolved where there is a conflict. Where the project does not totally conform to the Plan policies, CVRPC can make recommendations on those issues. This is where it helps to meet with the project developer before the project goes to Act 250. It was suggested that the Regional Plan needs to be more generalized than the local plans. Conformance or non-conformance should not be either/or; there should be a balance.

The District Environmental Commission wants clear direction from regional planning commissions on whether a project is in conformance or not. We can say that the project "advances" specific goals and also needs mitigation for others. The last sentence of the letter could say that the project is in conformance or not based on what it advances and what mitigation is needed. The 3rd sentence of the 3rd paragraph of the procedures could be modified to read "CVRPC's position must address how the project conforms to the Regional Plan policies and that a project is in conformance (or not) with the Plan as a whole." This seems to better inform what's trying to be accomplished by the towns through the Regional Plan.

On page 2 of the Procedures, under "Who serves on the Committee," "one alternate" should say "one alternate from the Commission." On page 1, under "When do we participate?," should "might

contribute to cumulative impacts" be deleted? It was noted that cumulative impacts can be positive impacts and not just negative ones. More clarification is needed on cumulative impacts.

It was agreed that the Procedures and Guidelines need further revision and that staff should bring a revised draft back to the Executive Committee at its July 6 meeting.

Regional Plan/Future Land Use Map: The discussion centered on the fact that regional commissions do not have regulatory authority and that zoning is a town responsibility. The concern that was raised is that the future land use map comes close to zoning on a regional basis. It is recognized that zoning is a local issue, but that the future land use map can provide information to towns that is useful to their planning processes. One comment is that development shouldn't only be allowed inside growth centers. Will the future land use map be used by Act 250 rather than the text of the Regional Plan? Why doesn't the wording in the Plan follow the land use map? If it doesn't then how useful is the map? The land use map seems to be more of a goal of how development could occur. The language in the Plan should encourage, but not prohibit, where development occurs. The policies should be the guide and not the future land use map. The Regional Plan language should lead the future land use map and not the opposite. It was suggested that the Regional Plan be kept general so that the towns can do what they are planning to do. The future land use map should fit with the cumulative impact criteria in the Regional Plan. The Regional Plan should not determine what and where development happens in each town; that's a local responsibility.

The inclusion of a future land use map in the Regional Plan is a statutory requirement which was not addressed in the 2008 Plan. The land use element and the future land use map will be discussed at the June 9 Commission meeting/public hearing on the Regional Plan.

Executive Director's Report: The State Administration has been requiring accountability measures in State contracts. This is the case with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development. Water quality will be the next place where accountability will come into play. H. 35, the Lake Champlain Basin water quality legislation, will require that towns have permits for infrastructure construction/improvements, etc, as well as implementation plans for future upgrades. Regional planning will be involved in assisting towns with implementing projects that improve water quality. Regional planning commissions may be able to access funds from the Clean Water Fund for clean up where we could work with towns to define projects and help manage them. The Agency of Natural Resources wants regional commissions to work with towns on clean water work such as watershed planning.

B. Waninger hopes to return to the office at least part time on June 8.

FY 2016 Budget: The budget discussion could be deferred to next month's meeting provided that the Executive Director was authorized to pay payroll and invoices for July 1. R. Wernecke moved and it was seconded to approve the FY 16 budget as proposed. The vote to approve the budget was unanimous, and it was noted that it was nice to have a balanced budget.

Hiring a Part Time, Temporary Regional Planner: The Executive Director asked to be authorized to contract with or hire a part time, temporary regional planner for 20 hours per week until staffing returns to full capacity. We are currently without a regional planner, and our VISTA volunteer doesn't start until August. The FY 15 budget projects a deficit of about \$6800, but if a part time regional planner is hired before July that would add about \$1800 to the deficit. It was moved, seconded, and unanimously approved to hire a part time, 20 hours per week, temporary regional planner.

Committee Appointments: June is the month for making appointments to the Project Review Committee and the Town Plan Review Committee. The Project Review Committee has five standing members with three year staggered terms and one alternate. R. Wernecke's term is up in 2015, although he is interested in continuing to serve on the Committee. B. Atwood would like to no longer be chair of the Committee since he'll be chairing the Commission. The Town Plan Review Committee has five members each with one year terms. J. Potter, as Vice-Chair, will reach out to Commissioners to see who is interested in either Committee.

The Commission votes to appoint members to both of these Committees and can do so at the July Commission meeting thereby allowing time to inquire as to who is willing to serve.

Commission Agenda for June 9: The agenda was reviewed.