

December 2013 Newsletter



~ www.centralvtplanning.org ~

CVRPC Commissioners

Barre City - Michael Miller
Barre Town - Byron Atwood
Berlin - Robert Wernecke
Cabot - Richard Payne
Calais - Rolf Mueller
Duxbury - Brian Fitzgerald
East Montpelier - Tim Carver
Fayston - Carol Chamberlin
Marshfield - Faeterri Silver
Middlesex - Ronald Krauth
Montpelier - Tina Ruth
Moretown - Dara Torre
Northfield - Laura Hill-Eubanks
Orange - George Malek
Plainfield - David Strong
Roxbury - David McShane
Waitsfield - Don La Haye
Warren - Craig Klofach
Washington - Gary Winders
Waterbury - Gunner McCain
Williamstown - Larry Hebert
Woodbury - Janet Shatney
Worcester - Bill Arrand

Plan Central Vermont

The collaborative effort to develop our 2016 Regional Plan, *Plan Central Vermont: Shaping Our Region from the Ground Up* or *Plan Central Vermont*, for short, kicked-off in late September with over 60 organizations represented at a lunchtime presentation and meeting held in Montpelier.

The purpose of this meeting was to share the types of analyses and input CVRPC will be coordinating as part of the planning process, and to identify partner organizations that may wish to participate in and help guide Central Vermont to a more sustainable future.



More than 65 Commissioners, organizational representatives and engaged citizens have since signed up to serve on the Regional Plan Draft Review Committee (RPDRC), Public Engagement Committee or a topic specific working group. To view the presentation, list of attendees or break-out discussion notes, visit:



centralvtplanning.org/programs/regional-planning/plan-central-vermont/

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*Barre Technical
Center Students
develop Plan
Central Vermont
logo!*

Staff is pleased to present
the new Plan Central
Vermont logo!

Plan Central Vermont (continued)

The RPDRC convened its first meeting on December 19 and began developing a vision statement that will serve as a roadmap for the Plan Central Vermont process. This initial vision and goal-setting was informed by input from kick-off meeting attendees and results from community interview projects led by both Spaulding High School Sociology students and Harwood Union High School Creating Sustainable Communities students with guidance from their teachers. These students interviewed a broad range of citizens throughout the Region in order to assist CVRPC in understanding who exactly it is we are planning for, what our residents value about living in Central Vermont and what makes our Region truly unique. The recorded interviews will also be shared on the Plan Central Vermont web site, planned for launch in early 2014 at www.plancentralvermont.org. The web site will allow us to update residents throughout the planning process and inform all about our progress and upcoming events.



This logo design was developed by a talented Digital Media Arts student at Barre Technical Center as part of a service-learning partnership with CVRPC.

BTC students will also be creating a style guide that will allow for consistent branding throughout the planning process and the life of the plan. The style guide and logo will inform the Plan Central Vermont website as well as various communication materials.

A Regional Priorities Survey was recently distributed online via CVRPC's web site, email, Facebook page and Front Porch Forum. The purpose of the survey is to solicit a broad range of citizen input on regional priorities for the different topic areas of the Regional Plan over a three week period. The results from the (will insert # of responses last-minute) completed survey responses will be compiled into a forthcoming report and utilized to inform the Vision and Goal-setting process as well as further outreach efforts later in the planning process. Staff has also begun data collection and analysis for the Strong & Diverse Economy element of Plan Central Vermont and will be convening the working group to work on goals, policies and strategies in late January. To receive further updates on the launch of the Plan Central Vermont web site, upcoming meetings and general plan progress, sign-up for our monthly e-news at this link: <http://eepurl.com/FrrN5>

Staff Changes

After nearly two years of dedicated work as Regional Planner for CVRPC, Jackie Cassino bid us farewell to accept an offer with the Vermont Agency of Transportation. In Jackie's tenure, she was instrumental in launching CVRPC's Local Food Systems Planning efforts and Online Information Hub after she secured a grant from the Vermont Department of Health. In addition to her assistance in town plan updates and review, Jackie also led and provided assistance to a number of Central Vermont communities participating in the Home Energy Challenge. We are sorry to see her go and wish her the best of luck in her new position.

Upcoming Events

Jan. 6 - Lake Champlain Restoration Proposal meeting for Local Officials & Staff

Central Vermont Chamber
of Commerce, Berlin
2:00-4:00pm

Jan. 8 – Green Mountain Byway Steering Committee Meeting

Green Mountain Club,
Waterbury Center
4:30-5:30pm

Jan. 14 – Monthly Commission Meeting

Central Vermont Chamber
of Commerce, Berlin
Featuring presentations on
Lake Champlain Restoration
Proposal and the
Community Rating System)
7:00-9:00pm

Mar. 31 – VT ANR Municipal Day at National Life

A day of workshops and
technical assistance for
Vermont's local officials



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Transportation Updates

Over the next 3 – 4 year period, there will be ten projects that will affect transportation in and around the Waterbury Village Area. These include roundabout construction, repair and replacement of Interstate bridges, Main St. reconstruction, Stowe St. sidewalks, and paving of US 2 and VT 100. These projects are focused on the rebuilding of the State Office Complex. There will be active traffic management throughout this time period, including using smart work zone technology from Richmond to Middlesex, and the Mad River Valley to Morristown. There will also be a Community Liaison Officer assigned to perform public relations activities to the surrounding area. Plans, schedules, and activities are still being formulated. When ready later this winter, VTrans will engage in formal and widespread public outreach.

CVRPC hosted a local concerns meeting for the expansion or relocation of the Exit 5 (Williamstown/Northfield) Park and Ride Lot. Demand for the current lot is regularly over capacity with people parking on the lawn or on the side of the road. It is also too small for bus operations that provide service to Randolph. Insights, concerns, and potential solution ideas would be welcome.

The Town of Berlin will be conducting a study to provide pedestrian and bicycle access to existing and future residential and commercial uses along the Barre-Montpelier Road (US Route 302) starting this winter. This planning process is a result of the Town not being allowed to use the railroad ROW for the Central Vermont Regional Path (CVRP). Sections of the CVRP have been built or are under design in Montpelier, Barre City, and Barre Town. Using the Barre-Montpelier Road corridor seems to be the only remaining option to make a bicycle/pedestrian connection among these communities. A key element of the study will be the investigation of the impact on traffic if the number of lanes were reduced in order to add bicycle lanes.

The CVRPC Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) is currently updating the Transportation Goals and Policies as part of the update to the 2008 Regional Plan. In January, the TAC will begin reviewing the Public Transit Section of the Plan. Also new this year, VTrans is seeking regional input on the prioritization of highway pavement leveling performed by VTrans Maintenance Districts.

If you have any questions or comments on anything related to transportation, contact CVRPC Senior Transportation Planner, Steve Gladczuk, 229-0389, or by email at Gladczuk@cvregion.com.



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www.fb.com/centralvtplanning

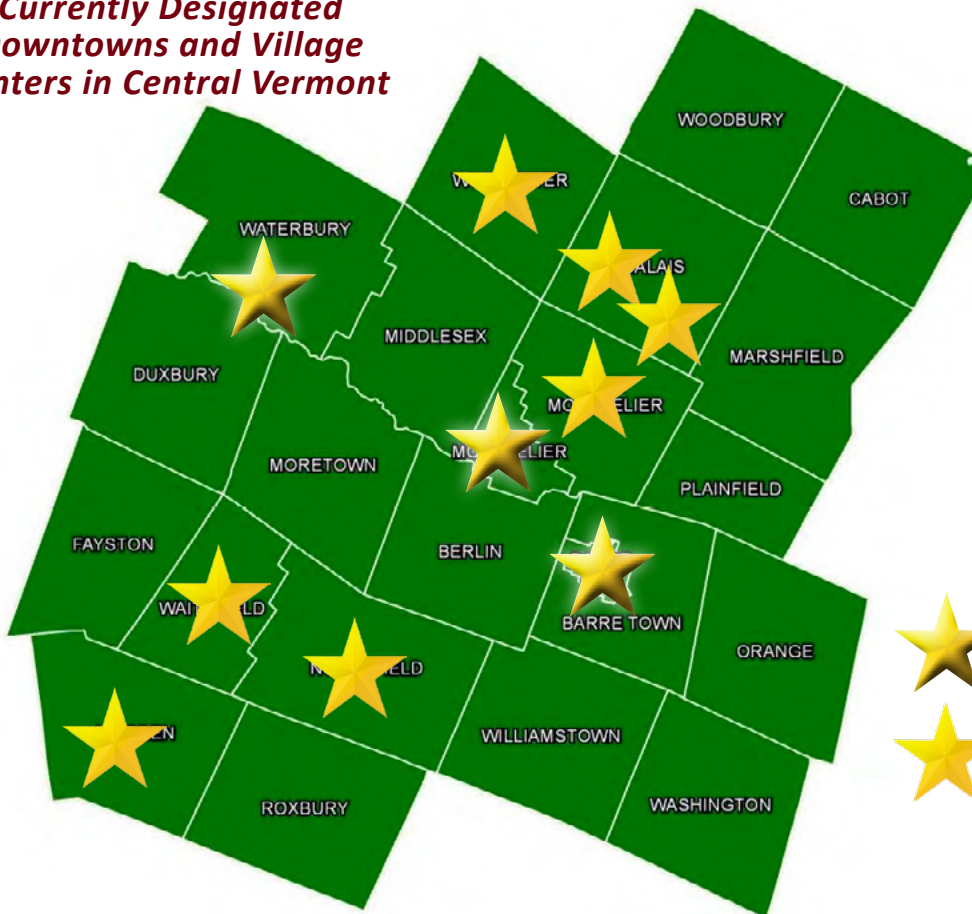
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Maple Corner and East Calais Village Center Designations

The Downtown Board officially approved Maple Corners and East Calais in the Town of Calais as Designated Village Centers. Congratulations to the Town of Calais for successfully completing the application and approval process to designate these two villages that have and continue to serve as the social and small commercial hubs of the community.

The Vermont Village Center Designation Program recognizes and supports local revitalization efforts across the State with dedicated staff and funding to help designated municipalities build and foster strong communities. Once designated, the community is eligible for benefits such as tax credits, technical assistance and priority consideration for certain grant programs. Maple Corners and East Calais join the growing list of Designated Village Centers in Central Vermont, which also includes: Warren Village, Waitsfield Village, Worcester Village, Northfield Village and East Montpelier Village. For more information on the Village Center Designation program, visit: http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/revitalization/village_center

Currently Designated Downtowns and Village Centers in Central Vermont



New Rules for Village Center Designation in Town Plans

To strengthen the linkage between community revitalization and municipal planning,



***Maple Corner Store,
(Village Center App)***

Town Plans must now describe how the designated area (Downtown or Village) supports community goals. Town Plans must include this element prior to applying and renewing their Village Center Designation after July 1, 2014.

***Designated
Downtowns***

***Designated
Village Centers***

Municipal Planning Grant Awards in Central Vermont

Total regional funding available: \$33,178

City of Barre—Comprehensive Energy Plan

State Funds Awarded: \$10,667

Local Match: \$1,333 Total

Project Cost: \$12,000

Local Contact: Michael Miller

mmiller@barrecity.org

The City of Barre will create an inventory and conduct an analysis of energy resources, needs, and uses within Barre City while engaging residents in developing a plan and policies to meet the City's energy goals.

Town of East Montpelier—Zoning and Subdivision Bylaw Update

State Funds Awarded: \$3,911 (No Local Match)

Local Contact: Bruce Johnson

eastmontadmin@comcast.net

The Town of East Montpelier will draft regulations to address fluvial erosion hazard areas and river corridor encroachment and will engage residents in the process.

Town of Waitsfield—Infrastructure Planning

State Funds Awarded: \$18,600

Local Match: \$5,300 Total

Project Cost: \$23,900

Local Contact: Valerie Capels

townadmin@madriver.com

The Town of Waitsfield will organize landowner associations for the construction and management of privately owned, shared, wastewater treatment projects in Waitsfield's growth area.



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Statewide CEDS Input Meeting held in Montpelier

The State of Vermont recently began a process to develop a statewide Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). A CEDS is designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen regional economies. ACCD in conjunction with the CEDS Consultant team hosted a series of regional meetings to provide opportunities for stakeholder input.

Central Vermont's CEDS input meeting took place in Montpelier on October 22nd with a number of CVRPC Commissioners in attendance. Questions regarding major trends impacting the economy yielded responses related to key themes of globalization and competitiveness, demographic shifts such as the aging population and youth out-migration, the need for continued citizen engagement in local efforts and policy-making, high costs of living, the need for rural public transportation options, and regulatory challenges for our Region's small businesses. When asked what it is that we do particularly well in Central Vermont, responses focused on branding and tourism, maintaining the values of our natural landscape, and supporting a high quality education system.

This information will be critical in development of the statewide CEDS and to provide a foundation for the efforts of our Economic Development working group as we update our Regional Plan. For the full notes from Central Vermont's regional meeting and others, visit:

http://accd.vermont.gov/business/strategic_planning

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Front Porch Forum Makes Announcements Easy

Front Porch Forum (FPF) offers an easy and timely way to let everyone in town know about meetings, special events, and projects—and at no cost.

FPF is now available in every Vermont community! As a modern-day cross between bulletin boards and virtual town greens, FPF uses technology to bring neighbors closer together. It's free. It's local, and it's friendly. Visit: <http://www.frontporchforum.com/> to sign up.



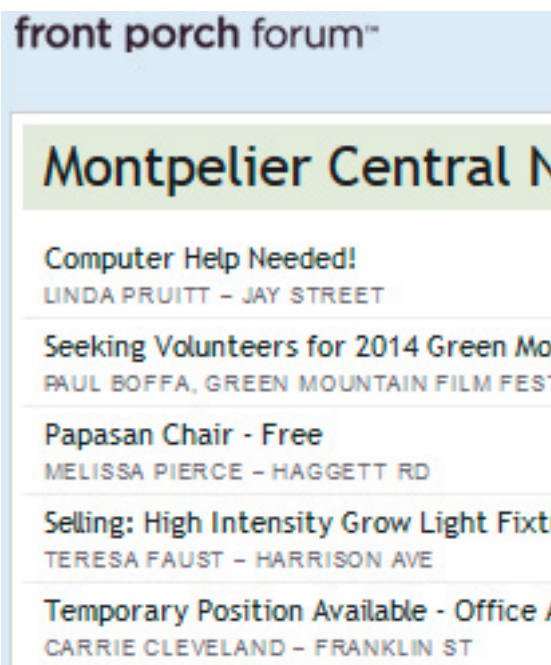
CVRPC plans on using FPF to reach community members throughout the region with announcements, events and Regional Plan updates. FPFs are in place statewide, but individuals need to sign up as members before they can join in. The more that sign up, the more interesting the

forum becomes and the bigger the audience for any news you want to share.

To learn more and sign up for this free service, visit FrontPorchForum.com. Front Porch Forum is winning national accolades for its community building innovations. People use their local FPF to update road conditions, provide background for upcoming meetings, rally volunteers for pie suppers, trade equipment, and describe wildlife sightings. Because the service is moderated and real names accompany postings, the discussions remain civil, engaging, and relevant. In times of need, such as during and following natural disasters, your FPF becomes even more powerful.

FPF and the Vermont Council on Rural Development's Vermont Digital Economy Project are teaming up to bring this service to all Vermonters for free. Vermont's Congressional delegation played a crucial role in getting this project funded and off the ground in our State.

For more information on FPF and how CVRPC will be using this tool, please contact Stephanie Smith, Community Engagement Coordinator A*VISTA at smith@cvregion.com.



Upcoming Grant and Funding Opportunities

Our Town Grants, National Endowment for the Arts (Jan. 13)
<http://arts.gov/grants-organizations/our-town>

Vermont Community Foundation: Innovations & Collaborations Grants (Jan. 25)
<http://www.vermontcf.org/Nonprofits/AvailableGrants.aspx>

Vermont Community Foundation: Small & Inspiring Grants (Feb. 22)
<http://www.vermontcf.org/Nonprofits/AvailableGrants.aspx>

USDA Rural Development Community Facilities
Applications encouraged (Ongoing)
<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/NHVTCommunity.html>

USDA Value-added Producer Grant (Feb. 24)
http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_VAPG.html

Local Action for Flood Resilience

According to the VT Agency of Natural Resources, immediate opportunities to take steps toward becoming a flood resilient community include:

- Outreach and Information – newsletter, web sites that refer to flood risk and mitigation information, maps, resources
- Elevation Certificates – Promote cooperation among neighbors
- Support structural adaptation to reduce flood risk and lower insurance cost
- Prioritize and pursue FEMA Flood Hazard Mitigation Grants
- Prioritize and pursue other funds for mitigation (including matching funds)
- Develop the flood resilience element of the municipal plan
- Update or review existing local hazard mitigation plan (if needed)
- Update or review municipal bylaws
- Qualify for maximum Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF) Post-Disaster state funding
- Join the FEMA Community Rating System (CRS)

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Planning for Flood Resilience

While floods are inevitable, there are many different approaches that can help make our communities safer and reduce flood losses in both compact historic village centers and downtowns that are located adjacent to the river, typical of many communities in Vermont, and along the smaller tributaries in the upper reaches of a watershed. Earlier this year, a new state planning goal was added through legislation dealing with flood resilience and a requirement that town and regional plans adopted after July 1, 2014 include flood resilience elements.

The purpose of this legislation (Act 16) is to encourage flood resilient communities and the goals of Act 16 are:

- New development in identified flood hazard, fluvial erosion, and river corridor protection areas is avoided. If new development is to be built in such areas, it does not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion.
- The protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion is encouraged.
- Flood emergency preparedness and response planning is encouraged.

Plans will need to identify and map areas at risk of flood damage and recommend ways to protect those areas and minimize flood damage. Any communities that are working on plan revisions or are planning to revise their plans soon should include this element. Staff at CVRPC can provide guidance on this work. Local hazard mitigation plans and other resources available to assist communities in planning for flood resilience and developing a flood resilience element are available on a new Flood Resilience section of CVRPC's web site: <http://centralvtplanning.org/programs/hazard-mitigation-planning/flood-resiliency/>

