

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
DRAFT MINUTES
July 14, 2020

Commissioners:

<input type="checkbox"/> Barre City	Janet Shatney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moretown	Dara Torre, Secretary/Treasurer
<input type="checkbox"/>	Heather Grandfield, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Joyce Manchester, Alt
<input type="checkbox"/> Barre Town	Byron Atwood	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Northfield	Laura Hill-Eubanks, Chair
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	George Clain, Alt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Orange	Lee Cattaneo
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Berlin	Robert Wernecke	<input type="checkbox"/> Plainfield	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Karla Nuissl, Alt.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Paula Emery, Alt.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cabot	Amy Hornblas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Roxbury	Jerry D'Amico
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Calais	John Brabant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Waitsfield	Don La Haye
<input type="checkbox"/>	Jan Ohlsson, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Harrison Snapp, Alt.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Duxbury	Alan Quackenbush	<input type="checkbox"/> Warren	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. Montpelier	Julie Potter	<input type="checkbox"/>	J. Michael Bridgewater, Alt.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clarice Cutler, Alt.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Washington	Peter Carbee
<input type="checkbox"/> Fayston		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Waterbury	Steve Lotspeich, Vice-Chair
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marshfield	Robin Schunk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Williamstown	Richard Turner
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Middlesex	Ron Krauth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacqueline Higgins, Alt.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Montpelier	Marcella Dent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Woodbury	Michael Gray
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mike Miller, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/> Worcester	Bill Arrand

Staff: Bonnie Waninger, Nancy Chartrand

Guests: Jamie Stewart, Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation; Dona Bate, Clean Water Advisory Committee

Call to Order

Chair L. Hill-Eubanks called the remote meeting to order at 6:32 pm. Quorum was present to conduct business.

Adjustments to the Agenda

None.

Public Comments

None.

Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation Update

Hill-Eubanks introduced Jamie Stewart of the Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation, who provided an update on the status of work they have been doing in the region since the onset of the pandemic in March. They have been working remotely since March, assisting businesses to pivot their operations and survive during this pandemic. Credit was given to the State for taking strong action at the outset of pandemic that has now allowed Vermont to reopen the economy at some level. Many

1 businesses CVEDC works with have been able to adapt in order to survive, but not necessarily thrive.
2 CVEDC's primary goal at this time is survival of businesses. They have been assisting businesses with the
3 various grant programs which have been made available and that have had many guidance changes. He
4 noted that there currently is capacity in programs for additional assistance, and they are happy to assist
5 businesses, and their website is being updated consistently with new information.

6
7 Questions were posed regarding status with restaurants; Stewart advised there has been good
8 distribution of monies within the state that went to small businesses including restaurants. He noted
9 the latest grant program initiated by the State last week is focused on the hospitality industry. He
10 believes this group is most at risk for not being able survive without significant financial assistance.

11
12 There was also question as to whether or not small Mom & Pop businesses were eligible for the latest
13 program. Stewart advised that if they did not take regular wage income (W2s) they do not qualify;
14 however, there is a program currently under development for sole proprietors that does not require W2
15 employees. Stewart noted that with regard to question about some businesses doing better than others
16 that those that have pivoted quickly to make modifications are doing better. He specifically noted
17 Agrimark (Cabot Cheese) been open entire time, and there is a huge demand for their products. Also
18 Onion River Outdoors is doing good with their business – servicing more bikes than normal. The third
19 business he noted was Ceres Greens in Barre City, which is an indoor vertical growing operation.

20 21 **Resolution on Complying with Vermont Open Meeting Law**

22 Hill-Eubanks read the resolution to meeting participants which was provided in the packet.

23
24 *S. Lotspeich moved to adopt the Resolution on Complying with Vermont Open Meeting Law per 1 V.S.A.,*
25 *Section 312; R. Wernecke seconded.* P. Emery raised a question regarding only two towns posting the
26 agenda; Waninger said the requirement to post in three locations was set up for municipalities. CVRPC's
27 goal is to post in three locations in the region. The towns listed had agreed to post in addition to our
28 posting at the CVRPC office. Emery asked if the Plainfield Clerk notified us that they were willing to post,
29 would we also send to Plainfield. Waninger confirmed CVRPC would be happy to send to Plainfield. N.
30 Chartrand requested that the callers who joined following roll-call identify themselves. Amy Hornblas
31 and Robin Schunk advised they were the callers. *The vote was called, and the motion carried.*

32 33 **Clean Water Advisory Committee Letter of Concern**

34 Hill-Eubanks introduced Amy Hornblas, Chair of the Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC). Hornblas
35 provide additional information. Hill-Eubanks also advised that George Clain had provided written
36 comments which were shared with the Board prior to the meeting. Hornblas noted CWAC members
37 represented a range of specialties and spent time researching and creating the letter in the packet. She
38 hoped the Board would trust them to move forward and submit the proposed letter to the Department
39 of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Dona Bate noted the CWAC listened to the Board's feedback and
40 made revisions to the letter based on it. She states she hoped the letter mets the Board's standards and
41 that it would support it. M. Dent had a procedural question related to abstaining from voting because
42 she works for the DEC in a different division. Waninger advised the Conflict of Interest Policy would not
43 apply due to there being no fiduciary responsibility. The the Code of Ethics would apply if she were
44 engaged in watershed planning at DEC. Dent confirmed she was not. S. Lotspeich noted the Committee

1 did a good job addressing the concerns that were raised previously. He thanked them for their work.
2 He requested all acronyms used in the letter be spelled out.

3
4 Hill-Eubanks read the written comments provided by Clain. Each comment was addressed individually.
5 With regard to comments on phosphorus load allocations, J. Brabant advised he felt that the comments
6 were basically clarifying language and did not conflict with what they were trying to address. With
7 regard to Agriculture, Brabant advised he felt a lot of folks understand what Roundup is but they don't
8 understand that it is Glyphosate. After discussion, it was concurred to replace "aka Roundup" with "i.e.
9 Roundup". Significant discussion ensued with regard to the comments on Policies and Regulation and
10 the differing impacts small vs. large farms have on the environment and water quality and the incentives
11 available for both. Hornblas advised the Committee discussed this item thoroughly and agreed it was
12 important to address in the letter. Ultimately J. Potter suggested the following language for the
13 recommendation: "VAAFM (Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets) should create policy
14 incentives to enable small scale farms to be economically viable."

15
16 Commissioners were in agreement with spelling out acronyms in the letter, and from Clain's comments
17 (in order), adding the suggested language regarding "contributing" fertilizers... "to affect the" ...loading;
18 adding "and its river basins"; changing aka Roundup to "i.e. Roundup"; and adding "contributing" before
19 chemical fertilizers. With regard to Policy and Regulation #2, it was agreed to leave the statement but
20 change the recommendation to be worded as suggested by Potter.

21
22 *R. Krauth moved to authorize the Chair to sign the letter of concern to the Agency of Natural Resources*
23 *with the revisions agreed upon; L. Cattaneo seconded. Motion carried.*

24
25 Hill-Eubanks noted she will sign the letter after the changes are made. Clain inquired if the Committee
26 was planning to meet with other Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) to form a bigger group for the
27 next time the Basin Plan is reviewed so there is a stronger voice than one RPC. Hornblas advised that
28 was a great suggestion. Lotspeich advised he believed the Commission would need to discuss further
29 because the Committee is an advisory group to the Commission, not to the statewide Association of
30 Commissions. He advised that Karen Bates of DEC seemed very receptive to sharing the information
31 with other basin planners. Waninger pointed out that if these comments are the types of issues that
32 cross basins, they should be submitted any time the Commission comments on a Basin Plan and the
33 comments on Basin 14 recently submitted did not include these types of comments. If the Commission
34 wants to see change overall, it should include on all basin plans. It was suggested other RPC's be copied
35 on the letter to which there was no objection raised. Clain asked if the suggestion to include these types
36 of comments in the future needed a vote, and it was determined that it did not.

37 38 **FY21 Budget and Workplan**

39 Waninger presented the FY21 Budget and Workplan. She noted the organization currently is focused on
40 projects versus an overall work plan due to the need to be nimble during COVID. She outlined the five-
41 year organizational goals established in 2016 and how they have been implemented.

- 42 1. Enhance Financial Security – positioned ourselves to operate in fiscally challenging times, such
43 as COVID 19.
- 44 2. Create Operational Excellence – staff was working in silos five years ago and has worked hard to

- 1 cross train across disciplines; still experts in their area, but knowledgeable in other areas too.
- 2 3. Enhance Services – worked to increase communities’ desire to work cooperatively regarding
- 3 regional issues; for example, making communities more competitive for grants.
- 4 4. Position CVRPC as Leader and Partner – we are helping other organizations achieve their goals
- 5 so we can achieve our own, such as working with Downstreet to achieve housing goals.
- 6

7 CVRPC’s goal for FY21 is “adaptability in a COVID world” and to continue with the above goals as follows:

- 8 1. Security – maintaining a balanced budget to the extent possible.
- 9 2. Excellence – take advantage of the remote work environment to accelerate employee growth
- 10 and development.
- 11 3. Service – maintain nimbleness so services can simultaneously prepare for pandemic effects and
- 12 adapt to recovery needs.
- 13 4. Leadership – grow partnerships using CVRPC’s core skills; conversation facilitation, data
- 14 collection and analysis, and strategic planning.
- 15

16 Waninger outlined projects for FY21: Carryover projects include the Regional Plan; workforce

17 development systems change facilitation; stormwater project design and construction; road erosion

18 inventory, capital plans and best management practices treatment assistance; municipal plan forest

19 integrity assistance; and hazard mitigation plan assistance. New projects include pandemic recovery

20 efforts, regional trails convening, economic development strategy, more stormwater design and

21 construction, and bolstering transit ridership.

22

23 Waninger advised the budget is approximately \$1,000,000 and includes the legislative allocation that is

24 27% of budget, annual contracts that are 32%, project specific contracts that are 33% and municipal

25 dues that are 8%. She further outlined major categories of expenses – staff, professional services,

26 project costs, contractor costs and overhead. Staff, professional services, and contractors constitute a

27 majority of the budget; CVRPC is a knowledge-based organization.

28

29 She discussed the budget that was adopted by the Executive Committee and noted scenarios have been

30 developed should revenues drop due to State budget constraints later in FY21. Currently the budget

31 looks fairly positive. We expect additional contracts in the near future - two related to pandemic

32 response, Clean Water Service Provider for Winooski Basin, and the Friends of the Winooski has also

33 asked us to work with them on the Water Wise Woodlands project in the Upper Winooski.

34

35 It was confirmed that the dollar amount in the presentation for project specific contracts needed to be

36 amended, but the percentage of the budget was correct.

37

38 Hill-Eubanks thanked the staff for all the work they do.

39

40 **Meeting Minutes**

41 *L. Cattaneo moved to approve the minutes; P. Carbee seconded. Motion carried.*

42

43 **Reports**

44 Potter requested explanation of the 2nd bullet on page 27 under COVID-19 Response and Recovery.

1 Waninger said CVRPC was part of a regional response team related to moving homeless individuals out
2 of shelters and into hotels so they could maintain physical distancing. CVRPC played a transportation
3 role by finding vehicles to do that. CVRPC intends to file a FEMA Public Assistance claim to recoup
4 related costs. L. Cattaneo requested a copy of the comments on Basin 14 as outlined on Page 28 –
5 Tactical Basin Planning Assistance.

6
7 G. Clain suggested every chapter of the Regional Plan should be addressing economics, especially after
8 all the information we've heard about impending budget deficits.

9
10 Regarding Solid Waste Implementation Plans, Hill-Eubanks questioned if solid waste haulers are
11 supposed to be picking up food waste as of July 1st. Discussion ensued regarding the economic
12 feasibility of haulers being able to do this and who is responsible for ensuring what goes into the landfill.
13 There has been reluctance to assign responsibility in this law to ensure that the goal of removing food
14 scraps from the solid waste stream is readily achievable. Additional discussion ensued regarding where
15 people may put their food waste and businesses being initiated to address the waste.

16
17 Waninger updated the Board that CVRPC will be hosting a VISTA member beginning late August. The
18 individual is coming from Colorado and will need a place to quarantine upon arrival. Waninger asked if
19 Board members had ideas regarding places that CVRPC could rent for the two-week quarantine period.

20
21 Waninger advised CVRPC is submitting a proposal to assess Wi-Fi hotspots in communities. The
22 Department of Public Service asked communities to identify locations where students could access
23 service. RPCs will assess how good that service is. Waninger asked whether any Board member would
24 be willing to complete assessments in their community as grant match. The list of sites will be sent to
25 the Board in case any members were willing to do the assessments.

26
27 Carbee asked if CVRPC has any direct COVID expenses that might be recoverable under the CARES.
28 Waninger advised CVRPC had minimal supply expenses and is keeping track of costs. Waninger said it's
29 unlikely CVRPC is eligible due to how we are set up. Municipalities are eligible for costs that cannot be
30 recovered through FEMA that are related to COVID response reimbursed at a State level. RPCs can help
31 municipalities document those costs. Costs must not be eligible through FEMA, or any other
32 reimbursement source. CVRPC will provide additional information to municipalities.

33
34 Lotspeich wanted to confirm whether there was a Commission meeting in August. Waninger advised it
35 depended on whether a municipality requested plan approval in the next two weeks. Lotspeich further
36 advised that the Transportation Advisory Committee is not meeting in August.

37
38 **Adjournment**

39 *D. La Haye moved to adjourn at 8:20 pm; R. Turner seconded. Motion carried.*

40
41 Respectfully submitted,

42
43 Nancy Chartrand, Office Manager