



## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

October 13, 2020 at 6:30 pm

*Remote Participation via GoToMeetings<sup>1</sup>*

Join via computer, tablet or smartphone: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/552444045>

Dial in via phone<sup>2</sup>: (872) 240-3212; Access Code: 552-444-045

Download the app at least 5 minutes before the meeting starts:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/552444045>

### Page AGENDA

- |    |                         |   |
|----|-------------------------|---|
|    | <b>6:30<sup>3</sup></b> | <b>Adjustments to the Agenda</b>  |
|    |                         | <b>Public Comments</b>  |
| 2  | <b>6:35</b>             | <b>Berlin New Town Center &amp; Neighborhood Development Area, Clare Rock, CVRPC, Brandy Saxton, PlaceSence, Karla Nuissl, Planning Commission Chair, Tom Badowski, Assistant Town Manager</b> (enclosed)<br>Presentation about New Town Center (NTC) and Neighborhood Development Area (NDA) designations; Berlin NTC and NDA planning efforts; and Regional Plan compatibility. |
|    | <b>7:35</b>             | <b>Legislative Update</b>   |
| 24 | <b>7:50</b>             | <b>Regional Plan Amendment</b> (enclosed) <sup>4</sup><br>a) Public hearing<br>b) Potential action to adopt the Amendment   |
| 25 | <b>8:15</b>             | <b>Meeting Minutes – September 8, 2020</b> (enclosed) <sup>4</sup>  |
| 35 | <b>8:20</b>             | <b>Reports</b> (enclosed)<br>Update/questions on Staff and Committee Reports  |
|    | <b>8:30</b>             | <b>Adjournment</b>  |

**Next Meeting: November 10, 2020**

<sup>1</sup> Persons with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate in programs or activities are encouraged to contact Nancy Chartrand at 802-229-0389 or [chartrand@cvregion.com](mailto:chartrand@cvregion.com) at least 3 business days prior to the meeting for which services are requested.

<sup>2</sup> Dial-in numbers are toll numbers. Fees may be charged dependent on your phone service.

<sup>3</sup> Times are approximate unless otherwise advertised.

<sup>4</sup> Anticipated action item.



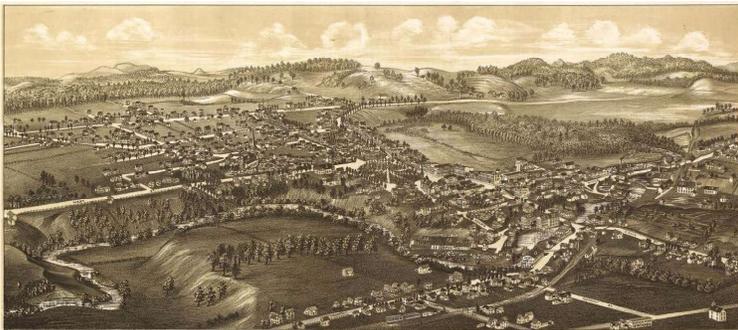
Slides courtesy of Jacob Hemmerick, Community Planning Policy Manager,  
VT Department of Housing and Community Development,  
unless otherwise noted.



# Designation Program

## Statewide Planning Goals

24 VSA Ch. 117 Section 4302(c)(1)



... plan development so as to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact villages and urban centers separated by rural countryside...

## Value of Designation



## Number of State Designations: 200



Village Centers: **163**



Downtowns: **23**



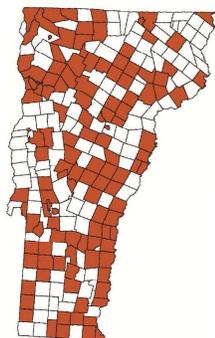
New Town Centers: **2**



Neighborhood Development Areas: **6**



Growth Centers: **6**



## The 5 Designations



Civic and Commercial Core Designations



Village Centers: **163** (Est. 2002)



Downtowns: **23** (Est. 1998)



New Town Centers, **2** (Est. 2002)



Add-On Designations to a Core Designation

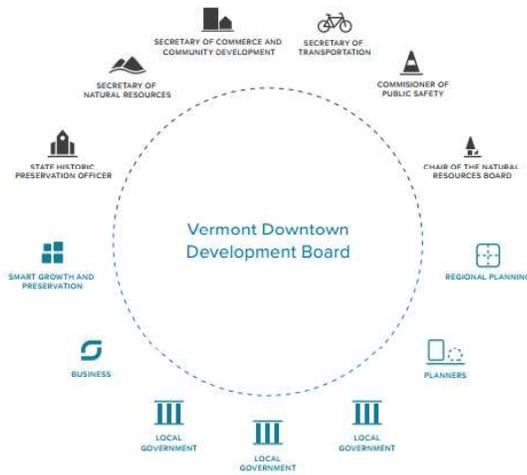


Neighborhood Development Areas, **6** (Est. 2013)



Growth Centers, **6** (Est. 2006)

Downtown Board



Comparing the Designations

Comparison of Designation Programs

|  | DOWNTOWN | VILLAGE CENTER | NEW TOWN CENTER | GROWTH CENTER | NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT AREA |
|--|----------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>AUTHORITY</b>   |          |                |                 |               |                               |
| Statute Section (24 V.S.A. Chapter 76A)  | 2793     | 2793a          | 2793b           | 2793c         | 2793e                         |
| Date Established   | 1998     | 2002           | 2002            | 2006          | 2013                          |
| <b>ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS</b>   |          |                |                 |               |                               |
| Pre-application meeting with DHCD staff  | ✓        | ✓              | ✓               | ✓             | ✓                             |
| Complete application submitted by the legislative body of a municipality*                    | ✓        | ✓              | ✓               | ✓             | ✓                             |
| Notice sent to RPC and RDC of intent to apply  | ✓        | ✓              | ✓               | ✓             | ✓                             |
| Notice of application published in local newspaper   | ✓        |                |                 |               |                               |
| Notice of application sent to adjoining towns and interested parties                         |          |                |                 | ✓             |                               |
| Map of proposed designation**  | ✓        | ✓              | ✓               | ✓             | ✓                             |
| Preliminary application required   |          |                |                 | ✓             |                               |
| Number of days to a designation decision after application received                          | 45       | 45             | 45              | 90            | 45                            |
| Number of years the designation remains in effect (renewal required to maintain designation) | 8        | 8              | 8               | 20            | ***                           |
| Interim review required (interval of years) ***  | 4        |                | 4               | 5             | ***                           |
| <b>LOCAL CAPACITY AND CHARACTERISTICS</b>  |          |                |                 |               |                               |
| Area listed or eligible for National Register of Historic Places                             | ✓        |                |                 |               |                               |
| Community reinvestment agreement - signed by municipality & others                           | ✓        |                | ✓               |               |                               |
| Source of funding for necessary improvements   | ✓        |                |                 |               |                               |
| An organizational structure for long-term revitalization                                     | ✓        |                |                 |               |                               |
| Meet requirements for sewage and water systems   | ✓        |                | ✓               | ✓             | ✓                             |
| Existing or planned multi-modal transport options including transit                          |          |                | ✓               | ✓             |                               |

Technical Assistance



State Grant Priorities

- VTrans Bike/Ped Grants
- VTrans Transportation Alternative Grants
- Vermont Community Development Program (CDBG)
- Historic Preservation Grants
- Municipal Planning Grants
- Brownfield Clean-up Grants
- And many others!



Downtown & Village Center Tax Credits

Hardwick, VT

Hardwick - Designation Sparks Revival



“The amount of new activity, life and excitement on Main Street is unprecedented. It’s clear to me that strong communities need vital urban cores -- and with the help of the tax credits, we’ve made a great start in Hardwick.”

Michael Gohl, local architect and tax credit recipient

### Regulatory Benefits



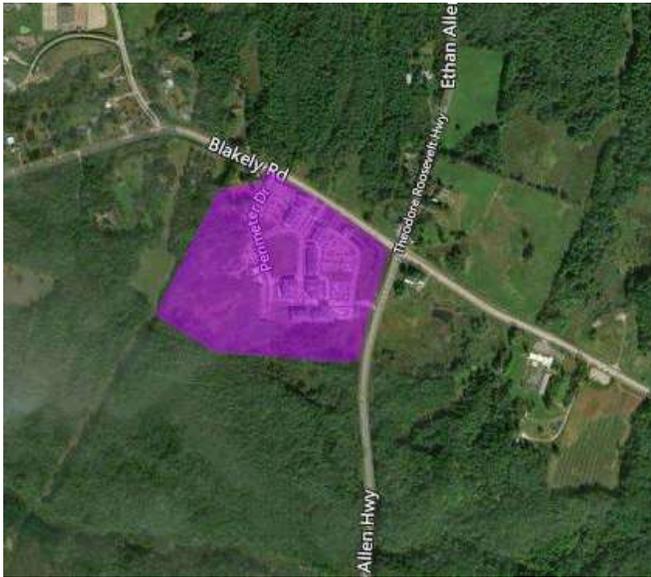
Priority Housing Project Act 250 Exemption

- ✓ Supported the development of more than **600 housing units**
- ✓ Saved an average of **\$50,000 in fees per project**
- ✓ Reduced project permit timelines by an estimated average of **7 months**



## New Town Center

### New Town Centers: Colchester

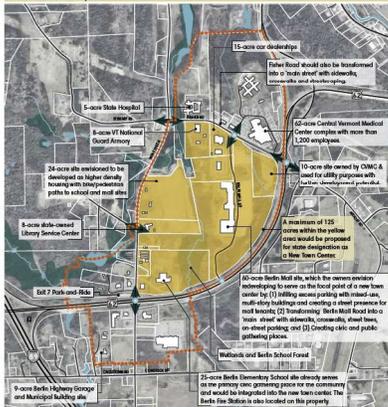


### New Town Centers: SoBu



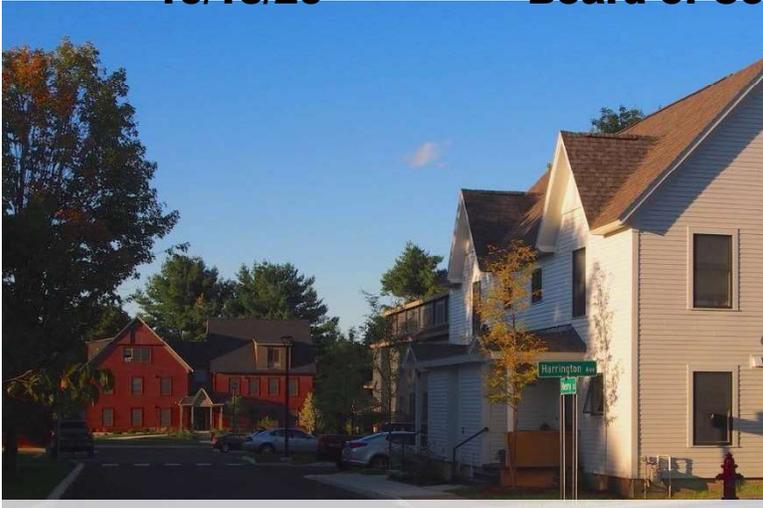
### Berlin

New Town Center Map

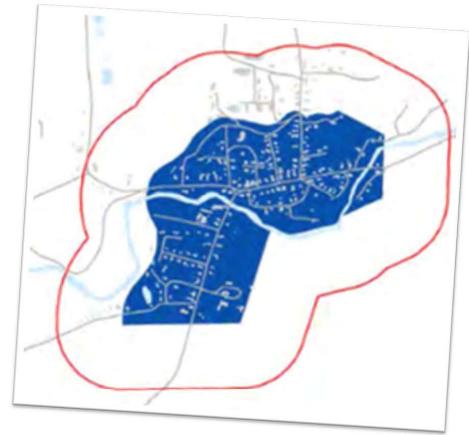


## Neighborhood Development Area





Develop More Affordable Housing



In Centered, Walkable Places

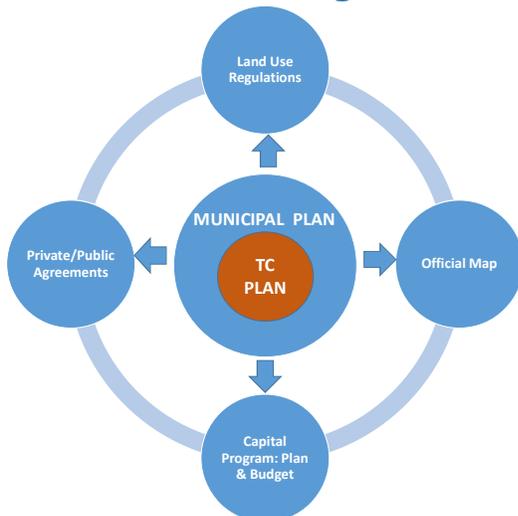


Using Traditional Neighborhood Design



Making It Work

### High Performance Planning



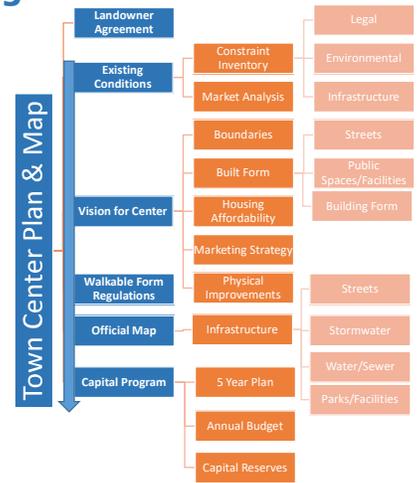
### High Performance Centers



Call it what you will, *it works.*

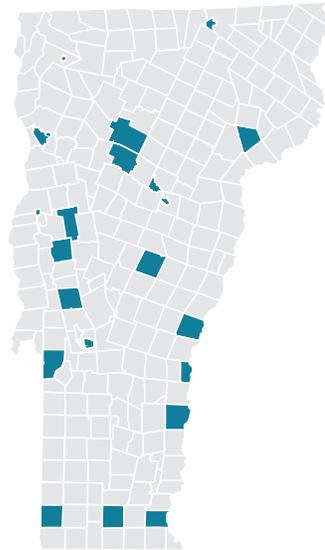
**Specific-Area Plan**  
**Master Plan**  
**Investment Plan**  
**Revitalization Plan**  
**Town Center Plan**

**Project Mapping**



# Downtowns

Downtowns are larger in scale than village centers with a higher density of mixed-use development. The development pattern and form is usually compact and uninterrupted, although there may be some public space, like a park or green, within a downtown. Multi-story buildings are often centered in the core of the downtown aligned along a main street with adjacent side streets. In general, the street level is active with commercial uses that invite pedestrian activity with retail, restaurants, and service businesses and upper floors typically have office space for professional services and residential housing units. Downtowns provide a greater range of functions than any other location in the region that serves as a place for employment, shopping, worship, tourism, housing, government services, dining, entertainment, lodging, and cultural attractions. All of these activities are usually situated within a compact area that is easily walkable with pathways and sidewalks that are sufficiently wide, offering interesting, attractive amenities, such as building façades, window displays, landscaping, and open spaces.



23 DOWNTOWNS ACROSS VERMONT

Vermont law defines a downtown as “the traditional central business district of a community that has served as the focus of socio-economic interaction in the community, characterized by a cohesive core of commercial and mixed use buildings, some of which may contain mixed use spaces, often interspersed with civic, religious, residential, and intersecting side streets that are within walking distance for residents who live within and surrounding the core and that are served by public infrastructure such as sidewalks and public transit.” ([24 V.S.A. § 2793](#))

The boundaries of designated downtowns vary in size and are largely driven by the historic development pattern in the community. Poultney and Wilmington have relatively small downtown districts while Rutland and Bennington’s districts are substantially larger.

See the [application guidelines](#) for complete details on the application requirements and the benefits of downtown designation.

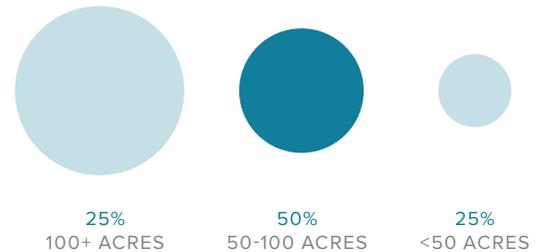
## POPULATION OF MUNICIPALITIES WITH DOWNTOWNS

Communities with designated downtowns can be big or small, but all have total populations of at least 2000. (Source: Census)



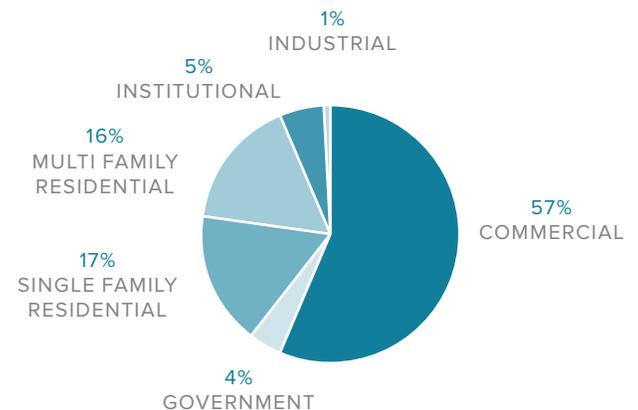
## SIZE OF DOWNTOWNS

About half Vermont’s downtowns are between 50 and 100 acres.



## LAND USE MIX

A little over half the buildings in Vermont’s downtowns are commercial buildings. (Source: E-911)





BARRE

## Case Study: Barre

### Designation Leads to New Infrastructure, New Businesses and Jobs Downtown

#### Downtown Designation, 2000

After multiple years of economic decline in downtown Barre, the city was struggling with empty store fronts, low commercial rents, and declining property values. Turning things around took time and didn't come without challenges. The city spent a decade investing heavily in the creative/tourist economy without any results. According to Mike Miller, the former Director of Planning, "We needed to better understand our strengths and weaknesses. Barre is never going to be Stowe, but what Barre has is plenty of water and sewer capacity, industrial activity, highway access, and a great stock of historic buildings with affordable rental office space." With those things in mind, a group of municipal officials and stakeholders identified three major goals to help jump-start revitalization: bring 500 new workers to Barre over five years by improving the city's image with investments in public infrastructure and marketing; recruiting businesses and services to meet the needs of local residents; and modernizing Barre's existing industrial assets to attract entrepreneurs and new start-up businesses.

Using support from the downtown designation program, over the past five years Barre was able to secure almost \$20 million in public investment in the downtown spurring \$45 million in private investment that has brought 24 new businesses, reduced vacancy rates by 8%, increased commercial rental rates by \$6-10 dollars a square foot and attracted over 350 jobs. This investment also includes major streetscape and public infrastructure improvements, construction of City Place, a new state office building with commercial/retail spaces on the ground floor, and rehabilitation of several prominent downtown blocks with the help of federal and state tax credits. "Technical support through the state's designation program helped us plan projects, identify funding sources and leverage public investment," Steve MacKenzie, Barre's City Manager.

# New Town Centers

New Town Center designation is for towns without a historic downtown or village center, with plans for a new, mixed-use downtown, built or retrofitted to be compact and pedestrian friendly. The new town center must be designed to be walkable, meet smart growth principles and have plans to include civic buildings in the center. An existing auto-oriented shopping mall, for example, should not be included in the new town center unless the municipality has undertaken the planning, adopted regulations, and identified the financing for redevelopment of the site.

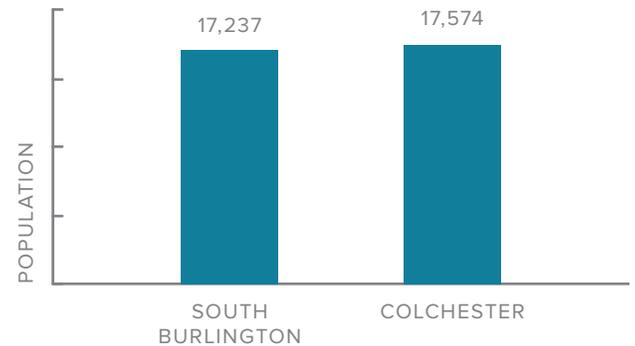
Vermont law defines a new town center as an “area planned for or developing as a community’s central business district, composed of compact, pedestrian-friendly, multistory, and mixed-use development that is characteristic of a traditional downtown, supported by planned or existing urban infrastructure, including curbed streets with sidewalks and on-street parking, stormwater treatment, sanitary sewers and public water supply.” ([24 V.S.A. § 2791](#))

Statute defines the maximum size of a new town center boundary, based on the population of the municipality ([24 V.S.A. § 2793b](#)). The boundaries should only include those areas that have been planned as a civic and commercial core of the community and provisions are in place to ensure walkability.

See the [application guidelines](#) for complete details on the application requirements and the benefits of new town center designation.

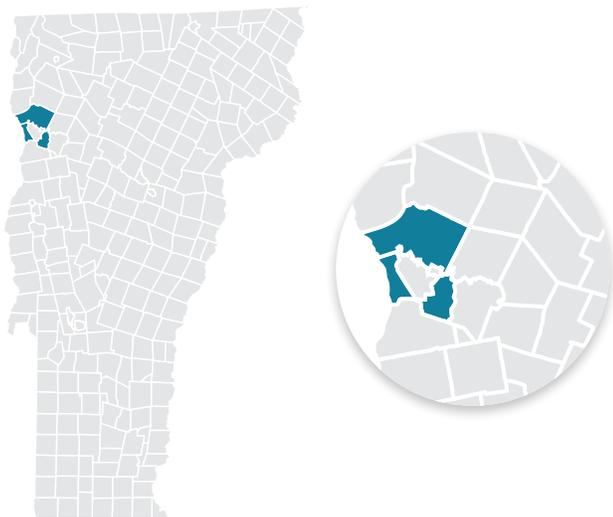
## POPULATION OF MUNICIPALITIES WITH NEW TOWN CENTERS

Vermont’s new town centers are in two of Vermont’s largest communities. (Source: Census)



## SIZE OF NEW TOWN CENTERS

The two new town centers are both around 100 acres in size.



2 NEW TOWN CENTERS ACROSS VERMONT



## Case Study: South Burlington

### Designation Leads to a New Downtown

New Town Center Designation, 2010

Neighborhood Development Area Designation, 2014

For over 30 years the City of South Burlington has identified the area around Dorset Street and Williston Road as the future City Center. Dominated by shopping centers, standalone retail and service establishments, with some office and multi-family uses, the bulk of the area was developed over 50 years ago for an auto dominant lifestyle. As part of the effort to create a central downtown to support the vibrant civic life and build community pride and identity, the city sought and received a new town center designation in 2010.

This designation provided the city with priority for municipal planning grants and opened the door to Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District approval and a neighborhood development area designation. State and regional planning grants and public infrastructure projects facilitated by the TIF District have allowed landowners and business owners to see the opportunities and value of investing in a compact walkable, transit friendly, and bikeable urban center.

Since the new town center designation, two high quality infill projects have been built, and one attractive 12 unit housing development is underway. Many more projects are in the planning stages and will take advantage of planned city infrastructure like roads and parks and public building investments such as a library and City Hall wholly or partially financed through the TIF District. Projects will also benefit from lower development costs in neighborhood development areas. In addition to supporting an increase of millions of dollars to the city's grand list, the designations are helping the city realize their vision of a center they are proud of.

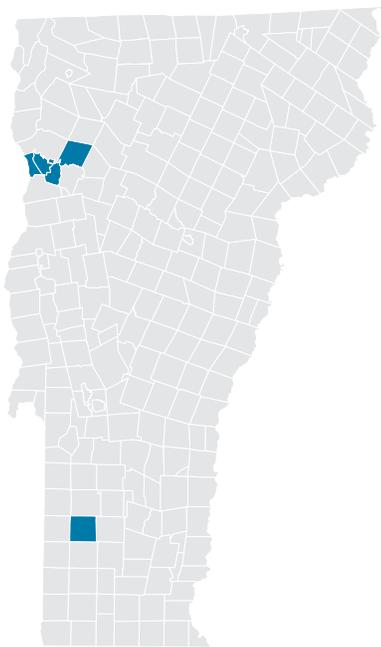
# Neighborhood Development Areas

This designation helps lower the cost to build housing in areas within easy walking distance of the core commercial centers — whether converting a barn or wing of a house into a ‘mother in law’ apartment or developing an entirely new neighborhood.

Within the designated areas, the program aims to help communities build and maintain walkable neighborhoods that are pedestrian oriented, contain a mix of uses (both residential and non-residential), accommodate but manage vehicular traffic, provide a variety of public spaces, have a sense of identity or place, and connect to adjacent neighborhoods and the downtown/ village core.

Neighborhood development areas may include the entirety of the underlying state designated core as well as areas suitable for development extending 1/4 mile from village centers and new town centers, and 1/2 mile from downtowns or within a designated growth center. In certain circumstances, the area may extend beyond these distances.

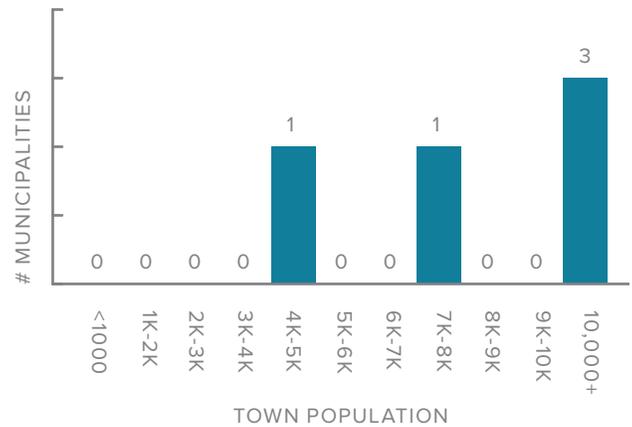
See the application guidelines for complete details on the [application requirements](#) and the benefits of neighborhood development area designation.



5 NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT AREAS ACROSS VERMONT

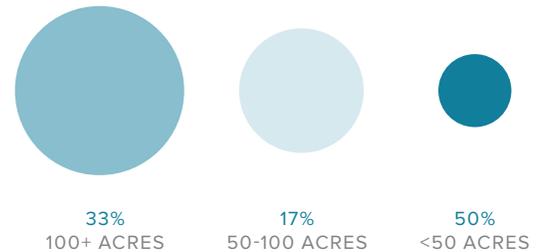
## POPULATION OF MUNICIPALITIES WITH NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Vermont’s Neighborhood Development Areas are currently in medium and large Vermont communities. (Source: Census)



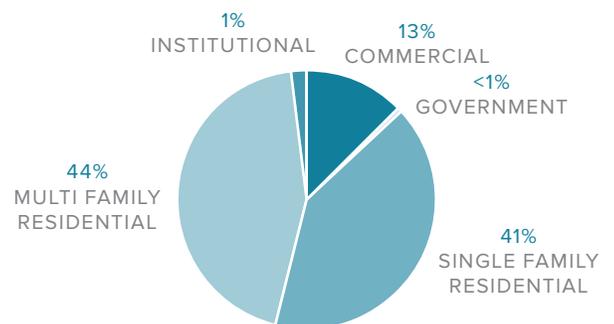
## SIZE OF NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Half of Vermont’s neighborhood development areas are smaller than 50 acres.



## LAND USE MIX

The large majority of neighborhood development areas in Vermont is, as expected, largely residential. (Source: E-911)





## Case Study: Burlington

### Designation Lowers Housing Costs

#### Downtown Designation, 1998

#### Neighborhood Development Area Designation, 2014

Burlington's vibrant mixed-use downtown, walkable neighborhoods, historic character, and world-class employers have made the city a desirable place to live and work, attracting visitors and new residents from New England and beyond. These circumstances, however, have placed significant pressure on the local housing market as an influx of new residents and college students compete for a limited supply of available homes. Despite historically low vacancy rates of around 1%, according to the city's 2014 Downtown Housing Strategy Report, only 222 units were built in the downtown area between 2002 and 2013. As a result, the downtown market is facing severe housing supply constraints, rising home prices, and escalating rents that are further impacting affordability in a market where a typical renter household allocates more than [44% of their total income to housing costs](#).

Burlington has responded to these housing challenges with a housing action plan that highlights the use of the neighborhood development area designation to help lower the costs of building well-designed mixed-income housing that fits into Burlington's existing character. Since becoming designated, the city has plans for approximately 1,000 new units proposed to be built in the coming years. Among these projects is the Champlain Housing Trust's Bright Street Coop, a 42 unit mixed income infill housing project on 1.35 acres of land in Burlington's Old North End neighborhood. Located within Burlington's designated neighborhood development area, the project was able forgo Act 250 review - saving over \$50,000 in associated costs and three months of permitting time. Additionally, the project saved another \$5,000 in wastewater connection fees and eliminated the risk of a project appeal. Burlington's neighborhood development area designation is expected to continue to help the city address its housing shortage by lowering the cost of building new mixed-income development in and around the designated downtown.

| <b>AUTHORITY</b>  |      |       |       |       |       |
|---|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Statute Section (24 V.S.A. Chapter 76A)                         | 2793 | 2793a | 2793b | 2793c | 2793e |
| Date Established  | 1998 | 2002  | 2002  | 2006  | 2013  |
| <b>PURPOSE</b>  |      |       |       |       |       |
| Historic Preservation*  | √    | √     |       | √     | √     |
| Economic Revitalization*  | √    | √     |       | √     | √     |
| Smart Growth  | √    | √     | √     | √     | √     |
| Economic Development  | √    | √     | √     | √     | √     |
| <b>BENEFITS</b>   |      |       |       |       |       |
| 10% State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit                    | √    | √     |       |       |       |
| 25% Façade Improvement Tax Credit                               | √    | √     |       |       |       |
| 50% Code Improvement Tax Credit                                 | √    | √     |       |       |       |
| 50% Technology Tax Credits                                      | √    | √     |       |       |       |
| Downtown Transportation Fund                                    | √    |       |       |       |       |
| Sprinkler System Rebate   | √    |       |       |       |       |
| Special Assessment District                                     | √    | √     | √     |       |       |
| Reallocation of Sales Tax on Construction Materials             | √    |       |       |       |       |
| Traffic Calming Options   | √    |       |       |       |       |
| Signage Options   | √    |       |       |       |       |
| No appeal of decision on character of neighborhood for housing  | √    |       |       | √     | √     |
| Act 250 Threshold for Mixed-Income Housing & Mixed-Use Projects | √    |       | √     | √     | √     |
| Act 250 Limited Review & Criteria - "Downtown Findings"         | √    |       |       |       |       |
| Act 250 Findings and Conclusions for Growth Centers             |      |       |       | √     |       |
| Act 250 Master Plan Permit Application                          |      |       |       | √     |       |
| Act 250 Mitigation for Loss of Primary Agricultural Soils**     | √    |       | √     | √     | √     |
| Act 250 fee reduction   |      |       |       |       | √     |
| Act 250 Existing Settlement under criterion 9(L)                | √    | √     | √     | √     | √     |
| Exemption from land gains tax                                   |      |       |       |       | √     |
| ANR Wastewater fee capped at \$50/application                   |      |       |       |       | √     |
| <b>PRIORITY CONSIDERATION***</b>                                |      |       |       |       |       |
| All State Agencies and Funding Programs - first priority        | √    | √     |       |       |       |
| Specific State Agencies and Funding Programs:                   |      |       |       |       |       |
| Municipal Planning Grants                                       | √    | √     |       | √     | √     |
| Bike/Ped and Transportation Alternatives Grants                 | √    | √     |       | √     | √     |
| Property Assessment Fund (Contaminated Sites / Brownfields)     | √    | √     |       | √     | √     |
| Community Development Block Grants                              | √    | √     |       | √     | √     |
| ANR Wastewater funding  | √    | √     |       | √     |       |
| State affordable housing funds                                  | √    | √     |       | √     | √     |
| Locating State Buildings  | √    | √     | √     | √     |       |

\*May not apply to all growth centers.

\*\*Agricultural soil mitigation benefits apply to designated neighborhood development areas only when they are associated with a designated downtown and applies only to new town centers created before 1/1/14.

\*\*\*Statute establishes that designated downtowns and village centers should have greater priority for state funding and programs than new town centers and growth centers. (24 V.S.A. §2790(d) and 24 V.S.A. §2793c(i)(2)(A))

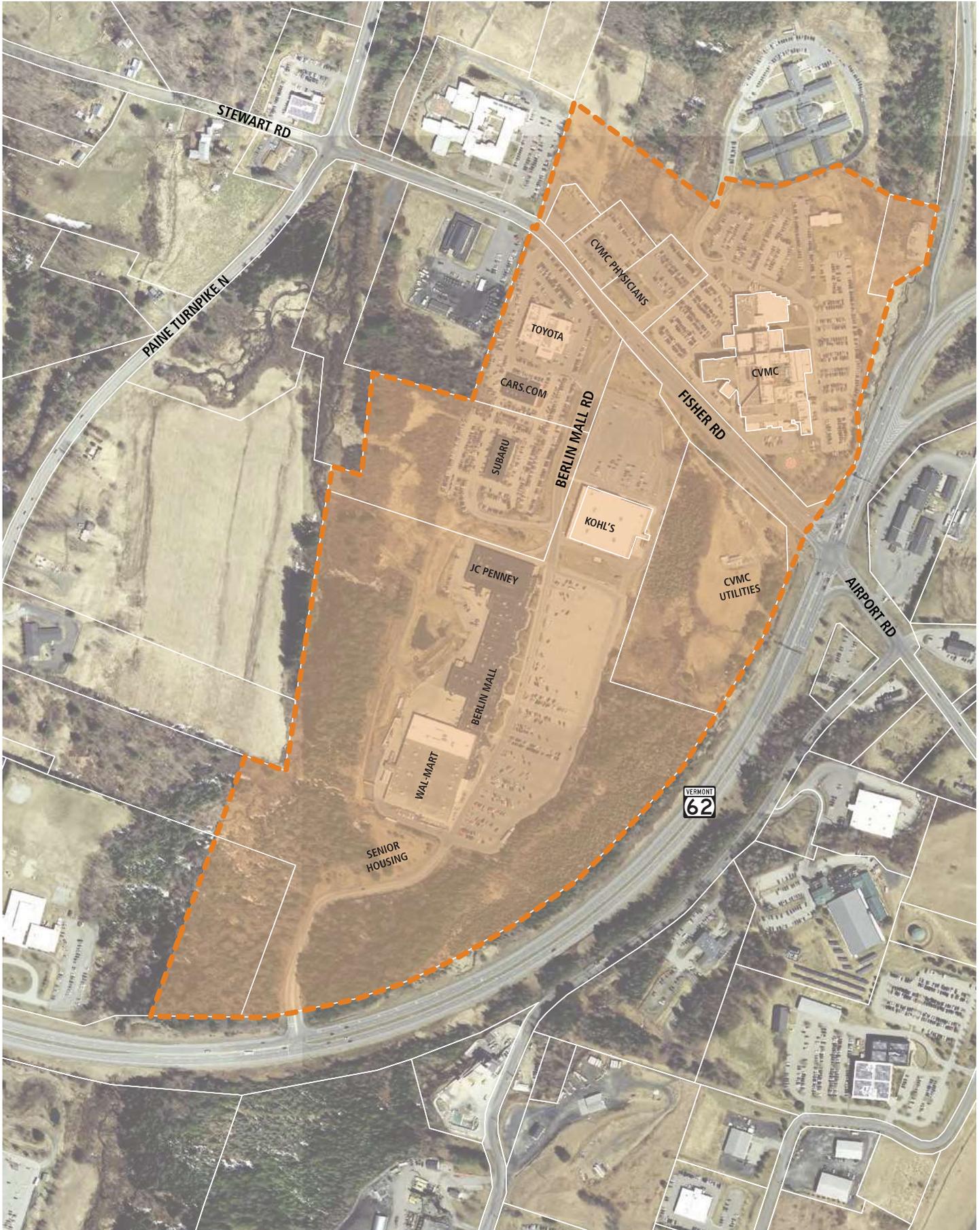
**For more information, please contact:**

Chris Cochran: [chris.cochran@vermont.gov](mailto:chris.cochran@vermont.gov) or 802.595.5410

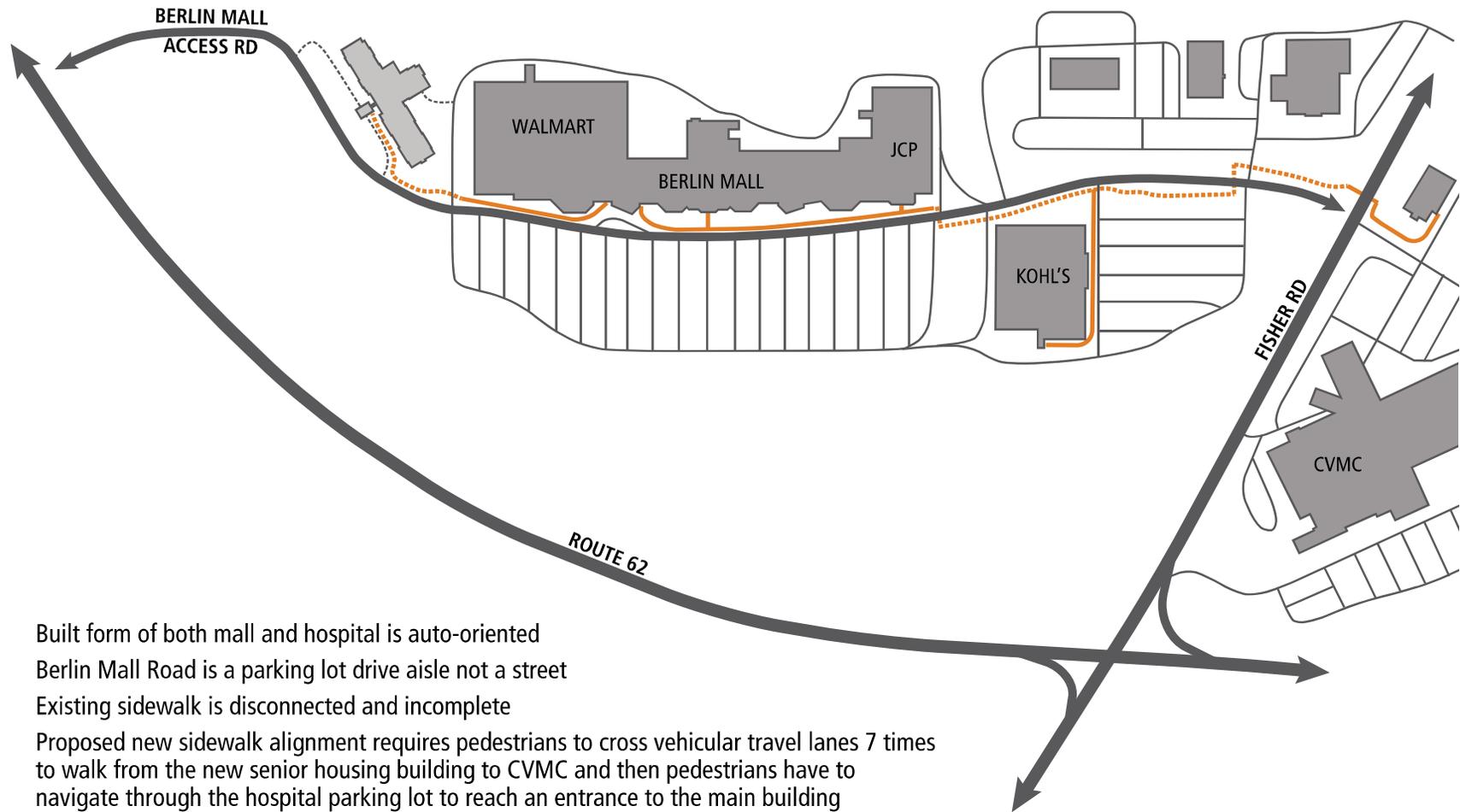
Website: <http://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/designation-programs>

PROPOSED BERLIN NEW TOWN CENTER BOUNDARY

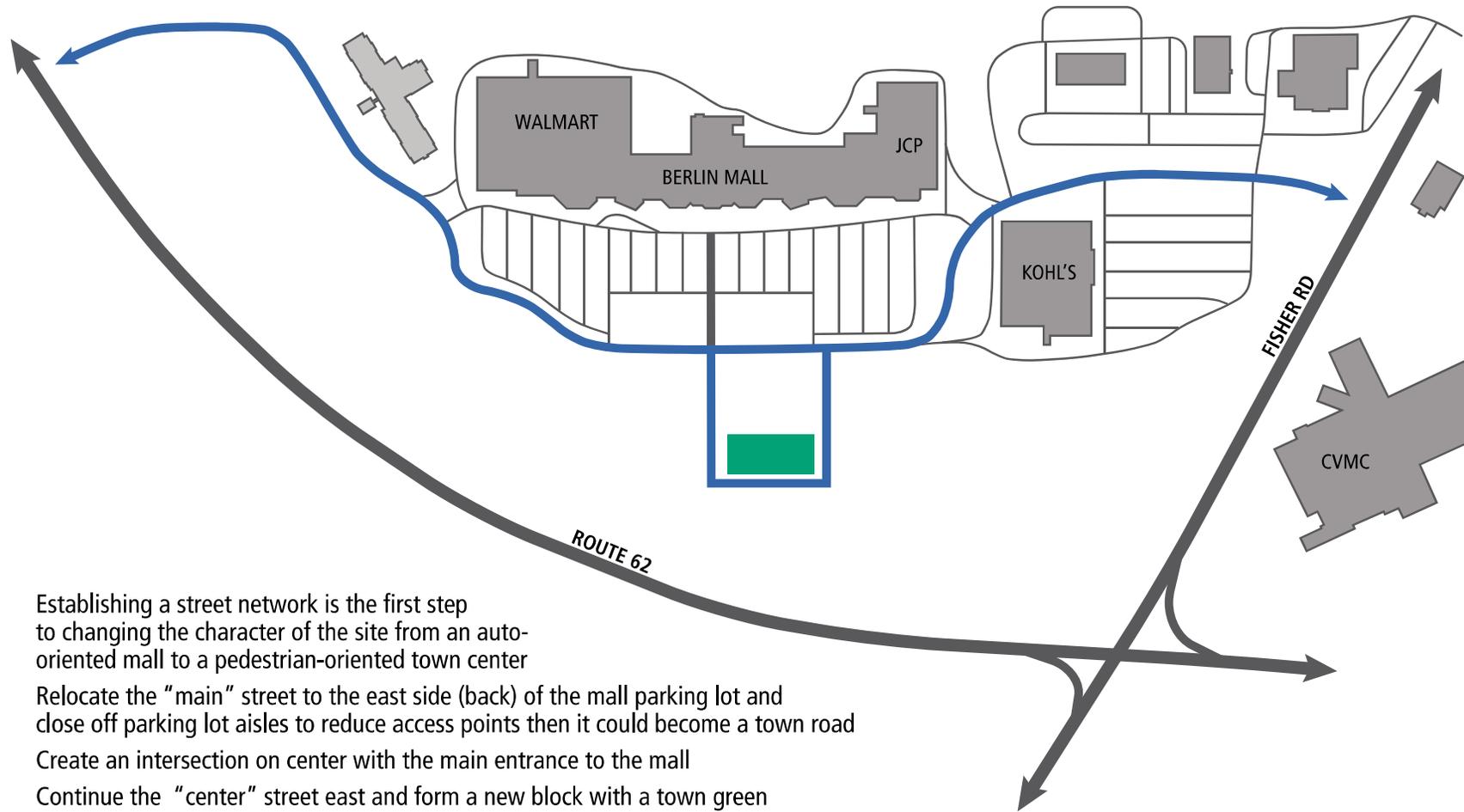
29 JUNE 2020 | TOTAL AREA = 118.5 ACRES



# EXISTING CONDITION



# STREET GRID



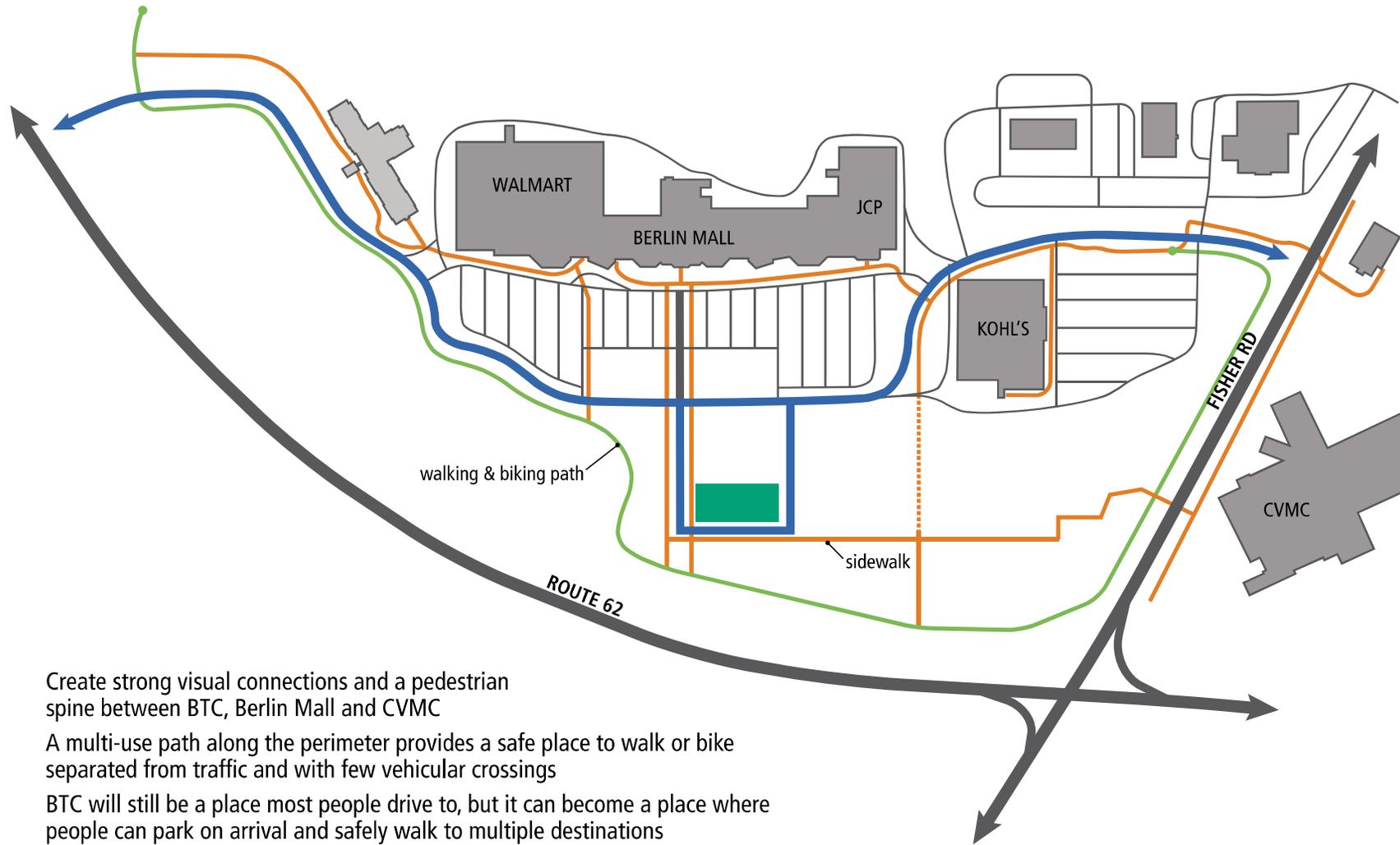
Establishing a street network is the first step to changing the character of the site from an auto-oriented mall to a pedestrian-oriented town center

Relocate the "main" street to the east side (back) of the mall parking lot and close off parking lot aisles to reduce access points then it could become a town road

Create an intersection on center with the main entrance to the mall

Continue the "center" street east and form a new block with a town green

# PEDESTRIAN SPINE

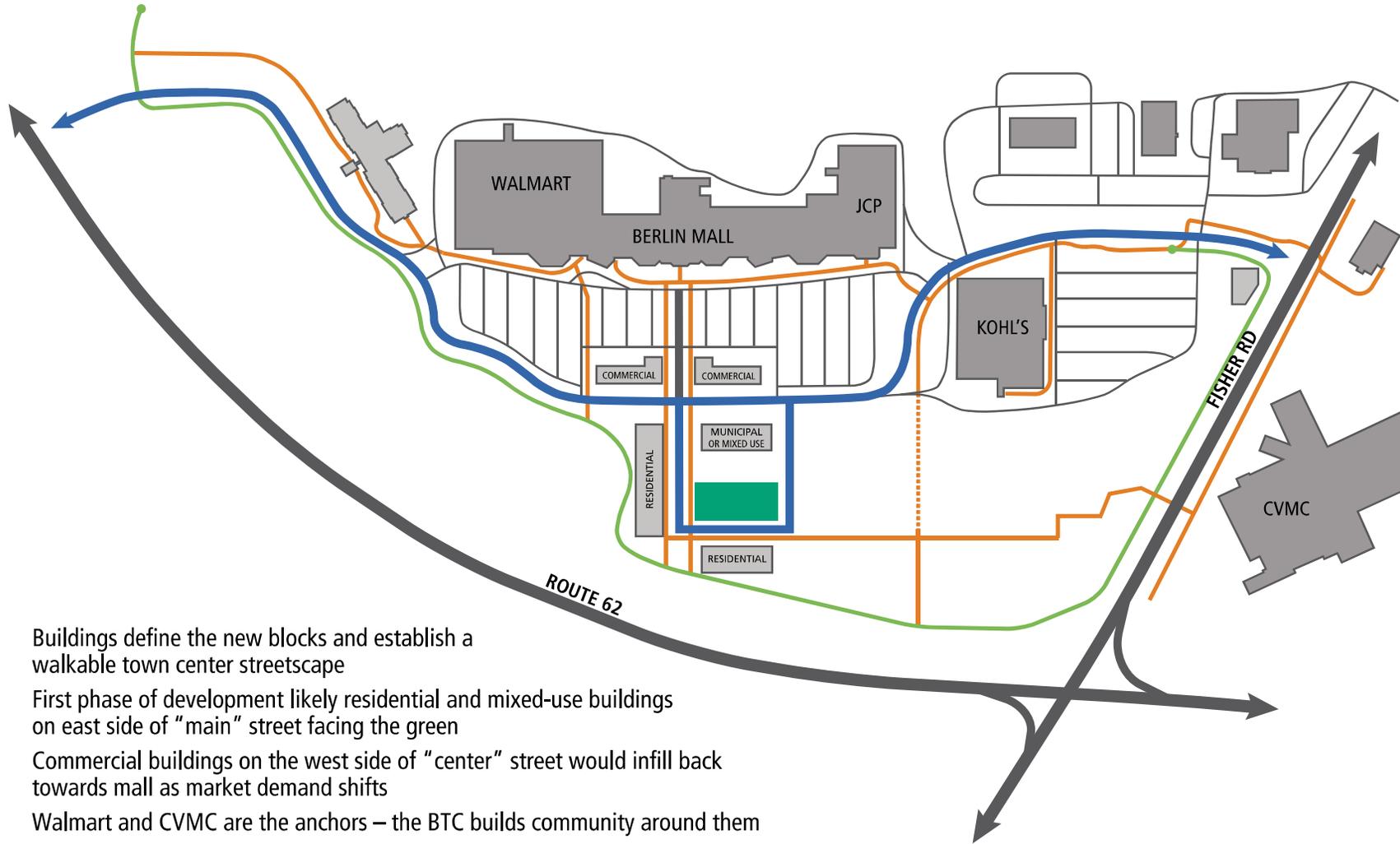


Create strong visual connections and a pedestrian spine between BTC, Berlin Mall and CVMC

A multi-use path along the perimeter provides a safe place to walk or bike separated from traffic and with few vehicular crossings

BTC will still be a place most people drive to, but it can become a place where people can park on arrival and safely walk to multiple destinations

# BLOCKS & BUILDINGS



Buildings define the new blocks and establish a walkable town center streetscape

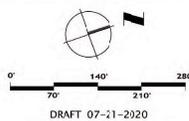
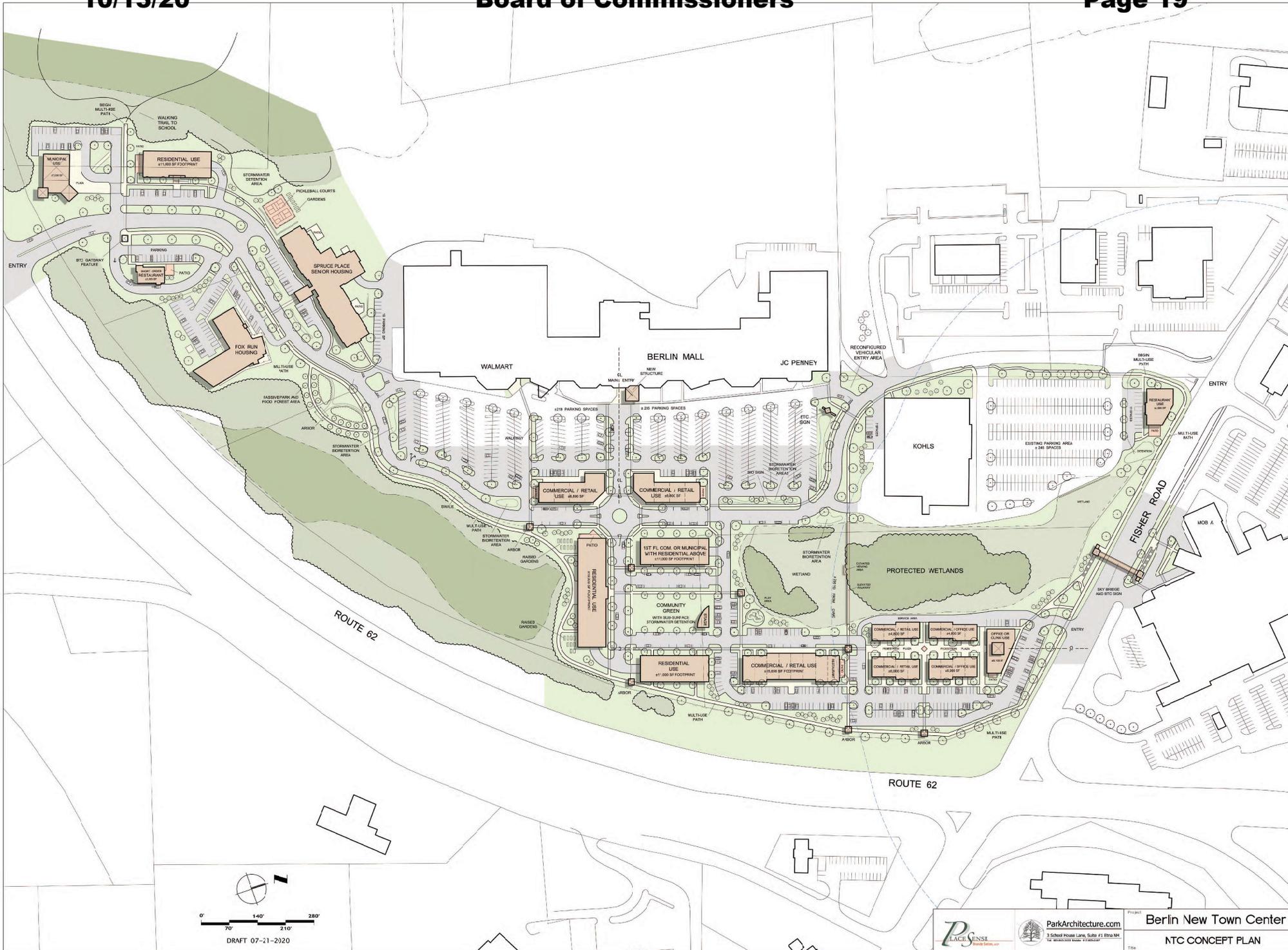
First phase of development likely residential and mixed-use buildings on east side of "main" street facing the green

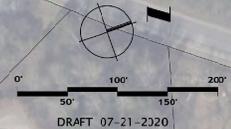
Commercial buildings on the west side of "center" street would infill back towards mall as market demand shifts

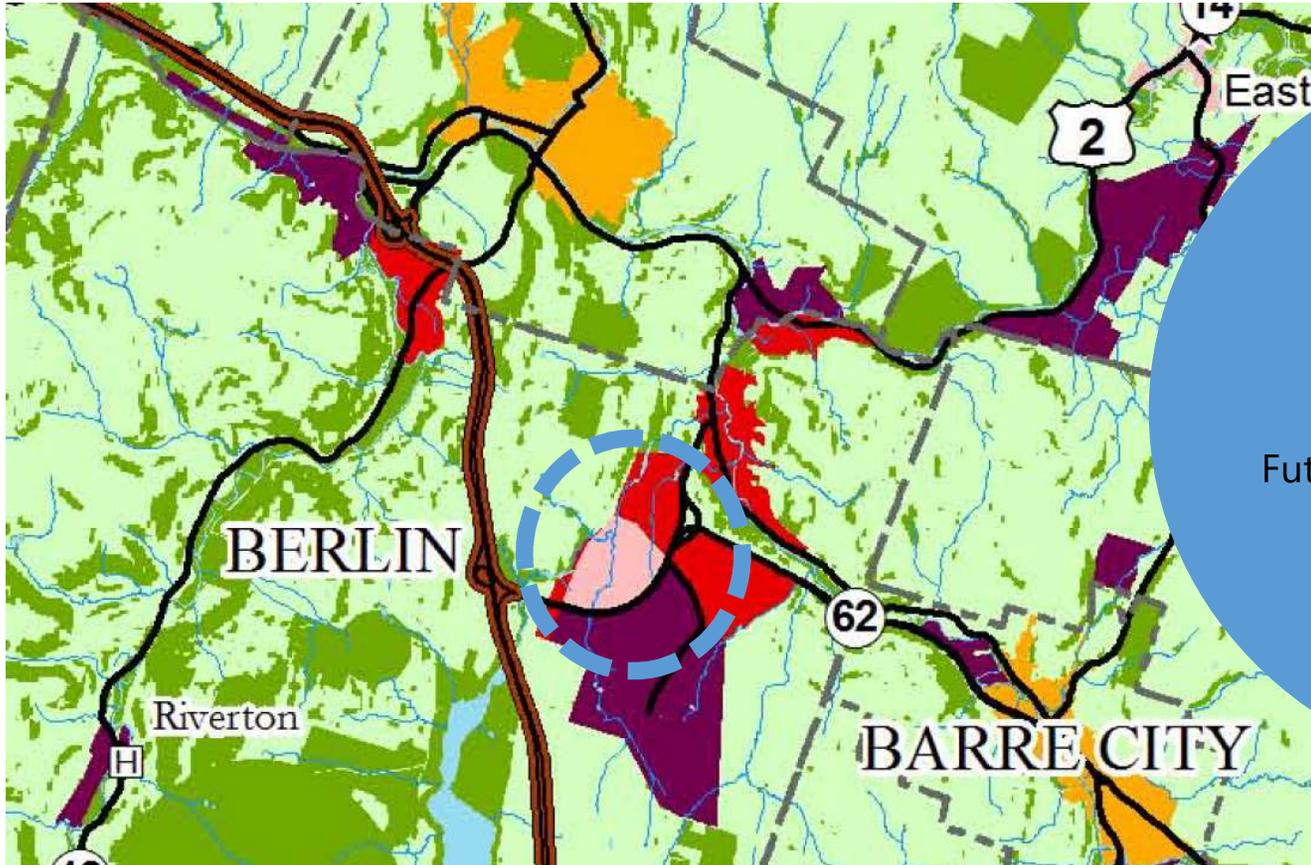
Walmart and CVMC are the anchors – the BTC builds community around them

The street grid and pedestrian spine are the skeleton that shapes and supports the BTC

BTC will evolve incrementally from its current auto-oriented form into a more walkable form







Regional Context:  
 Berlin's proposed  
 New Town Center is  
 located within the  
 Regionally identified  
 Town Center  
 Future Land Use Planning Area

Located between  
 Regional Centers of  
 Montpelier + Barre City

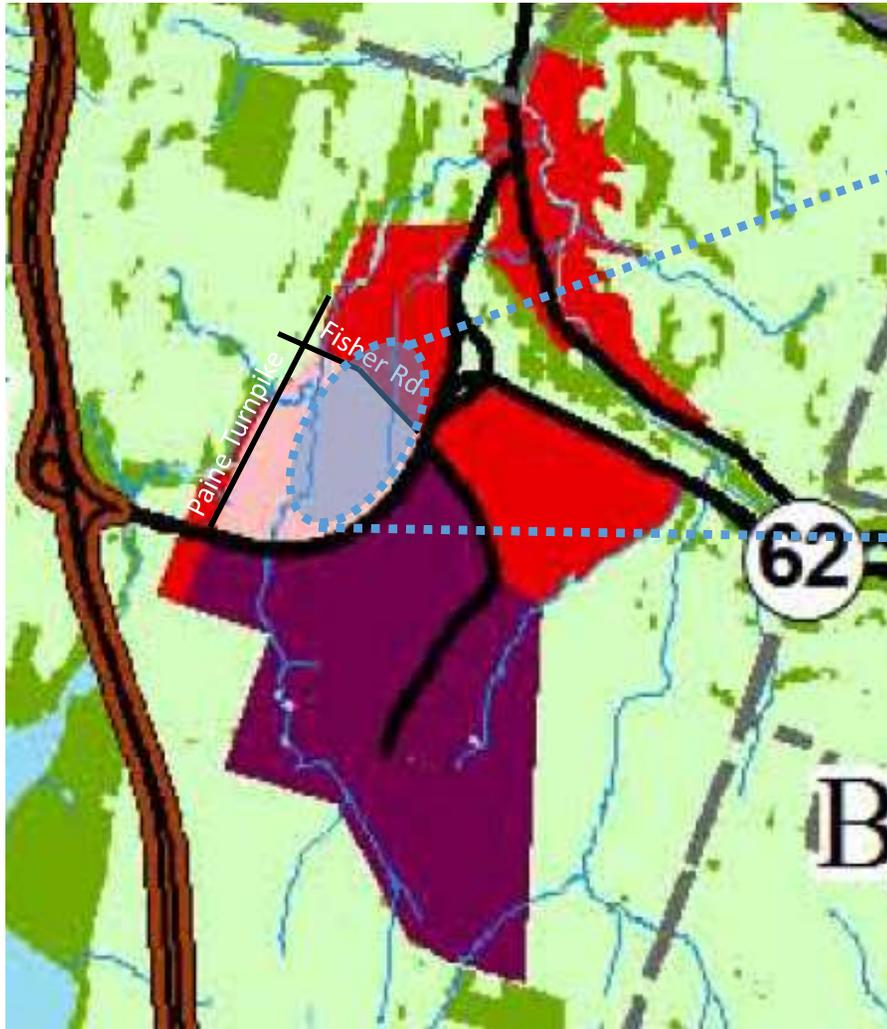
Future Land Use

- Resource
- Rural
- Regional Center
- Town Centers
- Industrial
- Mixed-Use Commercial
- Hamlets
- Resort Centers
- Villages



Data should be verified during permitting process per the provisions of the regulatory authority. This map is for general planning purposes only. This map may contain errors and omissions. See page 2-19 and 2-31 of the Land Use Element for a complete explanation.





Located at  
intersection of  
Fisher Road  
+ RT 62

**Future Land Use**

- |                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| Resource             | Hamlets        |
| Rural                | Resort Centers |
| Regional Center      | Villages       |
| Town Centers         |                |
| Industrial           |                |
| Mixed-Use Commercial |                |

Regional Plan  
Town Center  
Future Land  
Use Planning  
District

Small-scale shopping centers are most appropriate in Town Centers. Community and Regional Shopping Centers are less appropriate.

Small-scale = 10,000 sf to 30,000 sf  
Community scale = 30,001 sf to 300,000 sf  
Regional scale = > 300,000 sf

Community and Regional Shopping Centers should be located in Regional Centers as a first priority and Mixed-Use Commercial areas as a second priority.

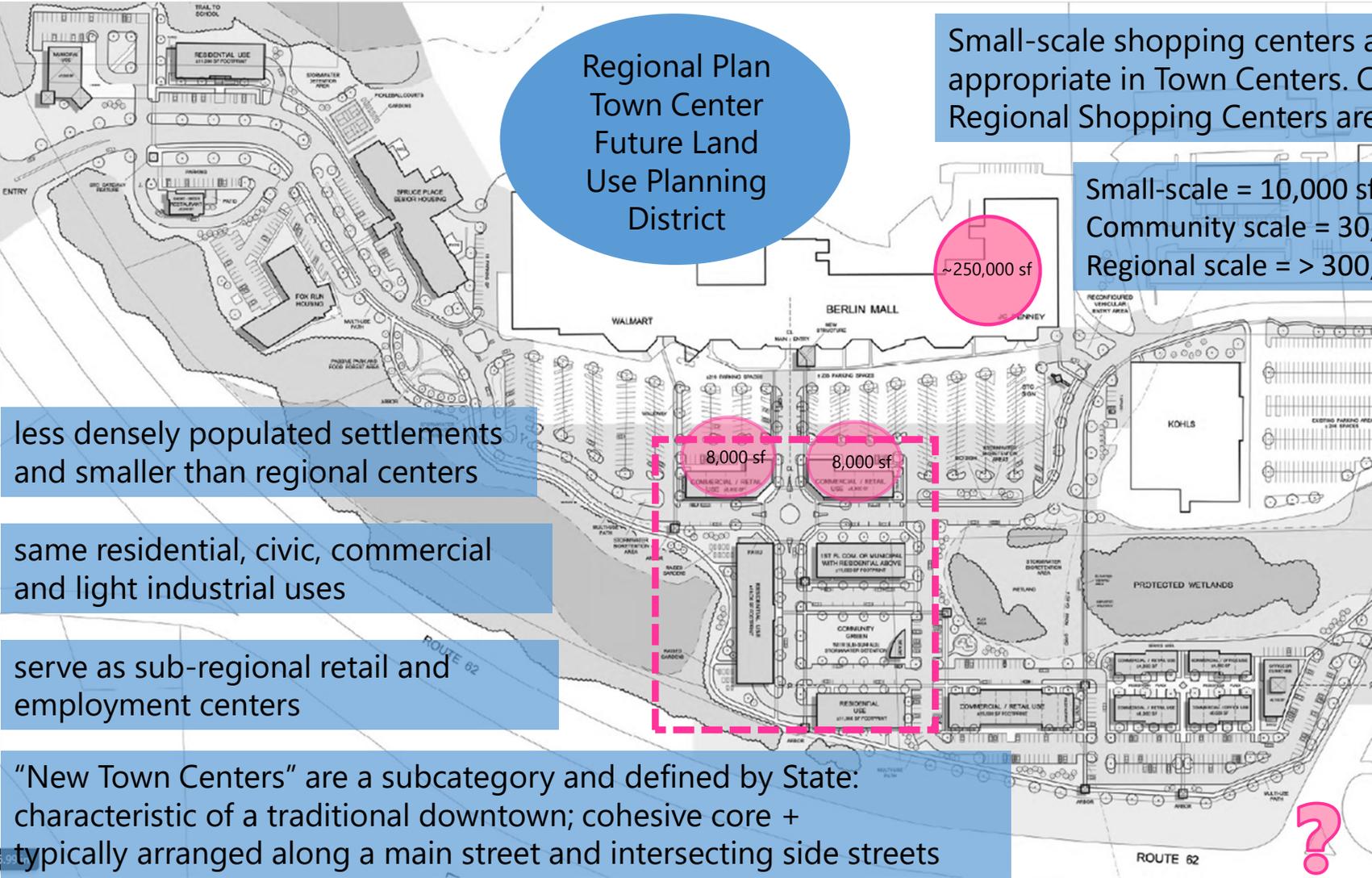
planned uses within existing districts along major road corridors must be developed carefully to avoid sprawl, traffic congestion, and safety hazards.

less densely populated settlements and smaller than regional centers

same residential, civic, commercial and light industrial uses

serve as sub-regional retail and employment centers

“New Town Centers” are a subcategory and defined by State: characteristic of a traditional downtown; cohesive core + typically arranged along a main street and intersecting side streets





## Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

August 17, 2020

### Notice of Public Hearings

The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission will hold two public hearings as required under 24 VSA Section §4348 to consider amendments to the *2016 Central Vermont Regional Plan, Amended 2018*.

The first public hearing on the *2016 Central Vermont Regional Plan, 2020 Draft Amendment* shall take place on **Tuesday, September 8, 2020 at 6:35 pm** and **the second public hearing shall take place on Tuesday, October 13, 2020 at 7:50 pm**. Both hearings shall be held virtually via GoToMeeting to join from your computer, tablet or smartphone visit: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/552444045> Dial in via phone: (872) 240-3212; Access Code: 552-444-045. Please download the app at least 5 minutes prior to the meeting start: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/552444045>

The hearings will be held to consider public comments on the proposed amendments to the *2016 Central Vermont Regional Plan, 2020 Draft Amendment*. The amendments will result in the removal the Housing Distribution Plan from the Housing Chapter and a technical correction to the Future Land Use Map by modifying the Regional Center boundary around the City of Montpelier.

The *2016 Central Vermont Regional Plan, 2020 Draft Amendment* can be reviewed <https://centralvtplanning.org>. To request a paper copy of the plan please contacting Clare Rock, Senior Planner at [rock@cvregion.com](mailto:rock@cvregion.com).

1 **CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

2 **Draft MINUTES**

3 **September 8, 2020**

4  
5 **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 checked="" 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> |               | Mike Miller, Alt.        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Worcester    | Bill Arrand                     |

6  
7 Staff: Bonnie Waninger, Nancy Chartrand, Clare Rock, Zachary Maia

8 Guests: Cedric Sanborn, Barre Town Planning Commission; Chris Violette, Barre Town Planning Director;  
9 Mike Gilbar, Barre Town Planning Commission

10  
11 **Call to Order**

12 Chair L. Hill-Eubanks called the remote meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Quorum was present to conduct  
13 business.

14  
15 **Adjustments to the Agenda**

16 George Clain recused himself from action for duration of the meeting.

17  
18 **Public Comments**

19 None.

20  
21 **Regional Plan Amendment**

22 C. Rock gave an overview. She noted this amendment was discussed previously with the Board before  
23 the COVID-19 Stay Home, Stay Safe Order. This is the first of two public hearings. She advised Mike  
24 Miller of Montpelier will be providing a presentation regarding Montpelier's Growth Center, and she will  
25 provide a presentation on the boundary revisions proposed for the Regional Plan.

26

1 City of Montpelier Growth Center Designation Planning Process

2 Waninger reminded the Board that when this topic was discussed previously the Board requested  
3 additional information regarding Montpelier’s Growth Center and recent boundary changes.  
4

5 Hill-Eubanks welcomed Miller, Director of Planning for City of Montpelier, and Alternate Commissioner  
6 to the Board for Montpelier. Miller provided a presentation which outlined the history of Montpelier’s  
7 growth center and its boundary changes. The State Growth Center Program designates an area where  
8 50% of housing and commercial development will be targeted with utilities and services to support that  
9 growth with assistance from grants and state funding. Montpelier’s initial growth center was approved  
10 in 2009. A reduction of that growth center was initiated in 2014 with conditions placed by Downtown  
11 Board. In 2019 during the 5-year renewal, there was an adjustment to add the Crestview area, which  
12 generated discussion of potential bear habitat impacts during the last Board meeting. The Crestview  
13 addition supports the City’s goal of encouraging housing, which was a challenge within the previous  
14 boundary. Both Sabin’s Pasture and Crestview are undeveloped areas within walking distance to the  
15 designated downtown and provide areas for additional housing growth. Miller said Montpelier’s growth  
16 center program is successful in meeting the goal of 50%+ of all new dwellings and enterprises being  
17 within the growth center.  
18

19 Rock asked Miller to talk specifically about the benefits of having a growth center boundary and what it  
20 will do to help achieve the goals for the area. Miller advised one benefit is it forces the City to keep  
21 development within the boundaries and to stay focused on an area of land that will support its  
22 designated downtown. Another benefit is if project comes up that needs utilities and services, they get  
23 the benefit of being able to apply for TIF (Tax Increment Finance) support, and they also may access tax  
24 stabilization. The City also works to set up programs and zoning to work hand-in-hand with the growth  
25 center boundaries. Miller noted there is some regulatory relief available, but they have not had projects  
26 take advantage of it. He confirmed that Sabin’s Pasture currently is not developed. He also spoke  
27 about Crestview and its future development potential and what habitat issues there might be. He noted  
28 that Crestview had roads roughed in approximately 15 years ago, but it has not been developed to date.  
29 The parcel runs up against the Middlesex boundary which is the primary area for the bear habitat.  
30 While there may be some habitat that extends into Crestview in Montpelier, he doesn’t have details on  
31 that. If any projects get planned for that parcel, they would likely have to go through Act 250; however,  
32 there are no plans at this time.  
33

34 **Public Hearing**

35 *D. La Haye moved to open the public hearing for the amendments to the 2016 Regional Plan; J. Potter*  
36 *seconded. Motion carried.* The hearing was opened.  
37

38 Rock provided a summary of the amendments. They remove the regional housing distribution plan and  
39 extend the regional center boundaries around Montpelier as depicted on the future land use map. Rock  
40 said the Regional Plan Committee (RPC) recommends removing the housing distribution plan as it is no  
41 longer relevant or applicable, and municipalities will no longer be required to meet this requirement.  
42

43 Additionally proposed are changes to the future land use map as it was recognized that the regional  
44 planning area around Montpelier doesn’t align with the State-designated area. Rock provided detailed  
45 maps outlining current boundaries and proposed boundaries. She advised this change was not

1 requested by the City of Montpelier, but rather was identified by the RPC. The Regional Plan states  
2 Regional Centers are the places that contain Growth Centers, and the Regional Center boundary should  
3 be aligned with the State-designated Growth Center boundary.  
4

5 It was confirmed that tonight is the first public hearing related to the proposed amendments. The  
6 second public hearing is scheduled for October 13<sup>th</sup>.  
7

8 Hill-Eubanks invited comments. A general comment was raised about pushing growth centers as state  
9 and regional policy while concurrently expanding high speed internet which will aid moving  
10 development in rural and undeveloped areas appears to be counterproductive.  
11

12 Miller commented that the proposed map did not include a section of Northfield Street which is in  
13 Montpelier’s growth center area and suggested it should be included. It was confirmed this area is  
14 zoned the same as Route 12N as it starts to leave Montpelier.  
15

16 *S. Lotspeich moved to close the public hearing on the Regional Plan Amendment; B. Arrand seconded.*  
17 *Motion carried.* The hearing was closed.  
18

19 *D. La Haye moved to set the second hearing date for October 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:50; A. Quackenbush seconded.*  
20 *Motion carried.*  
21

22 Waninger asked for clarification as to whether the Board would like staff to adjust the map to fully  
23 incorporate the boundary identified by Miller during the comment period.  
24

25 *D. Torre moved to adjust the map as discussed; R. Wernecke seconded. Motion carried.*  
26

27 Wernecke inquired if roll call votes were necessary. Hill-Eubanks advised it was her understanding that it  
28 was not necessary if a vote is unanimous. Waninger also advised she did not believe it was necessary.  
29 Miller further advised that if a vote is unanimous it does not need to be a roll call; however, if there is  
30 one “no” vote, a roll call is necessary.  
31

32 **Municipal Plan Approval, Confirmation of Planning Process & Certificate of Energy**  
33 **Compliance**

34 B. Arrand said the Barre Town Municipal Plan originally was discussed at the Municipal Plan Review  
35 Committee (MPRC) meeting and public hearing on August 27<sup>th</sup> and that hearing was continued to  
36 September 8<sup>th</sup> before tonight’s Board meeting. On the 27<sup>th</sup>, the MPRC voted to recommend approval  
37 and confirmation. Issuance of a determination of energy compliance was not agreed to at that meeting  
38 due to a missing map, resulting in the continuance and a request that Barre Town provide the missing  
39 map.  
40

41 Z. Maia advised the energy planning standards include having a set of maps that must be received for a  
42 Municipal Plan to receive an energy compliance determination. He advised the Plan met all criteria with  
43 the exception of the Existing Generation Map.  
44

1 Maia advised that at today's MPRC meeting, Barre Town provided a letter of clarification and a robust  
2 discussion ensued regarding the standard used to determine compliance. Maia stated the standard has  
3 three options: yes, the map was included; no, the map was not included; or the map is not applicable to  
4 the Town's Plan. To select not applicable, the Town must provide a compelling reason to advise why the  
5 map is not applicable. Barre Town provided the following in its letter:  
6

7 "The Barre Town Planning Commission and the Barre Town Selectboard respectfully request  
8 that a determination is made that the existing renewable energy generation map omitted from  
9 the Barre Town Energy Plan is not applicable. It is not applicable for the following compelling  
10 reasons:

11 1. The map is not relevant considering that there is always more up to date and accurate  
12 data available on the Community Energy Dashboard. Within a few clicks, a Planner,  
13 Developer, or Regulator can see current data, not data on a map that could be up to 8  
14 years old.

15 2. Unlike all other maps, the electric generation map does not set policy or have any  
16 regulatory implication at all. The map is a snapshot in time and outdated almost as soon  
17 as it is printed.

18 3. From a historical standpoint, the standards do not require a map to be included to  
19 show historical data.

20 4. If there is a concern for precedent, the precedent would only be for the existing  
21 renewable energy generation map, and then only if the same case is made which may  
22 very well happen. It will not set precedent for any other part of the plan or any other  
23 maps."

24 The MPRC heard the above stated reasons and after additional discussion, voted to recommend the  
25 Board of Commissioners provide the affirmative determination of energy compliance to the plan.  
26

27 Hill-Eubanks recapped that the Municipal Plan is recommended as being approved, the planning process  
28 is recommended as being approved, and the energy compliance determination is recommended as  
29 being approved; and the Board now needs to decide whether to move these recommendations.  
30 Discussion ensued regarding whether each item should be voted individually. It was confirmed they are  
31 separate issues and separate votes. Hill-Eubanks noted the resolution on page 14 of the packet  
32 addresses the plan and the process, but does not address energy compliance and that voting on energy  
33 compliance would come after voting on the approval of the plan and the planning process. Waninger  
34 advised it is necessary for the plan to be approved prior to issuing a Certificate of Energy Compliance.  
35

36 Hill-Eubanks read the full resolution on page 14 to the meeting participants.  
37

38 *B. Arrand moved that the Commission approve the Town of Barre, Vermont 2020 Town Plan; M. Gray*  
39 *seconded. Motion carried.*  
40

41 *B. Arrand moved the Commission also confirm the Town of Barre planning process; D. La Haye seconded.*

1 Motion carried.

2

3 J. Potter moved to authorize the Board Chair to sign the resolution related to these items; B. Arrand  
4 seconded. Motion carried.

5

6 Hill-Eubanks congratulated Barre Town on approval of its Town Plan. She directed the Board to the  
7 resolution related to Determination of Energy Compliance on page 15, opened discussion, and provided  
8 a recap that the plan was missing a map. B. Arrand advised the question at this point is does the  
9 Commission feel that the reasons provided by Barre Town for not including the map are compelling  
10 enough to determine it is not applicable.

11

12 A robust discussion ensued which included the following: a recap of the reasons provided by Barre  
13 Town in their letter for not including the map. It was noted that Barre Town held three public hearings  
14 with no attendees and that considerable time and effort was put into creating a good quality product for  
15 the Commission’s approval and the map was an oversight, it was not intentionally left out and that there  
16 is current information (Dashboard) that will allow the public to get an actual depiction of current use  
17 rather than a map in the Plan.

18

19 Clarification was requested from staff regarding the checklist for standards as to what should be in an  
20 approved energy plan; were those standards developed by the Regional Planning Commission or by the  
21 Public Service Department (PSD). Maia advised the standards were PSD standards.

22

23 Comment was also made regarding a presentation provided to the Board in 2019 regarding the  
24 importance of energy storage. It was noted the Regional Plan does not include energy storage and the  
25 Commission was encouraged to revise the Regional Plan as soon as possible so that municipal plans  
26 would be required to include energy storage.

27

28 Chris Violette, Barre Town Planning Director, offered that the compelling reason they believe map is not  
29 applicable is they don’t believe most planners, developers or regulators will go to this somewhat  
30 obscure and outdated map when they are looking at a project in Barre Town, they will go to the  
31 Dashboard where they will get the most current information. He noted this map is not really that  
32 significant while other maps in the plan are significant for very specific reasons. A determination of not  
33 applicable will make this process whole. He also noted they appreciate the Plan Review Committee  
34 spending time with them to address this issue.

35

36 Hill-Eubanks asked the Barre Town Planning Commission in consideration that this is a standard set by  
37 the State do they see a problem with getting to the PUC and offering the Energy Plan as it stands  
38 without the map and being vulnerable to a challenge due to not having the map. Violette advised they  
39 had that discussion at the MPRC meeting and believe the not applicable choice will be sufficient at the  
40 PUC and are comfortable. Also noted by C. Sanborn was their wanting approval to get substantial  
41 deference in case another energy project is proposed in the Town. Arrand advised a majority of the  
42 MPRC felt it should be recommended to pass. Hill-Eubanks clarified that it is not up to Regional Planning  
43 Commission to change the criteria, it is up to the State to change the criteria and she believes the map  
44 should be a baseline to see progress over time. R. Krauth advised that he looked at the Dashboard  
45 during the discussion and noted it includes graphs that show the progress over time so a baseline may

1 not be necessary and the map is a snapshot in time.

2  
3 G. Clain, Barre Town Planning Commission, also spoke to the Town's comfort level and noted they are  
4 looking for Regional Planning Commission to be comfortable with its determination saying that the map  
5 is not applicable in the standards and that the Dashboard is more relevant. Hill-Eubanks noted that she  
6 felt the arguments were somewhat in conflict.

7  
8 B. Atwood reminded the Board that not applicable is a choice provided by the State. Hill-Eubanks noted  
9 that she felt not applicable might apply to having no projects in the Town. Atwood stated the Town  
10 feels that the map is not relevant and therefore not applicable per logic presented by the State's own  
11 directive. R. Wernecke asked what the motion before the Board. Hill-Eubanks advised no motion had  
12 been made and directed the Board to the information on Page 15, which is what would be voted on.

13  
14 *R. Wernecke moved that the Town of Barre warrants an energy certificate of compliance; R. Turner*  
15 *seconded. D. Torre and B. Arrand abstained. A roll call was initiated. Waninger tallied the roll call and*  
16 *provided the results as 12 yeas and 5 abstentions. Motion carried.*

17  
18 It was suggested there be a motion to have the Chair sign the resolution, as it was with the previous  
19 action items related to the Municipal Plan. It was also confirmed that the resolution did not need to be  
20 read into the record.

21  
22 *R. Wernecke moved to authorize the Board Chair to sign the Determination of Energy Compliance*  
23 *resolution; R. Turner seconded. Motion carried.*

## 24 25 **Municipal Plan Approvals**

26 Hill-Eubanks a lot of plans are coming in for approval and towns want plans approved before end of  
27 September so they can apply for Municipal Planning Grants. She noted that normally it is Board that  
28 decides Plan approval and it is an important function of the Board, therefore they would like to it to be  
29 completed by the Board. The following options for action were identified: wait until October Board  
30 meeting which would mean planning grants could not be applied for, direct Executive Committee to  
31 complete approval on behalf of the Board, or hold a Special Commission meeting to act on the plans in  
32 September. It was also noted that if the Board does choose to hold a special meeting they were looking  
33 at the week of September 21<sup>st</sup> and suggest that the Board allows the Executive Committee to make the  
34 decision in the event a quorum is not made at the special meeting.

35  
36 There was question if the scheduling would give the towns time enough to apply for the Municipal  
37 Grants. Waninger advised that if towns are aware we are scheduling a special board meeting, they will  
38 start their applications in advance of that meeting.

39  
40 *R. Wernecke moved September 24<sup>th</sup> for a Special Commission meeting and should there not be sufficient*  
41 *members present that the Executive Committee be authorized to make the decision on behalf of the*  
42 *Board; P. Carbee seconded. Clarification of a 6:30 pm start time was made. Waninger asked if a straw*  
43 *poll should be conducted, and Lotspeich asked if anyone could not make the date. A. Quackenbush*  
44 *advised he could not. G. Clain asked if they were going to warn the meeting for the Commission, how*  
45 *would they warn for Executive Committee if there wasn't a quorum. It was confirmed both meetings*

1 would be warned concurrently. J. Potter commented the bylaws clearly allow special meetings and with  
2 the pandemic the towns cutting it on the wire is not their fault, all towns have been interested in  
3 applying for Municipal Planning Grants at one point or another and she encouraged the Board to show  
4 up and make quorum. Waninger called attention to a chat comment that P. Emery is not available on  
5 9/24. The vote was called and the motion carried.  
6

7 **Meeting Minutes**

8 R. Turner moved to approve the minutes of July 14th; R. Krauth seconded. Motion carried.  
9

10 **Reports**

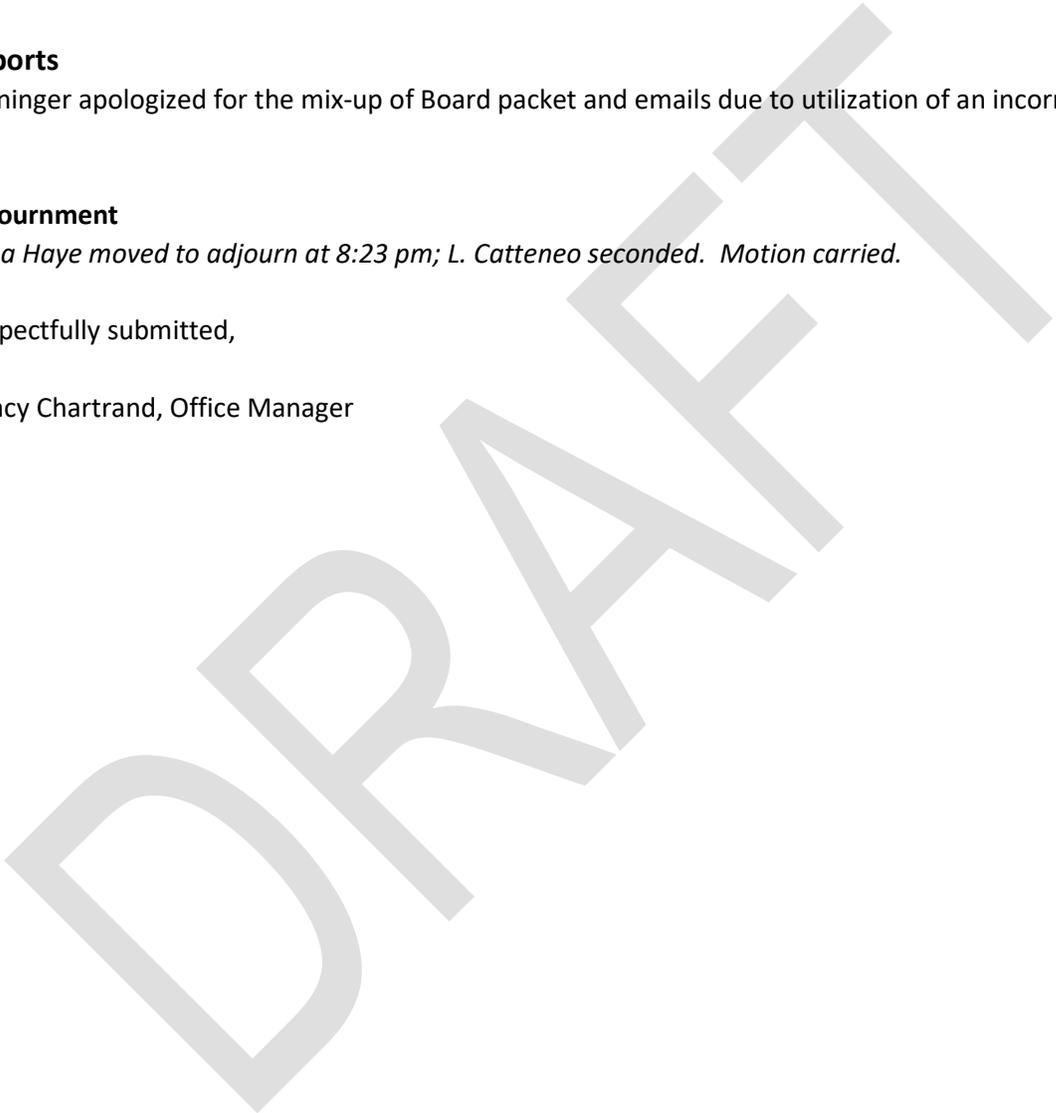
11 Waninger apologized for the mix-up of Board packet and emails due to utilization of an incorrect email  
12 list.  
13

14 **Adjournment**

15 D. La Haye moved to adjourn at 8:23 pm; L. Catteneo seconded. Motion carried.  
16

17 Respectfully submitted,

18  
19 Nancy Chartrand, Office Manager



1 **CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
 2 **BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
 3 **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**  
 4 **Draft MINUTES**  
 5 **September 24, 2020 Special Meeting**

6  
7 **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 type="checkbox"/>            | Orange       | Lee Cattaneo                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Berlin        | Robert Wernecke          | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Plainfield   |                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            |               | Karla Nuissl, Alt.       | <input type="checkbox"/>            |              | Paula Emery, Alt.               |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Cabot         | Amy Hornblas             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Roxbury      | Gerry D’Amico                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Calais        | John Brabant             | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Waitsfield   | Don La Haye                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            |               | Jan Ohlsson, Alt.        | <input type="checkbox"/>            |              | Harrison Snapp, Alt.            |
| <input 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 type="checkbox"/>            | Washington   | Peter Carbee                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Fayston       |                          | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Waterbury    | Steve Lotspeich, Vice-Chair     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Marshfield    | Robin Schunk             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Williamstown | Richard Turner                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Middlesex     | Ron Krauth               | <input type="checkbox"/>            |              | Jacqueline Higgins, Alt.        |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Montpelier    | Marcella Dent            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Woodbury     | Michael Gray                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            |               | Mike Miller, Alt.        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Worcester    | Bill Arrand                     |

8  
9 Staff: Bonnie Waninger, Nancy Chartrand, Clare Rock

10  
11 **Call to Order**

12 Chair L. Hill-Eubanks called the remote meeting to order at 6:35 pm and advised the reason for the  
 13 special meeting was to review Northfield and Fayston’s Town Plans. She noted there was not a full  
 14 quorum of the Board, therefore the Executive Committee will need to do voting. Hill-Eubanks  
 15 announced a roll call of participants, which is reflected in the attendance above.

16  
17 **Adjustments to the Agenda**

18 None.

19  
20 **Public Comments**

21 None.

22  
23 **Municipal Plan Approval, Confirmation of Planning Process & Certificate of Energy**  
 24 **Compliance**

25 Hill-Eubanks advised information was to have been presented by Bill Arrand, who was not currently

1 present and therefore requested Clare Rock do the introduction. She also noted a revised resolution  
2 was emailed to members today as a revision to the packet.

3  
4 Town of Fayston

5 Rock advised the Municipal Plan Review Committee (MPRC) did recommend approval of the Municipal  
6 Plan and confirmation of the Town’s planning process. She confirmed that the Fayston Plan did not  
7 include the enhanced energy component. She noted that as of the MPRC meeting, the Select Board had  
8 not yet voted to approve the plan, but that vote has happened since the MPRC met. Staff confirmed the  
9 plan has been approved by the Fayston Select Board, and that there was little discussion at the Select  
10 Board hearing. It was noted that one comment raised was the consideration of how COVID has  
11 impacted the municipal planning process and consideration of whether that should be incorporated into  
12 the review process. There was limited discussion as that is not a plan component or requirement.  
13 However, Rock wanted to make note of that comment to the CVRPC members. She reiterated that the  
14 MPRC voted to recommend approval by the CVRPC Board.

15  
16 Bill Arrand joined the meeting.

17  
18 Hill-Eubanks opened the floor to questions. G. Clain asked for confirmation that the meeting was now  
19 the Executive Committee meeting since there was not a quorum of the Board; this was confirmed. He  
20 also brought attention to one area of the Fayston Plan – Page 114 where the 1<sup>st</sup> sentence refers to “see  
21 Section 8.5.5”, which doesn’t appear to exist. Review of this page was conducted by Rock, Potter, and  
22 Hill-Eubanks. It was noted that this appears to be a typo, not a section that is missing, and that it should  
23 actually cite Section 8.6.

24  
25 D’Amico asked if the plan addresses the energy section that was noted in Barre Town’s Plan and  
26 discussed at our last meeting. It was confirmed that Fayston was not asking for a determination of  
27 energy compliance as Barre Town was.

28  
29 Hill-Eubanks read the proposed motion:

- 30 “Resolved that the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission:  
31 1) approves the Fayston, Vermont 2020 Town Plan, adopted September 22 2020, and  
32 2) consulted with and confirms the planning process of the Town of Fayston.”

33  
34 *G. D’Amico so moved; J. Potter seconded. Motion carried.*

35  
36 Town of Northfield

37 Hill-Eubanks requested Dara Torre assume the Chair role. Torre requested B. Arrand advise the  
38 members about the Northfield Town Plan and process. He advised that the MPRC reviewed the Town  
39 Plan, planning process, and energy component. The MPRC recommended all three.

40  
41 Hill-Eubanks advised that the Northfield Planning Commission has been working on the plan for over  
42 two years and had a lot of input from the public including hearings, forums, and surveys. It believes the  
43 Plan reflects what the Town of Northfield wanted in the Town Plan.

44  
45 Clain commented that on Page 34 of Northfield’s Town Plan under Public Utilities, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph has an

1 issue which might be a typo or punctuation. It reads "...but as of 2018 it did not generate any power and  
2 contracted with Green Mountain Power to provide all maintenance services..." and Clain noted GMT  
3 was contracted before 2018. Hill-Eubanks clarified that it was oddly worded as it is meant to state as of  
4 2018, they knew that GMT was still not generating power as that was the most current year they had  
5 data for. Clain advised gratitude for town officials who work on these plans and put in the time to  
6 create them. Torre inquired if there were additional questions or comments. She directed the  
7 members to the resolution on page 13 of the packet and read the following as a proposed motion:

8  
9 "Resolved that the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission:

10 3) approves the Northfield Town Plan 2020-2028, adopted August 11, 2020, and

11 4) consulted with and confirms the planning process of the Town of Northfield."

12  
13 *J. Potter moved to approve the Northfield Town Plan, confirm the Town's planning process, and*  
14 *authorize the Chair to sign the resolution; M. Gray seconded. Motion carried.*

15  
16 Waninger advised they now need to review the determination of energy compliance recommendation.

17  
18 Hill-Eubanks advised they shared with the MPRC that there had been a comment that the Plan should  
19 set an example by supporting or encouraging new energy generation, which did not make it into the  
20 review committee notes. She advised that the Plan addressed this in one of the implementation actions,  
21 which was to investigate capturing methane at the wastewater treatment plant to use to generate  
22 energy. She also noted Northfield wanted to protect ridgelines above 1,800 feet from larger renewable  
23 energy facilities, and therefore wanted discourage development above 1,800 feet.

24  
25 Potter raised a question regarding the proposed resolution item #6, which states..."Board of  
26 Commissioners..... voted to approve the determination...", and given that the that the Executive  
27 Committee was authorized to do this in lieu of Commissioners, how does this language change? She  
28 also referenced a highlight noting number of members of public in attendance at the MPRC meeting.  
29 Rock confirmed that the following were present at the MPRC Meeting - Municipal Representatives:  
30 Laura Hill Eubanks, Northfield Planning Commission Chair, Doug Day, Fayston Planning Commission  
31 Chair, Carol Chamberlain, Fayston Planning Commission. Waninger confirmed the resolution would  
32 need to have this information updated. Item #6 would be changed to reflect a new item that discusses  
33 the Board authorizing the Executive Committee to make a decision in absence of a Board quorum. The  
34 original Item #6 would become #7, which would replace Board of Commissioners with Executive  
35 Committee on behalf of Board of Commissioners.

36  
37 *J. Potter moved to issue a determination of energy compliance for Northfield and approve signature of*  
38 *the resolution as edited; M. Gray seconded. Motion carried.*

39  
40 **Adjournment**

41 *M. Gray moved to adjourn at 7:03 pm; D. Torre seconded. Motion carried.*

42  
43 Respectfully submitted,

44  
45 Nancy Chartrand, Office Manager

**Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission**

P: 802-229-0389

Staff Report, September 2020

F: 802-223-1977

All CVRPC staff continue to work remotely per the Governor's order to continue procedures to support work from home and telecommuting for all workers to the extent possible. (Addendum 12 to Executive Order 01-20)

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT****Municipal Planning & Plan Implementation:**

- Complete final zoning district map for Montpelier.
- Revised Town Plan maps for Roxbury and Worcester.
- Assisted Orange with submission of a Village Center Designation application for Orange Center.
- Assisted the Moretown, Middlesex, and Woodbury with Municipal Planning Grant applications.
- Provided municipal plan information on forest integrity requirements to Moretown.
- Completed Barre Town, Northfield, and Fayston municipal plan approvals and Enhanced Energy plan reviews for Barre Town and Northfield.
- Met with Woodbury Planning Commission to plan Town Plan schedule and public engagement.
- Began outreach and engagement support for municipalities participating in Button Up this fall.
- Initiated energy data draft template; developing reports for all municipalities.
- Continued conversation with the Middlesex Planning Commission about approaches to zoning changes.
- Responded to Calais inquiry about municipal training.
- Assisted Middlesex Selectboard member with understanding Municipal Planning Grant program requirements; consulted with ACCD on Town's reporting status to facilitate report filing and invoicing.
- Consulted with RPC representative to the Downtown Board regarding precedent for Act 250/designation program interactions.

**Training & Education:**

- Facilitated an Energy Committee Roundtable focused on the Efficiency Vermont data report and provided an opportunity for energy committees to provide updates.
- Hosted P&Z Roundtable on Facilitating Economic Development in Villages and Downtowns and Supporting the Forest Products Industry.
- Trained the Cabot Planning Commission on the Essentials of Land Use Planning in Vermont.

**Regional Planning and Implementation:**

- Continued updating transportation data for a regional plan update.
- Supported Washington County COVID Recovery Forum as regional "expert" and via note takers.

**Partnerships for Progress:**

Working Communities Challenge: Facilitated five Greater Barre team meetings to develop the team's workplan.

In September, the team completed 29 interviews with a single mothers, employers, and representatives from education, social service organizations and service users, and the non-profit sector to inform the work plan. Conducted 5 interviews. Held multiple calls with individual team members regarding workplan development and interviews. Authored and submitted the team's implementation grant application.

Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation (CVEDC): Participate in Board meeting. Collaborated on joint assistance to Berlin for its New Town Center designation application in regards to State requirements for development in progress that would be exempt from Act 250 if the designation were in place.

THRIVE – Researched hygienic facility options for individuals who are homeless; built inventory spreadsheet.

Capstone Community Action: Capstone is considering expansion of its childcare facility in Barre. Provided floodplain map and federal grant program information regarding a floodplain buyout opportunity and expansion of parking on the floodplain property.

Washington County Hunger Council: Chaired Council meetings.

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & HAZARD MITIGATION

### Local/Regional Planning:

- Attended monthly VEM/RPC meeting.
- Attended State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) meeting on Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) consolidation and realignment.
- Prepared Emergency Management Performance Grant applications. For 2020, VEM has offered RPCs additional funding to address COVID-19 planning and training needs.
- Hosted EMD roundtable with 11 participants, discussed Citizens Assistance Registry for Emergencies (CARE) Program, feeding during disasters, and overall emergency management needs.
- Hosted LEPC 5 meeting discussing LEPC consolidation and FY21 work.
- Completed Wi-Fi signal testing at up to three sites in every community.

**Local Hazard Mitigation Plans (LHMP)**: Contact Grace Vinson, [vinson@cvregion.com](mailto:vinson@cvregion.com), for assistance. Staff supported communities in the development, review, and adoption of local hazard mitigation plans.

Calais – Continued data updates. Town forming a planning committee. Emailed data gathering worksheets to Selectboard. Planned kick off meeting for October.

Montpelier – Moving forward with outreach to form Planning Committee (requires City Council adoption)

Plainfield – Comments returned by VEM and addressed, received VEM Approval Pending Adoption.

Washington – Municipal actions on hold due to COVID-19.

Williamstown – VEM issued Approval Pending Adoption. Adoption in progress by the Williamstown Selectboard.

### COVID-19 Response & Recovery:

- Participated in meetings to maintain situational awareness regarding response and recovery needs/actions:
  - SEOC (Monday, Wednesday, Friday) – situational awareness briefing.
  - Health Operations Center (Monday, Wednesday, Friday) - situational awareness briefings.
- Participated in the COVID-19 Washington County Community Recovery Forum and discussed resulting vision with Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD).
- Acted as statewide RPC lead for Local Government Expense Reimbursement (LGER) program assistance to municipalities. Held bi-weekly telephone consultations with the Dept. of Taxes. Hosted RPC monthly meeting. Researched and responded to questions from RPCs and Central VT applicants. Responded to Legislator inquiry about strategies to provide hazard pay for emergency services. Developed RPC sub-grant agreements and forms to facilitate joint reporting. Fostered conversation to allow LGER activities as match to emergency management grants for RPCs (saves each RPC \$6-17,000 in cash match). Provided LGER

services to Central Vermont units of local government (municipalities, solid waste districts, fire districts, county government, water/sewer districts).

## TRANSPORTATION

**Field Services:** Contact Ashley Andrews, [Andrews@cvregion.com](mailto:Andrews@cvregion.com), for 2020 counts and inventories.

- Completed road erosion inventory field work in Barre Town.
- Initiated or completed field work for bridge and culvert inventories in Barre City, Barre Town, Roxbury, and .Waitsfield
- Drafted inventory reports for Barre Town, Berlin, Waitsfield, and Washington.
- Set up road counters in Waitsfield on Main Street.
- Completed pedestrian counts around the Mad River Valley Trail network.
- Initiated inventory of public transit bus stop amenities in Barre, Berlin, and Montpelier.

### **Transportation Studies:**

Cabot Trail Planning: Finalized report and submitted final invoice.

Transportation Resilience Planning Tool: Presented project to TAC.

I-89 Advisory Committee: Participated in Committee meeting. Reviewed Secondary Growth Assessment summary and proposed land use changes and reviewed interchange alternatives being evaluated and draft evaluation metrics. A new interchange in Bolton was not prioritized at this time. This study is being authored by the Chittenden County RPC. The project involves the development of a vision, goals, and objectives which will guide the identification and prioritization of enhancements for the I-89 corridor in Chittenden County over the next 30 years. For information, visit <https://envision89.com/>.

**Public Transit:** CVRPC represents Central Vermont on the Green Mountain Transit (GMT) Board of Commissioners. Staff participated in the following GMT meetings:

Board of Commissioners – See Committee updates.

Leadership Committee – Planned Board retreat contents and format; contents will be training on the role of a Board, strategic planning, and fairness and inclusion. Discussed Medicaid contract change effects on GMT and seasonal service in light of COVID-19. Approved Board agenda.

Operations Committee – Reviewed FY21 Performance Dashboard. GMT is revising its performance tracking metrics to focus on key indicators for safety, mobility, customer satisfaction, service provided, maintenance, and labor relations. Discussed Passenger Boarding Limit Policy. GMT is raising limits on bus capacity from 50% to 75% based on safety measures in place, which appear to be effective. GMT staff presented updates to the Time-off Policy. GMT's accrued, unused time off balance has grown at a rapid rate during the past three years. The Board requested staff investigate the rapid growth and adapt the policy as needed to encourage staff to use time off and to bring the accrued liability into a finance-supported position.

GMT Board of Commissioners Chair Role Activities:

- Participated in briefing meetings with the General Manager about a variety of topics and events.

**Municipal Assistance:**

- Attended Community Conversation meetings designed by RPC and VTrans and hosted by the Plainfield Selectboard to gather input on the Route 2/Main Street intersection project. Developed a survey and designed a postcard to continue public outreach on the intersection.
- Developed ash tree inventory maps for Williamstown and Orange for use in management plans.
- Researched prospective bridge maintenance funding sources for Duxbury.

**Grants In Aid:**

- Reviewed invoices and for answered questions from multiple towns about Grants in Aid program.
- Completed post-construction site visits in Calais, Montpelier, Roxbury.
- Completed pre-construction site visits in Waterbury.
- Sent FY21 equipment grant letters to municipalities.
- Updated select municipalities about overdue MRGP fees and reports, which will prevent the municipalities from being reimbursed for Grants in Aid work.

**Regional Activities:**

- Participated in the Mad River Transportation Advisory Committee meeting.
- Participated in VTrans VPSP2 implementation briefing for RPCs. VPSP2 is VTrans' Project Selection & Prioritization Processes update. The new process is designed to be asset-centric using different criteria and different weights for similar criteria to focus on making the right investment at the right time. It also provided municipalities with opportunities to move a project on to the Capital Program.
- Participated in VT Rail Advisory Council meeting. VTrans is updating its Freight and Rail Plans.
- Reviewed VTrans New Project Summary for Northfield - Berlin STP PS24(1) (resurfacing of Rt. 12); discussed project with Berlin.
- Initiated work on a Central Vermont mobility report, including data gathering and map planning.

**NATURAL RESOURCES**

Contact Pam DeAndrea, [deandrea@cvregion.com](mailto:deandrea@cvregion.com), unless otherwise noted.

**Tactical Basin Planning Assistance:**

- Attended partner meeting with DEC Basin Planner, WNRCD, LCCD, LCPC, and CCRPC on the start-up of the Lamoille River Tactical Basin Plan.
- Continued project development with Winooski Basin Planner, Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District, Friends of the Winooski River, and the Friends of the Mad River for Winooski River Basin projects.

**Design Implementation Block Grant Program (DIBG, formerly Clean Water Block Grant Program):**

Woodbury Stormwater Mitigation Final Designs – D&K conducted necessary field work and data collection to complete The project team, including Selectboard member Michael Gray, D&K and CVRPC staff, met for a meeting to discuss the site visits and soil infiltration test results and potential project implications. Final designs anticipated by spring 2021.

Calais Stormwater Mitigation Final Designs – Finalized the contract with Milone and MacBroom, Inc. (MMI) who were hired to complete the final designs for two projects in to mitigate stormwater runoff in East Calais. Held kick-off meeting with the Town of Calais, landowners and MMI. The two sites reduce stormwater coming down Moscow Woods Road and Batten Road that has formed a gully on private land causing

sediment to enter the nearby Kingsbury Branch. MMI conducted necessary field work and data collection to complete the hydrologic modeling for the engineering designs. The designs will entail an underground infiltration system at the East Calais Post Office, an infiltration basin along Moscow Woods Rd., and the stabilization of the gully. Designs to be complete by the fall 2021.

Berlin Town Office Stormwater Implementation – Bid solicitation was completed for construction of a gravel wetland to remediate stormwater at the Berlin Town Office. Four bids were received with the lowest for construction to be done in the 2021 season. Upon approval by the Executive Committee, a contract will be completed between CVRPC and Berlin. Berlin may then contract with the construction company Dale Percy, Inc. to construct the project. Project completion is November 2021.

**Moretown Elementary School Stormwater Final Design:** This project will develop a final design for stormwater treatment at the Moretown Elementary School and Town Office. Watershed Consulting Associates (WCA) conducted soils characterization and surveying necessary for the final engineering design. The main treatment proposed is a gravel wetland along with improvements around the school to move stormwater away from the school. Stormwater contributes to flooding in classrooms. Final design is expected to be complete in June 2021.

**Clean Water Planning (604b):** Submitted final web map to Friends of the Winooski River (FWR) and final report to TRORC. The web map shows monitoring locations and 2019 results aiding the FWR in their education efforts and stakeholders in learning about water quality in the region.

**Act 76 Advisory Committee:** Participated in two Act 76 Advisory Committee meetings. Helped resolve conflict of interest approach. All Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC) members and the Clean Water Service Provider (CWSP) have conflicts of interest as their organizations will propose and prioritize projects. Proposed the draft CWSP rule recognize the conflict is inherent due to Legislative intent in CWSP and BWQC formation and create transparency in decision-making process to support visibility for any unsupported bias. Prepared materials to discuss the proposed draft Rule with the Clean Water Advisory Committee.

## OFFICE & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Office:

- Prepared RPC FY20 annual report.
- Held in-person, physically distanced staff lunch at Hubbard Park to bolster sense of team and meet Planning Technicians.
- Drafted update to Internal Controls.

### Professional Development/Leadership:

- Represented RPCs at the VT Urban and Community Forestry Council meeting. Council updating its strategic plan and discussing engagement during COVID.
- Bonnie participated in the Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility conference to strengthen incorporation of diversity, equity and inclusion concepts into the Commission's policies and work.
- Grace attended FEMA G-318 Training: Local Mitigation Planning Workshop, as well as VEM Training on the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Review Tool.

**Upcoming Meetings:**

All CVRPC meetings currently are being held as virtual meetings. Meeting access information is provided on agendas at [www.centralvtplanning.org](http://www.centralvtplanning.org). For non-CVRPC meetings, please visit websites for host organizations.

**October**

|        |         |   |
|--------|---------|---|
| Oct 8  | 4 pm    | Clean Water Advisory Committee                                      |
| Oct 8  | 5 pm    | Step Up to Button Up Webinar  |
| Oct 12 |         | <i>Indigenous Peoples/Columbus Day Holiday, CVRPC Office Closed</i> |
| Oct 12 | 5 pm    | Green Mountain Transit Microtransit service transition, via Zoom    |
| Oct 13 | Noon    | Green Mountain Transit Microtransit service transition, via Zoom    |
| Oct 13 | 6:30 pm | Board of Commissioners & Regional Plan Amendment Hearing            |
| Oct 14 | 4 pm    | Green Mountain Transit Microtransit service transition, via Zoom    |
| Oct 22 | 4 pm    | Project Review Committee  |
| Oct 27 | 6:30 pm | Transportation Advisory Committee                                   |

**November**

|               |         |  |
|---------------|---------|--|
| Nov 2         | 4 pm    | Executive Committee                              |
| Nov 2         | 6 pm    | Local Emergency Planning Committee 5             |
| Nov 11        |         | <i>Veterans Day Holiday, CVRPC Office closed</i> |
| Nov 12 (tent) | 4 pm    | Clean Water Advisory Committee                   |
| TBD           | 4 pm    | Project Review Committee                         |
| Nov 24        | 6:30 pm | Transportation Advisory Committee                |
| Nov 26 & 27   |         | <i>Thanksgiving Holiday, CVRPC Office closed</i> |

**Visit CVRPC's web site at [www.centralvtplanning.org](http://www.centralvtplanning.org) to view our blog and for the latest planning publications and news.**

**Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission**  
**Committee & Appointed Representative Reports**  
September 2020

*Meeting minutes for CVRPC Committees are available at [www.centralvtplanning.org](http://www.centralvtplanning.org).*

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** (Monday of week prior to Commission meeting; 4pm)

- Discussed FY20 year-end draft financials and 8/31 financials.
- Authorize signature of the following agreements and contracts:
  - Agency of Commerce and Community Development – ACCD Local and Regional Planning FY21
  - Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission – Design/Implementation Block Grant, Calais and Woodbury Stormwater Designs, Amendment 1
  - Vermont Department of Taxes – Local Government Expense Reimbursement (LGER)
  - Cross Vermont Trails Association – Administrative Services Amendment 1
  - Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission – Design/Implementation Block Grant, Berlin Town Office & Garage Stormwater Implementation Amendment 1
  - Town of Berlin – Stormwater Mitigation Construction, Berlin Town Offices Amendment #1
- Approved the revised CVRPC FFY21 Transportation Planning Initiative work program and budget.
- Discussed Barre Town Plan certification of energy compliance.
- Discussed potential need for special Board and/or Executive Committee meeting for plan approvals.
- Established process for Executive Director mid-year personnel review.
- Approved the Fayston, Vermont 2020 Town Plan and confirmed the Town’s planning process.
- Approved the Northfield Town Plan 2020-2028, confirmed the Town’s planning process, and issued a determination of energy compliance for the Northfield Town Plan 2020-2028.
- Approved the FFY20 Transportation Planning budget adjustment 2.
- Discussed CVRPC’s potential role as the Winooski Basin Clean Water Service Provider and potential need to transition the Clean Water Advisory Committee to a Basin Water Quality Council.

**PERSONNEL POLICY COMMITTEE** (A sub-committee of the Executive Committee)

Meetings on hold due to COVID.

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE** (February and March; scheduled by Committee)

Did not meet.

**PROJECT REVIEW COMMITTEE** (4<sup>th</sup> Thursday, 4pm)

Did not meet.

**REGIONAL PLAN COMMITTEE** (as needed; scheduled by Committee)

Did not meet.

**MUNICIPAL PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE** (as needed; scheduled by Committee)

- Met twice during September.

- Continued the public hearing for the energy determination and recommended an affirmative determination of energy compliance for the Barre Town Plan at the close of that hearing.
- Held public hearing on the Northfield Municipal Plan and certification of its energy plan. Recommended approval of the municipal plan, confirmation of the Town's planning process, and an affirmative determination of energy compliance.
- Held public hearing on the Fayston Municipal Plan and recommended approval of the municipal plan and confirmation of the Town's planning process.

#### **TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday; 6:30 pm)**

- Approved updated Rules of Procedure to bring them into alignment with the Commission's bylaws.
- Approved an *adjustment to the FFY20 Transportation Planning Initiative budget*.
- Approved the revised FFY21 Transportation Planning Initiative work plan and budget.
- Heard staff presentation on the Transportation Resilience Planning Tool. The tool maps threats and damages to municipal infrastructure from flooding events and provides infrastructure vulnerability and criticality ratings that help municipalities understand options to mitigate damages and prioritize solutions. This project mapped the Stevens Branch of the Winooski watershed in Central Vermont.

#### **CLEAN WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE (2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday, 4pm)**

Did not meet.

#### **VERMONT ASSOCIATION OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES**

- The VT Dept. of Taxes requested RPC assistance with ascertaining how costs for incorporated villages are billed. The State is working with a new municipal financial software vendor to help the vendor set up its system. Village billing differs among villages, and the Tax Dept. aims to have the system work for all villages.
- As part of the State Comprehensive Energy Plan update, the Public Service Department will be reviewing Act 174 standards. RPC input is requested.
- RPCs are with the Agency of Agriculture and energy distribution utilities on a grant application to support an RPC GIS analysis that would assist in determining preferred energy generation sites on farms. Grant activities would be coordinated with farmers.
- The Public Service Department noted that utilities are doing emergency planning for the grid. It requested RPC assistance because the grid planning work is not correlated with statewide emergency planning for other issues, such as where emergency shelters and emergency operation centers are located.
- VCGI discussed the new municipal Grand List management software, Axiomatic, which will replace NEMRC. VCGI is working to integrate statewide parcel information into the system so that Grand List information can be linked to parcels.
- VTrans and ACCD are updating the Better Connections grant program. One recommended update is to provide a funded role for RPCs to provide project management services. Project management at the local level has been uneven, and State staff have had to fill gaps, which is not their role. VTrans discussed three models: a) municipal grantee contracts with RPC for services without a competitive bid; b) Better Connection grants are provided to RPCs, who assist municipalities; and c) if RPC is not available, State staff provide project management services. RPCs supported the first model as some municipalities have the capacity and skills to act as project managers.

- Neil Kamman, from DEC, provided an update on Clean Water programs and the proposed budget from the Clean Water Board.

#### **VERMONT ECONOMIC PROGRESS COUNCIL**

No activities from Central Vermont.

#### **GREEN MOUNTAIN TRANSIT**

- Recognized new Alternate Commissioner from Burlington.
- Recognized 40 years of service and retirement of bus operator Rick Laferriere.
- VTrans has been contacted by Route Match who was recently purchased by Uber. They are exploring the idea of marrying the volunteer driver program and people who drive for Uber and Lyft.
- Heard update on the SSTA accident, in which the SSTA driver sustained fatal injuries. There were no passenger injuries. SSTA is a GMT contractor for Medicaid and Elders/Persons with Disabilities services in Chittenden County.
- Discussed Board retreat.
- Reviewed draft vision, values and strategic goals.
- Adopted an FY21 Operating Budget adjustment, which utilizes CARES funding to the extent possible.
- Debated continuation of the zero fare policy, which enhances operator safety and provides economic relief to passengers. It will result in unsustainable revenue losses after CARES funding is exhausted.
- Approved formation of a Retirement Committee.

#### **MAD RIVER VALLEY PLANNING DISTRICT**

- Met new Sugarbush President and CEO, John Hammond, who discussed continuity of operations and COVID operations.
- Discussed 2020 Town Leadership Meeting content and format. Content is affordable housing via MRV Housing Demand & Market Analysis report.
- Heard project updates for housing, transportation, and community dashboard.