



REGIONAL PLAN COMMITTEE

February 11, 2020 5:00 – 6:30 pm

Remote Participation via GoToMeetings

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pg		<u>AGENDA</u>
	5:00 ¹	Welcome and Adjustments to the Agenda
		Public Comments
2-13	5:10	Regional Review continued: Berlin New Town Center (NTC) Application² - Continue formal Regional Plan Conformance review of the New Town Center Application and consideration of comments.
14	6:10	Approval Minutes Consider approval of the May 26, 2020 & February 2, 2021 meeting minutes.
	6:30	Adjournment

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 at least 3 business days prior to the meeting for which services are requested.

¹ Times are approximate unless otherwise advertised.

² Possible action item



MEMO

Date: February 9, 2021
To: Regional Plan Committee
From: Clare Rock, Senior Planner
Re: Continued review of Berlin New Town Center Application

- ✉ **ACTION REQUESTED:** As a continuation of the meeting held on February 2, 2012 the Committee will be tasked with:
- Determining whether the NTC proposal is in conformance with the Regional Plan**
 - Identifying comments and input for the Downtown Board deliberations**
 - Addressing Berlin's request for a Letter of Support**
 - Directing staff to produce a letter outlining its findings for submittal to the Town and the Downtown Board**

Staff proposed to view the NTC Application similar to the review of a proposed zoning district rather than as development proposal. A zoning district is a defined geographic area in which a municipality defines a purpose; identifies the types of allowable uses; and specifies the dimensional standards which new development should conform. Natural resources and other constraints may exist within the zoning district but this doesn't necessarily preclude some areas to fall within the District.

Attached Regional Plan Goals and Policies (7-pages)

To aid in this discussion, staff has compiled Regional Plan goals and policies which relate to the Berlin NTC proposal. You'll see the majority support Berlin's efforts. Staff has highlighted areas according to the following key which relate specifically to the topics for discussion:

Blue = policies to highlight conformance specific to Designation benefits – the committee may choose to highlight these in their comments.

Magenta = policies which relate "program entry threshold." While these relate specifically to the Growth Center program I think they are relatable to the New Town Center Program (these specific policies could have been written before the inception of the New Town Center Program.)

Green = policies aimed at wetlands protections and other natural resource based policies which are

relative to development projects in this area.

Draft Letter

Lastly staff has included a rough draft of a letter designed to outline the Committee's findings. The letter is the first attempt to frame CVRPC comments and is to be used as a guide rather than a strict framework.

CVRPC issues conformance letters on a regular basis in response to requests for Letter of Support for grant applications. These letter are usually structured in the following manner:

- Description of project
- Determination of Conformance followed by a list of specific policies which demonstrate conformance
- A generalized indication of support for the application and project.

You'll see the letter contains staff comments which outline potential decision points and can be used to guide the discussion.

Berlin New Town Center Relevant Regional Plan Goals and Policies

Blue = policies to highlight conformance specific to Designation benefits

Magenta = policies which relate “program entry threshold”

Green = policies aimed at wetlands protections

Broad Policies

- CVRPC promotes housing availability to meet the needs of people of all socioeconomic levels.
- CVRPC seeks to maintain a healthy environment and to respect the Region's historic settlement patterns.
- CVRPC promotes diversified economic development and the creation and/or maintenance of sufficient jobs for all residents.
- CVRPC encourages development patterns which result in more energy efficient transportation patterns.
- CVRPC encourages investment in public facilities and services in areas of population and economic growth.
- CVRPC supports the identification and utilization of economic growth centers as a method of achieving development patterns that are mutually advantageous to the environment and the socio-economic needs of the Region's towns.

Future Land Use Planning Areas

Town Centers are less densely populated settlements and smaller than regional centers, but similarly accommodate many of the same residential, civic, commercial and light industrial uses. The Region ' s largest Town Centers that provide water and wastewater infrastructure and also serve as sub-regional retail and employment centers.

A subcategory of Town Centers in this Plan is New Town Centers. “New Town Center,” as defined by the State, means the 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 and sidewalks and on-street parking, storm water treatment, sanitary sewers, and public water supply. ” Though there are no state-designated New Town Centers within the Region, the Town of Berlin desires to encourage the expansion of the historic town area in the vicinity of Berlin Four Corners to adjacent areas to serve as a location of a mix of small-scale commercial, high density residential and civic uses in a traditional village setting.

Policies:

1. In order to maintain the existing settlement patterns, higher density residential, commercial, and industrial development should be located in Regional Centers and Town Centers.
2. Small-scale shopping centers, designed to complement the historic character and support the vibrancy of community centers, are most appropriate in Town Centers or Hamlets (see Rural Areas). Community and Regional Shopping Centers, however, are less appropriate in Town Centers or Rural Areas and should be located in Regional Centers as a first priority and Mixed-Use Commercial areas as a second priority.

3. Encourage infill, redevelopment, adaptive reuse of existing buildings and reuse of “brownfield” sites in Regional and Town Centers.

Strategy 3a: Work with municipalities to align local capital planning and public investment strategies with infill and redevelopment goals.

4. Municipalities should consider use of innovative tools such as “form- based ” land use regulations. These types of regulations focus less on specific uses and more on the physical form of the built environment, utilize dimensional standards to shape how buildings relate to each other, to streets, and to other public spaces.

5. Continue to work with municipalities and VTrans to reduce conflicts between traffic needs and human-scale functions of Regional and Town Centers through practices like traffic-calming measures, pedestrian-safety improvements and gateway treatments. **Priority for the use of public funding for the maintenance or improvement of infrastructure shall be for those that support concentrated development in Regional and Town Centers.**

Strategy 5a: Support identification of corridors for new roads or road segments in and around Regional and Town Centers as part of a local planning process, and support for construction of those roads and utility infrastructure to help drive growth in a way that supports compact center development.

6. Priority for the use of public funding for the development of affordable housing and assisted living facilities shall be for those located within Regional and Town Centers in order to increase access to services.

7. The placement of municipal and other government buildings should be in established Regional and Town Centers in order to maintain and enhance the vitality of these areas.

8. Encourage the development of public places and cultural events within Regional and Town Centers.

9. Support the creation of off-road bike and pedestrian paths that connect Regional and Town centers with residential areas and neighboring centers in a hub and spoke pattern.

Mixed-Use Commercial include areas of commercial, office and mixed-use development built in a spread out pattern and served by water and wastewater infrastructure. Typically dominated by commercial service industries, the intent of this land use category is to transform these areas into higher-density, mixed-use settlements through infill and redevelopment. These areas in the region are concentrated along US 302, Fisher Rd, VT 12 and south of Route 2 in Berlin, and also includes South Barre in Barre Town. Planned commercial or mixed uses within existing linear commercial zoning districts along major road corridors must be developed carefully to avoid sprawl, traffic congestion, and safety hazards.

Policies:

1. Encourage the transformation of existing commercial areas into areas serving a mix of uses, including residential, and offering diversified transportation options, while also conforming to traditional historic development patterns.

Strategy 1a: Work with towns to incorporate standards such as placement of buildings near the road with parking areas to the side and rear, attractive building design, application of access management principles and provision of pedestrian facilities within the center and facilities that connect to sidewalks and public transit.

2. Large scale retail constituting a substantial regional impact should be permitted only if it includes exemplary building and site design as described above in Policy 1, and is determined to have a net

beneficial impact based on an independent economic and community impact study that may be requested by the host municipality and/or CVRPC.

GENERAL LAND USE GOALS, POLICIES, AND STRATEGIES

Goal 3: To encourage the historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside while promoting development in economically viable locations.

Policies:

1. New development should be planned so as to respect the historic settlement pattern of compact villages, neighborhoods, and urban centers separated by rural countryside.

Accordingly, CVRPC:

☐ Endorses the concept of creating new villages to accommodate new growth.

☐ Endorses "smart growth" planning principles as embodied in this Plan and supports the designation of "Growth Centers" – be they identified in local plans or through the State process codified in Act 183. We would also support efforts to simplify the State Growth Center designation process so as to make its benefits more accessible to a broader cross-section of communities.

☐ Encourages PUD, "cluster" or "open space" design for new residential and commercial developments, particularly those outside of existing settlements or planned growth areas and discourages the development of commercial and residential sprawl.

☐ Encourages "in fill" development and adaptive reuse of buildings in existing settlements.

☐ Supports and encourages revitalization efforts directed towards strengthening and improving villages and cities.

☐ Recognizes that some environmental and development "trade-offs" will be necessary to achieve desired growth patterns. To this end, CVRPC believes that mandatory mitigation of any agricultural

soils or habitat losses, even at a reduced ratio, within State designated Growth Centers is counterproductive to enticing development and recreating traditional land use patterns.

☐ Encourages municipalities to undertake build-out modeling in order to better evaluate development capability and future growth potential under current zoning, as well as to examine the potential impact of employing alternative density strategies.

2. To seek ways to overcome the economic disincentives to development within existing builtup areas, including the high costs associated with the construction of, or hookup to, necessary infrastructure. CVRPC:

☐ Recognizes Tax Increment Financing (TIF) as a valuable tool for supporting infrastructure development in planned growth areas and supports amending current State law to make it more practical for communities to implement.

Goal 4: To protect environmentally sensitive or unique areas.

Policies:

1. Natural and fragile areas identified in this Plan should receive protection from harmful uses.

3. Where a potentially harmful development or activity is proposed in proximity to a natural or fragile area, measures should be taken to ensure adequate protection.

8. It is the policy of CVRPC to encourage the preservation of wetlands so as to protect their function and productivity. Efforts (including consideration of site design options) should be made to mitigate against the possible adverse impacts of development on the Region's wetlands.

Goal 6: To ensure that new development in the vicinity of the Region ' s interstate interchanges is appropriate to the setting and considers the impact of such development on adjacent village and urban centers.

3. CVRPC will continue to support the Town of Berlin ' s efforts to plan for and implement the creation of a new village center in the vicinity of Exit 7.

Goal 7: To manage the quality and quantity of storm water runoff in order to avoid property damage and negative impacts on surface and groundwater.

Policies:

1. New development should, through design and maintenance, attempt to minimize changes in the volume and chemical composition of runoff. Methods recommended to achieve this objective include: ☐ Stabilizing entrances to construction areas to eliminate tracking of sediment onto paved public roads; ☐ Employing cluster/open space design techniques; ☐ Minimizing development road and sidewalk widths to those which are necessary for safety and access; ☐ Avoiding the use of wide radius, paved cul-de-sacs, where appropriate ("Hammerhead" turns, smaller radius turns, and landscaped cul-de-sac islands are some other options.); ☐ Minimizing the removal of native vegetation to the extent practical; ☐ Phasing new construction to minimize the amount of disturbed soil at any given time where practical; and ☐ Providing vegetated buffers between roof lines and paved areas and between sidewalks and roads, where appropriate.

2. Structural Best Management Practices (BMP's) should be used, as appropriate, to control storm water on new development sites before, during and after construction (including plans for long term maintenance and operations). Objectives and applications include:
☐ Storm water retention: wet ponds, artificial wetlands ☐ Storm water detention: dry basins ☐ Storm water filtering: bio-retention, sand filters, compost filters ☐ Storm water velocity control: filter strips, grassed swales, rock swales ☐ Erosion control: construction schedule, seeding/mulching, check dams, run-off diversions ☐ Sediment control: sediment basins/traps, filter fabric/silt fences, hay bales, inlet protection ☐ Infiltration: infiltration basins, trenches, dry well, leaching catch basins, infiltration islands, pervious surfaces

4. Efforts should be made to minimize the extent of impervious surfaces and surface runoff associated with parking facilities. The following methods are recommended:
☐ Constructing structured parking facilities (i.e. multi-level garages) where practical and appropriate in order to provide a higher ratio of parking spaces to impervious surface area; ☐ Using pervious materials in "spillover" parking areas; ☐ Integrating the use of landscaped areas as "bio-retention" filters; and ☐ Providing smaller spaces for compact cars.

Energy

GOAL: Support alternative transportation options and alternative fuel vehicles throughout the region.

Policy: Facilitate the development of walking and biking infrastructure to provide alternative transportation options for the community.

GOAL: Land use policies support compact development in mixed-use centers

Policy: Central Vermont is committed to reducing sprawl and minimizing low-density development by encouraging density in areas where infrastructure exists or is planned to support growth.

Policy: Strongly prioritize development in compact, mixed-use centers when feasible and appropriate; and identify ways to make compact development more feasible throughout Central Vermont.

GOAL 4: To integrate modes of travel in order to allow for their most effective use and ultimately reduce dependence on single occupant vehicles.

5. Encourage the availability of multiple options for the movement of people and goods.

GOAL 6: To make necessary improvements to achieve a transportation system appropriately structured and designed to safely, effectively, and economically move goods and people.

Policies:

2. Foster a neighborhood street system characterized by a network of interconnected streets that minimizes through traffic in residential neighborhoods.

GOAL 8: To promote a Regional transportation system that preserves and enhances residential and economic development potential in growth areas.

Policies:

3. Encourage transportation system improvements that renew and improve downtowns, growth areas, and neighborhoods.

GOAL 9: To promote a Regional public transportation system.

Policies:

2. Support public transit that provides access to employment.

Utilities and facilities

WASTEWATER TREATMENT GOAL: Improvement and expansion of wastewater treatment facilities and options so as to protect public health, maximize public investment, and reinforce desired patterns of growth.

Policies:

6. New or expanded wastewater treatment facilities should be planned where municipalities have immediate need or where additional growth is appropriate, including *Regional Centers, Town Centers, Hamlets, Resort Centers, and Mixed Use Commercial and Industrial* areas.

WATER SYSTEM GOAL: Improvement and expansion of public water system facilities so as to protect public health, maximize public investment, and reinforce desired patterns of growth.

Policies:

6. Water service area expansions should be designed to encourage development in areas where growth is appropriate including *Regional Centers, Town Centers, Hamlets, Resort Centers, Rural Commercial and Industrial* areas and growth centers as identified by town plans.

EMERGENCY/HEALTH SERVICES GOAL: To promote effective, efficient and accessible emergency and health care services.

Policies:

1. Adequate health care facilities and personnel should be planned and located throughout the Region so that all residents have access to such services. It is necessary that planning for these facilities be coordinated with population distribution and existing and future transportation patterns.

CHILD CARE GOAL: To ensure the availability of safe and affordable child care and to integrate child care issues into the planning process.

Policies:

4. Encourage the location of child care facilities in growth centers and existing settlements, near residential clusters, schools, and large employers, and along public transportation routes. Such locations can help reduce traffic, energy consumption, and the overall financial cost of day care for families.

Housing

Goals:

1. To promote the development of housing opportunities for all residents of the Region, including and especially, affordable, elderly, and special needs housing.
2. To encourage innovative planning, design, and development of housing which minimizes its costs, energy consumption, and environmental impacts.
3. To promote preservation of the existing housing stock and the development of future housing in the village/town and employment centers of the Region, or those areas designated as Growth Centers.
4. To support the coordination between public, private, and non-profit agencies involved with planning, financing, and developing affordable housing.

Policies:

1. The Region's towns, non-profits, and state agencies should work collaboratively to address the Region's housing needs.
5. The majority of new housing should be constructed in town centers and designated growth centers.
7. Housing units that are affordable to households below the area median income and housing near employment centers should be encouraged.

Economic Element

Goal 1: Full employment⁴ and the creation and preservation of high quality jobs in a diverse range of occupations.

Goal 2: Business retention, growth and development that anticipate and meet market opportunities.

Policy 3: Focus retention, growth and development efforts on industries and businesses that are a good fit with the Region's existing economic base and support sustainable economic development.

B. Support and encourage expansion in sectors that are poised for growth, such as: health care, high tech manufacturing, software development and information technology, value added agriculture, higher education and recreation and tourism.

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POLICY 6: Ensure availability of commercial and industrial space to meet employment and business expansion needs.

D. For uses that do not require a rural location, guide and assist commercial, industrial and institutional uses to locate in downtowns, villages and adjacent industrial areas, or at those locations in the fringe areas that have been significantly developed and are zoned for such purposes.

Goal 4: Dynamic and resilient downtowns, villages and commercial districts.

Policy 13: Find new uses and opportunities for vacant and under-utilized sites and buildings.

C. Support rezoning of village centers for mixed-use development, encompassing commercial, light manufacturing, artisan and residential uses at traditional village density.

Policy 14: Focus infrastructure investments in downtowns, village centers and growth centers and promote use of healthy community design principles in public investments and land use regulations.

A. Promote incorporation of Healthy Community Design and Complete Streets principles into public infrastructure, redevelopment projects, land use regulations and community engagement efforts.



February 8, 2021

Mr. Thomas Badowski
 Assistant Berlin Town Administrator
 Town of Berlin
 108 Shed Road
 Berlin, Vermont 05602

VIA EMAIL

Dear Mr. Badowski;

Thank you for providing notice of the Town of Berlin's intent to submit application to the State's New Town Center Designation Program. The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission's Regional Plan Committee has reviewed the proposal and provides the following letter to ...

Berlin's New Town Center Application includes a conceptual plan that graphically depicts the Town's vision to incrementally transform the mall property and adjacent undeveloped property into a mixed-use center for the Town. The conceptual design incorporates smart growth principles and proposes mixed use infill development in an area currently characterized by separated uses and automobile reliance. The conceptual plan is accompanied by updated zoning regulations, an Official Map, a Capital Improvement Plan and official agreements with project partners; all which demonstrate a commitment towards attainment of the Town Center vision.

Commented [CR1]: insert the overall nature of the letter: i.e. support?

Commented [CR2]: insert "significant" before "commitment" if this is the sense of committee

Regional Plan Conformance

Based on the information contained within the final application, dated February 1, 2021, the project is compatible with the 2016 Central Vermont Regional Plan, amended November 17, 2020, as the New Town Center proposal aligns with CVRPC's broad planning policies including:

- promoting housing availability to meet the needs of people of all socioeconomic levels.
- promoting diversified economic development and the creation and/or maintenance of sufficient jobs for all residents.
- encouraging development patterns which result in more energy efficient transportation patterns.
- encouraging investment in public facilities and services in areas of population and economic growth.
- supporting the identification and utilization of economic growth centers as a method of achieving development patterns that are mutually advantageous to the environment and the socio-economic needs of the Region's towns.

The Central Vermont Regional Plan specifically acknowledges and recognizes Berlin's planning efforts and finds the NTC Application conforms to the relevant Future Land Use Planning Area policies in which Berlin's New Town Center is located:

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 802-229-0389 E Mail: CVRPC@CVRegion.com

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higher density residential, commercial, and industrial development should be located in Town Centers and infill and redevelopment is encouraged;
Small-scale shopping centers, designed to complement the historic character and support the vibrancy of community centers, are most appropriate in Town Centers;
Alignment of local capital planning and public investment strategies with infill and redevelopment goals are supported;
innovative tools such as “form- based ” land use regulations are encouraged. These types of regulations focus less on specific uses and more on the physical form of the built environment, utilize dimensional standards to shape how buildings relate to each other, to streets, and to other public spaces.
5. Continue to work with municipalities and VTrans to reduce conflicts between traffic needs and human-scale functions of Regional and Town Centers through practices like traffic-calming measures, pedestrian-safety improvements and gateway treatments.
Priority for the use of public funding for the maintenance or improvement of infrastructure shall be for those that support concentrated development in Regional and Town Centers.
Strategy 5a: Support identification of corridors for new roads or road segments in and around Regional and Town Centers as part of a local planning process, and support for construction of those roads and utility infrastructure to help drive growth in a way that supports compact center development.
6. Priority for the use of public funding for the development of affordable housing and assisted living facilities shall be for those located within Regional and Town Centers in order to increase access to services.
7. The placement of municipal and other government buildings should be in established Regional and Town Centers in order to maintain and enhance the vitality of these areas.
8. Encourage the development of public places and cultural events within Regional and Town Centers.
9. Support the creation of off-road bike and pedestrian paths that connect Regional and Town centers with residential areas and neighboring centers in a hub and spoke pattern.

Additional General Land Use, Energy, Utilities and Facilities, Housing, and Economic policies further support Berlin’s proposal to develop its New Town Center.

As projects in the proposed designated area are engineered and permitted, CVRPC recommends incorporation of the following policy directives for site-specific development in the New Town Center for continued conformance:

Designation Program Requirements

Berlin’s dedication to its New Town Center planning efforts in recent years displays its commitment to focusing more dense development supported by municipal infrastructure in a compact, mixed use area. On behalf of the CVRPC Board of Commissioners We look forward to supporting the Town in their efforts and extend our offer of assistance as this process progresses.

Regards,

Commented [CR3]: Need to summarize and simplify these policies and make sure they all have the same sentence structure

Commented [CR4]: This paragraph to be included if the committee finds some specific policies of possible concern should be called out

Commented [CR5]: Insert list of policies those which relate to wetlands, stormwater, impervious surfaces? Size of shopping center?

Commented [CR6]: Insert any comments related to the following CVRPC policies?:

We would also support efforts to simplify the State Growth Center designation process so as to make its benefits more accessible to a broader cross-section of communities.

☐ Recognizes Tax Increment Financing (TIF) as a valuable tool for supporting infrastructure development in planned growth areas and supports amending current State law to make it more practical for communities to implement.

Commented [CR7]: Insert any comments about how the conceptual plan does or does not depict characteristics of a “traditional downtown”?

Commented [CR8]: Insert something notable or specific about the what the project seeks to accomplish: i.e. the creation of XXX units of affordable housing will ...

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Cc: Mr. Josh Hanford, Chair
Vermont Downtown Development Board
Agency of Commerce and Community Development
One national Life Drive, 6th Floor
Montpelier, VT 05602

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Regional Plan Committee
Draft Minutes
May 26, 2020 4:00 – 5:15 pm
Remote Participation via GoToMeetings

Committee Members:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dara Torre, Chair
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Julie Potter, Vice Chair
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Laura Hill-Eubanks
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ron Krauth
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Marcella Dent

Staff: Clare Rock, Grace Vinson

Others: George Clain, Barre Town Alternate

CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME AND ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

D Torre opened the meeting at 4:05pm. There were no adjustments to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Consider approval of the February 18, 2020 meeting minutes.

Page 1, Line 18: replace weather with whether

Page 2, Line 2: replace stagg with staff

Page 2, line 9: replace shorted, with shorter

Page 2, line 30: replace Board with Committee

L Hill Eubanks made a motion to approve the February 18, 2020 meeting minutes with the amendments noted, seconded by M Dent. All in favor. Motioned carried.

Basin 14 Basin Plan - Grace Vinson, CVRPC Staff

Vinson provided a summary of the proposed comments and recommendations (as contained within the meeting materials) regarding the *Steven, Wells, Waits, Ompompanoosuc & Connecticut River Direct Tributaries, Basin-14 Tactical Basin Plan's* conformance with the Regional Plan. Staff found the Basin Plan to be in conformance with the Regional Plan.

Discussion followed with comments and questions by the committee. The committee suggested the crosswalk accompany the letter to ANR as it provides good context for items referenced in the letter.

Grammatical and formatting suggestions were made including a suggestion that when the document name is used for the first time (i.e. Tactical Basin Plan) the acronym should follow (i.e. TBP). Plus a request that line # be used for easier referencing in the review process.

The committee also inquired about bullet 2 in the letter and whether the RPC should also be commenting on the prioritization of projects (as this wasn't covered in the memo) Staff should double

1 check if this is applicable, before the conformance review and comments are finalized and submitted to
2 the Executive Committee.

3
4 Marcella Dent, indicated that she works with VT DEC and while she isn't involved with the tactical basin
5 Plan Dent wanted to ensure there wouldn't be any perceived possible conflict of interest. Other
6 committee members thanks Dent for raising the issue and the committee determined there was no
7 conflict of interest.

8
9 Other committee comments included: Combining the 2 wetland comments and/or cross reference the
10 comments within the crosswalk documents, and making the connection between the Regional Plan
11 Goals and the Basin Plan strategies clearer by referring to specific Regional Plan goals in the letter, and
12 bolding each Regional Plan goal in the crosswalk document as opposed to just underlining.

13
14 The committee was in agreement with the staff review and request the Committee comments be
15 incorporated into the formal communication to DEC about the Basin Plan.

16
17 Vinson provided an overview of the review process:

18 June 11: CWAC will review, primary for input on comments on meeting water quality goals (rather than
19 on conformance.)

20 June 15: Executive Committee will review all comments and approve final comments and input prior to
21 submittal to ANR.

22 June 18: Staff shall send final version to ANR.

23
24 **Regional Plan: Development of New Plan – Clare Rock, CVRPC Staff**

25 The committee reviewed comments and feedback from Board meeting on March 10, 2020. This included
26 reviewing input on the draft Vision and Aspirations; and a review of the municipal needs, challenges and
27 successes. The committee discussed incorporation into the Regional Plan.

28
29 A general comment made by the committee was a recognition of how broad the view is on the term
30 "infrastructure." Municipalities are likely just looking at things like water and sewer and roads, and likely
31 not necessarily thinking about broadband and other telecommunication needs. With current conditions
32 and everyone relying on internet service this has become highlighted how there just isn't adequate
33 broadband. In the context of the draft aspirations, we may not know how people are interpreting the
34 term "infrastructure."

35
36 The committee went through the draft Aspirations and Board comments (included in the packet and had
37 the following discussions:

38
39 Re: the economy aspiration: Should do a better merge of the existing aspiration and the staff revision.
40 The second half of the original aspiration shouldn't be lost and the term "skilled" should be removed, as
41 this implies unskilled workers are not wanted or needed yet they are integral to many businesses in the
42 region. One committee questioned whether the aspiration should also include a reference to the
43 management aspect of businesses. No additional suggestion were made on this comment.

44
45 Re: Housing aspiration: Discussion of the terms "attractive" and "high quality" and their relative
46 subjective nature. There was general support of the proposed revision with a suggestion to include
47 energy efficiency, suggestion to look at Downstreets' language and the inclusion of terms like "healthy"
48 and home. Discussion followed about passing judgement on people's individual standards of attractive

1 and safe, and affordable. The committee agreed to change the aspiration to “Ensure a range of safe,
2 healthy, and affordable homes which are available for all residents.” With the caveat this may be
3 modified or wordsmith-ed in the next review.

4
5 Re: Energy aspiration: discussions about the use of the term “clean” as in “clean energy” and what this
6 actually means to not only the development of energy but in the development and re-use of the
7 materials such as solar panels. The staff revision doesn’t seem to capture all types of energy usage, such
8 as transportation energy usage and the aspiration needs to accommodate all sectors and not just an
9 alternatives electrical energy. One suggestion was the inclusion of bundling the adjectives... “Reliable,
10 efficient and diverse...” Staff will take another run at that one.

11
12 Re: Cost-effect infrastructure: yes we should we weave in the term “connectivity” to relate to
13 broadband, to clarify that internet is part of the infrastructure. In response to staff revision, committee
14 wanted to keep the term growth pattern, but this may not be adequate. Staff take another crack at that
15 one.

16
17 Re: Healthy and connected population: the term connected should emphasize community networks
18 “and building social capital” and not how socially connected an individual should be. This clarification
19 could likely come with the associated narrative, and no necessarily change the aspiration.

20
21 Staff reported CVRPC is applying for EDA funds to write a Comprehensive Economic Development
22 Strategy (CEDs) in partnership with a few other RPC’s. If this project is funded this CEDS would be, could
23 be the economic development chapter of our new regional plan. Committee would like additional
24 information about the components of this because if the CEDS will result in just a list of projects then it
25 may not be sufficient. Staff shall provide additional information about this effort and its intersection
26 with the regional plan at the next meeting.

27
28 **ADJOURNMENT**

29
30 *L Hill-Eubanks made a motion to adjourn, seconded by J Potter, all in favor. Motion carried.*

31
32 **Next meeting Date: approx. 2 months, date TBD.**

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Regional Plan Committee
Draft Minutes
February 2, 2021
4:00 – 5:30 pm

Via GoTo Meeting, Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission
 29 Main Street, Suite 4, Montpelier, VT 05602

Committee Members:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dara Torre, Chair
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Julie Potter, Vice Chair
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Laura Hill-Eubanks
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ron Krauth
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marcella Dent

Berlin Representatives: Tom Badowski, Interim Town Administrator; Karla Nuissl, Berlin PC; Paul Simon, NTC Consultant
 Staff: Clare Rock, Bonnie Waninger, Elena Juodisius

Call to Order, Adjustments to the Agenda

D Torre opened the meeting at 4:05pm. There were no adjustments to the agenda.

Regional Review: Berlin New Town Center (NTC) Application - Guests Karla Nuissl, Planning Commission Chair and Tom Badowski, Assistant Town Manager - Formal Regional Plan Conformance review of the New Town Center Application and consideration of comments.

T Badowski started to describe the revised concept plan as contained in the materials packet and noted some of the changes since the plan was last presented to the CVRPC Board on October 13, 2020. The most significant changes included a revised west entrance and the addition of 3 new buildings. P Simon took over the presentation and further described the concept plan and highlighted various details as labeled on the plan.

The Town did work with a wetlands specialist to further delineate the extent of the wetlands on the site and those are labeled on the plan. A large driver of the proposal is to have "Priority Housing" (as defined by Act 250) sited within the New Town Center to ensure much needed affordable housing is developed within the designated area. The plan also envisions new small retail spaces in addition the existing retail at the mall. To the south of the mall building, three residential buildings are proposed to face the green along with some retail across the street. Moving eastward, a medical clinic with some additional medical buildings are sited and will be linked by a pedestrian spine.

CVMC, a project partner promoted the need for address a safety concern and suggested a pedestrian bridge to link the existing hospital across Fisher Road to the new medical buildings located in the New Town Center.

T Badowski stated this a concept plan and the town is not seeking permits to build the buildings proposed on the plan, rather Berlin is relying on the partners to develop, and buildings may change

1 shape and size. He further stated the plan is a template, and Berlin supports the concept of housing as
2 the anchor of new development in the NTC. T Badowski acknowledges there has been some criticism
3 about the low level of new development in the mall parking lot. K NuiSSL added all the partners have
4 been involved in the approval of the concept plan.

5
6 Staff asked about the regulatory components the town has or will invest in to support the realization of
7 the concept plan. And what types of investment the town would invest in the next 5 to 10 years. The
8 Town noted the updates to the water system, updates to the town plan, and changes to zoning
9 regulations, to include a level of form based code. The town has spent approx. \$9 million in
10 infrastructure updates including upgrades to the wastewater infrastructure. The SB has adopted the
11 official map which depicts where development should occur based upon water and waste water service.
12 The Town recognizes that the work now really begins, once the designation is in place.

13
14 The Town will consider a TIFF district in the proposed designated area as a method to fund
15 infrastructure and has adopted a CIP. The town may also consider a possible option tax to help pay for
16 further infrastructure, such as sidewalks roads, and etc. T Badowski referenced the VLCT letter of
17 support and believes that really encapsulates the spirit and intent of the NTC project.

18
19 Staff summarized some of the contents of the memo which was included in the meeting packet. Staff
20 indicated that the overall initial concept of the NTC was found to be in conformance with the Regional
21 Plan when the RPC approved the town plan. Upon the submission of the actual detailed NTC proposal
22 this provides the opportunity to look more closely at the proposal and confirm conformance. Staff raised
23 the issue of the size of the shopping complex and whether new retail development at the NTC would or
24 should be considered part of the shopping complex. If so then the additional of new retail square
25 footage may not be in conformance, as the scale of an expanded shopping center has been identified to
26 better suited for our defined Regional Centers (Montpelier and Barre City.)

27
28 Discussion of the mall and its current status of conformance followed. It was generally agreed that the
29 mall is a pre existing condition. Committee members added the NTC plan is about bringing a
30 neighborhood to a shopping mall and this was a positive improvement to the area. If additional box
31 store were to be proposed this may be a different situation. Berlin representatives added that the mall
32 square footage would likely transition away from all retail as the changing nature of commercial and
33 desired commercial space would need to adapt and changing preferences. A committee member
34 expressed concern about the proposed plan doesn't look like a traditional downtown. Another member
35 recognizes the dynamic nature of the mall in current times and suggests an ongoing partnership
36 between the RPC and the Town as the area evolves and development does occur.

37
38 Further discussion about the wetlands followed, and indication that the Regional Plan promoted
39 protection of these resources. P Simon stated that the impacts are minimal and the need to balance the
40 form of the built environment with the many constraints of the site. The wetland area between RT 62
41 and the mall is already a heavily impacted wetland and the plan proposes to fix some broken wetland
42 areas and incorporate some stormwater management techniques which should help the integrity of
43 those wetlands.

44
45 The committee discussed the Towns readiness for entering the program, and one committee member
46 expressed concern about whether the town was ready. T Badowski suggested S Burlington didn't start
47 building until 12 years after getting designation. And that Berlin is a small town with fewer resources
48 and needs the benefits of the program in order to fulfill the vision.

Continued discussion included the following areas: Committee member noted the need to promote affordable housing and this is another component of conformance with the plan (which was not in the identified in the staff memo.) Staff inquired about the orientation of the block forms in the top node, and questioned the position of the parking areas and suggested this may raise questions about whether this form does display characteristics of a traditional downtown.

Berlin representative left the meeting and the committee continued discussions. Further conversation touched upon how this proposal is a different than an Act 250 application as the RPC is evaluating a permit application rather it is a plan. There was general recognition that the NTC plan conforms with the plan on the whole, yet there are aspects which should be evaluated further in light of some RPC policies such as those regarding wetlands.

The committee also discussed about whether it should be shovel ready, and questioned what type of program should the New Town Center Program be. If towns are expected to as ready as South Burlington then it is likely only a designation program for Chittenden County.

The committee decided to meet again and requested staff to draft a letter of conformance/support for the committee to review and react to and to aid in the deliberations. Staff will send out an email polling members on availability for another meeting.

Committee Process - Review and approve attached 2020 Draft Rules of Procedure (ROP)

J Potter made a motion to recommend the ROP to be approved by the Board, seconded by L Hill-Eubanks. All in favor. Motion carried.

Approval Minutes - Consider approval of the March 17, 2020 meeting minutes.

The wrong minutes were included in the packet and therefore not acted upon.

Adjournment

J Potter made a motion to adjourn, seconded by L Hill-Eubanks. All in favor. Motion carried.

Next meeting Date: TBD