

**CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**MINUTES**  
**March 9, 2021**

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 type="checkbox"/> Berlin	Robert Wernecke	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plainfield	Paula Emery
<input type="checkbox"/>	Karla Nuissl, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bob Atchinson, Alt.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cabot	Amy Hornblas	<input type="checkbox"/> Roxbury	Gerry D'Amico
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Calais	John Brabant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Waitsfield	Don La Haye
<input type="checkbox"/>	Jan Ohlsson, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Harrison Snapp, Alt.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Duxbury	Alan Quackenbush	<input type="checkbox"/> Warren	VACANT
<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	Russ Bowen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Waterbury	Steve Lotspeich, Vice-Chair
<input 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 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

Staff: Bonnie Waninger, Nancy Chartrand, Zach Maia, Clare Rock  
Guests: Kate Forrer, Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Council

**Call to Order**

Chair Hill-Eubanks called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm and conducted a roll call. Quorum was present.

**Adjustments to the Agenda**

None

**Public Comments**

None

**Town Forest Recreation Planning Toolkit**

Hill-Eubanks introduced Kate Forrer of the Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Council (UCF). Forrer said they have been supporting towns in planning for recreation, conservation and management in town forests. She noted that town forests are often managed by volunteers. To assist municipalities,

1 they have developed a process for developing a Town Forest Recreation Plan through the Vermont Town  
2 Forest Recreation Planning Initiative. Marshfield and Woodbury were two of the pilot communities that  
3 participated in this planning process. She provided an outline of the process, developed in collaboration  
4 with SE Group. Each pilot community had a steering committee to guide its process.

5  
6 The process is outlined in the Toolkit available at <https://vtcommunityforestry.org/places/town-forests/recreation-planning-initiative/recreation-planning-toolkit>. Forrer walked the Board through a  
7 portion. She noted there is a Step-by-Step Planning Process and Individual Pods to use. The different  
8 pods provide such tools as town forest survey template, volunteer trail use counting forms, natural  
9 resource guidelines, planning matrix for natural resources, town forest recreation plan template, and  
10 trail design guide.

11  
12  
13 The floor was opened to questions and discussion. There was discussion regarding the conflict that can  
14 occur in town forest planning between recreation and conservation and the difficulty of finding the  
15 appropriate balance. Forrer noted there is no perfect answer for all communities. A Board member  
16 suggested contacting Susan Morse regarding Keeping Track (<https://keepingtrack.org/sue-morse-background>). Forrer noted the University of New Hampshire had done a lot of work on impacts of  
17 recreation use. County Foresters are another excellent resource. There was discussion regarding the  
18 tension between recreation and forest management. Forrer noted that the toolkit is designed around  
19 recreation. UCF will be revising the toolkit to address how a recreation plan intersects with a forest  
20 management plan. She confirmed that the planning process outlined is focused on bringing together  
21 different groups to work collectively through a temporary group of people (steering committee) who  
22 come together to guide the process of planning for recreation in the town forests.

23  
24  
25 Gray advised that their town went through the process with SE Group for their town forest which was  
26 donated in the 1950's for timber rights. The process involved a lot of community participation which  
27 resulted in a decision to conserve the town forest with an identified use of walking/interpretive trails  
28 and snowmobile use in the winter. He said the SE Group was great, and that it was a well thought out  
29 and enjoyable process for the community.

30  
31 The topic of funding was raised. The Toolkit Implementation Pod lists grant opportunities and fund  
32 raising information. The Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economy Collaborative (VOREC) may also be a  
33 resource for funding. Forrer shared her email [Katherine.forrer@uvm.edu](mailto:Katherine.forrer@uvm.edu) and noted she is happy to  
34 discuss opportunities with municipalities.

### 35 36 **Regional Economic Priority List**

37 Hill-Eubanks said the Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation (CVEDC) has asked that two  
38 to three CVRPC Board members join their Review Committee for prioritizing economic development  
39 projects in the region. Waninger confirmed the projects have to be economic focused: job retention,  
40 workforce development, infrastructure that allows further development of private businesses. Waninger  
41 explained CVEDC advised it will not need to provide the prioritized list until December as the state is  
42 looking for a more robust engagement process this year to solicit and then prioritize projects. CVEDC is  
43 hoping to do focus groups with municipalities, private sector, and non-profits to identify projects. The  
44 Committee is expected to be made up of three CVEDC Board Members, three CVRPC representatives,

1 representatives from municipal governments, and representatives from businesses.

2  
3 Paula Emery and Peter Carbee both volunteered to serve on this committee.

4  
5 *M. Gray moved to appoint Paula Emery and Peter Carbee to the CVEDC Regional Economic Projects*  
6 *Priority Review Committee; J. Potter seconded. Motion carried.*

## 7 8 **Meeting Minutes – February 9, 2021**

9 *P. Carbee moved to approve the minutes; R. Turner seconded. Motion carried, with one abstention.*

## 10 11 **Reports**

12 Waninger noted CVRPC has a new transportation planner, Christian Meyer. He is providing services to  
13 CVFiber tonight. Gray asked if the Board could have a short report at a future Board Meeting about  
14 CVFiber and how things are progressing there. Waninger will coordinate. The CVFiber Board meets the  
15 same night as the CVRPC Board. She noted CVFiber had won some slots in the broadband auction.  
16 Carbee requested in the chat that the Board receive updates from both CVFiber and ECFiber.

17  
18 Hill-Eubanks asked about the recent Town Meeting cannabis legislation and how it intersects with  
19 municipal zoning regulations. Rock advised she is undertaking research for the March 31<sup>st</sup> Planning &  
20 Zoning Roundtable to speak directly to this topic. A guest speaker will also participate to talk about  
21 youth substance abuse prevention, and considerations for municipalities to think about in their planning  
22 process and how it may intersect with zoning regulations.

23  
24 Significant discussion ensued regarding helipads. Waninger advised Meyer can assist municipalities with  
25 this question. Rock advised CVRPC will conduct outreach to municipalities with additional resources and  
26 guidance in the future.

27  
28 Emery raised questions about Vermont Extreme Heat Research Project. Waninger advised Grace Vinson  
29 is our staff person on this project and could assist with details.

30  
31 There was also a request for the Board to learn more about the Energy Action Network and VTrans pilot  
32 project as outlined in the staff report. Waninger advised we will have more information soon.

33  
34 Hill-Eubanks advised the letter related to the Berlin New Town Center was not in the packet. Rock  
35 provided a summary of the letter, noting the Regional Plan Committee met twice to review the Berlin  
36 New Town Center application. Their charge was to confirm the conformance of the application with the  
37 Regional Plan, to consider any comments CVRPC might want to give to Downtown Board in review of  
38 application, and to respond to Berlin's request to receive a letter of support from CVRPC. The  
39 Committee found that overall the application as proposed was in conformance with the broad planning  
40 goals outlined in Regional Plan. They also found that many Regional Plan policies supported Berlin's  
41 application. They also recognize that Berlin chooses not to propose a new town center located in an  
42 undeveloped area, but chose to create a downtown in an area currently defined as sprawl-like  
43 development. The challenge of sprawl repair is an ongoing, incremental process.

1  
2 Miller further advised the City of Montpelier has come out in favor of the New Town Center and  
3 provided them a letter of support. Waninger will email the CVRPC letter out to the Board following the  
4 meeting for comment/questions to be provided to the Chair.  
5

## 6 **Municipal Updates**

7 Hill-Eubanks advised Clain had asked if he could talk about a solar project in Barre Town; however, he  
8 had left the meeting. She shared that Barre Town is currently dealing with the Public Utilities  
9 Commission regarding the project. The agenda item "Municipal Updates" has been added to the end of  
10 the agenda as time allows to provide opportunity for members to share municipal information/news.  
11

12 Potter shared East Montpelier's experience dealing with a 60-day notice that they received that AT&T  
13 for was going to file with the Public Utility Commission for permission to put in cell tower. It is a  
14 controversial project and the second one they have had to address. She noted their Planning  
15 Commission is being pushed to make an amendment to their Town Plan to address cell towers, which is  
16 not a statutory requirement of the plan. She wanted members to be aware that there is a public  
17 advocacy/legal group at the Department of Public Service that can be helpful in navigating this type of  
18 issue and assisting towns to explain the process to community members at public meetings. Hill-  
19 Eubanks suggested having Public Utilities Commission or Department of Public Service come to a future  
20 Board meeting to inform members on the process.  
21

22 Krauth requested having utilities come to explain what transmission systems are going to be needed to  
23 connect infrastructure for renewable energy (cell towers, windmills, underground cables, etc.) and  
24 address environmental problems that might arise.  
25

## 26 **Adjournment**

27 *D. La Haye moved to adjourn at 8:07 pm; R. Krauth seconded. Motion carried.*  
28

29 Respectfully submitted,  
30 Nancy Chartrand, Office Manager