

**CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
June 8, 2021**

Commissioners:

<input checked="" 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 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Duxbury	Alan Quackenbush	<input type="checkbox"/> Warren	VACANT
<input type="checkbox"/> E. Montpelier	VACANT	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marshfield	Robin Schunk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Williamstown	Richard Turner
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Middlesex	Ron Krauth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacqueline Higgins, Alt.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Montpelier	Marcella Dent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Woodbury	Michael Gray
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mike Miller, Alt.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Worcester	Bill Arrand

Staff: Bonnie Waninger, Nancy Chartrand, Clare Rock

Call to Order

Chair Hill-Eubanks called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm and conducted a roll call. Quorum was present.

Adjustments to the Agenda

None.

Public Comments

Hornblas advised she finished the final report for the Mask Survey that she personally compiled and presented in preliminary form to the Board for informational purposes last fall. She has continued to collect surveys and compiled it all in a final report. She has requested N. Chartrand to share her report with Commissioners should they wish to review and share it.

In follow-up to Hornblas comments, Atwood reiterated the question he posed to Dr. Levine at our meeting last fall about unintended consequences of COVID – specifically related to overdose death and concern that the Health Commissioner did not appear to be aware of the increase in overdoses during 2020.

Elections

D. Torre, Secretary/Treasurer advised the votes were tallied today with Chartrand. 14 ballots were received for the new slate of officers and committee members. She outlined the number of votes received for all positions. The slate of officers and committees was elected. Hill-Eubanks congratulated those elected and advised all duties will begin July 1st. Chartrand advised that there were no write-ins offered on the ballot provided, as the final slate was approved at the May Board meeting, at which time the floor was open to additional nominations. The ballot consisted of the approved final slate.

Tools and Resources for Complying with Act 171, Forest Integrity

C. Rock presented on Tools and Resources for Complying with Act 171. Act 171 went into effect in 2018 to encourage and allow municipalities to address protection of forest blocks and habitat connectors while also supporting the local forest products industry. Shared were multiple resources that municipalities can access. A copy of the presentation and links to resources is posted to CVRPC's webpage, as is the video of the presentation.

Discussed was that Vermont is experiencing overall loss of forest cover incrementally which threatens the forest's ecological health, function and value. Threats such as parcelization and forest fragmentation were also discussed. The resources reviewed and shared will help with the update that is underway of the Regional Plan and also assist municipalities as they update their Municipal Plans. CVRPC incorporated a new map and language into the 2016 Regional Plan Amendment in 2018 and many towns have also incorporated the Act 171 requirement into their Municipal planning process. Currently CVRPC is undertaking a regional analysis using BioFinder data and municipally identified forest blocks as identified in municipal plans. We hope to use this analysis to identify regional progress and inform regional plan updates and are anticipating completing the analysis later this year. CVRPC has also provided input on draft language that will be incorporated in the update of the Vermont Natural Resource Council's Community Strategies Guide, which will be available soon.

The floor was open to questions and the following topics were discussed: finding a balance to ensure wood is not over harvested for energy use, promoting awareness to keep forest blocks connected to help species stay resilient in the face of climate change, keeping track of areas that are reverting back into forests as well as forests that are being lost, and that Conservation Commissions in municipalities are doing a lot of good work and are a valuable resource.

Municipal Plan Approval & Confirmation of Planning Process & Certificate of Energy Compliance

B. Arrand, Chair of the Municipal Plan Review Committee, advised the Committee met last week on the Plainfield Town Plan. Four members of the public were present at the hearing including Will Colgan, Chairman of the Plainfield Planning Commission. He advised there was a good presentation of the tools utilized and review which was put together by Grace Vinson. The Committee concurred it was a good plan with a good review. They are suggesting that the Commission approve Plainfield's 2021 Town Plan, confirm their planning process, and issue a certificate of energy compliance.

R. Krauth moved to approve the Plainfield 2021 Town Plan; B. Arrand seconded. Motion carried.

1 *P. Carbee moved to issue an affirmative determination of energy compliance for the Plainfield Town*
2 *Plan; R. Turner seconded. Motion carried.*

3
4 *J. Shatney moved to confirm the Town of Plainfield's planning process; P. Carbee seconded. Motion*
5 *carried.*

6
7 Waninger advised the Board needed to adopt the resolution. Hill-Eubanks summarized the resolution
8 language into a motion for the Board as *"it is resolved that the Central Vermont Regional Planning*
9 *Commission approves the 2021 Plainfield, Vermont 2021 Town Plan adopted April 12, 2021; and*
10 *consulted with and confirms the planning process of the Town of Plainfield". B. Arrand moved this*
11 *motion; P. Carbee seconded. Motion carried.*

12 13 **VELCO 2021 Long Range Transmission Plan Comments**

14 Rock provided an overview of the June 7, 2021 comment letter that was provided. Commissioners
15 shared general comments regarding concern that more should be done now to prepare for what we will
16 need 10 years from now; that more communication as it relates to general public needs to be
17 considered; and also a need to better address renewable energy and the grid. There also were
18 comments related to potential grid deflection concerns; equipment failures; and cyber security.

19
20 *A. Quackenbush moved to approve the letter containing comments on VELCO's long range transmission*
21 *plan; J. Shatney seconded. Motion carried with one abstention.*

22 23 **Municipal Updates**

24 A. Quackenbush asked for assistance in getting on agency mailing lists as a member of the Duxbury
25 Planning Commission. Currently the Zoning Administrator is getting communications on such things as
26 heliports and agriculture projects but he is not. Waninger advised staff would follow-up to see if we can
27 assist him to get on lists based on the types of correspondence.

28
29 P. Emery asked about an information sharing event regarding what towns are doing with COVID funds
30 that will be coming to municipalities. Waninger advised we are willing to come and speak directly to the
31 Plainfield Selectboard and also build this type of discussion into a future Board agenda. She noted that
32 US Treasury Guidance recently came out decided that Vermont had county governments (Court
33 System/Sherriff). Currently towns will only be receiving the municipal share of funds not the county
34 share, which cuts the amount of funding coming into Vermont. Many groups are working together to
35 determine whether the county funds can be moved to municipalities. Staff will also share the link to a
36 recent webinar hosted by VLCT on the forthcoming funds.

37
38 Hill-Eubanks brought up in-person meetings as Northfield is deciding when to start their meetings in-
39 person and will likely start with hybrid meetings, noting that a hybrid option may make people feel more
40 secure and help with attendance. Quackenbush advised Duxbury is starting hybrid meetings next week.
41 Torre noted that technology for hybrid meetings would be a good use of the ARPA monies. Lotspeich
42 advised Waterbury Selectboard had their first hybrid meeting utilizing an Owl Pro camera that is good
43 for moderate size meetings and works well with Zoom, and that allowing people to participate by Zoom
44 is a good option.

1
2 Lotspeich asked Waninger to speak about the potential to go hybrid for the Board. Waninger advised
3 CVRPC has purchased an Owl and has tested it once. Staff encountered some initial issues, and are not
4 yet ready to host with this equipment. Lotspeich offered assistance with settings. Hill-Eubanks
5 requested CVRPC be a resource if we are able to successfully get things up and going.
6

7 **Meeting Minutes – May 8, 2021**

8 *P. Carbee moved to approve the minutes from the May 11th meeting; R. Wernecke seconded. Motion*
9 *carried.*
10

11 **Reports**

12 Hill-Eubanks inquired if staff had highlights. There was discussion on the trainings being offered by VBSR
13 on equality and equity. Waninger advised staff has been participating in a few of these trainings and
14 found them very helpful as they combine an educational component with real life experiences.
15

16 Hill-Eubanks noted some of the dates outlined in the Executive Director report – CEDS workshop on June
17 24th and Regional Energy forum on June 28th.
18

19 There was discussion regarding funds for a Climate Coordinator. Waninger confirmed these funds
20 approved by Legislature will likely mean CVRPC can hire one full-time mid-level position. This position
21 will help implement the regional energy plan and local energy plans, as well as the State Climate Action
22 Plan scheduled to be completed by end of December.
23

24 Hill-Eubanks thanked the Board for their patience this year as we navigated the pandemic. The next
25 meeting will be chaired by S. Lotspeich. Lotspeich thanked Hill-Eubanks for a great job and service to
26 the Board and Executive Committee.
27

28 **Adjournment**

29 *A. Quackenbush moved to adjourn at 8:12 pm; R. Wernecke seconded. Motion carried.*
30

31 Respectfully submitted,
32 Nancy Chartrand, Office Manager