



## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

October 12, 2021 at 6:30 pm

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81136818419?pwd=dDFDbDhrTm56TUNQUlp3WEorYzRZZz09>

One tap mobile: +19294362866,,81136818419#,,,,\*722490# US (New York)

Dial in via phone: 1-929-436-2866 • Meeting ID: 811 3681 8419 • Passcode: 722490

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81136818419?pwd=dDFDbDhrTm56TUNQUlp3WEorYzRZZz09>

Download the app at least 5 minutes before the meeting starts: <https://zoom.us/download>

### *Physical Location*

Central VT Chamber of Commerce Conference Room, 963 Paine Turnpike North, Berlin

(Facial coverings required for in-person participation)

### Page **AGENDA**

**6:30<sup>2</sup> Adjustments to the Agenda**

**Public Comments**

**6:35 Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation Update, Jamie Stewart, Executive Director**

**2 6:50 Lifting All Boats, Childcare in Vermont, Trey Martin, Let's Grow Kids**

The pandemic and low enrollment has forced a number of child care businesses to close. What policy changes can help?

**12 7:50 Committee Nominations, Jerry D'Amico, Committee Chair (enclosed)<sup>3</sup>**

Nominations for Clean Water and Brownfield Advisory Committees vacancies.

**14 8:00 Reports (enclosed)**

Update/questions on Staff, Director, and Committee Reports

**8:15 Adjourn**

**Next Meeting: November 9, 2021**

<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> Times are approximate unless otherwise advertised.



# 2020 Legislative Agenda

Strengthening Vermont's Early Care & Education System

## Contents

Executive Summary .....	1
Background .....	2
2020 Policy Priorities .....	2
Legislative Priority 1: Support Vermont's Early Childhood Educators .....	3
Student Loan Repayment Support Program .....	3
Expand Early Childhood Educator Scholarships .....	4
Address the Early Childhood Educator Wage Gap.....	5
Legislative Priority 2: Continue to Transform Vermont's Child Care Financial Assistance Program ....	5
Align Reimbursement Rates with Current Market Rates .....	5
IT Infrastructure Updates .....	6
Legislative Priority 3: Employer Engagement .....	7
Child Care Capacity Development Project .....	7
Conclusion.....	7
Endnotes .....	8

---

## About Let's Grow Kids

Let's Grow Kids is leading a movement for affordable access to high-quality child care for all Vermont families who need it by 2025. With its network of 30,000 supporters, LGK is strengthening today's early care and education system to create immediate impact for families with children birth to five, while simultaneously mobilizing Vermonters from all walks of life to call for policy change and public investment in child care to build a better Vermont for generations to come. Join the movement at [letsgrowkids.org](https://letsgrowkids.org).

---

Let's Grow Kids | 19 Marble Ave, Ste 4 | Burlington, VT 05401 | [www.letsgrowkids.org](https://www.letsgrowkids.org)

For questions about Let's Grow Kids' 2020 Legislative Agenda, please contact:  
Sarah Kenney, Senior Director of Policy, [sarah@letsgrowkids.org](mailto:sarah@letsgrowkids.org) or 802-735-2205

## Executive Summary

2019 saw important progress for Vermont's children, their families, and early childhood educators. The state increased its investment in early care and education, launching a 5-year plan to strengthen Vermont's Child Care Financial Assistance Program, sustain and establish supports for early childhood educators, and increase the capacity of Vermont's early care and education system; but we still have further to go.

Let's Grow Kids believes Vermont can be the first state in the country to truly get early care and education right. But there are many challenges between us and that goal, including a critical need to support our early childhood educators.

Right now, early childhood educators are the lowest paid college graduates in the country, with wages so low it can be almost impossible for new early childhood educators to afford basic expenses, let alone make payments on their student loans.<sup>1</sup> The good news is that there are proven, cost-effective ways to better support early childhood educators, work toward increasing wages, and make child care more affordable for Vermont families.

This legislative session, Let's Grow Kids is calling on the Legislature to continue to build on the investments made in 2019 and focus on three key areas in 2020: strengthening supports for early childhood educators; continuing to invest in the programs that make child care more affordable for Vermont families; and providing employers and community partners with the tools they need to support this work.

When we're successful, we'll ensure that:

- More children have access to high-quality child care by recruiting and retaining skilled early childhood educators;
- Vermont's early childhood educators are valued and better-compensated;
- Child care is more affordable for more Vermont families;
- Child care and early education programs are paid fair rates for the care and education they provide; and
- Employers are engaged partners in Vermont's early care and education system.

## Background

In 2015, the Vermont Legislature established the Blue Ribbon Commission on Financing High Quality, Affordable Child Care to evaluate the state's early care and education system and make recommendations regarding how Vermont could make high-quality, affordable child care accessible for Vermont families. The Blue Ribbon Commission then led to Building Vermont's Future from the Child Up. This process gathered feedback from Vermont families, early childhood educators, state and community agencies, business representatives, and community members on what they need in an early care and education system. Based on findings from interviews, focus groups and a statewide two-day summit, Building Bright Futures then formed a group of key stakeholders to formulate a blueprint for Vermont's future system. This group, known as the Building Vermont's Future from the Child Up Think Tank, released its recommendations on the first day of the 2019 Legislature, outlining the concrete steps needed to achieve the vision, developed by Vermonters, for the state's early care and education system.

As a result of this work, in 2019, the Vermont Legislature made historic investments in early care and education. These funds are already hard at work to support children and families and the early childhood education workforce. However, Vermont's investment in its early care and education system is still far behind the levels needed to adequately sustain our current system, let alone achieve the vision mapped out in the Building Vermont's Future from the Child Up process.

## 2020 Policy Priorities

Based on the progress made during the 2019 legislative session and the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission and the Building Vermont's Future from the Child Up process, we are making the following policy proposals.

- Support Vermont's early childhood educators:
  - Provide student loan repayment support;
  - Expand early childhood educator scholarships; and
  - Create a wage supplement program.
- Continue to implement the 5-year redesign plan for Vermont's Child Care Financial Assistance Program:
  - Align reimbursement rates with how much early care and education programs are currently charging; and
  - Allocate funding to allow the Child Development Division to purchase a new IT system to administer Vermont's early care and education system.
- Engage communities in the effort to bring local solutions to the need for high-quality, affordable child care by investing in a pilot program to support employers, early childhood educators, and other community partners to strategically expand access to quality child care options throughout Vermont.



## Legislative Priority 1: Support Vermont's Early Childhood Educators

Vermont does not have enough qualified early childhood educators to fill open positions at early care and education programs, much less a system with capacity for all Vermonters seeking high-quality care.<sup>2</sup> In fact, child care workers have one of the highest turnover rates in the state according to data from the Vermont Department of Labor.<sup>3</sup> A key factor behind turnover and a general lack of qualified educators willing to work in the early care and education field is low wages.

It's hard to make ends meet when you earn \$13.27 an hour, the median hourly wage for a child care worker in Vermont.<sup>4</sup> This translates to a median annual wage of approximately \$29,430.<sup>5</sup> Comparatively, the median annual wage for a kindergarten teacher in Vermont is \$59,560.<sup>6</sup>

To address the current wage gap, recruit new early educators, and retain current early educators, Let's Grow Kids joins Building Bright Futures in recommending that the state increase investments in scholarships, establish a student loan repayment support program, and create a wage supplement program to support Vermont's early childhood educators.

### Student Loan Repayment Support Program

Paying back student loans can be challenging for new early childhood educators. College graduates who earn bachelors' degrees in early education earn the least of any college degree in the country, including the least of any education-related degree.<sup>7</sup> In Vermont, 63% of the class of 2017–2018 graduated with student loan debt, which, on average, totaled \$31,431.<sup>8</sup> According to 2018 Vermont



Public Radio and Vermont Public Broadcasting Station polling data, Vermonters ages 18 to 44 reported that the cost of education is one of the most financially stressful expenses they face, coming in second only to the cost of housing.<sup>9</sup> This is a serious concern for new early childhood educators who may only earn \$11.52 an hour as they start out in the early care and education field.<sup>10</sup> It's hard to pay for essentials such as housing, food, and transportation when you earn less than a livable wage, let alone have hundreds of dollars in student loan payments.

**To address the need for more early childhood educators, Let's Grow Kids proposes introducing a student loan repayment support program to recruit and retain new early childhood educators.**

### Who qualifies

The program should be open to early childhood educators who graduated with a bachelor's degree in early education or early special education within the past three years (2018–2020) who meet the following criteria:

- During college or university, was a Vermont resident who obtained a degree from an in- or out-of-state college or university or was an out-of-state resident who obtained a degree from a Vermont college or university; and
- Holds a position as a lead teacher for infants, toddlers, or preschoolers/pre-K with a regulated Vermont family child care home or center-based child care or preschool program, including prequalified pre-K programs; and
- Earns an annual salary equal to or less than \$40,000 per year.

These eligibility criteria would allow the program to support early childhood educators who are likely to have the hardest time making ends meet, and the expanded eligibility would allow early care and education programs to more quickly fill vacant positions. Moving forward, the program could be open to the above categories of early childhood educators who graduate in the given calendar year.

### **What participants receive**

If an early childhood educator qualifies for the program, we recommend that early childhood educators working as lead teacher for infant, toddler, or preschool/pre-K classrooms receive up to \$3,000 per year in student loan repayment support. If paid out on a monthly basis, this support is likely to provide meaningful financial support.

### **Length of program**

To ensure that early childhood educators are able to make the transition from college to career and work toward higher wages, we recommend that participants be eligible for the program for up to 5 years. This allows the program to both recruit and retain qualified early childhood educators and grow Vermont's overall workforce.

### **Expand Early Childhood Educator Scholarships**

In 2019, Vermont invested in scholarships to support early childhood educators currently working in early care and education programs. These funds were used to support Vermont's T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood program. T.E.A.C.H. is a national, evidence-based initiative that provides scholarships through a cost-sharing model to individuals currently working in early care and education programs who want to pursue higher education in the field. The model is currently implemented in 22 states and the District of Columbia.<sup>11</sup>

Vermont's T.E.A.C.H. program, administered by the Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children (VTAEYC), provides scholarships, book and travel funds, release-time funds, contract completion bonuses, and career counseling to individuals currently working in early care and education programs who are seeking an associate's degree in early childhood education, individuals with a bachelor's degree who are seeking early childhood teacher licensure or endorsement through the Vermont Agency of Education, or individuals participating in a child care and early education apprenticeship through the Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council (VCCICC).<sup>12</sup>

However, current funding does not allow the program to meet the needs of Vermont's early childhood education workforce. The program has waitlists for current scholarships, and there is a critical need to begin offering scholarships for those seeking bachelor's degrees in early childhood education. In fact, there is already a long list of early childhood educators who have expressed a need for such a scholarship if one becomes available.

With a \$653,000 appropriation, the program would have the ability to expand to provide scholarships for individuals completing bachelor's degrees in early childhood education and address current waitlists for those seeking an associate's degree, teacher licensure or endorsement, or participating in VCCICC's child care apprenticeship program.

**Let's Grow Kids recommends fully funding the T.E.A.C.H. program in order to address growing waitlists for existing scholarship offerings and to expand the program to offer scholarships for early childhood educators seeking bachelor's degrees.**

### Address the Early Childhood Educator Wage Gap

The wage gap faced by early childhood educators in Vermont is an issue that many states are facing across the country. Other states are using a variety of strategies to provide immediate financial relief to early childhood educators while working to address root causes to create a sustainable system for families and early childhood educators, including supplemental wage support payments through a national program known as WAGE\$ or WAGE\$-style programs.

WAGE\$ and WAGE\$-like programs provide education-based salary supplements to early childhood educators to increase workforce retention, education, and compensation. In WAGE\$, a recipient receives a graduated supplement tied to their level of experience and education every six months. As an early childhood educator's educational attainment increases, so does the wage supplement. States with WAGE\$ projects have seen an average annual turnover rate of only 11%, and over 26% of participating providers with an education level below an associate's degree moved up a level on the program's supplement scale.<sup>13</sup>



**We recommend implementing a WAGE\$-style program in Vermont that assesses the current wage gaps between early childhood educators and equivalent positions in elementary settings in the public education system and provides quarterly supplement payments to early childhood educators based on their Northern Lights career ladder credentials.**

### Legislative Priority 2: Continue to Transform Vermont's Child Care Financial Assistance Program

Vermont's Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP) is an important resource for lower- and middle-income families to help them access and afford quality early care and education programs. The program is available to children in protective custody and children whose families qualify based on income and a work, education, health, or other qualifying need. Families receive financial assistance based on a sliding scale that accounts for family size.

In 2019, CDD proposed, and the Legislature endorsed, a five-year redesign plan for CCFAP that will expand eligibility and raise reimbursement rates (the amount the program pays to early care and education programs). Once transformed, the program will determine assistance based on the family's income and how much they can afford to pay for child care, with the state filling in the gap. This year, Vermont needs to continue moving this work forward by increasing reimbursement rates and continuing to invest in critical IT upgrades that will allow further implementation of the 5-year redesign plan.

### Align Reimbursement Rates with Current Market Rates

For families enrolled in CCFAP, the program makes payments to a child's early care and education provider on behalf of a family. The amount CCFAP pays is known as the reimbursement rate. For families receiving a 100% benefit through CCFAP, CCFAP pays 100% of the reimbursement rate to an early care and education program on behalf of a family. However, reimbursement rates have fallen behind how much early care and education programs charge families. This means that a family receiving a 100% benefit may still have to pay the difference between CCFAP's reimbursement rate and the actual tuition rate their child's program charges.





To understand how CCFAP reimbursement rates compare to how much early care and education programs are charging families, every few years the Vermont Department for Children and Families' Child Development Division is required to gather information on the cost of child care in the state. This is currently done through a survey, known as the Market Rate Survey, which gathers information on early care and education tuition rates throughout the state. In the fall of 2019, the Child Development Division conducted an updated Market Rate Survey, and the report on its findings will be available in early 2020.

Currently, infant and toddler child care reimbursement rates are aligned with 2017 market rates and preschool and afterschool child care reimbursement rates are aligned with 2014 market rates. This means that early care and education programs are in a difficult position—they either have to accept being paid less than what they charge for their program or they have to ask families who are already struggling financially to cover the difference. It's a lose-lose for families and early childhood educators.

**For 2020, we recommend that all CCFAP reimbursement rates be aligned with the findings of the 2020 Market Rate Survey to ensure that families and early care and education programs receive the financial support they need. Additionally, we recommend that the statute be amended to require the rates to adjust automatically in the future.**

### **IT Infrastructure Updates**

As part of the CCFAP redesign proposed in 2019, a new IT system is needed to administer the program. As part of the SFY 2020 budget, the Legislature allocated initial funding to support CDD in assessing its IT needs and to begin pursuing IT infrastructure updates based on the assessment. The Child Development Division and the Agency for Digital Services have reviewed proposals for a new IT system and identified an appropriate solution that will integrate across Agency of Human Services programs. An additional \$6.75 million is needed in order to build the system.

**Let's Grow Kids recommends allocating the \$5.75 million needed to complete the IT infrastructure system update, which will allow the continued implementation of the 5-year redesign plan for CCFAP.**

### Legislative Priority 3: Employer Engagement

Employers are critical partners in addressing Vermont's child care challenges. Their success hinges on having reliable, productive employees. For many employees, child care is a make-or-break consideration when figuring out how to balance work and family needs. Employers can play a role in helping to financially support their employees' child care needs and invest in our state's early care and education system. However, figuring out how to help address employees' child care challenges can be hard for employers, especially for small businesses or start-ups.



### Child Care Capacity Development Project

Given that different industries have different child care needs and that these needs can look different from one community to the next, we propose establishing a child care capacity development grant and technical assistance program with a limited-service FTE program manager position to specifically support employers to connect with economic development partners, regional planning partners, early childhood education leaders, and community stakeholders to strategically develop child care capacity to support the regional economic stability and growth.

**We recommend establishing a pilot to engage employers, early childhood educators, and other community partners to strengthen early care and education program capacity and allocating at least \$1 million for the program in its first year.**

### Conclusion

Vermont has worked hard over the past several years to develop a road map for how we, as a state, want to make high-quality, affordable child care a reality for Vermont children and families. In 2020, we recommend critically-needed investments—growing and sustaining our early childhood educators, the people who make high-quality early care and education a reality for Vermont's children and their families—and to continue to strengthen CCFAP and the capacity of Vermont's early care and education system.

These investments will mean that:

- Vermont can attract and retain talented early childhood educators;
- Child care is more affordable for more Vermont families;
- Child care and early education programs are paid fair rates for the care and education they provide; and
- Employers and communities are engaged partners in Vermont's early care and education system, driving creative, local solutions to the critical need across Vermont.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Anthony Carnevale, Ban Cheah, Andrew Hanson. (2015). *The Economic Value of College Majors*. Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce: Washington, DC. Retrieved from <https://1gyhoq479ufd3yna29x7ubjn-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/The-Economic-Value-of-College-Majors-Full-Report-web-FINAL.pdf>.
- <sup>2</sup> This statement is based on concerns raised at multiple Building Bright Futures state and regional committees and analysis of job postings on the [Early Childhood Jobs VT website](#), a job posting site for early childhood education positions in Vermont, as of 2018. Early Childhood Jobs VT is a project managed by the Let's Grow Kids programs team.
- <sup>3</sup> Vermont Department of Labor. (2016). *Vermont Department of Labor Economic and Labor Market Information 2016-2026 Long Term Occupational Projections*. Vermont Department of Labor: Montpelier, VT. pg 5. Retrieved from <http://www.vtlmi.info/projlt.pdf>.
- <sup>4</sup> United States Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics. (April 2, 2019). May 2018 State Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates Vermont: Childcare Worker. Retrieved from [https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_vt.htm#39-9011](https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_vt.htm#39-9011).
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid
- <sup>6</sup> United States Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics. (April 2, 2019). May 2018 State Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates Vermont: Kindergarten Teacher Except Special Education. Retrieved from [https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_vt.htm#25-2012](https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_vt.htm#25-2012).
- <sup>7</sup> Anthony Carnevale, Ban Cheah, Andrew Hanson. (2015). *The Economic Value of College Majors*. Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce: Washington, DC. Retrieved from <https://1gyhoq479ufd3yna29x7ubjn-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/The-Economic-Value-of-College-Majors-Full-Report-web-FINAL.pdf>.
- <sup>8</sup> The Institute for College Access and Success. (2019). College InSight Vermont 4-year or above Data Table. Retrieved from <https://college-insight.org/spotlight/vermont-4-year-or-above/5019999999>.
- <sup>9</sup> Vermont Public Radio, Vermont Public Broadcasting Station. (October 2018). VPR– Vermont PBS Poll Full Results, Method, Sampling Error & Survey. Retrieved from <http://projects.vpr.net/vpr-vermont-pbs-poll>.
- <sup>10</sup> Hourly wage represents data from the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile for Vermont Preschool Teachers, except special education teachers, as reported by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics May 2018 State Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates. Data retrieved and analyzed from <https://www.bls.gov/oes/special.requests/oesm18st.zip>.
- <sup>11</sup> T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood National Center. (2018). T.E.A.C.H. Results. Retrieved from <http://teachecnationalcenter.org/t-e-a-c-h-early-childhood/results/>.
- <sup>12</sup> Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children. (n.d.). T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Vermont. Retrieved from <http://vaeyc.org/programs-and-services/teach/>.
- <sup>13</sup> T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood National Center. (2019). WAGE\$ Results. Retrieved from <https://teachecnationalcenter.org/child-care-wage/results/>.



## MEMO

Date: September 29, 2021  
 To: Board of Commissioners  
 From: Jerry D'Amico, Nominating Committee Chair  
 Re: Clean Water Advisory Committee Nominations

CVRPC's Bylaws task the Nominating Committee with nominating candidates for committees. The Clean Water Advisory Committee has two vacancies. Dona Bates from Montpelier resigned from the CWAC after experiencing health challenges. The Private Companies/Interested Stakeholders seat became vacant when the Board elected Joyce Manchester to a municipal seat earlier this year.

In preparing this nomination, the Nominating Committee has followed its adopted Rules of Procedure and Guidelines, including considerations such as the best interest of the Commission, Commissioner interests, and committee balance. Candidates were solicited via the CVRPC e-newsletter. Staff also emailed the announcement directly to Planning Commissions, Selectboards, and Conservation Commissions.

Commissioners may nominate additional candidates from the floor at the Board meeting. Those nominations will be added to the ballot for election.

The candidate identified by the Nominating Committee is included below. The candidate will fill the seats' terms through June 30 of the year noted under "Term End".

### Clean Water Advisory Committee

The Clean Water Advisory Committee includes RPC Board members, municipal representatives, and interested stakeholders. Terms are staggered terms and elected by the Board. The proposed candidates are:

<u>Seat</u>	<u>Nominee</u>	<u>Term End</u>
Municipal Representative	Emily Ruff, Orange Selectboard	FY22
Interested Stakeholder	Joseph Whalen, Montpelier Conservation Commission	FY23

Regional Commissioners with current terms are: Ron Krauth, Middlesex (FY22), John Brabant, Calais (FY22), Amy Hornblas, Cabot (FY23), and Rich Turner, Williamstown (FY23, CWAC Alternate). Municipal members with current terms are: Russ Barrett, Northfield Conservation Commission (FY22), John Hoogenboom, Moretown Selectboard (FY22), Larry Becker, Middlesex Conservation Commission (FY23), and Joyce Manchester, Moretown TAC Representative (FY23).



## MEMO

Date: September 28, 2021

To: Board of Commissioners

From: Jerry D'Amico, Nominating Committee Chair

Re: Nominations to fill vacancy on the Brownfield Committee

---

CVRPC's Bylaws task the Nominating Committee with nominating candidates for committees. The Brownfield Committee has a vacancy. Heather Grandfield, Barre City Zoning Administrator and Alternate Commissioner, has taken a different position in the City.

In preparing this nomination, the Nominating Committee has followed its adopted Rules of Procedure and Guidelines, including considerations such as the best interest of the Commission, Commissioner interests, and committee balance.

Commissioners may nominate additional candidates from the floor at the Board meeting. Those nominations will be added to the ballot for election.

The candidates identified by the Nominating Committee are included below. The candidates will fill the seats' term through June 30 of the year noted under "Term End".

### **Brownfield Advisory Committee**

The Brownfield Advisory Committee includes RPC Board members, interest group representatives, and US EPA staff as a non-voting member. Terms are staggered terms with Commissioner terms ending FY22 and interest group representative terms ending F23. Committee members are elected by the Board. The proposed candidate is:

<u>Seat</u>	<u>Nominee</u>	<u>Term End</u>
Regional Commissioner	Janet Shatney, Barre City	FY22

Regional Commissioner members are: Paula Emery, Plainfield, Ron Krauth, Middlesex, George Clain, Barre Town Alternate, and Peter Carbee, Washington (Committee Alternate). Interest group representatives are CVEDC, VT Dept. of Health, Capstone Community Action, Downstreet Housing and Community Development, Friends of the Winooski River, Union Bank. One interest group seat is currently vacant.



## Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

P: 802-229-0389

Staff Report, September 2021

F: 802-223-1977

All CVRPC staff continue to work remotely per the Governor's order to support remote work for employees to the extent possible. (Addendum 12 to Executive Order 01-20)

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Contact Clare Rock, [rock@cvregion.com](mailto:rock@cvregion.com) unless otherwise noted.

#### Municipal Planning & Plan Implementation:

- Continued Middlesex parcel GIS data update and tax map revisions.
- Reviewed accessory dwelling unit zoning changes and accessory on farm business zoning changes along with draft changes to the Putnamville Zoning district boundaries with the Middlesex Planning Commission.
- Updated Moretown zoning regulation document with changes discussed in previous meetings for PC review.
- Provided further comments on the Plainfield Zoning regulations and preliminary cost estimate for changes.
- Co-hosted two community engagement events for Woodbury town plan and finalized document for public hearing process.
- Provided town plan hearing and adoption procedures to Calais, Woodbury and Roxbury.
- Responded to a VCDP letter of regional plan conformance request from the Turning Point Center in Barre City. Project is the purchase and rehabilitation of a downtown building to create a model recovery center.
- Provided comment on MRV Short Term Rental (STRs) document and undertook additional research about the status of regulatory approaches which could be utilized in Vermont.
- Developed materials for Cabot Village Center Designation renewal; coached Planning Commission Chair on process.
- Researched housing data for Barre City Homeless Task Force.
- Agreed to provide NBRC grant administration services for the Calais Memorial Hall.
- Led development of a Capital Improvement Program for Middlesex.

**Training & Education:** No activity.

#### Regional Planning and Implementation:

- Facilitated Board input into Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Discussed forest economy resources and stakeholder engagement with State's Regional Forest Economy Manager. Participated in Steering Committee meeting to discuss engagement progress, COVID economic affects, and ACCD EDA funds related to ARPA planning.
- Researched ANR proposed change to Public Utilities Commission Rule 5.100 related to local and regional letters for renewable energy generation preferred sites.
- Participated in interview for Lake Champlain Basin Program's clean water and healthy ecosystems economic valuation study.
- Prepared letter of support for conservation purchase of ED Hyde property in Woodbury and Worcester.

#### Partnerships for Progress:

Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation (CVEDC): Participated in Board meeting.

THRIVE: Participated in Leadership Committee meeting to provide CVRPC updates and introduce VISTA member.

Washington County Hunger Council: Chaired Council meetings discussion how the Council can reach out to organizations that formed during COVID to keep the work going.

Wrightsville Beach Recreation District: Attended Board meeting and provided input on VOREC grant idea.

CVFiber: Prepared Governing Board and Finance Committee meeting minutes. Coached CVFiber Board members on ARPA requirements and potential approaches for municipal funding.

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & HAZARD MITIGATION

Contact Grace Vinson, [vinson@cvregion.com](mailto:vinson@cvregion.com), unless otherwise noted.

### Local/Regional Planning:

- Attended quarterly regional RPC/VEM meeting.
- Hosted workshop on Transportation Resilience Planning Tool and Hazard Mitigation Planning, distributed PPT and informational materials on TRPT to Planning/Zoning officials, Conservation Commission, and EMDs/EMCs
- Hosted EMD Roundtable on VT Alert.
- Developed and distributed information on new CVRPC flood hazard web map which shows information on SFHA, river corridor, and landslide hazards in the region.
- Distributed information on Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC) statewide guidance and state review session, REMC timeline and initiated outreach. Discussed REMC with East Montpelier Selectboard. Participated in VEM regional REMC process check in.
- Communicated with Plainfield Selectboard and grant write on 2021 HMGP application
- Communicated with Calais Selectboard on 2021 BRIC Application for Kent Hill Road culvert.
- Distributed information to EMDs/EMCs on 2021 hazard mitigation grant opportunities including Flood Resilient Communities Fund, BRIC, and HMGP.
- Attended meeting with VEM and IEM on Washington County LEPC Plan Annex Planning.
- Completed outreach to Washington, Marshfield, and Williamstown on 2021 LEMPs. 21 of 23 municipalities have completed LEMPs.

**Local Hazard Mitigation Plans (LHMP):** Staff supported communities in the development, review, and adoption of local hazard mitigation plans.

Calais – Met with LHMP Planning Team to discuss VEM/DEC comments. Submitted LHMP for Approval Pending Adoption, and received Approval Pending Adoption. The Selectboard adopted the LHMP.

Marshfield – Coordinated with Marshfield to adopt LHMP at Selectboard meeting and Village Trustees meeting. Submitted final LHMP for FEMA approval.

Montpelier – Coordinated with LHMP Committee for adoption by City Council. Submitted final LHMP for FEMA approval, and received FEMA approval. Congratulations Montpelier!

### COVID-19 Response & Recovery:

- Participated in State Emergency Operation Center and Health Operation Center meetings to maintain situational awareness regarding response and recovery needs/actions.
- Presented to Calais Selectboard on Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) planning. Continued to develop draft COOP for Calais.
- Sent draft Plainfield COOP to Selectboard for feedback and coordinated meeting to complete draft.

### American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA):

- Participated in RPC/VLCT meeting to coordinate services to municipalities. Please note: VLCT services may only be available to its member municipalities. If your municipality is not a member, please let CVRPC know. We will keep you updated on ARPA guidance changes.
- Conducted outreach with municipalities on updated allocations.

- Developed and distributed project selection guidance document. The guidance document has been used by multiple other RPCs.
- Developed project prioritization template for Cabot based on one developed by the Brandon Selectboard.
- Attended East Montpelier Selectboard meeting to discuss ARPA and project development.
- Participated in Plainfield Selectboard meeting to answer ARPA questions.
- Communicated with East Montpelier, Middlesex, Plainfield, Fayston, Marshfield, Moretown, Woodbury about ARPA process.

## TRANSPORTATION

Contact Christian Meyer, [meyer@cvregion.com](mailto:meyer@cvregion.com), unless otherwise noted.

**Field Services:** Contact Ashley Andrews, [Andrews@cvregion.com](mailto:Andrews@cvregion.com).

- Placed road counters in Warren and Middlesex.
- Inventorying Barre City's road erosion.
- Completed site visits in Orange to look at completed Grants in Aid segments and to look at a bridge of concern on Riddel Pond Rd.

**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 – Discussed GMT on-site COVID vaccine clinic outcomes. Held Executive Session to discuss labor relations agreement with employees. Discussed Board/Union relations and staffing challenges brought on by labor shortage.

Operations Committee – Reviewed Performance Dashboard metrics and proposed new metrics. Discussed electric bus fleet performance. Discussed organizational staffing and changes in progress. Legalization of marijuana in Vermont has resulted in recruitment challenges for safety-sensitive positions due to state and federal regulation differences. Less seasonal service will operate this year due to driver recruitment challenges.

- Participated in the MyRide Advisory committee meeting.
- Participated in VTrans Public Transit Advisory Committee meeting on behalf of RPCs.
- Developing regional mid cycle-transit services survey
- Spoke with multiple Board members about Collective Bargaining Agreement progress and outcomes.
- Drafted GMT General Manager contract extension.
- Discussed operational and policy items with GMT General Manager.

### Municipal Assistance:

- Studying the feasibility of improved forest access for the town of Northfield using consulting services. Recent work included three community site visits and hosting a community forum to develop community supported alternatives for further consideration. Gathered existing conditions data.
- Advised Northfield on developing a project to install new crosswalks.
- Developed map of current status for of the Central Vermont Path in support of region active transportation goals.
- Provided technical support in Waitsfield and Duxbury for road safety and roadway drainage issues.
- Coordinated with partners on best bridge maintenance and management practices.
- Assisted Barre City, Cabot, Marshfield, Orange and Waitsfield to review existing roadway conditions to better integrate bicycle and pedestrian needs, develop projects to replace deteriorated bridges, and integrate local planning initiatives into state sponsored roadway projects on state assets (Route 2).

- Preparing to support municipalities with Transportation Capital Improvement Plans.
- Served as municipal project manager for the Waitsfield Village West sidewalks construction project.
- Served as municipal project manager for the Walkable Middlesex Scoping Study.

#### **Regional Activities:**

- VPSP2 (State project prioritization) - Developed informational materials to better brief local and state elected officials on projects under consideration. Coordinated with VTrans on the outcomes of the previous project prioritization process. Communicated VPSP2 results to regional stakeholders.
- Organized and facilitated the Central Vermont Elders and Persons with Disabilities (E&D) Advisory Committee (REDPAC) to advance local E&D and mobility priorities.

#### **Transportation Resiliency Planning Tool (TRPT):**

Hosted workshop on Transportation Resilience Planning Tool and Hazard Mitigation Planning for planning/zoning officials, Conservation Commission, and EMDs/EMCs. Continued management of RPC assistance on this VTrans-funded project. The statewide coverage of this tool scheduled for completion late this fall will allow Towns to better plan for infrastructure replacement from a flood resilience lens. The Winooski Watershed data is expected to be uploaded to the tool web application (<https://roadfloodresilience.vermont.gov/#/map>) by September 30<sup>th</sup>. Once the tool is completed statewide, CVRPC will be available to help towns incorporate this information into Municipal Plans and Local Hazard Mitigation Plans. Contact Pam DeAndrea, [deandrea@cvregion.com](mailto:deandrea@cvregion.com).

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

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

#### **Tactical Basin Planning Assistance:**

- Continued project development and implementation activities to prepare municipalities in anticipation for upcoming funding. Assisted Barre City with meeting the 3-acre permit requirement for the Auditorium & Ice Rink. Supported Moretown Elementary School, Woodbury Elementary School, and Calais construction projects.
- Coordinated with partners and DEC on the release and outreach of the draft of the Lamoille Tactical Basin Plan for public comment. Basin Planner Danielle Owzcarski will present to the Board in November for consideration of Regional Plan conformance.

**Clean Water Service Provider (CWSP):** Reviewed financial management guidance and provided comments to DEC. Participated in CWSP start up meeting with DEC.

#### **Design Implementation Block Grant Program (DIBG):**

Woodbury Stormwater Mitigation Final Designs – Coordinated with consultant on 100% design for Church Street site.

Contact Grace Vinson at [vinson@cvregion.com](mailto:vinson@cvregion.com).

Calais Stormwater Mitigation Final Designs – Contractor has finalized the 90% plans and has presented them to the Selectboard for comments. The contractor will bring the design to 100% completion by September 30<sup>th</sup>.

Berlin Town Office Stormwater Implementation – Construction was finalized in August. Sent final deliverables to the grantor. This gravel wetland and filter strip treats stormwater from the Town Garage lot and the Town Office. The project assists the Town to meet its 3-acre General Stormwater Permit. This project is complete.

**Moretown Elementary School Stormwater Final Design:** The consultant team is expected to complete the 100% design by end of September. Staff expects to submit a grant application to the DIBG program for construction.

**Woodbury Elementary School/Fire Department Annex Final Design:** Coordinated with D&K on 100% design for

Elementary School. Contact Grace Vinson at [vinson@cvregion.com](mailto:vinson@cvregion.com).

**Plainfield Gully Restoration:** CVRPC hired SLR International (formerly Milone and MacBroom) for engineering services for the bid phase and construction oversight of stormwater mitigation and gully restoration at The Health Center. A kick-off meeting occurred in late September. This project originated from a Stormwater Master Plan that was funded for final design from the DEC, which was completed in 2019. Construction is expected to occur summer 2022.

## OFFICE & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Office:

- Conducted second interviews for land use planning position.
- Participated in final walk through with contractor for office renovations.
- Welcomed and completed orientation with VISTA member Gavin Bodnar and new Bookkeeper Dana Hock.
- Prepared RPC FY21 annual report.
- Updated CVRPC COVID Policy.
- Consulted with CVRPC attorney regarding employment issue and COVID safety policy.

### Professional Development/Leadership:

- Pam participated in Enterprise Geospatial Consortium (EGC) monthly meeting.
- Pam continued effort with the Northeast Arc Users Conference (NEARC) Board to discuss logistics of the Fall 2020 conference and other matters.
- Ashley participated in VLR Virtual Technical Round Table: Municipal Bridge Maintenance & Management and MRGP & Road Erosion Inventory (REI) Demo.
- Ashley participated in a Managing EAB Infested Ash: 1 Day Workshop for Municipal Staff and Arborists
- Nancy participated in 2022 Premium Reduction and Planning for Winter with Covid for Employers
- Clare attended Historic Preservation grant webinar hosted by ACCD and webinar titled "Parks as Community Infrastructure During and Beyond the Pandemic: Building Trust to Advance Equity"
- Bonnie reviewed VHFA's Housing 101 video.
- Grace participated in a FEMA BRIC & FMA Application Pitfalls webinar.
- Grace completed FEMA IS 700 and IS 800 training.
- Grace attended the VT Emergency Preparedness Conference.
- Bonnie represented RPCs at the Urban and Community Forestry Council quarterly meeting. Toured Richmond ash tree management project and riparian buffer plantings.

### Upcoming Meetings:

All CVRPC meetings currently are being held as hybrid meetings, with a physical location and remote access. Meeting access information is provided on agendas at [www.centralvtplanning.org](http://www.centralvtplanning.org).

### October

Oct 11		<i>Indigenous Peoples Day Holiday – Office Closed</i>
Oct 12	11 am	Bylaw Work Group, CVRPC Office and via Zoom
Oct 12	6:30 pm	Board of Commissioners, Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce and via Zoom
Oct 14	5:30 pm	Clean Water Advisory Committee, Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce and via Zoom
Oct 25	4 pm	Regional Plan Committee, CVRPC Office and via Zoom
Oct 26	6:30 pm	Transportation Advisory Committee, Waterbury Town Office and via Zoom



Oct 27	10:30 am	Bylaw Work Group, CVRPC Office and via Zoom (may be rescheduled)
Oct 28	4 pm	Project Review Committee, CVRPC Office and via Zoom
<b>November</b>		
Nov 1	4 pm	Executive Committee, CVRPC Office and via Zoom
Nov 9	11 am	Bylaw Work Group, CVRPC Office and via Zoom
Nov 9	6:30 pm	Board of Commissioners, Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce and via Zoom
Nov 23	6:30 pm	Transportation Advisory Committee, CVRPC Office and via Zoom
Nov 24	10:30 am	Bylaw Work Group, CVRPC Office and via Zoom (may be rescheduled)
Nov 25	4 pm	Project Review Committee, CVRPC Office and via Zoom

## WEEKLY NEWS HEADLINES

Click on a week to read more about the headlines listed. *To receive Weekly News via email, sign up on our [website](#).*

### September 3<sup>rd</sup>

- Emerald Ash Borer Update
- Funding Available to Grow Urban Forests in the Face of Emerald Ash Borer

### September 17<sup>th</sup>

- Save the Date: VLCT/RPC/State Funders Webinar: Take Some Time to Think Big
- FEMA Hazard Mitigation Funding Opportunities
- VEM Flood Resilient Communities Fund
- Vermont Business Relief Program Receives National Award
- America Walks Community Change Grants
- Clean Water Design / Implementation Block Grant - Request for Applications

### September 24<sup>th</sup>

- 2021 Conservation Summit
- VHFA Launches Vermont Housing 101 Video Series
- Planning Grants for Local Action – MPG

- Zoning for Great Neighborhoods Bylaw Modernization Grants
- SFY 2022 Transportation Alternatives Program Grant Opportunity
- 21st Annual Renewable Energy Vermont Virtual Conference

### October 1<sup>st</sup>

- What's Going on in Your Watershed?
- Advancing Equity and Inclusion Through Placemaking
- CVRPC and Town of Berlin Implement Stormwater Treatment at Berlin Town Office
- American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Funding
- Community Kitchen Academy

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



## Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

### Executive Director Report

September 2021

---

#### STAFFING

Reference checks for CVRPC's land use position are in progress. We hope to make an offer by Oct.15.

As noted via email previously, CVRPC had two resignations in September. Dana Hock, our new Bookkeeper, accepted a position with another employer after two weeks on the job. Pam DeAndrea, our IT/GIS/Natural Resources Senior Planner will be leaving the team on Oct. 21. Pam accepted a position with the VTrans mapping unit.

Ashley Andrews will be transitioning into an IT/GIS Planner position. Since 2015, Ashley's responsibilities and the breadth of her work have been increasing. She has written local hazard mitigation plans, filled in as transportation planner for nearly a year, assisted municipalities with ash tree management plans, been our primary liaison with road foreman, and completed an award-winning food access analysis for the Washington County Hunger Council. These experiences have broadened her knowledge of GIS and planning as a partnership.

With Ashley's move, the team is discussing how staffing might be restructured for maximum benefit. DEC recently provided Clean Water Service Providers with funding estimates by basin. For FY23, CVRPC would receive ~\$1.2 million, of which ~\$160,000 would be for staffing. These funds would double CVRPC's budget and equate to an additional 1.5 Full Time Equivalent employees. Additional finance and natural resources planning capacity will be required.

#### OFFICE CONSTRUCTION

Phase 1 of construction activities were completed by our landlord. CVRPC has a larger conference room (with 4 walls!), a larger office that can accommodate three staff, and a kitchen with running water. For this investment, CVRPC signed a 10-year lease. The first five years of the lease maintain current rent. Years 6-10 include a 3.1% increase.

Phase 2 of construction will be funded by CVRPC. With new and current positions, CVRPC will need 14-15 work spaces. These spaces are possible in the current office with a few wall moves.

**Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission**  
**Committee & Appointed Representative Reports, September 2021**

*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)

- Accepted August unaudited financial report
- Approved amendment to CVRPC's Personnel Policy to accrue sick and vacation leave with the pay period rather than on an employee's anniversary date
- Approved FFY21 Transportation Planning Initiative Amendment 2
- Supported the CVRPC policy to require facial coverings at all meetings and authorized a letter to explain the policy to Board members and committees.
- Authorized Executive Director to sign the following agreements, amendments, and contracts:
  - Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation – Clean Water Service Provider Start Up
  - Agency of Commerce and Community Development – ACCD Local and Regional Planning FY21
  - Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission – Tactical Basin Planning FY22
  - Bigglestone Investments – Office Lease
  - Northwest Regional Planning Commission – Municipal Grants in Aid FY22
  - SLR International Corporation – Plainfield Gully Stormwater Implementation Engineering Services
  - Vermont Department of Public Safety – Emergency Management Performance Grant 2021
  - Mount Ascutney Regional Commission – Berlin Town Office & Garage Stormwater Construction Amendment
  - Town of Berlin – Berlin Town Office & Garage Stormwater Construction Amendment #2
  - Ijaz and Associates – Accounting Services Amendment #2
- Received update from the Bylaw Work Group about its progress
- Discussed office updates from the Executive Director, including staff turnover, hiring progress, office lease, landlord construction activities, and additional proposed office improvements
- Approved updates to CVRPC's Administrative and Financial Policies and Procedures to align them to a new timesheet software.

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

Did not meet.

**BYLAW WORK GROUP** (A sub-committee of the Executive Committee)

- Discussed Indemnification versus public officials' liability insurance. Staff will draft text for discussion.
- Added language to Section 902 to better correspond with CVRPC's Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy.
- Added language to Section 907, Dissolution, to notify municipal legislative bodies of a proposed dissolution.
- Reviewed staff memo summarizing discussion issues and staff recommendations. Initiated discussion of these final items. The memo is included in Work Group meeting packets for Sept. 14, Oct. 5, and Oct. 12 meetings. See CVRPC website: [www.centralvtplanning.org](http://www.centralvtplanning.org).

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE** (February - April; scheduled by Committee)

- Review and recommend candidates for Board consideration for vacancies on the Clean Water Advisory Committee
- Discuss Brownfield Committee vacancy and nomination for Board consideration

**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)**

Did not meet.

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

- Accepted an organizational budget adjustment to the FFY 21 TPI work program and budget. The work program will remain unchanged; the budget adjustments are precipitated by a need to reallocate tasks among staff to reflect workload shifts, reducing contractual funds to ensure all allocated funds can be spent down within the fiscal year.
- Reviewed the projects selected for further development and either the AOT project prioritization process (VPSP2) and submitted comments where merited.
- Discussed the current solicitation for the Transportation Alternatives set aside program, which provided federal funds to study and construct bike and pedestrian improvements.

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

Did not meet in September.

**BROWNFIELDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Met for an introductory brownfields presentation to orient new committee members to the topic and program. Presentation included a description of brownfield properties in Central Vermont, the brownfields assessment process and the general program process for providing assistance to properties owners in Central Vermont with ARPA funds.

**VERMONT ASSOCIATION OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES (VAPDA)**

September meeting was annual retreat.

- Adopted FY22 VAPDA budget with an amendment to add funds to work with Rights and Democracy on environmental justice logistics.
- Discussed RPC office operations and staffing in light of COVID.
- Agreed to develop a Code of Conduct policy.
- Reviewed program area priorities for FY22 – energy, natural resources, transportation, and planning and economic development.
- Received legislative update from Necrason Group. Reviewed issues for the upcoming legislative session.
- Supported ACCD request for potential RPC involvement in ARPA economic recovery planning work and community development assistance, including grant support.

- Supported request from VT Dept. of Health for RPC involvement in Healthy Community Design and Planning for Hot Weather efforts.
- Supported VTrans proposal for VTrans and RPCs to share the cost of a new ESRI product that would facilitate data management for a number of programs.
- Discussed organization issues, such as strategies for keeping staff engaged during remote work; addressing resumption of physical meetings; idea of sharing finance staff; management structures; hiring/workforce challenges; and director retirements (3 in the next 2 years).

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

Initial application for VEGI assistance from MTX Group approved. MTX proposed to open its northeast regional office in a portion of the Keurig Green Mountain campus in Waterbury. Gave initial authorization of VEGI incentives of up to \$5,152,189 with an estimated incentive of \$5,066,319 based on application data, for activity to commence September 1, 2021, subject to submittal and consideration of a Final VEGI Application before the end of calendar year 2021. There was subsequent negative [press](#) in Seven Days regarding a statement made by the MTX CEO and the “but for” clause for VEGI support. The VEGI incentive remains in place.

#### **GREEN MOUNTAIN TRANSIT**

- GMT had no findings for the VTrans management review.
- VTrans working with Dartmouth on a COVID-19 research study examining on-board air quality and safety approaches (filters and ultraviolet light systems). Little to no virus spread has been attributed to transmission while using public transportation.
- Recognized retirement of two, longstanding GMT drivers.
- Discussed Presidential mask mandate impact to GMT and its employees; awaiting OSHA/VOSHA guidance.
- Approve a contract extension for the General Manager through October 31, 2021 and a 1.5% wage increase retroactive to July 1, 2021.
- Reviewed year end financials for June 30, 2021.
- Authorized a change in signatory for the bank account.
- Awarded DATTCO the contract for the purchase of two Battery Electric Cutaway Buses under the existing VPTA procurement award. Awarded Alliance 187 Bus Group the contract for the purchase of four (4) Ford Transit 350HD vehicles under the existing joint procurement award with SEVT. Transit organizations are alternating statewide procurement of buses through different organizations to increase efficiencies and improve pricing.
- Charlie Baker, Chris Cole, and Lee Kahn gave a presentation on the Lakeside Avenue Intermodal Facility (HULA campus) in Chittenden County.
- Held Executive Session on Collective Bargaining Agreement negotiations. No action taken.
- Held Executive Session on a pending civil litigation to which GMT is a party. No action taken.

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

Did not meet in July. In August, discussed upcoming staff transitions and managing work load. An update on the Community Data dashboard was presented along with other project updates. Outreach continued with stakeholders regarding implementing a Valley-wide short-term rental registry.



**CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
Draft MINUTES  
September 14, 2021**

**Commissioners:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Barre City	Janet Shatney, Sec'y/Treas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moretown	Dara Torre
<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
<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 type="checkbox"/> Cabot	Amy Hornblas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Roxbury	Gerry D'Amico, Vice-Chair
<input type="checkbox"/> Calais	John Brabant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Waitsfield	Don La Haye
<input checked="" 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	Clarice Cutler (Interim)	<input type="checkbox"/>	J. Michael Bridgewater, Alt.
<input type="checkbox"/>	VACANT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Washington	Peter Carbee
<input type="checkbox"/> Fayston	Russ Bowen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Waterbury	Steve Lotspeich, Chair
<input type="checkbox"/> Marshfield	Robin Schunk	<input 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, Grace Vinson

**Call to Order**

Chair Lotspeich called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm. Quorum was present to conduct business.

**Adjustments to the Agenda**

None.

**Public Comments**

None

**West Central Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)**

Waninger provided an overview of the CEDS and provided an abbreviated version of the CEDS outreach presentation, which will be posted on our website with the minutes. She advised participants they will then be moved into breakout rooms for discussion, and then come back and highlight what was discussed. It was noted that the West Central Vermont Region is comprised of the following Planning Commissions: Central Vermont, Chittenden County, Rutland County and Addison County. At the State's suggestion, as they are the regions that have yet to create a CEDS, they have banded together to create one.

During the presentation, Jan Ohlsson asked in the chat – “of the 90 municipalities in this group, how many of them - percentage wise - are under 2000 population?” Waninger advised that we would include the answer in our minutes. (see \*\* below)

Waninger advised that each breakout room would be hosted by a CVRPC staff person and the six topic areas participants to focus on are:

- Workforce and Education
- Business Climate
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Infrastructure
- Quality of Life
- Civic and Government Systems
- Land Use and Natural Resources

Chair Lotspeich opened the floor to any questions about the breakout room process. None were raised and the breakout rooms were opened.

Participants returned to the main meeting to share. The highlights of some of the areas discussed included the following strengths, opportunities, aspirations and results (**S O A R**):

**Infrastructure:** Interstate 89 (**S**), Broadband infrastructure in some areas (**S**), Being the seat of State Government (**S**), Rail networks that could be leveraged with federal funding (**O**), Public water supplies to build off of (**O**), Continue building out Electric Vehicle Network (**O**), Rural transportation improvements (**O**), Separation of stormwater/wastewater (increased capacity) (**A**), Utility incentives to all customers (**A**), Resilient roads and infrastructure and how climate change factors into this (**A/R**); Widely available broadband (**R**)

**Workforce & Education:** Tech systems working well (**S**), High number of higher education locations and livable jobs (**S**), Better linkage between entire education system and more capacity and promotion of career centers and post high school paths other than 4 year degrees (**O**), Aging population and lack of available workforce (**O**), More capacity at universities (**O**)

**Quality of Life:** Social Networks in Communities (**S**), Recreation and Trails (**S**), Affordable housing which meets the market need (**A**), Affordable housing with livable wage jobs in communities (**A/R**), Poverty rate lowered (**R**)

**Civic and Government Systems:** Increased coordination on a regional or county level vs. town by town to address infrastructure needs (**O**)

Discussion ensued as to where the process goes from here. It was noted that additional groups and organizations are being contacted for input and to create focus groups for additional input. It is anticipated that a draft plan will be brought back to the Board for perusal in late winter. Concern was raised about implementation of the plan once finalized, beyond being part of the CV Regional Plan economic update. Concern was also raised regarding whether or not the plan will recognize and address the needs of small rural villages. The CEDS website link was shared where additional comments can be provided and more information accessed: <https://www.westcentralvt.org/ways-to-participate>

**FY22 Work Plan and Budget**

Chair Lotspeich directed the Board to the information in the packet. Waninger provided an overview of the work plan and budget as outlined with a brief presentation which included our five-year goals and how we are progressing towards achieving them, specifically in FY22 and how we can assist municipalities in the region. Also outlined was where funds are obtained to accomplish the work outlined. A copy of the presentation will be posted to the website with the minutes.

Opened floor to questions. There was discussion regarding timely receipt of payment from municipalities and state agencies and if late charges are included in contracts. Also discussed was whether the organization advertised its services to private industry in addition to municipalities and it was noted that our charter from Legislature is to assist municipalities. Question was raised if the Board needed to approve the Executive Committee's approval of the budget and the Chair noted it was not. G. Clain advised he wanted to make such a motion and the Chair indicated such a motion would be out of order.

**Meeting Minutes – July 13, 2021**

Chair Lotspeich directed the Board to the information in the packet.

*L. Cattaneo moved to approve the minutes; D. La Haye seconded. L. Hill Eubanks noted a technical correction was needed by removing "Chair" following her name in the list of attendees. So noted. Motion carried.*

**CVRPC COVID-19 Policy**

Chair Lotspeich directed the Board to the information in the packet and advised of a recent Committee meeting that involved a masking issue and reiterated that the CVRPC policy is to be masked during meetings. Waninger advised that businesses are allowed to establish safety policies in the workplace and that this policy requires facial coverings at CVRPC meetings for employees and participants. She noted that in accordance with open meeting law we are required to have an in person location and are providing this, but also providing other ways to participate.

Discussion ensued regarding CVRPC staff participation in meetings in municipalities. Waninger confirmed staff will participate in meetings in municipalities in person when necessary, and confirmed we could not require that masks be worn by non-CVRPC staff at those meetings. It was suggested that Waninger provide a letter to municipalities advising of what our policy is in advance of staff participating in meetings in the municipality so that they are aware of the policy staff is operating under.

**Reports**

Chair Lotspeich directed the Board to the information in the packet and opened the floor to questions. He advised they will likely institute a process where Board will be requested to accept the Reports in the future as part of the Bylaws update.

Lotspeich requested a hiring update. Waninger noted we are hosting an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer this year who started two weeks ago, Dana Hock started last week as the organization's bookkeeper and is currently cross training with our contracted accountant. We are also recruiting for a new Land Use Planner and are on our second round of applicants. We will also be recruiting for a Climate & Energy

1 position as funded by Legislature.

2  
3 **Adjournment**

4 *D. La Haye moved to adjourn at 8:37 pm; L. Cattaneo seconded. Motion carried.*

5  
6 Respectfully submitted,  
7 Nancy Chartrand, Office Manager

8  
9 \*\* ~61% of the municipalities in the West Central Vermont Region for CEDS development have less than  
10 2,000 residents.