

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Draft MINUTES
March 8, 2022

Commissioners:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Barre City	Janet Shatney, Sec/Treas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moretown	Dara Torre
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vacant, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Joyce Manchester, Alt
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Barre Town	George Clain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Northfield	Laura Hill-Eubanks
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mike Gilbar, 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 type="checkbox"/>	Jan Ohlsson, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/> Warren	Harrison Snapp, Alt.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Duxbury	Alan Quackenbush	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vacant
<input type="checkbox"/> E. Montpelier	Clarice Cutler (Interim)	<input type="checkbox"/>	J. Michael Bridgewater, Alt.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vacant, Alt.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Washington	Peter Carbee
<input type="checkbox"/> Fayston	Vacant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Waterbury	Steve Lotspeich, Chair
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marshfield	Robin Schunk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Williamstown	Richard Turner
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Middlesex yes	Ron Krauth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacqueline Higgins, Alt.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Montpelier yes	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, Sam Lash, Brian Voigt, Blaine Hoskins

Call to Order

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

Adjustments to the Agenda

Waninger advised removal of Cabot Town Plan amendment due to a piece of the adoption process being omitted. The plan contains everything it needs, but needs to be validly warned and adopted by the Town.

Public Comments

None.

Vermont Climate Action Plan

Chair Lotspeich welcomed Climate and Energy Planner Sam Lash and advised we will be having a presentation and doing an activity in follow-up. Lash moved forward with the presentation on the Climate Action Plan (CAP) that was provided in the packet. She shared an update on climate change and its impact in Vermont. She further outlined the charge of the plan; highlighting the following of that charge where work is already started:

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation, building, regulated utility, industrial,

1 commercial, and agricultural sectors.
2 Achieve net zero emissions by 2050 across all sectors.
3 Reduce energy burdens for rural and marginalized communities.
4

5 It was noted that the CAP is broad and far reaching with pathways, strategies, and actions that will
6 accomplish the emissions reduction target. There are 26 pathways, 64 strategies and 234 specific
7 action steps.
8

9 She noted that the guiding principles are included in the memorandum in the packet; which also
10 includes a table that helps define the CAP framework and prioritization of pathways.
11

12 She provided examples of actions that are already occurring and noted weatherization is a key piece for
13 the ultimate goal of emissions reductions and to see benefits to individual Vermonters regarding
14 energy costs.
15

16 Also briefly shared was the implementation plan, resources, and an outline for how the Board may want
17 to begin defining CVRPC's priorities for CAP implementation.
18

19 Discussion followed regarding the definition for carbon sequestration and how it relates to forests;
20 where the power will be sourced for EV charging stations; and the statistic for average income being
21 expended on energy and the definition of energy burdened. Lash noted that energy transmission,
22 distribution and storage are not specifically in the plan and she believes they are issues that are still
23 being worked out. She advised she will try to obtain more information regarding this. It was also noted
24 that there is an equity issue involved because low income people have a higher percentage of their
25 income going into energy costs.
26

27 Lash advised the activity will be a discussion that is structured and will break out into two rooms with
28 the same questions addressed:

- 29 ○ What actions are happening now at the municipal level?
 - 30 ○ What actions are happening now at the regional level?
 - 31 ○ What gaps do you see at the municipal level?
 - 32 ○ What gaps do you see at the regional level?
- 33

34 Following the breakout sessions, members returned to the main meeting to report and the following
35 was shared:

36 Solar, EV and weatherization are being addressed in some towns. There are questions about what
37 climate action means when it comes to municipalities and what kind of ideas qualify. It was noted that
38 some towns are at beginning level of thinking about it. It was noted that quite a few things are on the
39 border of municipal and regional level, falling between the two. Some towns may be overwhelmed with
40 a project that is larger than the scope of municipality and there were questions as to how to approach
41 projects a regional level. Also commented on were draft energy plans; adoption and implementation of
42 those plans. There was also note of knowledge gaps about what can be done and how the funding can
43 be achieved, as well as how to tie in ARPA funds when it comes to energy.
44

45 D. Torre also provided some information about 'window dressing' (<https://windowdressers.org/>); which
46 is a program out of Maine that trains people (volunteers) to do measurements in households and help
47 install interior storm windows. The way the program is facilitated keeps costs low and is community
48 oriented.

1
2 After pointing out a couple of issues he noted in the plan, Clain stated he believes good information is
3 going to be very important as we move forward.
4

5 It was advised that part of the exercise related to CAP is to get the Board thinking about the following:
6 How the Regional Plan might address climate change. What does it mean when we talk about
7 municipalities are doing and what does that mean for the RPC role into the future? Brainstorming ideas
8 to provide to the Regional Plan Committee. Where will the RPC lead and where will it provide support
9 to municipalities moving forward.
10

11 **Municipal Plan Approval & Confirmation of Planning Process & Certificate of Energy**

12 Waninger shared her screen with the memorandum and resolution related to the Roxbury 2021 Town
13 Plan. Waninger advised that the Municipal Plan Review Committee (MPRC) held a hearing regarding the
14 Roxbury 2021 Municipal Plan and there were members of the Roxbury Planning Commission present.
15 The MPRC found the plan consistent with state goals, compatible with the regional plan, and compatible
16 with other towns in the region. The Committee recommended the Board approve the plan and the
17 Town's planning process.
18

19 *R. Wernecke moved to approve the Roxbury 2021 Municipal Town Plan; seconded by B. Arrand.* Clain
20 raised a question regarding the process the committee used. He noted a Barre Town constituent
21 submitted a letter of concern regarding the municipal plan review process that was outlined in an earlier
22 memorandum to the Board. Arrand advised a new process has not been finalized yet as a result of the
23 letter that was requesting more detail and formality in how a plan is looked at. Waninger advised that
24 due to turnover in municipal planning commissions and selectboards that Clare Rock has been trying to
25 put on paper the process the Regional Planning Commission uses in the municipal plan review process –
26 i.e. who can request a plan be approved (member of public, planning commission, selectboard), and
27 what kinds of information the RPC needs. Commissioners have not seen anything related to it because
28 it has not been drafted for Commission review yet, and is still in Committee for discussion and review.
29 Clain further questioned when does the full Board see letters from constituents. Hill-Eubanks suggested
30 we move forward on the motion as the discussion is not relevant to the motion. *Vote called and due to*
31 *an abstention, a roll call was conducted: Barre City – Yes, Barre Town – Yes, Berlin – Yes, Cabot – Not*
32 *present, Calais – Not present, Duxbury – Yes, East Montpelier – Not present, Fayston – Not present,*
33 *Marshfield – Yes, Middlesex – Yes, Montpelier – Yes, Moretown – Yes, Northfield – Yes, Orange – Yes,*
34 *Plainfield – Abstain, Roxbury – Yes, Waitsfield – Yes, Warren – seat vacant, Washington – Yes, Waterbury*
35 *– Yes, Williamstown – Yes, Woodbury – Yes, Worcester – Yes. Motion carried with 17 in favor, 1*
36 *abstaining.*
37

38 *B. Arrand moved to confirm the planning process of the Town of Roxbury; L. Cattaneo seconded. Motion*
39 *carried.*
40

41 It was confirmed it was not a conflict for G. D'Amico to make the following motion as long as he did not
42 have a financial interest.

43 *G. D'Amico moved to adopt the Resolution; R. Wernecke seconded. Motion carried.*
44

45 **S.148 – An Act Relating to Environmental Justice in Vermont**

46 Chair Lotspeich directed the Board to the information in the packet. Waninger noted that the Vermont
47 Association of Planning and Development Agencies (VAPDA) has been asked to sign on to a support

1 letter for this bill – S.148. She is bringing the information in the packet to the Board to determine if
2 there is support to bring the bill forward and also for the RPC to sign on to the joint organizational letter.
3 She shared her screen with the memorandum in the packet that provides a summary of the bill and
4 provided an overview.

5
6 Significant discussion ensued regarding whether or not it is appropriate for the RPC and/or VAPDA to be
7 in a position of supporting legislation. There was also concern raised about whether a Commissioner
8 should speak on behalf of the town without knowing the town's position, whether or not they were
9 personally in support of the legislation. There was also concern noted about action being premature
10 and this time and also indication that the bill maybe overly bureaucratic.

11
12 Waninger advised the Board could express support of the bill, but choose not to sign on to the joint
13 organizational letter. With regard to RPCs supporting legislation, she advised they support all the time,
14 usually in conjunction with an agency, where the agency has consulted with the RPC in advance to
15 ensure the RPCs can support. It was noted that this particular case is outside of what the RPC has done,
16 and that is why she is bringing the information to the Board.

17
18 Hill-Eubanks advised she would like to see us support policy that supports planning and that she was in
19 support of the bill and signing the letter. Discussion continued as to whether or not to take action and
20 what a possible motion might entail. Lotspeich directed the Board to the suggested action in the packet.
21 There was question if this could be taken up at the next meeting with the bill's sponsor(s) available to
22 discuss the bill with Commissioners. Waninger advised she could make that request. She also advised
23 that if the Commission is not supportive of supporting the bill, we could simply be silent on it at this
24 time. Choices are to support, to not support, or to remain silent.

25
26 Wernecke reiterated his question of should the organization be joining with other political action
27 committees in supporting any legislation, regardless how you feel about it as a person, specifically
28 before going back to your community.

29
30 Clain requested time to speak with his legislative body before a vote is taken.

31
32 *D. La Haye made a motion to table this issue to a future meeting. Seconded by L. Cattaneo.* Clain raised
33 a point of order, according to Bylaws Section 303B his request to talk to his municipality indicates
34 discussion should stop to take up at next meeting and a motion was not needed. *LaHaye withdrew his*
35 *motion and Cattaneo agreed.*

36
37 It was confirmed there was interest to have a speaker on this at the next meeting.

38 39 **Minutes**

40 *R. Wernecke moved to accept the February 8, 2022 minutes; L. Cattaneo seconded.* Clain advised that
41 with regard to the Basin Water Quality item that he voted yes rather than no and believed Wernecke
42 voted no and wondered his reason, Wernecke advised he could not recall a reason and agreed that he
43 voted no. *Vote called with to approve the minutes with correction and motion carried.* [Staff reviewed
44 the 2/8/22 video to reconfirm the vote in question and it was noted that Quackenbush voted no and

1 both Clain and Wernecke voted yes, therefore the 2/8 minutes were corrected to reflect Quackenbush
2 as no, and Wernecke and Clain as yes.]
3
4

5 **Reports**

6 Waninger introduced new employees— Sam Lash, Climate & Energy Planner; Brian Voigt, Natural
7 Resources Planner; and Blaine Hoskins, Assistant Planner. Waninger advised she doesn't expect much
8 movement on Act 250 legislation. There was an inquiry as to when we would get back to the office and
9 how much longer will we continue virtual meeting participation. Waninger advised staff is planning to
10 return to office in May/early June and noted that some staff does come into the office now. She advised
11 that meeting participation (virtual vs. hybrid) is up to the Board. Lotspeich suggested the Executive
12 Committee could take up this topic at their next meeting. Wernecke thanked Christian Meyer for his
13 help provided to the Town of Berlin with the road diet on Fisher Road.
14

15 **Adjournment**

16 *R. Wernecke moved to adjourn at 8:27 pm; D. La Haye seconded. Motion carried.*
17

18 Respectfully submitted,
19 Nancy Chartrand, Office Manager