

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
April 12, 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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"/>	Vacant, Alt.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Duxbury	Alan Quackenbush	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Warren	Alexis Leacock
<input type="checkbox"/> E. Montpelier	Clarice Cutler	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vacant, 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	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

Guests: Sarah Waring, USDA Rural Development VT/NH Director; Alyssa Johnson, Waterbury Selectboard

Call to Order

Chair Lotspeich called the meeting to order at 6:33pm. Quorum was present to conduct business. A roll call and introduction of guests was completed.

Adjustments to the Agenda

None.

Public Comments

A. Hornblas from Cabot advised she went to a housing charrette at Vermont Technical College recently noting several architects have offered pro bono services to low income housing projects in the state. She offered to discuss it more at a later meeting. She further noted they met in person and suggested we do so as a Board.

1 **USDA Rural Development**

2 Chair Lotspeich introduced Sarah Waring of USDA Rural Development. Waring shared a
3 presentation that outlined the priorities from the Biden | Harris administration that USDA Rural
4 Development is focused on:

- 5 Advancing Climate Change Resilience
- 6 Racial Justice, Equity and Opportunity;
- 7 More and Better Market Opportunities;
- 8 Food and Nutrition Security; and
- 9 Making USDA a Better Place to Work.

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11 She advised that if any projects in municipalities reflect the project areas she outlined, these
12 are the types of projects USDA wants to be funding and to contact them to discuss. They are
13 also trying to determine which towns in Vermont have not been served to date and how they
14 can serve them in the future. She provided contact information for the area directors that
15 municipalities can contact regarding community projects that may need funding and to
16 determine eligibility: Jon-Michael Muise (Max) – jon.muise@vt.usda.gov (802-689-3026) and
17 Misty Sinsigall - misty.sinsigalli@vt.usda.gov (802-622-4119).

18

19 During discussion following Waring’s presentation the following items were discussed: USDA
20 working to identify regulatory burdens or barriers and wanting to hear from communities;
21 small communities with small staffs are challenged in their ability to identify and apply for grant
22 funds; rural electrification and concerns regarding equity of funding for small utilities vs. large
23 utilities; the rural energy pilot program; community facilities grant program; a suggestion for
24 RPCs to be able to bundle multiple municipalities at the study stage that would allow some
25 economy of scale to get base information; and scaling the level of effort in application process
26 with amount of money to be granted.

27

28 Lotspeich thanked Waring for her presentation and the information provided. A copy of the
29 presentation will be shared with the Board and posted on the CVRPC website.

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31 **Nominations Committee Report**

32 Chair Lotspeich directed the Board to the memorandum that was forwarded from the
33 Nominating Committee on April 8th and outlined the nomination process. He noted that a full
34 slate for all committees would be shared at the May meeting and that tonight’s slate is only for
35 the Executive Committee. M. Dent read the slate as outlined: Chair – Steve Lotspeich; Vice
36 Chair – Jerry D’Amico, Secretary/Treasurer – Janet Shatney; Members at Large – Laura Hill-
37 Eubanks, Lee Cattaneo, Marcella Dent, and Peter Carbee. Chair Lotspeich opened the floor to
38 further nominations.

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40 R. Wernecke nominated George Clain for a position on the Executive Committee as an at-large
41 member.

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Municipal Updates

Chair Lotspeich advised this is an opportunity for Board members to share news from their communities in an open forum.

M. Dent shared that Montpelier’s Planning Commission is working on density requirements in their zoning law and queried the group for ideas on how to engage the community in a meaningful conversation regarding the issue.

L. Cattaneo shared that Orange received a Municipal Planning Grant with CVRPC acting as an agent and they have completed an RFP for a consultant to prepare a Capital Improvement Plan for the Town.

R. Wernecke shared several projects that Berlin has been involved in over the past year. Repair of culvert on Fisher Road, conditional certification for Berlin Town Center (full approval expected on June 7th); \$100,000 Road Diet grant for Fisher Road, \$40,000 grant to review bicycle / pedestrian access around new Town Center; gaining back 3.8 acres of land from school district to improve access to Town Center; Senior Housing Project that will be opening up soon with 100 units of senior housing, work on Twin City Good Samaritan Housing with temporary housing for homeless; and work on Fox Run Housing at the Town Center. They also completed a \$2.2 million sewer project on Paine Turnpike and are designing a new wastewater disposal system in Riverton. In addition, they expect an application for a four-story addition at CVMC to provide 30 psychiatric beds.

D. Torre shared that Moretown is hard at work on new zoning regulations which are moving along and will hopefully be on the Town Meeting ballot in 2023. She thanked Clare Rock for her assistance and management of the process. She noted their Planning Commission is working on a feasibility study for wastewater in the village of Moretown that ARPA funds may assist with; and they are in talks with Duxbury and Waterbury about extending their wastewater system. In addition, the Planning Commission and Selectboard have assembled an ARPA Advisory Council that will begin meeting next week.

J. Ohlsson of Calais provided an update regarding the recent Town Plan amendment that was completed in order to move forward with a Village Center designation for North Calais, change the boundary for the Adamant Village Center and to renew their other two village centers. Village Center designation was necessary in North Calais to apply for tax credits for the renovation of Memorial Hall. They have also been working for three years on substantial changes to Land Use Bylaws and she complemented RPC staff for their assistance. They hope to have these changes on the ballot in November. She also noted they are having difficulty filling planning commission seats and is wondering if other small towns are having this issue and queried how they are getting people to serve.

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2 B. Arrand of Worcester shared they are working to get back their Village Center designation and
3 that they recently amended their updated Worcester Town Plan to include cell tower citing
4 language. He also reported on the proposal of Industrial Wireless Technologies to build a
5 198.8-foot cell tower in Worcester and the concerns that the Town has related to that proposal.
6 He directed members to the Worcester Town website that has documentation related to the
7 proposal.

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9 M. Gray of Woodbury noted they are very close having an approved Town Plan after several
10 years of not having a valid plan. He noted CVRPC was their consultant for their Town Plan
11 Amendment process and Rock was very helpful in meeting the needs of the Town in the plan.

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13 R. Turner of Williamstown reported they are currently closing out their Emerald Ash Borer grant
14 and he expects all towns will be seeing more infestations. They also have a Stormwater Master
15 Plan in the works and will begin work on an update of their Town Plan.

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17 J. Ohlsson further noted that Calais received a lot of assistance from Pam DeAndrea with regard
18 to Stormwater Management and inquired who would be assisting in the future. She also
19 mentioned that East Calais General Store work will be starting soon, the importance of this
20 work and the joint community effort with Woodbury on this project.

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22 B. Waninger shared Brian Voigt is CVRPC's new Natural Resources Planner and can assist with
23 Stormwater Projects.

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25 **Minutes**

26 *L. Cattaneo moved to accept the March 9, 2022 minutes; D. La Haye seconded. Motion carried.*

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28 **Reports**

29 Chair Lotspeich directed the Board to the information in the packet and opened the floor to
30 questions.

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32 B. Waninger advised staff is beginning work on the FY23 work plan for CVRPC and will be
33 reaching out to municipalities to discuss projects they may need assistance on. The
34 Environmental Justice bill is moving through the Legislature and there is a map in the packet
35 outlining environmental justice populations in the region. She advised Senator Kesha Ram
36 Hinsdale would be presenting at the May Board meeting on the Environmental Justice bill.

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38 B. Waninger went on to conduct an on-screen poll for in-person meetings and utilization of
39 masks at in-person meetings. Members worked on the poll and Waninger advised she would
40 provide the poll to those members who could not participate due to being on the telephone; as
41 well as to members who were not present. Following the poll, she briefly noted that there was

1 a strong preference for hybrid meetings, that some people would participate in person and
2 would prefer optional masks.

3

4 Significant discussion then ensued regarding S.148 and having a second speaker at the May
5 meeting who can speak to the counter issues regarding the bill. It was ultimately agreed that B.
6 Waninger would attempt to have a legislator who is in opposition of the bill also come to the
7 meeting to provide their viewpoint.

8

9 **Adjournment**

10 *L. Cattaneo moved to adjourn at 8:16 pm; R. Wernecke seconded. Motion carried.*

11

12 Respectfully submitted,

13 Nancy Chartrand, Office Manager