

1 **CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**
2 **BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**
3 **Draft MINUTES**
4 **February 14, 2023**

5 **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 type="checkbox"/>	Northfield	Vacant
<input type="checkbox"/>		Mike Gilbar, Alt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Orange	Lee Cattaneo
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Berlin	Robert Wernecke	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plainfield	Paula Emery
<input type="checkbox"/>		Karla Nuissl, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/>		Bob Atchinson, Alt.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cabot	Vacant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Roxbury	Jerry 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"/>		Vacant, Alt.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Duxbury	Alan Quackenbush	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Warren	Alexis Leacock
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		David Wendt, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/>		Vacant, Alt.
<input type="checkbox"/>	E. Montpelier	Vacant	<input type="checkbox"/>	Washington	Peter Carbee
<input type="checkbox"/>		Clarice Cutler, Alt.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Waterbury	Steve Lotspeich, Chair
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fayston	Vacant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Williamstown	Richard Turner
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marshfield	Vacant	<input type="checkbox"/>		Jacqueline Higgins, Alt.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Middlesex	Ron Krauth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Woodbury	Michael Gray
<input type="checkbox"/>	Montpelier	Ariane Kissam	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Worcester	Bill Arrand
<input type="checkbox"/>		Mike Miller, Alt.			

6
7 Staff: Christian Meyer, Nancy Chartrand, Clare Rock,
8 Guests: Alice Peal, Waitsfield; Toni Kaeding, Worcester

9
10 **Call to Order**

11 Chair Lotspeich called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm and completed a roll call. Quorum was present to
12 conduct business. He announced the resignation of Board Member Laura Hill-Eubanks and expressed
13 appreciation for her years of service to the Commission.

14
15 **Adjustments to the Agenda**

16 L. Cattaneo noted the need to appoint another person to the Nominating Committee, and requested it be
17 addressed at tonight's meeting. Lotspeich advised he planned to address at the next regular meeting
18 nominations for both Executive Committee and Nominating Committee, however, an item can be added before
19 reports on the agenda for the Board to determine whether or not to move tonight or next month with a
20 nomination for Nominating Committee.

21
22 **Public Comments**

23 None
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25

1 **COVID Protocol Update**

2 C. Meyer provided an overview of the information in the packet. It was noted that the major change will be a
3 shift to a “mask appreciated” policy in the office vs. “mask required” given transmission being at a low level.
4 Also noted was the expectation that this could change based on transmission levels in the future. It was
5 requested that the memorandum be amended to clarify staff will be present at physical locations of meetings.
6 Also, the last bulleted item should remove the word “may” and keep the word “will”.

7 Chair Lotspeich confirmed no action is necessary as it is Executive Director protocol to set the safety standards in
8 the office.

9 **Municipal Plan Approval & Confirmation of Planning Process**

10 B. Arrand reported the Municipal Plan Review Committee met on February 6, 2023 and reviewed the Worcester
11 Town Plan. Toni Kaeding and Chani Waterhouse, of the Worcester Planning Commission were present at that
12 meeting. He advised the Municipal Plan Review Committee recommends approval and confirmation the
13 Worcester Town Plan adopted by the Worcester Selectboard on January 3, 2023.

14
15 *L. Cattaneo moved to approve the Worcester Town Plan adopted 1/3/2023; J. D’Amico seconded. Motion carried.*

16
17 *D. La Haye moved to confirm the Town of Worcester planning process per 24 VSA § 4350(a). R. Wernecke*
18 *seconded. Motion carried.*

19
20 *R. Wernecke moved to adopt the resolution documenting the Worcester Plan approval and planning process*
21 *confirmation by CVRPC; L. Cattaneo seconded.* G. Clain noted he continues to have issues with the language of
22 the resolution as previously stated, however, no changes were requested. *Vote called and motion carried.*

23

24 **Regional Plan Update**

25 Chair Lotspeich introduced Senior Planner Clare Rock. Rock shared a brief presentation in follow-up to the
26 memorandum provided in the packet. She provided an overview of the Regional Plan Project and advised work
27 is being undertaken now and will continue through FY23 and FY24. The current Regional Plan expires in August
28 2024. The plan development process will be led by staff, guided by the Regional Plan Committee and adopted
29 by the Board of Commissioners. Staff is currently gathering necessary data for the plan and undertaking
30 assessments of current conditions. We will also be using some of the draft narrative from the Plan Central
31 Vermont effort undertaken a few years ago. A draft vision and aspiration statement, which was brainstormed
32 with Board members prior to the pandemic, has been put together and was included in the packet.

33

34 It was noted there is a good foundation for this project to work from and it will be a team effort and
35 collaboration between staff, the Regional Plan Committee, and the Board. Regular updates will be provided to
36 the Board and they will have the opportunity to review and comment on the drafts and provide input on
37 proposed policies. We will also need involvement from stakeholder groups throughout the process. The goal is
38 for the new plan to be short and concise with an accessible writing style. It will be focused on emerging trends
39 and will work to link the findings in the plan and the policies. It will include a strategic implementation program
40 which will be an important part in assisting staff with their annual work plan and will focus on what the RPC can
41 do to forward the goals of the plans and the policies vs. what municipalities *should* do.

42

43 The 1st Tuesdays of the month will be the regular meeting schedule for the Regional Plan Committee.

44

1 There was discussion related to balancing goals and policies of State Comprehensive Energy Plan and to what
2 degree we can identify areas that would be off-limits to development that can be collectively agreed upon. It
3 was confirmed that the Regional Energy Plan will also be updated, however, we are currently waiting to hear
4 back from Department of Public Service who is recalibrating the data we need to use in that process and we will
5 revisit components of the energy plan when that information is available.

6
7 **Legislative Update**

8 C. Meyer provided a brief overview of the following bills:

9 H.129 – Brownfields: includes one million dollars for assessment work to buttress work already being done.

10 H.68 - Omnibus Housing DR0091: pre-emptive zoning limits on density; includes specific regional language
11 regarding creation of a position for an RPC Housing Navigator to connect resources to housing needs; influences
12 the housing element of regional plans; addresses additional dwelling units (ADUs) and number of housing units
13 per acre. He noted there is an open hearing on 2/16 and that he would share information on that hearing to the
14 Board via email.

15 H.124 - Rural Capacity: would change funding formula for regional planning commissions based on number of
16 towns per region to create more financial resources for rural communities. It would also take funds from some
17 regions. It is viewed somewhat problematically from a regional planning perspective.

18 H.129 - River Corridors: would create statewide jurisdiction and permitting authority for mapped river corridors

19 H.126 Conservation (last session was H606): looks to create 30% of state as conserved land by 2030 and 50% by
20 2050.

21
22 Meyer went on to provide detail on the memorandum in the packet noting there are many issues being
23 discussed in the legislature that RPCs could help address if adequate funding were provided. These issues
24 include rural capacity, housing, shared services, climate change, economic development, etc. To address this,
25 the RPC Directors are recommending full statutory formula funding be provided to RPCs. If full statutory formula
26 funding is provided, it will approximately double our regional planning funds. These funds are our core funding
27 (Municipal & Regional Planning), which we use to support all of our regional planning work, as well as leverage
28 as matching funds for other grants. It was confirmed that the language in the proposed statement was
29 developed by the Government Relations Committee of Vermont Association of Planning and Development
30 Agencies (VAPDA) with the intent that RPC board members across the State could sign onto this concept and
31 that it could be transmitted to the appropriate legislative committees.

32 A graph was shared showing the statutory formula for funding from the Property Transfer Tax for RPC allocation
33 and the actual RPC funding that has been approved since 2001. The actual funding falls below the allocation and
34 the request is to support full funding of RPCs as outlined in statute.

35 Proposed Statement: As regional planning commission board members, we are requesting support from the
36 Legislature to provide full statutory formula funding to regional planning commissions. The capacity of our
37 towns is strained, which has resulted in towns not taking advantage of federal and state funding opportunities.
38 The continued underfunding of RPCs has resulted in lost opportunities and support for our towns. The Property
39 Transfer Tax funding is the foundation that RPCs use to provide support to leverage federal and state resources.
40 We hereby ask the Legislature to support full statutory formula funding for the RPCs increasing the funding from
41 \$4,574,416 in FY23 to the full property transfer tax formula amount of \$10,134,624.

42
43 Discussion ensued regarding the challenges of small communities in meeting state requirements with much of
44 the work being done by volunteers and that the RPCs would be able to assist these smaller towns better with

1 increased funding. It was noted that the hiring of new planners at CVRPC has been amazing for towns and there
2 has been an increase of support to municipalities and an increase in funds would in turn increase that support.
3 There was inquiry as to where the rest of the allocation goes that RPCs are not receiving, and Meyer advised he
4 would need to confirm. There was concern that signing on to the proposed statement may imply towns agree
5 with other proposed legislation. Concern also shared about how much legislature is asking towns to do and
6 dictating what commissions need to do. It was confirmed the proposed legislation is different than the funding
7 formula that allocates funds from the Property Transfer Tax (PTT) fund. The statutory formula is for 17% of the
8 current \$10,000,000 PTT fund go to RPCs and currently RPCs get less than 50% of what the statute allocates
9 resulting in RPCs being underfunded based on this statute. The proposed statement encourages legislature to
10 fully fund RPCs as stipulated in statute and has nothing to do with other proposed legislation.

11 *G. Clain made a motion that the proposed statement come via individual board members, not the Board as a*
12 *whole. No second. Motion failed.* R. Wernecke advised the statement would be more effective if it came from
13 Board members individually but would be even more effective if it came from member municipalities.

14
15 Meyer advised the statement needs to be submitted before 2/24.

16
17 *A. Leacock moved to approve the proposed statement from the Board; seconded by R. Wernecke.* Discussion:
18 Confirmation that VAPDA membership is Directors of the 11 RPCs. The signatures would be pooled by VAPDA
19 from the RPCs across the state. Support of the statement could come directly from CVRPC or through VAPDA.
20 *Vote called. One nay and one abstention resulted in a Roll call vote: Barre City – yes; Barre Town – no; Berlin –*
21 *yes; Duxbury – abstain; Middlesex – yes, Moretown – yes; Orange – yes; Roxbury – yes; Waitsfield – yes, Warren*
22 *– yes, Waterbury – yes, Williamstown – yes, Worcester – yes. 11 yeas, 1 no, 1 abstention. The vote does not*
23 *pass.*

24
25 G. Clain made note of previous VAPDA action which initially noted including all RPCs and wants to be sure that
26 doesn't happen again.

27
28 As suggested, Meyer advised he would follow-up individually with members to confirm if they want to sign on
29 directly to statement.

30
31 **Minutes - (January 10, 2023)**

32 *R. Wernecke moved to approve the minutes as written, seconded by L. Cattaneo. Motion carried.*

33 **Reports**

34 Chair Lotspeich directed the Board to the information in the packet. C Meyer advised of current recruitment for
35 a Natural Resources Planner.

36 **Nominating Committee**

37
38 There was discussion as to the appropriateness of accepting nominations from the floor for a new Nominating
39 Committee member. It was concluded that a recommendation needs to come from the Executive Committee
40 and then nominations opened, so this will be addressed at the next regular Board meeting. It was requested
41 that staff send out a recruitment email to all Commissioners/Alternates.

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1 **Consideration of Executive Committee Recommendation for Executive Director - Executive Session - 1 V.S.A.**
2 **§ 313(a)(3), Personnel**

3 Chair Lotspeich requested the Executive Director recommendation be provided in executive session.

4
5 *J. D'Amico moved to enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter; G. Clain seconded. Alternate David*
6 *Wendt was invited. Motion carried. Executive session was entered at 8:13.*

7
8 *L. Cattaneo moved to exit executive session; seconded by A. Leacock. Motion carried. Executive session ended*
9 *at 8:29 pm.*

10
11 *R. Wernecke moved to approve the recommendation of the Executive Committee - Christian Meyer, seconded by*
12 *D. LaHaye. Motion carried.*

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14 **Adjournment**

15 *R. Wernecke moved to adjourn at 8:32 pm; D. La Haye seconded. Motion carried.*

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17
18 Respectfully submitted,
19 Nancy Chartrand, Office Manager

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DRAFT