



## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

February 14, 2023 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

Or find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kcjBhj3blX>

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

### Page **AGENDA - REVISED**

**6:30<sup>2</sup> Introductions**

**Adjustments to the Agenda**

**Public Comments**

2 **6:35 COVID Protocol Update** (enclosed)

4 **6:45 Municipal Plan Approval & Confirmation of Planning, Bill Arrand, Municipal Plan Review Committee Chair** (enclosed)<sup>3</sup>

Report and recommendation from Municipal Plan Review Committee regarding Town of Worcester – plan approval, confirmation

6 **7:00 Regional Plan Update** (Clare Rock)

11 **7:15 Legislative Update** (enclosed)<sup>3</sup>

12 **7:35 Minutes** (enclosed)<sup>3</sup>

16 **7:45 Reports** (enclosed)

Update/questions on Staff and Committee Reports

**7:55 Consideration of Executive Committee Recommendation for Executive**

**Director Position** - Executive Session – 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3), Personnel <sup>3</sup>

**8:15 Adjourn**

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<sup>1</sup> Persons with disabilities who require assistance or alternate 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.

<sup>3</sup> Anticipated action item.



## MEMO

Date: February 7, 2023  
To: Board of Commissioners  
From: Christian Meyer, Acting Executive Director  
Re: CVRPC COVID-19 Office Protocols

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✉ **ACTION REQUESTED:** This item is information and discussion purposes only. No action is requested.

CVRPC re-opened to the public June 5, 2022. In the interim months the office protocols on preventing the spread of COVID-19 virus have proved largely successful. Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act, employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthy workplace free from recognized hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm. OSHA continues to recommend implementing multiple layers of COVID-19 safety controls (e.g., mask wearing, distancing, and increased ventilation) in certain scenarios (e.g., areas of high transmission, or after known exposure to a someone with COVID-19). This plan works to enhance safety for Commission employees and event participants and to maintain continuity of business operations.

- **Commission-sponsored meetings will continue to be hybrid meetings (in-person and via electronic meeting technology).** Meetings are subject to Vermont Open Meeting Law, which means a Commission representative must be present at in-person meeting locations for Commission-sponsored meetings.
- **Employee participation at in-person, external meetings is based on employee choice unless the work requires in-person participation.** The Commission will encourage remote participation by employees, when offered as an option, when the CDC COVID-19 “Community Level” categorization is “High” in Washington or Orange Counties (depending on event location) per the CDC Community Level Metrics. Details can be found here: [https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view?list\\_select\\_state=all\\_states&list\\_select\\_county=all\\_counties&data-type=CommunityLevels](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view?list_select_state=all_states&list_select_county=all_counties&data-type=CommunityLevels).
- **Facial coverings will be required for all parties, regardless of vaccination status unless medically unable,** in shared “public” spaces in the Commission office when the CDC COVID-19 “Community Level” categorization is “High” in Washington or Orange Counties (depending on event location) per the CDC Community Level metrics. Details can be found here: [https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view?list\\_select\\_state=all\\_states&list\\_select\\_county=all\\_counties&data-type=CommunityLevels](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view?list_select_state=all_states&list_select_county=all_counties&data-type=CommunityLevels). Children younger than 2 years old are not expected to wear masks. If a party is medically unable to wear a mask, they will be asked to contact Commission staff to determine an alternative option for providing Commission services. Employees would contact the Executive Director regarding options for personal

masking. This protocol is in line with the CDC's recommendation that fully vaccinated people wear a mask in public indoor settings if they are in an area of substantial or high transmission. The executive director may implement masking requirements in the event that the CDC COVID-19 Community Level is "Medium." Masks are made available to all visitors to the Commission offices.

- **Signs will be posted** on the Commission office entry doors and at various points announcing current masking requirements and that admittance is not possible to those experiencing the symptoms of COVID-19.
- **The Commission will continue to employ other COVID-19 protocols** as often as possible or necessary, such as disinfecting frequently-touched surfaces, physical distancing when possible, and in-office air filtration.
- **Use of the Commission Conference Room may will continue**, so long as the guidelines of this protocol are being met. Use of the Commission Conference Room by outside parties will be enabled after a use policy is adopted.



## MEMO

Date: February 8, 2023

To: CVRPC Board of Commissioners

From: Bill Arrand, Municipal Plan Committee (MPRC) Chair

Re: Recommendation on Worcester Town Plan and planning process

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**⊗ ACTION REQUESTED:** (Best practice is to make these separate motions/actions)

- a) Approve the Worcester, Vermont Town Plan, adopted 1/3/2023 per 24 V.S.A. § 4350(b).
- b) Confirm the Town of Worcester planning process under 24 VSA § 4350(a).
- c) Adopt the resolution documenting the Worcester Plan approval and planning process confirmation by CVRPC.

### Background

On February 6, 2023, the Municipal Plan Review Committee (MPRC) held a hearing on the *Worcester, Vermont Town Plan, Adopted 1/3/2023*.

In attendance were: Toni Kaeding and Chani Waterhouse of the Worcester Planning Commission.

No members of the public attended.

The Worcester Town Plan is a re-write of the previous 2007 Worcester Town Plan. The Planning Commission worked diligently over the past few years to update the plan and following completion of their new town plan was advised by Vermonters for a Clean Environment in early 2022 that their Plan language regarding the protection of ridgelines and viewsheds needed a more regulatory tone to receive deference from the Public Utility Commission. The Planning Commission proposed amendments and the adoption process concluded with Select Board approval on January 3, 2023. Staff reviewed the January 3, 2023 Town Plan and found it meet the Statutory requirements.

The MPRC recommends the Board take the actions outlined under *Action Requested*.



## RESOLUTION

**Whereas** Title 24, VSA, Section §4350 requires that regional planning commissions, after public notice, shall review the planning process of member municipalities and shall so confirm when a municipality:

1. is engaged in a continuing planning process that, within a reasonable time, will result in a plan that is consistent with the goals contained in 24 V.S.A. § 4302;
2. is engaged in a process to implement its municipal plan, consistent with the program for implementation required under 24 V.S.A. § 4382; and
3. is maintaining its efforts to provide local funds for municipal and regional planning purposes;

**Whereas** as part of the consultation process, a regional planning commission shall consider whether a municipality has adopted a plan;

**Whereas** a regional planning commission shall review and approve plans of its member municipalities, when approval is requested and warranted, and a commission shall approve a plan if it finds that the plan:

1. is consistent with the goals established in 24 V.S.A. § 4302;
2. is compatible with its regional plan;
3. is compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the region; and
4. contains all the elements included in 24 V.S.A. § 4382(a)(1)-(12);

**Whereas** the Town of Worcester prepared a municipal plan in accordance with 24 V.S.A Chapter 117;

**Whereas** the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission concluded that the *Worcester Town Plan Approved January 3, 2023* meets the requirements for approval; now, therefore, be it

**Resolved**, that the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission:

1. approves the *Worcester Town Plan Approved January 3, 2023*; and
2. consulted with and confirms the planning process of the Town of Worcester.

Under 24 V.S.A. § 4350, when an adopted municipal plan expires, its approval and planning process confirmation also expire. The Worcester Town Plan shall expire on January 3, 2031. Recommendations made by the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission are attached and should be considered when developing the next municipal plan.

A municipality that has adopted a plan may define and regulate land development in any manner that the municipality establishes in its bylaws, provided those bylaws are in conformance with the plan and are adopted for the purposes set forth in 24 V.S.A. § 4302.

ADOPTED by the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission on February 14, 2023.

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Steve Lotspeich, Chair

29 Main Street Suite 4 Montpelier Vermont 05602  
802-229-0389 E Mail: CVRPC@CVRegion.com



## MEMO

Date: February 8, 2023  
To: CVRPC Board  
From: Clare Rock, Senior Planner  
Re: Regional Plan Project: Introduction & Update

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### What is the Regional Plan Project?

In short, it is the development of a new regional plan for the Central Vermont Region.

Vermont Regional Planning Commissions coordinate planning at the regional level through the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive regional development and conservation plan (along with related studies.) In general, regional plans assess the challenges and opportunities related to growth and development within the region and present solutions that transcend or cross municipal boundaries.

Vermont State Statute ([24 V.S.A. Chapter 117, Subchapter 3](#)) describes the purpose of the regional plan and states it “shall be made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, efficient, and economic development of the region...” Statute requires regional plans to work toward attainment of the State Goals and requires inclusion and consideration of specific topics and information. Furthermore, Statute provides the option to undertake additional “enhanced” energy planning and by doing so a regional plan may obtain a Determination of Energy Compliance from the Dept of Public Service.

The Plan will cover topics including energy, transportation, utilities and facilities, housing, economic development, natural resource conservation and historic preservation. The plan will culminate in:

- a future land use plan that is expected to identify present and prospective locations, intensities, and characters of various land uses (including but not limited to areas for land conservation, working lands, neighborhoods, and village centers and downtowns);
- identification of areas of regional significance; and a definition of what the RPC will consider a project or development that will have a substantial regional impact (and to the extent possible identify locations of proposed developments which will have a potential for regional impact);
- a set of policies designed to guide the future growth and development of land and of public services and facilities, and to protect the environment; and
- a program for the implementation of the regional plan’s policies.

### Why have Regional Plan?

Regional Plans can provide benefits to the region (and of course each RPC is obligated to have a plan in place to meet statutory responsibilities, duties, and obligations.)

One of the overarching reasons to have a Plan, as articulated in Statute is to “best promote the health, safety, order, convenience, prosperity, and welfare of the inhabitants as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development.” It is designed to present a vision for the region to help guide local planning efforts and investment decisions of the public and private sectors (including municipalities).

The Plan helps promote coordination between municipalities and helps ensure the compatibility of local plans with neighboring municipalities or with neighboring regions so one municipality or region’s efforts will not significantly reduce the desired effect of the implementation of the other plan.

Regional Plans also play a role in State regulatory proceedings. The clearly articulated goals and policies in the regional plan are given due consideration or substantial deference when large development projects (Act 250) or siting of energy generation facilities and telecommunication structures (Section 248, and 248a) go through State permitting.

One little known benefit is the Regional Plan or a portion thereof may be adopted by any member municipality as its plan, if so desired. Lastly with an adopted Regional Plan which includes enhanced energy standards, the RPC can issue Determinations of Energy Compliance to its member municipalities.

#### When will this project be undertaken?

Work is underway now!

Regional Plans must be adopted every 8 years. The current plan will expire on August 12, 2024. Provided below is a short history of Regional Plan efforts and amendments:

- 2015-2016-ish(?): CVRPC launches Plan Central Vermont regional plan re-write effort. Effort put on hold; efforts shifted to amend current plan and undertaking of new enhanced energy plan component.
- 2016: CVRPC adopts the 2016 Regional Plan (expiration 2024), includes new Implementation Schedule. The plan was an update of the 2003 plan.
- 2018: CVRPC amends the 2016 Plan with the following changes:
  - Updated Energy Chapter and new Regional Energy Plan
  - Updated Land Use Chapter to address forest integrity requirement and new Natural Resources Map – 3
  - Vermont Public Service Department grants the amended Regional Plan a Certificate of Energy Compliance
- 2020 CVRPC adopts amendments to the 2016 Regional Plan with the following changes:
  - Removal of the Housing Distribution Plan and associated appendices
  - Amendment to the Land Use Map to adjust the Regional Center boundary around Montpelier to align with Montpelier’s State Designated Growth Center Boundary

#### Who will be responsible for developing the new Regional Plan?

The project will be a coordinated and dedicated effort lead by staff, guided by the Regional Plan Committee and ultimately adopted by the CVRPC Board of Commissioners.

The general plan development process involves the following steps (which may be iterative): assessment of current conditions; developing a vision, identifying goals and objectives, mapping out the future, identification of action items. Staff in process of data gathering and undertaking assessments of current conditions. Staff can

utilize some draft narrative from *Plan Central Vermont* process. A draft vision statement and overarching aspirations/goals exists from pre-pandemic work (see attached Vision & Aspirations document.) New Substantial Regional Impact (SRI) criteria has been previously developed by the Project Review Committee for consideration.

The Regional Plan Committee (RPC) will be involved in the following:

- Review and comment of plan drafts and proposed goals;
- Assist in the identification and development of policies and actions;
- Respond to concerns and comments by interested/affected parties; and
- Bring up items of local or regional concern for Committee consideration.

The current membership is as follows (Term Ends June 30, 2023): Laura Hill-Eubanks, Northfield; Dara Torre, Moretown; Michael Gilbar, Barre Town Alternate; Jan Ohlsson, Calais Alternate; Michael Gray, Woodbury. The RPC is scheduled to begin meeting on the 1st Tuesdays of the month at 4pm.

The Board will be consulted on the project and will:

- Be provided with regular progress updates;
- Be given the opportunity to review and comment upon drafts; and
- Provide input on proposed policies and actions.

Staff recognized the need for stakeholder engagement. Primary Stakeholder groups have been identified to include:

- Member municipalities (specifically legislative bodies, i.e. Select Boards, Planning Commissions);
- State Planning and Policy Offices; and State Permitting Officials, Boards and Commissions;
- Non-profit organizations and advocacy organizations; and
- Economic Development Organizations.

#### What will be different about this plan compared to the current plan?

The new Plan will...

- Be shorter and more concise.
- Be written in an accessible writing style.
- Identify emerging trends and highlight key findings.
- Establish a clear link between findings and policies.
- Include a strategic Implementation Program.
- Focus on what the Regional Planning Commission can do vs. what the municipalities should do.
- Not be an encyclopedia of Central Vermont nor shall it be a data repository.



## New Regional Plan

### Comments and Feedback: Vision + Aspirations

The following comments and feedback was generated at the March 10, 2020 CVRPC Board Meeting. For additional information about the meeting please see the Board Meeting Minutes.

Agree	Disagree	Unsure / indiff	<b>Vision</b>
12	0.25*	7	<p>Central Vermont is a place where people and commerce thrive and innovate, the health of the natural environment and residents' quality of life are valued, and local communities are equipped to plan for and respond to emerging trends and unexpected challenges.</p> <p><i>* one red dot was mostly obscured by a green dot placed on top of the red one, therefore it was counted as a partial</i></p> <p>Comments: The vision is not clear enough to give direction.</p>
# of votes	<b>Aspirations</b>		
3	<p>Steward a strong <b>culture of cooperative planning</b> with residents working together to find solutions to sustaining the vitality of local communities and high quality of life enjoyed in our Region.</p> <p>Comments: High quality of life = living in the country</p>		
11	<p>Foster a <b>prosperous, equitable, and adaptable economy</b> that will provide full employment in a broad range of occupations at a livable wage.</p> <p>Comments: Encourage, attract, develop, and retain a good workforce.</p> <p><u>Suggested staff revision: Foster a prosperous, equitable, and adaptable economy that invests in the development of a skilled workforce.</u></p>		
10	<p>Preserve an <b>economically viable working landscape</b> of farms and forests, with increased local food production and access to healthy food.</p> <p>Comments: "local food production" – for whom?</p>		
13	<p>Protect <b>ecologically functioning natural systems</b> and sustainably manage natural resources including wildlife, habitat and water resources.</p> <p>Comments: How?</p>		
7	<p>Minimize contribution to a <b>changing climate</b> and be prepared to mitigate impacts from increased natural hazards.</p> <p>Comments: none</p>		

7	<p>Ensure a <b>range of housing choices</b> that are high quality, safe and attractive, provide affordable options available for all residents.</p> <p>Comments: "attractive" – to whom? "provide" – can't we provide our own. We know how.</p> <p>Suggested staff revision: <i>Ensure a range of safe and affordable housing choices are available for all residents.</i></p>
9	<p>Accommodate the availability of <b>reliable and affordable energy</b> supplies, increased energy efficiency, and diverse renewable energy resources and facilities.</p> <p>Comments: How? Where? Energy storage problems. Meet the challenge.</p> <p>Suggested staff revision: <i>Accommodate the <u>development</u> of <b>reliable and affordable energy</b> supplies, increased energy efficiency, and diverse renewable energy resources and facilities.</i></p>
9	<p>Preserve the <b>rural character and unique historic settlements</b> with thriving downtown and village centers serving as cultural and economic hubs.</p> <p>Comments: none</p>
8	<p>Guide construction and maintenance of <b>cost-effective infrastructure</b> that supports desired growth patterns, public health and environmental sustainability.</p> <p>Comments: "desired" – by whom?</p> <p>Suggested staff revision: <i>Guide construction and maintenance of <b>cost-effective infrastructure</b> that supports public health and environmental sustainability.</i></p>
7	<p>Stimulate a <b>healthy, active and connected population</b> in communities that work for all residents.</p> <p>Comments: More focus on "healthy" population (use to address substance abuse)</p>
6	<p>Provide an <b>integrated, regional transportation system</b> that encourages various modes of travel.</p> <p>Comments: "transportation system" – just one for the region (?)</p>

Other overall comment: too many adjectives. Board member suggested striking all adjectives from the Aspirations.



## MEMO

Date: February 11, 2023  
To: Board of Commissioners  
From: Christian Meyer, Acting Executive Director  
Re: Full Statutory Formula Funding for RPCs

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☒ **ACTION REQUESTED:** Review the proposed statement below and consider action as a Board or signing on as individual board members.

There are many issues being discussed in the legislature that RPCs could help address if adequate funding were provided. These issues include rural capacity, housing, shared services, climate change, economic development, etc. To address this, the RPC Directors are recommending full statutory formula funding be provided to RPCs. If full statutory formula funding is provided, it will approximately double our regional planning funds. As you know, these funds are our core funding, which we use to support all of our regional planning work, including being leveraged as matching funds for other grants.

Working together, RPC directors have developed the below language with the intent that RPC board members across the State could sign onto this concept and that we could transmit it to the appropriate legislative committees.

Thank you for your consideration and assistance.

### Proposed Statement:

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

**CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
Draft MINUTES  
January 10, 2023**

**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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Montpelier	Ariane Kissam	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Worcester	Bill Arrand
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mike Miller, Alt.		

Staff: Christian Meyer, Nancy Chartrand, Jon Ignatowski, Brian Voigt

Guests: Karen Sauther, Fayston Planning Commission; Jamie Stewart, Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation (CVEDC)

**Call to Order**

Chair Lotspeich called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm. Quorum was present to conduct business.

**Adjustments to the Agenda**

None

**Public Comments**

None

**Clean Water Advisory Committee Membership**

Chair Lotspeich introduced Brian Voigt, CVRPC Senior Natural Resources Planner. Voigt shared that the Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC) deals with water related issues in the watershed within which the RPC is situated – the vast majority being within the Winooski Basin. He requested that Commissioners consider serving on the committee or sharing names of people in their municipalities who may be interested in serving. It was confirmed that CVRPC elects the following members to the committee 3 CVRPC Commissioners and 1 Alternate

member, 5 representatives of the region's municipalities, and 1 interested stakeholder. Voigt noted that the CWAC could play a role in helping to identify potential projects that could be considered for funding through the Clean Water Service Provider program. CWAC currently meets every other month. He reiterated that it is not required to be a Board member to be on CWAC that municipal representatives are also welcome.

M. Gilbar advised Milly Archer who used to work for VLCT would be a great addition to the committee.

Voigt also provided details on the Clean Water Service Provider (CWSP) program and the Winooski Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC). The BWQC has nine members dictated by Department of Environmental Conservation guidance. It is their responsibility to review and prioritize projects that come before it for funding by the CWSP. It was confirmed that the BWQC's only focus is on phosphorus reduction projects; while CWAC can help to identify activities, policies and direction for clean water in the region. It was confirmed that of the nine members of the BWQC that the Board only elects four of those members.

Chair Lotspeich requested that Board members share any names of potential members with Brian; and it was also suggested that an announcement go out in the weekly news.

#### **Open Meeting Law Resolution**

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

There was discussion on the posting locations and confirmation that Cabot and Waitsfield were the only towns listed as they have volunteered to post CVRPC's Board and Committee agendas. CVRPC welcomes any town to post their agendas.

There was a request for details on committees to be shared and N. Chartrand confirmed she would send this information out to Board members.

It was noted that there was a typo on page 2 of the resolution, usage of a comma instead of a period.

*R. Wernecke moved to adopt the resolution on Open Meeting Law; seconded by B. Arrand. Motion carried.*

#### **USDA Rural Business Development Grant Resolution**

Chair Lotspeich directed the Board to the information in the packet. At the February 2022 Board meeting the Board appointed Bonnie Waninger as the representative for the USDA Rural Business Development Grant that we are currently administering for the Plainfield Coop and this information needs to now be updated with current Acting Director listed.

*R. Wernecke moved to adopt the USDA Rural Business Development Grant resolution; seconded by L. Cattaneo. Motion carried.*

#### **Election of Nominating Committee**

Chair Lotspeich directed the Board to the information in the packet identifying recommended members for the Nominating Committee. Michael Gilbar, Lee Cattaneo and Laura Hill-Eubanks all offered to be on Nominating Committee. Chair Lotspeich opened the floor to further nominations. It was clarified that a member from the Executive Committee is not necessary on the Nominating Committee, but this has been practice historically.

No further nominations were made and nominations were closed.

*J. D'Amico moved to nominate the slate of Laura Hill-Eubanks, Lee Cattaneo, and Michael Gilbar to 2023 Nominating Committee; seconded by P. Emery. Motion carried. A vote was then called in favor of the slate which passed unanimously.*

### **West Central Vermont Strategic Economic Development Strategy**

Chair Lotspeich directed the Board to the information in the packet and introduced Jon Ignatowski of CVRPC and Jamie Stewart of CVEDC. C. Meyer provided additional background on the CEDS and noted that Friday, January 13<sup>th</sup> is deadline for comments.

Comments outlined in the packet were reviewed and addressed. It was noted that the employer survey did not ask employers to identify urban or rural but that detail will be advocated for in future surveys. It was also noted that the current data is not aggregated by county but it will be CVRPC as steering committee member will work to ensure future iterations of the CEDS to have data broken down by county.

An analysis of survey responses based on towns was completed and it was noted that of 132 employer respondents, 15 were from the Central Vermont region (11.4%). Through additional analysis it was determined that the goals and actions of the CEDS aligns with the 15 CV employers with one exception – more than ½ of CV employers identified road and infrastructure in need of investment. As the CEDS does not include an action or priority on road improvements, we will advocate for this to be included as an action.

With regard to the request for a goal for a more robust and sustainable plan for attracting businesses, it was noted that goals and actions of CEDs are direct products of several years of data collection and survey responses. Noted was that the labor force participation rate is at its lowest in the last 40 years. It was also noted Vermont has the most job opportunities per capita in US with 25,000 to 30,000 vacant jobs in VT. Of the 15 employer survey responses in CV region, 10 identified lack of employees and skilled labor as impediments to growth and success. CVRPC and economic development partners understand the importance of bringing in new firms, however, the expressed priority from data collection is attracting workers to Vermont and investing in businesses already established within state.

It was confirmed that the CEDS is a standalone document and does not need to be integrated into the Regional Plan and that CVRPC has the option to adopt the CEDS as a standalone document which will allow towns to use the CEDS however they wish. It was emphasized that the CEDS was not an effort to change how towns are approaching economic development, but a work program based on the shared priorities of the four participating regions to allow them to access funding for economic development.

Regarding the comment how on substance abuse is addressed due to its impact on economics; it was confirmed the CEDS identifies the impacts of substance misuse on the regional economy in the Economic Profile and integrates solutions which include prevention-based strategies in the Action Plan.

J. Stewart of CVEDC noted that 90% of job growth occurs with existing businesses and there will be a continued focus on that as well as outreach to bring new business in from outside the region. It was highlighted that the

number of people retiring is significantly impacting workforce availability at this time and will continue into the future. Workforce development is a priority for CVEDC.

Additional discussion ensued related to the CEDS being a living document that will be updated annually, where statistics can be accessed, and the goal to obtain equal representation in each region with regard to survey responses in the future. Also discussed was the need for higher paying jobs with benefits to attract younger work force / families; as well as workforce development/training. There was confirmation that the Steering Committee of the CEDS is not a municipal or regional committee that falls under Open Meeting Law.

Chair Lotspeich reminded that final comments are due by Friday and should be sent to Christian or Jon. The Board will be voting on the document in March.

#### **Minutes - (December 13, 2022)**

R. Wernecke *moved to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Bob Atchison. Motion carried.*

#### **Reports**

Chair Lotspeich directed the Board to the information in the packet. G. Clain asked when Commissioners would hear about Waninger's exit interview. Lotspeich confirmed D. Torre, member of the Executive Director Search Committee met with Waninger to conduct this interview and then the Executive Committee met in executive session to discuss it due to it being a personnel matter and the exit interview being held confidentially. Clain noted that it did not seem right that only a select few were able to hear the information. Torre noted the information helped inform some of the thinking in the applicant review process and that some items from the conversation would be good to talk about in the future.

Chair Lotspeich provided an update on the Executive Director search. The Executive Director Search Committee chose five candidates to interview out of a pool of 18 applicants. One candidate withdrew so they interviewed four. They have recommended three of the four candidates for second interviews with the Executive Committee which are scheduled for January 17<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. The Executive Committee will then meet to recommend a candidate to the full Board by the February meeting.

There was discussion about the role of Regional Plan Committee and the timeframe for the Regional Plan update (18 months). There was also discussion on the use of interest surveys for the Nominating Committee and confirmation that committee descriptions will be sent out to the Board.

#### **Adjournment**

D. La Haye *moved to adjourn at 7:52 pm; R. Wernecke seconded. Motion carried.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Nancy Chartrand, Office Manager

## Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

P: 802-229-0389

Staff Report, January 2023

F: 802-223-1977

Staff are in the office on Mondays through Thursdays. Due to telework schedules, please schedule in-person meetings in advance. Masks are required in public areas of the office.

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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

#### Municipal Planning & Plan Implementation:

- Attended Middlesex Planning Commission meeting to discuss planning for wildlife and recreation.
- Participated in a Marshfield workshop planning meeting as part of the towns Recreation Economy planning process and in the weekend community meeting to gather public input.
- Coordinated Worcester Town Plan review and scheduled public hearing for Municipal Plan Review Committee.
- Met with Barre Town staff to discuss updates to their zoning map.
- Communicated with Town of Orange staff regarding their parcel data and updating their online parcel viewer.
- Provided staff comments on the draft 2023 Waitsfield Town Plan in advance of the Planning Commission public hearing.
- Created a housing profile PowerPoint presentation for the City of Montpelier.

#### Regional Planning and Implementation:

- Provided three Letters of Support for Community Recovery & Revitalization Program (CRRP) funding and one for Rec Trails Program.
- Participated in the Mad River Valley Planning District's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary meeting.
- Reviewed capacity score method, data, and results for region underpinning Rural Capacity Building Program, compared to forthcoming Municipal Vulnerability Index, Justice40 indices, among other recently released metric sets.
- Regional Plan Update
  - Staff met to coordinate draft outlines for chapters in the new plan.
  - Continued to add to the data catalog and outline for the new Regional Plan.
  - Started equity and inclusion discussion among staff in relation to the regional plan.
  - Gathered data and worked on outlining the economy chapter of the new plan.

#### Health Equity: (Contact Sam Lash, [lash@cvregion.com](mailto:lash@cvregion.com))

- Participated in RPC statewide meetings to discuss Health Equity Toolkit (next steps and training), update on grant, and Implementation Projects.
- Developed and reviewed with staff proposed regional implementation project: sidewalk inventory and community food asset inventory update followed by gap analysis and site-specific targeted implementation recommendations (walk to shop campaigns, sidewalk projects, rural transit route foci). Coordinated collaboration with District Health Office and Capstone Rural Transit project launch.
- Continued to develop integrated health equity workshop to host toolkit introduction and training, get feedback, identify projects for implementation, and identify community locations/partners for frontline community outreach.
- Outreach regarding launch of Vermont Department of Health and Department of Housing & Community Development [Health Equity and Community Design Technical Assistance Pilot](#) and [Health Equity Ambassador](#) programs. Provided suggestions to improve website utility for towns.



**Economic Development:** (Contact Jon Ignatowski, [ignatowski@cvregion.com](mailto:ignatowski@cvregion.com))

- Plainfield Co-operative Business Assistance
  - Contacted references of Task 2 (Financial Feasibility) and selected Columinate, LLC to perform the Task 2 scope of work.
  - Developed draft contracts for Task 1 (Architectural Review and Design) and Task 2 (Financial Feasibility)
  - Published a Request-For-Bid for Task 3 (Internal Readiness Assessment) of the grant and sent directly to 14 different firms.
- Continued involvement for the Western Central Vermont CEDS to ensure local needs are reflected in the multi county report. Comments were gathered from Commissioners and integrated into the draft CEDS.

**Brownfields:**

- Received presentation on Barre City Phase II Environmental Site Assessment, and request for additional funding for Corrective Action Planning activities.
- Prepared for and staffed Brownfields Advisory Committee.
- Coordinated communications between Northfield Site and Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) re application process.
- Inquired with Mt. Ascutney Regional Commission (MARC), DEC and ACCD about additional funding for Central Vermont Projects.

**Partnerships for Progress:**

CVFiber: Processed incoming mail.

THRIVE: Participated in monthly meeting: provided update and asks on RPC Health Equity Toolkit and upcoming regional training; updates included Innovation Food Lap pilots and Cooking with Hearts (VT Foodbank); building trust and community relationships (Barre City, Fayston, Montpelier); presentation on forthcoming launch of Community Ride VT (Capstone in partnership with GMT and VTrans).

CVEDC: CVRPC participated in the monthly CVEDC board meeting.

WBRD: Provided administrative training for mail and invoicing processing to WBRD General Manager.

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & HAZARD MITIGATION

Contact Keith Cubbon, [cubbon@cvregion.com](mailto:cubbon@cvregion.com), unless otherwise noted.

**Local/Regional Planning:**

- Participated in Vermont Emergency Management(VEM)/RPC monthly meeting.
- Posted Capital Fire Mutual Aid (CFMA) agenda and minutes to CFMA page on CVRPC website.
- Provided support to Plainfield for Brook Road Bridge #21 Hazard Mitigation Grant Program application
- Created and emailed 9 Emergency Relief Assistance Fund (ERAF) report.
- Scheduled Scott Whittier as speaker for February Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC) meeting.
- Created workshop for Community Rating System (CRS)/National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) reached out to towns for interest and meeting times.
- Attended conference calls with VEM for Christmas Eve Storm and performed Local Liaison role after storm.
- Met with Waterbury to review Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) process.
- Reviewed Marshfield Dam updated Emergency Action Plan.
- Contacted Barre City and Barre Town about staffing changes in Emergency Management Director (EMD) role.

**Local Hazard Mitigation Plans (LHMP):** Staff supported communities in the development, review, and adoption of local hazard mitigation plans. Contact Sam Lash at [lash@cvregion.com](mailto:lash@cvregion.com).

Fayston- Prepared LHMP Update Draft for review for public and stakeholder comment, and by Vermont Emergency Management.

Orange: - Prepared LHMP Update Draft for review for public and stakeholder comment, and by Vermont Emergency Management.

**American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA):** Supported Barre in reviewing their Final Draft report from the Barre City Community outreach forum.

## TRANSPORTATION

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

### Field Services:

Met with Moretown Road Foreman to deliver Bridge and Culvert inventory maps.

Set up Pedestrian Counter at the Wrightsville Recreation area on the disc golf course.

**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.

### Municipal Assistance:

- Worked on Northfield Falls crosswalk project to create safer pedestrian connectivity to neighborhood.
- Supported towns with access to VT bridge and culverts site with password and log in changes.

### Regional Activities:

- Submitted Town Highway Major Collector data to VTrans.
- Collected usage of the VT Culverts website for VTrans reporting.
- Worked with Berlin, Northfield and Barre City to submit letters of interest for the CCRPC transit oriented development zoning and master planning grant (funded through RAISE - Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity discretionary grant program).
- Met with Community Ride/Rural transit team (Capstone); consulted regarding program design, implementation and launch including municipal engagement and rollout in Central VT (e.g. outreach to town leadership and Road Foremen).
- Participated in VT Transportation Equity Framework Meeting to refine recommendations and implementation plan.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

Contact Brian Voigt, [voigt@cvregion.com](mailto:voigt@cvregion.com), unless otherwise noted.

### Tactical Basin Planning Assistance:

- Attended working group meeting to discuss barriers to implementation and opportunities for scaling up buffer plantings.
- Attended Basin 7 regional coordination meeting.
- Scheduled a meeting with the Plainfield Conservation Commission to discuss water quality, stormwater mitigation and the Tactical Basin Plan.

- Collaborated with DEC staff to enter a project into the Watershed Projects Database.

#### **Clean Water Service Provider (CWSP):**

- Organized and hosted a Basin Water Quality Council meeting.
- Updated CVRPC CWSP webpage – meeting materials, meeting minutes and DEC presentation.
- Completed monthly reporting.
- Attended a Records Retention Policy meeting with representatives from the Vermont State Archives and Records.
- Attended State Financial Reporting Form training session with DEC Staff.
- Attended Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets training session regarding the use of CWSP funding for projects on agricultural land.
- Updated the draft co-benefits matrix and scoring methodology based on feedback from the Basin Water Quality Council and further research by staff.
- Attended DEC CWSP check-in meetings to discuss data management, Operations & Management and updates to the Watershed Projects Database.
- Prepared draft language to revise the CVRPC Procurement and Grants Management Policies to meet the requirements of Act 76.

#### **604b:**

- This effort has concluded for FY23.

#### **FEMA Map & Flood Bylaw Updates:**

- Attended check-in meeting with DEC staff to discuss progress and anticipated next steps.
- Attended DEC informational meeting regarding Federal Emergency Management Agency flood map updates.

#### **Stormwater Projects:**

Barre City Auditorium Final Designs – Received sub-contractor approval from project funder. Prepared contract for consultant. Completed CVRPC Risk Assessment, Procurement Summary and Procurement Checklist. Hosted project kick-off meeting and site visit with project partners.

Calais / Woodbury Stormwater Implementation – No activity.

Moretown School Stormwater Implementation – Regular correspondence with project partners. Hosted meeting for project partners to finalize details of construction bid documents. Issued bid documents. Bids are due February 7, 2023.

Plainfield Gully Stormwater Implementation – Project has been shut down for the winter. Minor landscaping and site recovery will be completed in the spring.

## **CLIMATE & ENERGY**

Contact Sam Lash, [lash@cvregion.com](mailto:lash@cvregion.com) unless otherwise noted.

#### **Municipal Planning and Implementation**

- Connected Roxbury Planning Commission member and Energy Coordinator to support resident home energy inquiries; wrote and provided memo including resources for off grid-home renewable energy systems, resident heat assistance, fuel switching programs, etc.
- Provided Worcester Planning Commission and Commissioner outline of Act 174 Enhanced Energy Planning process, respective roles, and next step including energy plan checklist.
- Responded to Marshfield Energy & Building Committee member and Montpelier Sustainability Coordinator (among others) re energy audit requests and inquiries about forthcoming Municipal Energy Resilience Program, provided

sketch of program, timing, and advice re next steps. Office Hours, workshop, additional resources are forthcoming- to sign-up for energy specific emails please email [lash@cvregion.com](mailto:lash@cvregion.com).

- Tracked Energy Committee and town projects ongoing and provided support and resources (e.g. Middlesex I-89 project; street light survey; electrical vehicle supply equipment (EVSE); Warren Town annual report, Orange, etc.).
- Checked-in with regional and state partners on current initiatives and upcoming opportunities for municipalities (programs and feedback) including ACCD (EVSE programs, Better Places, etc.), ANR (Municipal Vulnerability Index and VT Climate Toolkit), Public Service Department (Regionalized LEAP Data and Generation Scenarios update for Enhanced Energy Planning), and Closed loop networked geothermal.

### Regional Planning and Implementation

- Developed informational materials on the Municipal Energy Resilience Grant Program to begin formal municipal outreach coordinating with RPC Energy Planners (building inventory), VLCT (funding matrices), and Buildings & General Services.
- Attended RPC/Department of Energy (DOE) to coordinate VT County Allocations of the [Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant](#) (EECBG) (submitted Notification of Interest), attended DOE EECBG webinar for local governments, reviewed application, and began developing potential regional projects.
- Closed-Loop Networked Geothermal Working Group ([Energy Action Network](#)): reviewed proposed Affordable Community Energy Solutions Act (ratepayer protections, networked geothermal, limits expansion of natural gas territory) and provided recommendations for energy burden definitions and metrics, income thresholds for EAPs.
  - Meetings included update from finance sub-group and on feasibility studies; discussion of stakeholders, biggest barriers, and model project types (parameters and site specifications).
- Developed 3-part municipal solar workshop series (first upcoming in February) and accompanying materials to support towns developing municipal solar projects.
- Prepared webinar on [Community Led Resilience Hubs](#) for [VECAN Winter Workshops Series](#) (February 1<sup>st</sup>) with Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD).
- Provided recommendations and support to PSD public engagement plan implementation as part of [Renewable Energy Standards \(RES\) and supporting programs review](#).
- Provided feedback to Climate Office on Municipal Climate Toolkit progress (organization, contents, & resources).
- Reviewed capacity score method, data, and results for region underpinning Rural Capacity Building Program, compared to forthcoming Municipal Vulnerability Index, Justice40 indices, among other recently released tools.
- Participated in RPC energy planning meeting: contributed to potential municipal and regional projects at behest of VT Green Bank and Climate Alliances); coordinated development of resources for towns on federal funding (VLCT).
- Attended [State of Energy Storage 2022 Year in Review](#) (highlights: long term/duration gap accredited at 8hrs vs seasonal planning needs; roundtrip efficiency declines; interconnection queues, integrated resource planning and role of storage in aggressive policies and procurement; supply chain and alternative chemistries) (CESA).
- Attended [Bringing Community Perspectives to Community Solar](#) (CESA).
- Attended State Energy and Climate programming including [VCV Climate and Energy Legislative Priorities Highlights](#) (Affordable Heat Act, RES, EVSE, bike/ped, rural transit, Networked Geothermal); [Climate Change and Social Justice Webinar](#) hosted by the Kellogg Library (featuring Sen. Keshia Ram Hinsdale, Judy Dow, and Kashka Orlo; [Complete Streets: Connecting Communities Through Multi-Modal Transportation Options](#), added “gateways” as complement provided recommendations for region.

## OFFICE &amp; ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Office:**

- Preparation of Nominating Committee materials and scheduling of initial meeting.
- Executive Committee support for regular and special meetings.
- Onboarding of new Planning Technician Zach Melcher to support the Commission's transportation planning and field services program.
- Staff participated in Executive Director candidate meet and greets and provided feedback to Executive Committee.
- Compiled ACCD Mid-Year Report.

**Professional Development:**

- Brian Voigt completed FEMA's IS 200 Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response course.

**Upcoming Meetings:**

CVRPC meetings will host a physical location and offer remote access unless otherwise noted. Meeting access information is provided on agendas at [www.centralvtplanning.org](http://www.centralvtplanning.org).

**February**

Feb 6	4 pm	Municipal Plan Review Committee
Feb 6	4 pm	Executive Committee
Feb 10	12 pm	Executive Committee Special Meeting
Feb 14	6:30 pm	Board of Commissioners
Feb 16	1 pm	Winooski Basin Water Quality Council
Feb 20		Office Closed - Holiday
TBD		Project Review Committee
TBD		Brownfields Committee
Feb 28	6:30 pm	Transportation Advisory Committee

**March**

Mar 6	4 pm	Executive Committee
Mar 14	6:30 pm	Board of Commissioners
Mar 16	1 pm	Winooski Basin Water Quality Council
TBD		Regional Plan Committee
TBD		Project Review Committee
TBD		Brownfields Committee
Mar 28	6:30 pm	Transportation Advisory Committee

## RECENT 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](#).*

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

### January 6th

- Downtown Transportation Fund and Clean Water Funding Applications Available
- Health Equity and Community Design Technical Assistance Pilot
- Better Buildings by Design Conference Scholarship Applications Are Now Open

### January 20<sup>th</sup>

- Notice of Public Hearing – Worcester Town Plan
- RAISE Grants
- Environmental Leadership Trainings
- Better Connections Grant Program Reminder

### January 27<sup>th</sup>

- Temporary Laws Readopted for Town Meeting and Open Meeting Law
- Public Service Department Electricity Webinars
- Funding for Organizations and Programs Supporting Vermont Women and Girls
- DHCD Launches Statewide Fair Housing Surveys

### February 3<sup>rd</sup>

- Bylaw Modernization Awards
- Vermont Clean Water Initiative 2022 Performance Report
- Survey on Vermont's GIS / mapping resources
- AARP VT Accepting 2023 Community Challenge Grant Applications
- NBRC Forest Economy Program Now Open
- Municipal Solar Workshop – Part 1
- Vermont Capital Planning Forum

## Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

### Committee & Appointed Representative Reports, January 2023

*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)

[1/10/23, 1/17/23, 1/20/23 1/24/23, 2/6/23]

- Authorized the Acting Executive Director to sign Vermont Department of Public Safety – State Emergency Operations Center Support Memorandum of Agreement Amendment and Department of Environmental Conservation – Clean Water Service Provider Start Up Amendment #4.
- Received an update of COVID 19 Office Protocols for CVRPC from Acting Director.
- Accepted the December 2022 unaudited financial reports with minor correction to summary memorandum.
- Conducted second interviews of Executive Director candidates and follow-up special meetings in executive session.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE** (A sub-committee of the Executive Committee)

Did not meet.

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

Did not meet.

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

Scheduled to meet February 16th

**PROJECT REVIEW COMMITTEE** (4<sup>th</sup> Thursday, 4pm)

Did not meet. Staff continue to monitor other projects.

**REGIONAL PLAN COMMITTEE** (as needed; scheduled by Committee)

Did not meet.

**MUNICIPAL PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE** (as needed; scheduled by Committee)

Scheduled to meet February 6<sup>th</sup> for Worcester Town Plan review.

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

- The TAC met to discuss complete streets reporting requirements for all eligible road improvements. Members expressed considerable concern that complete streets do not going far enough to address safety.
- Members also discussed CVRPC transportation field services and how member communities can take advantage of these services.

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

Did not meet.

**BROWNFIELDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (3<sup>rd</sup> Monday, 6pm)**

- Met on January 23, 2023 to receive presentation on Barre City/Turning Point Phase II Environmental Site Assessment and recommend allocation of remaining funds to property Corrective Action Plan.

**WINOOSKI BASIN WATER QUALITY COUNCIL (3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday, 1pm)**

- Provided update on Clean Water Service Provider (CWSP) policy development.
- Presented a revised draft Co-benefits matrix and scoring methodology for quantifying project-specific co-benefits. A motion to adopt the methodology is anticipated at the February 2023 meeting.
- Discussed options for soliciting projects for CWSP funding. An initial call for projects will be issued in March. Subsequent project solicitation rounds may use geographic targeting and / or focus on specific project types to achieve Phosphorous reduction targets.
- Identified recurring agenda items for future meetings, including check-ins with the DEC Basin Planner and presentations from Project Implementors (best practices, tales of success and sorrow, opportunities for collaboration).

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

Discussion in the January meeting included:

- Members volunteered to serve as the Regional Plan and Future Land Use Map committee as required by ACCD agreements.
- Issues discussed concerning natural resources included municipal access to water and sewer projects and additional funding coming for urban forestry.
- Rebecca Ramos joined to discuss the anticipated legislative agenda and what items may be important to RPCs, including H.5 which would improve institutional support and benefit regional planning.
- Agency of Natural Resources is promoting their municipal resilience toolkit, which will assist municipalities adapt and become more resilient, mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, and advance carbon sequestration.
- Vermont Community Broadband is promoting their Digital Equity Project. Vermont Community Broadband Board (VCBB) is in charge of coordinating the build out of the fiber optic network process. Fiber is coming to every connected e-911 address and VCBB wants to make sure everyone can benefit from it. They are working on the implementation plan to focus on disadvantaged groups. The process aims to get greater engagement from excluded groups and traditionally overlooked groups.

**VERMONT ECONOMIC PROGRESS COUNCIL**

No Central Vermont activity.

**GREEN MOUNTAIN TRANSIT**

- GMT has a new General Manager, Clayton Clark.
- GMT is coordinating with other state agencies to improve transit for health needs.
- Route performance data will be share at the February meeting
- Staffing remains a major area of concern for GMT. Currently they are operating 30% of services with overtime and double time due to a lack of drivers. This is affecting seasonal services as well.
- Community Rides will be procuring vehicles and launching their service soon in coordination with GMT. The on-demand service will serve the CVRPC municipalities.



- The Board adopted an FY24 budget with the following conditions: staff bring an updated ADA funding policy to the Board prior to FY25 budget approval that will seek to minimize swings to member communities, GMT Board and staff prioritize the efforts for state and regional funding to strengthen the Authority's long-term funding, and GMT staff will work to redouble rural community outreach for private public partnerships where appropriate. Due to the budgetary constraints, certain services will begin the process of being formally cut. In the Central VT region this will affect the Barre Express, which was paused in 2020 due to COVID and never restarted. These cuts underscore the need for a sustainable transit funding source.
- The reintroduction of fares is being discussed. There will be substantial investment in fare collection technologies that were previously retired. Reintroducing fares will reduce the number of trips but help address the anticipated reductions in funding. The reintroduction of fares may affect all riders or only urban riders.
- GMT will undertake an organizational assessment in the coming year.

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

CVRPC staff participated in the MRVPD tri-town meeting organized to facilitate municipal feedback on the Districts work in the needs, priorities, successes, and challenges of the MRV community. The MRVPD Steering Committee will be discussing the feedback at the January 26, 2023 Steering Committee meeting.