



Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

**CVRPC Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC)  
Meeting Minutes – 14 March 2024**

**CWAC Members:**

| <b>Commissioner Representatives</b> |               |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| ✓                                   | John Brabant  |
|                                     | Royal DeLegge |
|                                     | Ron Krauth    |
| ✓                                   | Rich Turner   |
| ✓                                   | Alice Peal    |

| <b>Municipal Representatives</b> |                  |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| ✓                                | John Hoogenboom  |
| ✓                                | Joyce Manchester |
| ✓                                | Emily Ruff       |
|                                  | Jeff Schulz      |
| ✓                                | Joseph Whelan    |

**CVRPC Staff:** Brian Voigt, Lincoln Frasca

**Other Attendees:** Adelaide Dumm (Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District), Alison Marchione and Keith Fritschie (Department of Environmental Conservation), Dana Allen (FluidState Consulting), Becky Tharp (Just Water Consulting), Charles Wohlers (Woodbury Conservation Commission), Michael Gray (CVRPC Commissioner & Woodbury Conservation Commission)

**Call to Order & Roll Call**

B. Voigt called the meeting to order at 4:10 PM.

**Approval of November minutes (action)**

A. Peal moved to approve the minutes of the 11 January 2024 meeting. R. Turner seconded the motion. No discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

**Updates to agenda:** None

**Public Comment:** None

**Lake Wise Assessments & Lake Watershed Action Plans (presentation)**

A. Marchione, Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Shoreland Restoration Ecologist, presented on the Lake Wise program. She noted that Vermont’s lakeshores have the greatest residential development density in the nation. The goal

of the Lake Wise Program is to establish a culture of lakeshore living that is proven to protect the lake through stormwater best management practices. The program is free and voluntary (and is separate from the DEC regulatory enforcement division). A Lake Wise Assessment reviews four different characteristics of a property: driveway, structures and septic, recreation areas, and shoreline. Properties that meet the criteria of all four categories are awarded a Lake Wise sign for display in their yard.

The Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District was recently awarded funding to conduct Lake Wise assessments on Nelson Pond (aka Forest Lake) and Sabin Pond (aka Woodbury Lake). A. Dumm, District Manager of the Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District, described her plans for conducting Lake Wise assessments in partnership with Dana Allen (FluidState Consulting) and Becky Tharp (Just Water Consulting). Community outreach to lakeshore landowners is central to the success of the Lake Wise program. The Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District will engage the lake communities, the Calais & Woodbury Conservation Commissions and the Calais Lakes and Streams Committee to help identify willing landowners interested in participating in the Lake Wise program. Outreach efforts will include press releases, social media posts, and door-to-door advertisement on Memorial Day weekend. Assessments will take place between June and August of 2024. The [Calais Lakes and Streams Committee](#) is also seeking a volunteer representative for Nelson Pond.

A. Dumm reviewed the [DEC Inland Lake Scorecards](#) for Nelson and Sabin Ponds, including total phosphorus, summer phosphorous, water clarity and summer chlorophyll-a trends. She noted that the overall water quality score of Sabin Pond is poor. Neither pond has known invasive species infestations. Lake scorecards are updated every five years. There are 65 parcels on Nelson Pond and 106 parcels on Sabin Pond. Although the current funding from DEC will only support 20 Lake Wise Assessments, additional funding could be requested if interest in the program exceeds the current level of support. Lake Wise Assessments offer recommendations for implementing Green Stormwater Infrastructure projects and adopting Best Management Practices. The Lake Iroquois Watershed Action Plan is currently underway as a result of Lake Wise Assessments in the area.

A. Marchione discussed the Lake Watershed Action Planning process. Lake Wise Assessments are the first step towards the development of a Lake Watershed Action Plan – a watershed-based planning tool to improve lake water quality, habitat and resilience. A Lake Watershed Action Plan extends beyond the shoreland to consider the entire lake watershed, focusing on sources of nutrient pollution and how they can be addressed. This includes assessment of the shoreland, roads and streams to address erosion and stormwater runoff in the entire lake watershed. The outcome of these plans includes a project prioritization matrix and 30% (conceptual) designs for a

select few projects. In the last five years 20-25 LWAPs have been funded in the state. Lakes are prioritized based on phosphorus trends, disturbed watersheds and the presence of an active and engaged lakeshore associations. Funding for Lake Watershed Action Plans is available through the Winooski River Basin Clean Water Service Provider and the Lake Champlain Basin Program.

### **Presenter Q & A (discussion)**

J. Brabant raised the point that part of Sabin Pond is bordered by a road and wondered if Lake Wise Assessments could still be conducted. He also asked if the town could coordinate with landowners on road projects such as regrading away from the lakes. A. Marchione responded that lakeshore road project inquiries should be directed to her. A. Dumm added that outreach efforts will target homes on the lakeshore. The Lake Wise Assessments will consider best management practices for those properties and would promote shoreland buffering where appropriate. The assessments are really a personalized approach to stewardship that works for the landowners. J. Brabant asked if there are monies available for town or landowners to implement the proposed projects? A. Dumm replied that Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District will support landowners on these projects, including seeking funds to support project design and implementation. Funding for project advancement is available through the Winooski River Basin Clean Water Service Providers, the DEC Water Infrastructure Sponsorship Program and the Lake Champlain Basin Program.

M. Gray asked how the Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District intends to work with the Woodbury Conservation Commission and whether there was anything they could do to help. He also asked if septic systems of historically seasonal camps that have become year-round residences factor into the Lake Wise Assessments. A. Dumm responded that it will be beneficial to have the support of and collaborate with Conservation Commissions. Lake Wise Assessments are nonregulatory and do not enforce septic system requirements. A. Marchione added that there are scoring criteria built into the assessments based on septic age, placement, and maintenance schedules. However, septic and wastewater regulation is another division of DEC. M. Gray asked if there is a formal determination made through these assessments on whether or not a septic system is a problem. A. Marchione responded that there is not. She also noted that Wastewater Workshops are an effective training opportunity that the Conservation Commission could host as a complimentary outreach event. Wastewater Workshops bring a septic expert into the community to train landowners on best practices. A. Peal mentioned that depending on the age of septic system, the DEC may have a record of the system.

### **Upper Winooski Potential Flood Mitigation Projects (discussion)**

L. Frasca presented a list of potential flood mitigation projects in the central Vermont region, including the project type, phase, potential partners and potential funding sources for project advancement / implementation. This effort builds on work that a CVRPC Regional Plan Committee member recently completed to compile a record of ongoing and potential projects. The project list serves as a model for the types of activities municipalities may be interested in pursuing for flood mitigation and water quality benefits. B. Voigt suggested CWAC members work with their Selectboards and Planning Commissions to identify projects of interest. CVRPC can identify potential funding sources to advance projects and work with municipalities to that end.

J. Brabant noted the severe damage that the July 2023 flood caused along Route 215 in Cabot. Many of the fields were inundated and erosion on the river banks is significant. He asked if CVRPC staff were aware of the damage and whether mitigation strategies have been developed.

B. Voigt noted that the projects displayed are already in the pipeline, meaning they have been identified through past assessment work. However, the projects displayed are a subset of the data and by no means a comprehensive list. CVRPC's Emergency Management Planner, Keith Cubbon, has been in touch with Cabot on the flooding issues along Route 215. If there are stream segments that have not been assessed, CVRPC or a municipality could solicit funds for project identification and development.

A. Peal asked what the best way is to identify projects at specific locations. B Voigt responded that there is no single way to navigate this process. The projects displayed in the presentation were identified by reviewing prior assessments such as River Corridor and Stormwater Master Plans.

### **Tactical Basin Plan FY25 workplan (discussion)**

B. Voigt explained the process for developing the Tactical Basin Planning FY25 Workplan and shared a list of topics for consideration. He reviewed the FY24 Workplan, noting that many of the CWAC meeting topics over the past year were identified through the workplan development process. He opened the floor to discussion and asked the CWAC to submit suggestions by 22 March 2024 to allow staff time to develop a workplan proposal.

J. Brabant mentioned the trend of summer camps being converted to year-round residence, adding new appliances like dish and clothes washers. Wastewater Workshops seem like a good idea to help municipalities understand what can be done with zoning regarding the conversion of seasonal structures to year-round residences.

B. Voigt responded that CVRPC could arrange for Wastewater Workshop(s). As well as engage with DEC permitting to better understand regulatory procedures.

A. Peal would like to focus on Wetlands Mapping and Reclassification. The DEC is working on a statewide mapping effort. Data for the Winooski River Basin may not be available until next year. She also noted that although the updated Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Rate maps are not ready now, Flood Hazard Mitigation and River Corridor Bylaws are topics CVRPC can help municipalities with now. B. Voigt responded that CVRPC receives money through the state to work with municipalities on Flood Hazard and River Corridor Bylaws. CVRPC is still waiting for the Federal Emergency Management Agency working maps to begin technical assistance. Once the working maps are released municipalities have two years to bring their bylaws into conformance with model language developed by the state. CVRPC has already evaluated bylaws in each municipality. Several municipalities will have to make relatively simple changes to their bylaws to meet the new requirements. Remaining in conformance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency maps improves the towns Emergency Relief Assistance Fund score, increasing state assistance after a declared disaster.

J. Hoogenboom is interested in Forest Road Inventories / Town Forest Management especially in relation to stormwater management. B. Voigt noted that there is funding to initiate this work in the FY24 budget, and that additional funding would allow for a more thorough exploration of potential projects and the development of management strategies.

A. Peal remarked that Wastewater Workshops should be a priority. Waitsfield's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan process resulted in the idea of developing emergency plans for wastewater treatment facilities. B. Voigt responded that CVRPC staff member Keith Cubbon is a great resource for municipal-level hazard mitigation.

### **Announcements**

L. Frasca noted ongoing work in Middlesex and Marshfield supported by the Emergency Watershed Protection Program. B. Voigt encouraged CWAC members to attend the Clean Water Service Provider Summit in Waterbury, 5 April 2024 ([RSVP](#)). L. Frasca noted training opportunities through the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Service and available funding to support land acquisition or conservation easements.

**Adjourn:** *J. Brabant moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:57 PM. A. Peal seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

The next meeting is scheduled for 9 May 2024.