

Meeting Minutes
Addison County Regional Planning Commission
Wednesday, March 11, 2020

ACRPC held its monthly meeting at its office on Seminary Street in Middlebury with the Chair, Diane Benware of Leicester, presiding.

ROLL CALL:

Addison:

Bridport:

Andrew Manning

Bristol:

Bill Sayre

Cornwall:

Stan Grzyb
Don Burns

Ferrisburgh:

Tim Davis
Steve Huffaker

Goshen:

Leicester:

Diane Benware

Lincoln:

Steve Revell

Middlebury:

Andy Hooper
Ross Conrad
Hugh McLaughlin

Monkton:

Wendy Sue Harper

New Haven:

Tim Bouton
Harvey Smith

Orwell:

Panton:

Ripton: Jeremy Grip

Salisbury: Barrie Bailey

Shoreham:

Starksboro: Richard Warren

Vergennes: Shannon Haggett

Waltham:

Weybridge:

Whiting: Ellen Kurrelmeyer

CITIZEN INTEREST REPRESENTATIVES:

Addison County Farm Bureau:

Addison County Economic Development Corp:

Otter Creek Audubon Society:

Otter Creek Natural Resources:

Addison County Chamber of Commerce:

Kent Wright

Robert Feuerstein

Ron Payne

Paul Wagner

ACRPC EXECUTIVE BOARD

Chair: Diane Benware

Vice-Chair: Stephen Pilcher

Secretary: Tim Davis

Treasurer: Nick Causton

At Large: Shannon Haggett

Ross Conrad

Ellen Kurrelmeyer

STAFF

Executive Director: Adam Lougee

Assistant Director/GIS Manager: Kevin Behm

Land Use Planner: Katie Raycroft-Meyer

Transportation Planner: Mike Winslow

Emergency Planner: Andrew L'Roe

Office Manager/Bookkeeper: Pauline Cousino

Eco-Americorps member: Benton Wright

Diane opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Prior to beginning the program, Adam acknowledged the impact the corona virus was having on the country. He noted ACRPC would discuss its policy later in the agenda. However, at this point he asked that all take it seriously, and that those that were sick refrain from coming to ACRPC's meetings.

7:00 PROGRAM: Diane welcomed David Sausville of the Department of Fish and Wildlife. David gave a presentation on work the Department has been doing in the Champlain Basin to promote wildlife habitat and clean water. Work programs include:

Wildlife Management;
Vegetation Management;
Invasive species suppression;
Mast and fruit tree releases;
Research;
Buffer plantings and wetland conservation and restoration.

Dave highlighted the conservation program and noted the Department is actively seeking to purchase land with valuable wetlands and habitat. He noted he has \$4.35 Million dollars to purchase parcels in the Champlain Basin. He is looking for land adjacent to waterways that could demonstrate wetland features or wildlife habitat. Ideal parcels are greater than 100 acres in size or greater than 50 acres in size located immediately adjacent to existing conserved parcels.

A full copy of the report can be viewed on ACRPC's website at:

http://54.172.27.91/naturalresources/Wetlands/ACRPC_WMA_and_Wetlands_Mgt.ppt

8:00 p.m. BUSINESS MEETING: Diane Benware, the Chair, called the monthly meeting to order at 8:05 to address the Commission's agenda.

- I. Approval of the February 12, 2020 minutes:** Barrie Bailey moved approval of the minutes. Ellen Kurrelmeyer seconded the motion. The minutes passed by voice vote with Andy Hooper abstaining.
- II. Executive Board Minutes:** Diane noted that the Executive Board minutes are included in the package and are posted on the website for your information. If you have questions, please speak with Adam or a member of the Executive Board.
- III. Treasurer's Report:** Adam noted that the Treasurer's report dated March 11th was passed out tonight and the monthly budget report through January was included in the package. The checkbook balances are at an appropriate level and the monthly budget report shows revenue exceeding expenses through January. **Tim Davis moved to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. Steve Revell seconded the motion, which passed by a unanimous voice vote.**

IV. Committee Reports:

Act 250/Section 248: Ellen gave the Act 250/248 Committee report. She noted the Committee did not meet. No major Act 250 applications were filed. One new Section 248 application was filed with the Public Utilities Commission, for a cell tower serving Route 7 in Ferrisburgh. However, the Committee had thoroughly reviewed the application in its 45 Day notice. Since the application had not substantially changed, the committee took no action. Adam spoke about the VELCO Control Building proposed for New Haven. He noted he had attended the site visit and is also working with New Haven to amend their energy plan to adapt to this new usage source.

Energy: Jeremy noted that the Energy Committee met jointly with the Local Government Committee and the Weybridge Planning Commission to review the Weybridge enhanced Energy Plan and Town Plan on March 10th. The Energy Committee also plans to hold its second Town Energy Committee Roundtable on March 31st. Jeremy deferred to Shannon to discuss the Plan Review meetings.

Local Government: Shannon Haggett confirmed the Local Government Committee met jointly with the Energy Committee and the Weybridge Planning Commission to review the Weybridge Town Plan on March 10th. He noted it was a very positive and constructive meeting. Weybridge praised the support they received from staff to create their plans. **Shannon reported that at the end of the meeting the Committees voted jointly to recommend that the Full Commission confirm the Town of Weybridge's planning process and approve the Weybridge Town Plan, including confirming that the enhanced energy section of the plan meets the Department of Public Service standards. The full Commission voted to affirm the committee's motion as recorded above.**

Natural Resources: The Committee met immediately prior to the Full Commission meeting. Wendy Sue Harper reported that the Committee has reviewed the Clean Water Service Provider position for the Commission. The Committee recommended that ACRPC respond to the RFP issued by the Agency of Natural Resources soliciting applications to serve as the Clean Water Service Provider as long as it can meet the following 3 criteria:

1. ACRPC leadership confirms that becoming the CWSP is in the Region's best interest;
2. ACRPC leadership finds that the State of Vermont has structured the CWSP function in a manner that ACRPC believes it can succeed in the position without sacrificing the financial integrity of the organization;
3. ACRPC leadership determines it desires to pursue the position.

Adam thanked Wendy Sue and the Committee. he noted he did not expect the Commission to vote on the Committee's motion tonight. Instead, the Commission shall devote a substantial portion its next meeting to a discussion of and vote on whether it will compete to become the Clean Water Service Provider for the Region. Adam will prepare a program for the Commission on the CWSP role.

Economic Development: No Meeting.

Transportation Advisory Committee: Andrew Manning reported that the TAC had received a presentation from VTrans on autonomously driving cars at its last meeting and started its discussion concerning regional priorities. Next meeting it will devote entirely to setting regional priorities for the year.

Population and Housing: Tim Davis reported the committee met with a representative of the Vermont Landlords Association to discuss ideas to support creating more rental housing. It continues to work to draft the plan.

V. Joint Partner's Report: Fred Kenney, the Executive Director of Addison County Economic development Corporation joined ACRPC to discuss a list of priority projects ACEDC is creating for the Region. He handed out project worksheets and asked the commission to help him gather the data for projects the region should prioritize to support with grant money.

VI. Delegate/Staff Recognition/ Project Highlights: Adam pointed Commission members to the highlights he, Mike and Andrew shared all noting upcoming events or tasks. He stressed Andrew's highlight of having towns complete and return their Local Emergency Management Plans as soon as possible.

VII. Old Business:

Clean Water Service Provider: Please see the discussion under the Natural Resources Committee.

Other: Harvey Smith recommended that Adam speak with the Champlain Valley Farmer's Coalition about the Clean Water service Provider role.

VIII. New Business:

Vote to appoint the Nominating Committee: Adam reminded Commissioners that a couple of years ago ACRPC had amended its bylaws to solicit volunteers for the Nominating Committee at its February meeting. Adam asked any commissioners interested in serving on the Nominating Committee to see him or a member of the Executive Board before the Executive Board meeting on February 26th. Tim Bouton and Arabella Holzapfel volunteered to serve. The Executive Board accepted their request and that of Tim Davis, a current member of the Executive Committee that will not be running for office next year to serve as the slate of the Nominating Committee. Diane asked if any other Commissioners wanted to be considered for the nominating committee. Getting no other volunteers, **Wendy Sue Harper moved the slate as recommended by the Executive Board. Ellen Kurrelmeyer seconded the motion. The slate passed on voice vote.** The Nominating Committee will create a slate of officers for the Executive Board to have available at the April Full Commission Meeting. The Commission will vote on officers at the Annual meeting in May. Tim Bouton requested that any Commissioner interested in serving on the Executive Board speak with a member of the Nominating Committee.

Maintaining ACRPC's Electric Charging Stations: Adam pointed the Commission to the Executive Board minutes in their package. He noted that he had asked the Executive Board to authorize him to spend an additional \$4,000 beyond the budget to repair and improve ACRPC's electric charging stations. Adam noted he took the request to the Executive Board because if ACRPC acted before March 1st, it would save \$2,000 on the cost of the station, reducing them from \$6,000 to the \$4,000 he requested. The Commission consented to the expenditure. Adam noted the stations had arrived in the office and ACRPC has hired an electrician to install them shortly.

Policy for addressing Covid -19: Adam distributed a proposed policy for addressing the Covid -19 virus. Adam explained the policy briefly, but noted he did not feel he could ask for a vote immediately after handing it out. He pointed out that the policy did allow for teleconferences, something ACRPC has not done in the past. He also noted the bylaws were unclear whether telephone attendance would count as "present" for the purpose of a vote. Andy Hooper pointed out that as long as there was a physical address of the meeting, the open meeting law permitted voting by phone.

The Commission consented that for this Covid -19 event, it would allow teleconferencing, but would not make any further long-term decisions. Adam encouraged commissioners to send him any comments on the policy.

Other: Adam encouraged delegates to think about who they would like to nominate for the Bertha Hanson award and to speak to any member of the Executive Board prior to its April meeting.

- IX. Member's Concerns/Information:** Bob Feuerstein noted that the Executive Board minutes included a discussion of joining the Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement System. He cautioned the Commission to thoroughly investigate the solvency of the trust prior to making any decisions. Adam acknowledged that it would be a full commission decision and thoroughly investigated.
- X. Adjournment:** There being no further business; **Jeremy Grip moved adjournment. Ellen Kurrelmeyer seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The Commission adjourned its meeting at 9:23 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Adam Lougee
Director