

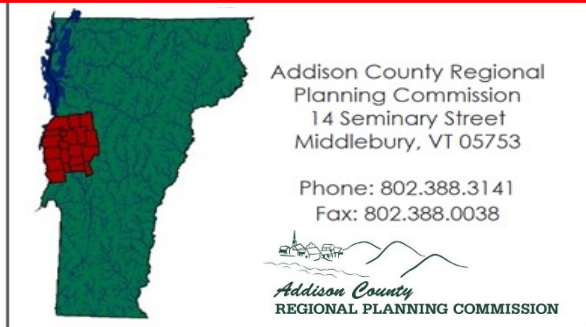
ACRPC update

July 2020

This Month's Calendar

Date	Time	Event
Wed. 8	7:00pm	Full Commission Mtg (Zoom) *No August Meeting*
Thurs 16	7:00pm	ACSWMD
Wed. 22	6:30pm	ACRPC Exec. Board (Zoom)
Thurs 23	7:00pm	On-farm Accessory Business presentation
		No TAC meeting or LEPC meeting

Meetings held at ACRPC, 14 Seminary St, Middlebury, are currently postponed. Virtual meetings are open to the public and call-in information is provided by invitation and request. Digital calendar located at <http://acrpc.org/calendar/>



This newsletter is financed through the State of Vermont Dept. of Housing and Community Affairs. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the State of Vermont. All programs of the Addison County Regional Planning Commission are handicapped accessible.

Shannon Haggett of Vergennes 2020 Citizen Planner of the Year

As a volunteer serving as Chair of the Vergennes Planning Commission and a member of the Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC), **Shannon Haggett** has been directly involved in almost every betterment project in the City of Vergennes over the last decade. During Mr. Haggett's tenure, he has assisted in two re-writes of the City plan and two sets of zoning ordinance revisions. He is a strong advocate for the planning process and is a firm believer in encouraging local participation. Mr. Haggett has been lauded for his patience, respect and kindness while leading the Planning Commission, and he has spearheaded Vergennes' participation as one of six communities in the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development's Zoning for Great Neighborhoods project. Through this effort, the City has focused on the mismatch between available housing and the needs of the community, leading to the promotion of more affordable housing.

In addition to volunteering for the City, Mr. Haggett also keeps regional concerns in mind through his service on the ACRPC Executive and Local Government Committees. Former City Manager and former Mayor Renny Perry has called Mr. Haggett "the template for excellence in planning." Please join us in congratulating & thanking Shannon!

Transportation Projects



Bristol Paving, Lighting, & Sidewalk Upgrades

The Bristol downtown paving project is incorporating some lighting and sidewalk upgrades. This work begins near the intersection of North Street/South Street/Main Street and extends east to a point near the National Bank of Middlebury.

This work entails new sidewalk, imprinted concrete and curbing on the east portion of Main Street. The west side of Main Street will receive new curbing and imprinted concrete. The existing street lighting system will be replaced in-kind with new electrical conduit, foundations/concrete pedestals and light fixtures.



Vergennes Paving Projects

Main St. and Green St. in Vergennes are looking better as a Class I paving project nears completion. Sidewalk ramps and pedestrian crossing infrastructure will be replaced and upgraded to meet current ADA standards. Some minor drainage work occurred near and along the edge of pavement. Signs were replaced and upgraded as necessary to meet current specifications. Existing traffic signals within the project limits received some minor upgrades.

The Vergennes project incorporates most of the proposed features identified in the VT22A Truck Route Study facilitated by ACRPC.

Lincoln Sidewalk Scoping Study

The Town of Lincoln is undertaking a scoping study to explore the feasibility of extending their sidewalk from its current terminus to the elementary school. The Town has hired Dufresne Group Consulting Engineers to complete a study to identify and evaluate potential alternatives for a bike and/or pedestrian facility along River Road from the end of the existing sidewalk south to the Community School. The project is funded through a VTrans Bike and Pedestrian Grant that ACRPC assisted Lincoln in preparing. ACRPC is also assisting with the management of the contract with the Dufresne Group. This process typically includes a public meeting to obtain feedback from the community on existing issues and concerns. Due to COVID-19, that meeting was put on hold and a survey is being utilized to obtain this feedback. The survey is available online and in paper format at the Town Office. The link for the online survey is: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/66MD995> The link will be open until **July 10**. Paper surveys should be returned to the Town Office by **July 10**.

Transportation Projects



Middlebury Downtown Shutdown for Tunnel Construction to begin July 13

The Merchants Row temporary bridge is now gone, and for a period of 10 weeks, from Monday July 13 until the third week of September, traffic across Main Street will be detoured as the major stage of the downtown bridge replacement takes place. During those 10 weeks the Main Street and Merchants Row bridges will be replaced with a 350-foot-long precast concrete tunnel. Construction will occur 24 hours a day/7 days a week during this time to finish the project as quickly as possible and temporary light poles are being installed along the rail corridor for overnight work during the shut-down. Over 400 precast tunnel pieces currently staged at the Fifield Farm off Route 30 below the Ralph Myhre golf course will be moved and installed as part of the construction. A 300-ton crane will be operating to lift the precast tunnel sections into place. In addition, 3,500 feet of the downtown rail corridor will be completely rebuilt, from the trestle bridge over Otter Creek on the south end to the Middlebury railyard at the north.

Main Street will be closed to thru traffic between North Pleasant Street and Bakery Lane/Mill Street and traffic will be detoured to the Cross Street Bridge. Merchants Row is already closed to thru traffic. Vermont Rail trains will be detoured up the eastern side of the state.

For an overview of week-by-week activities from VTrans and Kubricky there is a special Middlebury Selectboard meeting scheduled on **Wednesday, July 8, at 7 PM**. As with most meetings these days, this will be a virtual Zoom meeting but it will also be recorded by MCTV to view afterward at your convenience. The Zoom log-in info will be available next week from Jim Gish.

Thanks for your patience- the finish line of the project is in sight!

For questions, please contact **Jim Gish**, Project Community Liaison for the Middlebury Bridge and Rail Project at jgish@townofmiddlebury.org. You can sign up to receive updates by email at the Town's website www.townofmiddlebury.org, by clicking on Join Town Email List. Or you can view them on Jim's excellent blog at www.middleburybridges.org

ACRPC Staff Updates

Adam Lougee, Director

Last month I focused my monthly highlight on asking all of you for help creating a grant to do broadband planning for the Region. Thank you! Your response was tremendous. We received over 50 letters of support from businesses, educators, organizations and individuals all telling us compelling stories of why faster more reliable broadband connections are critical to the Addison Region. I have not heard back on the grant application yet, but I am confident that your stories will carry the day. So, This month, I am also focusing on Broadband. I am working with several towns in the region to create a Communications Union District (CUD) for the Addison Region. A CUD is one type of entity, that can operate a communications network. It works like a solid waste district or fire district to aggregate capital to build infrastructure for a public good, in this case broadband. It also serves to separate municipalities from any liability that might arise from the operation of that system. We are moving fast to try to take advantage of some changes to Vermont law and some funding opportunities created by the State and federal government to respond to the needs created by the COVID-19 epidemic. We hope our efforts will enable us to help build the broadband network that so many of you need. Thank you again for your help and support!

Kevin Behm, Asst Director & GIS Data Manager

Kevin and Benton have been helping the Addison County River Watch Collaborative with adding and revising web pages on our site as well as reviewing new options for engaging users. Kevin has also prepared a mapping site to assist Mike in preparing Goshen's capital budget for highway projects. He and Adam recently met with our website hosting company to discuss ways to improve and update the site's functioning. Staff will be reviewing the site and developing a list of possible improvements.

Mike Winslow, Transportation Planner

Mike has been conducting site visits for completed Grants in Aid projects. About 1/3 of towns ACRPC serves have completed their work at this time. Mike has conducted a number of traffic counts for Shoreham, and offered guidance to Orwell on traffic controls at unregulated intersections. Contractor work on TAC funded transportation studies in Bristol and Salisbury continue, while work on a Lincoln project has wrapped up. Additionally, ACRPC has been assisting Vergennes and Lincoln in their execution of Bike and Pedestrian Grant funded projects for sidewalks. The Elderly and Disabled Committee of ACTR met this month and reviewed results of a user study conducted by VTrans and facilitated by ACRPC. ACTR users expressed high praise for the services they received. VTrans has not yet completed comparison of services between regions, but intends to do so in July.

Katie Raycroft-Meyer, Community Planner

In June, Monkton and Salisbury's Town and Enhanced Energy Plans were reviewed by the Commission's Local Government and Energy committees and recommended for regional approval. Both communities are looking to establish energy committees and develop local initiatives as they work towards their town's renewable energy goals. Salisbury has recruited three new PC members to continue work on town planning. Congratulations!

The ACRPC Housing Committee met via Zoom to review the recent draft of the Population and Housing chapter of the Regional Plan, always a lively discussion! They are currently working on the implementation section, fact checking statistics and pulling together the pieces of this important document.

Grants

Spark Connecting Community Grant

Round Two: Due to the impact of COVID-19, the next round of Spark Grants has a deadline of **Thursday, October 15 at 5:00 p.m.**

We encourage applicants to be creative in their use of technology and other strategies for keeping people engaged and connected to one another in these challenging times.

Grants of \$500 - \$3,000 will go to organizations throughout Vermont. This grassroots grant-making focuses on strengthening community connections that lead to action and impact.

For more information please contact grants@vermontcf.org. Thank you for your understanding during these uncertain times.

<https://www.vermontcf.org/NonprofitsGrants/AvailableGrants.aspx>

Economic Recovery Grants

Grants available for businesses on July 6, 2020. Please join the Agency of Commerce and Community Development and the Department of Taxes for a webinar discussion and presentation that will cover eligibility requirements, grant award calculation information, grant application processes, and what documents businesses will want to have prepared and on-hand when applying. Webinars will be offered:

- **Thursday - July 2, 3 p.m. to 4 p.m.**
- **Friday July 3rd 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.**
- **Friday, July 3rd, 11 a.m. to noon.**

Webinar log-in and call-in information at:

<https://accd.vermont.gov/content/emergency-recovery-grants-overview-webinar>

FY2021 Municipal Planning Grant

<https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/municipal-planning-grant>

With continued funding support in the pending budget, applications will be due **October 1st**.

State funding priorities for this year include COVID-19 economic recovery plans, fair and affordable housing plans, housing bylaws that implement Zoning for Great Neighborhoods, planning for a NEW state-designated area, and physical master planning for a state-designated area. For more information, see the

FY21 MPG Program Description (https://accd.vermont.gov/sites/accdnew/files/documents/CD/CPR/MPG/MPG_FY21_ProgramDescription.pdf)

and **Application Guide** at (<https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/municipal-planning-grant/applicant-guidance>)

If you are interested in developing a proposal and applying, please contact ACRPC Community Planner, Katie Raycroft-Meyer at 802-388-3141 or kaycroftmeyer@acrpc.org

Announcements

Bristol Completes Stormwater Master Plan, Readies for Next Steps

Last summer, the Town of Bristol completed a stormwater master plan for the village center and is proceeding with implementation of three of the recommended projects. With funding assistance through the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, Ecosystem Restoration Program and administrative assistance from ACRPC, Bristol hired Watershed Consulting Associates (WCA) of Burlington to complete the plan and develop preliminary designs of up to four priority projects.

This past winter, with the assistance of ACRPC, the Town of Bristol applied for and received two new grants through the Clean Water Design/Implementation Block Grant program to develop final design documents for School Street and Bristol Elementary School infiltration chamber projects.

Solicitations for the design engineer will begin this summer and the final designs are expected to be completed by fall of 2021



Triangle Bike Loop Master Plan Released

<https://acrpc.org/programs-services/transportation/bikeped/triangle-bike-loop/>

TRIANGLE BIKE LOOP MASTER PLAN
The SE Group worked with stakeholders to identify a dedicated bike loop that will connect Addison County's three largest civic hubs of Middlebury, Bristol and Vergennes, while providing a safe and enjoyable rider experience, increasing connectivity between communities along the route (Ferrisburgh, New Haven, Waltham, Weybridge). The project was funded by the State of Vermont's Municipal Planning Grant Program administered by the Town of New Haven and coordinated by the Addison County Regional Planning Commission. ACRPC will assist towns in securing funding to implement the plan.



Acorn and CEAC Team Up



to Create Climate and Energy Resource Guide
Acorn Energy Co-op (Acorn) and the Climate Economy Action Center of Addison County (CEAC) are developing an online guide offering free listings to local businesses and organizations doing work related to climate and renewable energy in our region. The guide will be the "Champlain Valley Climate and Energy Resource Guide." The Climate and Energy Resource Guide is intended to highlight the good work going on in these areas and to make that information accessible to consumers and businesses alike. A digital version of the guide is expected by August, followed by a printed version in the fall. There will be no charge for being listed. For more information or to ask to be included, contact Susan Smiley at susan.smiley46@gmail.com or 802-388-6601

On-farm Accessory Business presentation 7pm, Thursday July 23rd

Kaitlin Hayes of the Agency of Agriculture Farms and Markets and Adam Lougee, Executive Director of the Addison County Regional Planning Commission will be presenting: "Accessory On Farm Businesses for farmers and municipalities- How are they created? How are they regulated?"

Kaitlin will provide information on how Accessory On Farm businesses fit into the structure of farms and farming. Adam will discuss how the regulations work from a municipal perspective. We really are looking forward to doing this together to give municipal representatives and potential applicants the same information. We have designed this for as broad an audience as we can. We will be presenting the conversation to the Shoreham Planning Commission Via Zoom, but all are welcome to attend.

For more information please contact Kaitlin Hayes at Kaitlin.Hayes@vermont.gov or Adam Lougee at alougee@acrpc.org