

# Addison County Regional Planning Commission

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## Meeting Minutes Addison County Regional Planning Commission Wednesday, September 8, 2021

*ACRPC held its monthly meeting at its office and via google meet with the Chair Stephen Pilcher of Monkton, presiding.*

### **ROLL CALL:**

<i>Addison:</i>		<i>Orwell:</i>	Joseph Adriano
<i>Bridport:</i>		<i>Panton:</i>	James Dayton
<i>Bristol:</i>		<i>Ripton:</i>	Jeremy Grip
<i>Cornwall:</i>	Don Burns	<i>Salisbury:</i>	Barrie Bailey
<i>Ferrisburgh:</i>	Arabella Holzapfel Tim Davis	<i>Shoreham:</i>	
<i>Goshen:</i>	Jim Pulver	<i>Starksboro:</i>	Richard Warren
<i>Leicester:</i>		<i>Vergennes:</i>	Shannon Haggett Cheryl Brinkman\
<i>Lincoln:</i>		<i>Waltham:</i>	
<i>Middlebury:</i>	Hugh McLaughlin	<i>Weybridge:</i>	
<i>Monkton:</i>	Wendy Sue Harper Stephen Pilcher	<i>Whiting:</i>	
<i>New Haven:</i>	Tim Bouton Harvey Smith		

### **CITIZEN INTEREST REPRESENTATIVES:**

<i>Addison County Farm Bureau:</i>	
<i>Addison County Economic Development Corp:</i>	
<i>Otter Creek Audubon Society:</i>	Ron Payne
<i>Otter Creek Natural Resources:</i>	Paul Wagner
<i>Addison County Chamber of Commerce:</i>	

### **ACRPC EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*Chair:* Stephen Pilcher  
*Vice-Chair:* Shannon Haggett  
*Secretary:* Jamie Dayton  
*Treasurer:* Ross Conrad  
*At Large:* Jamie Dayton  
Wendy Sue Harper  
Jeremy Grip

### **STAFF**

*Executive Director:* Adam Lougee  
*GIS Manager:* John Van Housen  
*Land Use Planner:* Katie Raycroft-Meyer  
*Transportation Planner:* Mike Winslow  
*Emergency Planner:* Andrew L'Roe  
*Office Manager/Bookkeeper:* April Clodgo  
Eco-AmeriCorps member: Maddison Shropshire

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**Regional Planning Commission**

**7:00 p.m. BUSINESS MEETING:** Steve opened the meeting at 7:06 p.m. by welcoming the commission.

- I. Approval of the July 14, 2021 minutes:** Shannon Haggett moved approval of the minutes. Arabella Holzapfel seconded the motion. The minutes passed by voice vote/show of hands with Jim Pulver abstaining.
- II. Executive Board Minutes:** Steve noted that the Executive Board minutes from July and August are included in the package and 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 gave a Treasurer's Report for the end of June 2021. Adam noted that cash flow is the best ACRPC has ever had, that cash on hand is significantly more than we are used to seeing, and receivables remain high. Adam also noted that revenues at the end of FY2021 (ending June 30, 2021) will exceed expenses by about \$35,000, so we will finish this year in the black. Given all the disruption around COVID, Adam stated he is happy with the result. **Shannon Haggett moved to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. Jeremy Grip seconded the motion, which passed by voice vote/show of hands.**
- IV. Committee Reports:**

Act 250/Section 248: No meeting.

Natural Resources: No meeting.

Energy Committee and Local Government Committees: These committees will issue a joint statement regarding the Bristol Town Plan later in the agenda.

Transportation Advisory Committee: Shannon Haggett reported for the TAC. He noted that it had reviewed all Addison Towns' progress on the Municipal Roads General Permit (it is a very interesting study available on ACRPC's website), discussed the VPSP2 priority system for projects from VTrans and received a project update on the Vergennes Planning and Environmental Linkages Study ("PELS").

Population and Housing: Tim Davis reported that a final draft of the Housing Plan is currently on the website for review. He urged all to look at and comment on the document. The Housing Committee will meet tomorrow evening to make its final comments. The plan will remain on the website throughout the month. The Committee will request a formal hearing on the plan in November and then January to provide time for comments between hearings.

Economic Development Committee: Adam noted that ACRPC and Addison County Economic Development Committee ("ACEDC") continue to work on gathering information for their Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy ("CEDS") process, which they will also use to inform a joint economic development plan. They will send revised SOAR Reports, created after a meeting in June, back out to its adviser network next week.

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- V. **Joint Partner’s Report:** See above under the Economic Development Committee report.
- VI. **Delegate Staff Recognition:** Adam welcomed Joseph Adriano, a new Delegate from Orwell. Joseph introduced himself and Steve welcomed him to the Commission. Adam also acknowledged Maddison Shropshire, ACRPC’s former Eco AmeriCorps service member, who will be rejoining ACRPC as our Energy Coordinator and Emma Sandman, our new Eco AmeriCorps service member. Both will be starting with ACRPC on September 20th.
- VII. **Old Business:**

Maple Broadband Addison County CUD Update: Adam gave a brief summary of Maple Broadband activities. He noted that Maple Broadband continues really good work to build out broadband services in the region. It is currently working on high level design for the region with its engineering consultant, Vantagepoint. It also has submitted grant applications to the State to cover all of the costs of its remaining engineering work and is confident that work will be funded from H360. Maple Broadband also recently entered an agreement with Waitsfield CChamplain Valley Telecom (“WCVT”) to serve as its operating partner for its network. This increases its capacity tremendously and allows it to focus exclusively on building fiber. WCVT will provide the other operational infrastructure and services. Lastly, it is renewing its request to towns to consider investing a portion of their ARPA money in MapleBroadband. It has received \$50,000 from the Town of Cornwall and hopes other towns in the region will also invest some of their ARPA money to support broadband. The timing is critical because Maple Broadband needs the funding to pre-purchase long lead time equipment (Fiber) so if everything works out, they can begin construction as soon as next summer/fall, much faster than it initially projected.

Clean Water Service Provider (“CWSP”) update and budget: Adam stated that he had still not received a contract to begin setting up the CWSP. He expects it soon.

ARPA Funding, County Funds legislative expenditures: Adam reported that most towns should now have or will shortly receive their allocation of County money in addition to the first installment of town money. The RPCs and VLCT continue to be available to help towns with intertown coordination and advice regarding the interim Treasury rules. ACRPC will focus on helping towns support well conceived projects that will fuel the local economy in the years to come. ACRPC is creating a dashboard for transparency with the Agency of Administration and VCGI. It is also creating a

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comprehensive list of state funding that will be available for different activities. Please see the current newsletter for more information.

DHCD Additional Energy and Municipal Support Funding: Adam reminded the commission that in the budget it passed in June included two items, highlighted in red, that were not assigned any numbers. Adam explained he expected them to happen, but had no details about the amount or timeframe of the funding streams. Adam now had better information and informed the Commission that he intends to ask to amend the budget at the October meeting.

He noted ACRPC would receive \$75,000 over a 3 year period for covid recovery and municipal support. He noted he was using some of this funding to help Maple Broadband, but the rest is available to help communities.

Adam also noted ACRPC will receive approximately \$80,000 for this year for energy funding, with potentially more for the next two years. Adam noted he had used the energy funding to hire Maddi starting in September.

Lastly, Adam reported that the Agency of Commerce would also be releasing competitive grants this fall, similar to municipal planning grants to help towns re-write their bylaws to support the development of housing and accessory dwelling units. Adam urged any community interested to contact Katie Raycroft-Meyer here at ACRPC.

Brownfields and Clean Water Development Funds: Adam noted that ACRPC anticipates that a lot more brownfields funding will be available this year and has decided to apply to revive its program. It has not had brownfield funding for many years. It also knows of several projects in the region so the timing seems right. ACRPC will publish an RFP for a consultant to help shortly. ACRPC will also serve as the lead RPC for an application to identify more clean water projects in the region. ACRPC believes this program will help put it in a position to be successful when the Clean Water Service Provider program finally gets off the ground.

Other: Adam noted he was sorry we were not able to all get together for dinner at this meeting as we had intended. However, with the spike in Covid cases the Executive Board felt we should wait until a time when it would be safer for all of us.

Paul Wagner asked about the PELS study in Vergennes. He wanted to know the timeframe and what it did. Adam explained that “PELS” stands for Planning and Environmental Linkages Study. He noted that VTrans was spending money ahead of the federal NEPA study process which will be required for any significant federal investment around Vergennes to try and pre-address as many of the issues that may

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arise as possible. By addressing issues early, it hopes to shorten the timeframe and ease the requirements of the NEPA process. Adam noted he expects this PELS study to take another couple of years and then the project would move to NEPA, which will also take a couple of years.

## VIII. New Business:

Committee Assignments: Adam stated that Committee Assignments, as delegated by the Executive Board, were included in the package sent to commissioners. He thanked those that had submitted their requests and reminded the remaining delegates that they could still apply for a committee assignment by speaking with him or any member of the Executive Board. Stephen noted that ACRPC asks all members to serve on our committees as a lot of ACRPC's best work is done in committee.

Review and Vote on Bristol Plan: Shannon Haggett reported that the Local Government Committee and the Energy Committee had met jointly with the Bristol Planning Commission on a stormy night in July to conduct a municipal consultation, and review Bristol's plan, including its enhanced energy plan. The staff report noted Bristol has a good plan and planning process. The Plan meets all requirements for both the planning and the energy portion of the plan. After a thoughtful meeting with a lot of good discussion about the Bristol Plan and the desires of the Town of Bristol, **both Committees unanimously moved to confirm Bristol's Planning process and approve the Bristol Town Plan, including certifying that the enhanced energy plan meets all requirements of DPS. Stephen presented the Committee motion for approval of the Full Commission, which passed it unanimously.**

Meeting Time: Adam noted the Full Commission has met on the second Wednesday of the month for a very long time. He had no desire to change that as it seems to work. However, at least one delegate had contacted the Executive Board and requested to move the meeting earlier by half an hour. After discussion it appeared there was little support for changing the time and the Commission chose to keep the current time starting at 7:00 p.m.

Other: None.

**IX. Member's Concerns/Information:** Arabella noted that the legislature's leadership team intends to hold a forum tomorrow evening to listen to ideas for legislative action.

Paul Wagner noted combined wastewater and stormwater projects were a bad idea a long time ago. We are paying for the overflows which combined systems suffer in

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high flow events now. These overflow spikes prohibit our systems, like Vergennes, from providing more wastewater services and are expensive to repair.

- X. Adjournment:** There being no further business, **Tim Bouton moved adjournment and all voted in favor. The Commission adjourned its meeting at 8:15 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Lougee  
Director

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