

Meeting Minutes
Addison County Regional Planning Commission
Wednesday, April 10, 2021

ACRPC held its monthly meeting remotely via Zoom with the Chair, Stephen Pilcher of Monkton, presiding.

ROLL CALL:

<i>Addison:</i>		<i>New Haven:</i>	Tim Bouton Harvey Smith
<i>Bridport:</i>	Edward Payne	<i>Orwell:</i>	
<i>Bristol:</i>		<i>Panton:</i>	Jamie Dayton
<i>Cornwall:</i>	Stan Gryzb	<i>Ripton:</i>	Jeremy Grip
<i>Ferrisburgh:</i>	Arabella Holzapfel Steve Huffaker	<i>Salisbury:</i>	Barrie Bailey
<i>Goshen:</i>	Jim Pulver	<i>Shoreham:</i>	Nick Causton
<i>Leicester:</i>		<i>Starksboro:</i>	Richard Warren
<i>Lincoln:</i>	Steve Revell	<i>Vergennes:</i>	Shannon Haggett Cheryl Brinkman
<i>Middlebury:</i>	Hugh McLaughlin Ross Conrad	<i>Waltham:</i>	
<i>Monkton:</i>	Stephen Pilcher Wendy Sue Harper	<i>Weybridge:</i>	
		<i>Whiting:</i>	

CITIZEN INTEREST REPRESENTATIVES:

Addison County Farm Bureau:
Addison County Economic Development Corp:
Otter Creek Audubon Society: Ron Payne
Otter Creek Natural Resources:
Addison County Chamber of Commerce:

ACRPC EXECUTIVE BOARD

Chair: Stephen Pilcher
Vice-Chair: Shannon Haggett
Secretary: Ross Conrad
Treasurer: Ellen Kurrelmeyer
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

7:00 p.m. BUSINESS MEETING: Stephen opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. by welcoming the commission.

- I. Approval of the March 10, 2021 minutes:** Steve Revell moved approval of the minutes. Ross Conrad seconded the motion. The minutes passed by voice vote/show of hands with Jeremy Grip and Harvey Smith abstaining.
- II. Executive Board Minutes:** Stephen noted that the Executive Board minutes from March 24th 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 February. Adam noted that revenues had fallen behind expenses by about \$50,000, much more than he would have predicted. He noted that cash flow remains good, that cash on hand is down, but receivables are very high. **Shannon Haggett moved to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Arrabella Holzapfel seconded the motion, which passed by voice vote.**
- IV. Committee Reports:**

Act 250/Section 248: Steve Revell reported for the committee. He noted it had met yesterday and reviewed a number of mostly small projects that had been developed within the region since the committee's last meeting. He noted nearly all Act 250 applications had been treated as minors or were administrative amendments and not "regionally significant" as defined by the Commission. On the Section 248 side, Steve noted some more activity, notably some larger solar projects in Bristol and Salisbury, but which the commission and the town had supported. He did note that the Committee requested that the Commission take two actions on relatively minor activities:

1. First, Cross Pollination, a solar project that is built in New Haven and that ACRPC had participated in at length, has requested permission to remove and replace a historic cow barn on the property. The farm is raising sheep and the barn does not function well for that purpose. **The Committee recommended that ACRPC staff should cooperate with DHP and the Town of New Haven.**
2. Second, the Town of Essex New York has requested to build a small telecommunications facility at the location of an existing tower facility in Monkton. It is small enough that the Region would ordinarily not weigh in. However, Steve Pilcher requested the Committee review the tower application. **After review of the application, the Committee recommended that the Commission find the proposed location in conformance with the Regional Plan.** Wendy Sue Harper, a delegate from Monkton and member of the Planning Commission noted that the proposed small tower and control building is in a no build zone under the Monkton Plan and Zoning ordinance. Steve Pilcher, Chair of the Monkton Selectboard noted that the Communications facility is also largely developed on the site, that this does not significantly change the impact of the existing facility and that the Emergency services the tower will support are also supported by the Monkton Town Plan.

Cheryl Brinkman moved to support the two committee recommendations. Jeremy Grip seconded the motion. The motion passed by a majority on a voice vote/show of hands

(Adam provided those voting against the motion with the opportunity to request a Roll Call vote. They declined. Barrie Bailey and Ross Conrad abstained.

Energy Committee: Jeremy Grip reported that the Committee had not met. However, he also noted that the federal American Recovery Plan Act (“ARPA”) contained a substantial amount of money that can be devoted to energy investments to fight climate change. He also noted that both the Governor and the legislature were interested in this subject and that Representative Cordes of Lincoln had contacted staff late last week and asked for ACRPC’s recommendation regarding how to spend the federal funding and had requested a response by Friday. Andrew L’Roe, as staff to the Energy Committee, had reviewed ACRPC’s Regional Plan and had sent it to Jeremy, as chair of the Committee, to review and create a list of recommendations. Jeremy had created that list and shared his recommendations with the full Commission. It included:

- Increased subsidies and incentives for electric vehicles, heat pumps and residential photovoltaic (PV) systems;
- More electric vehicle charging infrastructure;
- Increased financial support for weatherization for most income levels;
- Development of more large scale islanded combined PV and battery backup projects;
- Increased support and incentives for home-scale battery backup accessible for grid peak load;
- Increasing the current 500 kw cap on net metering projects for municipalities;
- Balanced low carbon generation and demand development planning;
- Transparency in the Vermont climate council process;
- Rail transport, passenger and freight, in the western corridor;
- Renewable fuel development for agricultural uses;
- Expanded funding for Efficiency VT to reduce fossil fuel use;
- Broadband Internet (although separately funded from Climate Mitigation, it has huge climate effect

The Commission discussed how to respond to Representative Cordes’s request and the recommendations Jeremy recommended from ACRPC’s Energy Plan. **Ross Conrad moved to add funding to Efficiency Vermont. Barrie Bailey asked if Ross would accept a friendly amendment that the additional funding be used to promote activities that would reduce fossil fuel use in the State. Ross accepted the amendment. Wendy Sue Harper seconded Ross’s motion as amended by Barrie. The motion carried on a voice vote.**

Cheryl Brinkman moved that the Full Commission support the recommendations from the ACRPC’s Energy Plan as compiled by Jeremy Grip, the Energy Committee Chair, as bolstered by Ross’s amendment and pass them on to Representative Cordes.

Shannon Haggett seconded the motion, which passed by a voice vote/show of hands. The content of the list is listed below:

Local Government Committee: No meeting.

Natural Resources Committee: The Committee met briefly just before this meeting to discuss the Clean Water Service Provider position. Since little had changed, it was a short meeting.

Transportation Advisory Committee: Shannon Haggett reported for the TAC. He noted that it received a presentation concerning VTrans's walking and biking program, VTrans's new prioritization system, and the draft State Rail and Aviation Plans.

Population and Housing: Adam reported that Katie is compiling comments from the last Committee meeting. She has one big push left and expects to have a final draft for review. The Committee will meet again later in April.

Economic Development Committee: No meeting, but soon.

V. Joint Partner's Report: Fred Kenney of the Addison County Economic Development Corporation ("ACEDC") joined the Commission. Fred also wanted to discuss the ARPA money. He noted that about \$62M had been set aside for Economic Development investment in businesses over the next 3 years. He noted he had been requested to create a shortlist of priority projects from Addison County that are shovel-ready. Fred noted that he had consulted with Adam regarding ACRPC's preferences. He noted that ACEDC would be putting the following list of projects forward:

1. Stoney Hill Business Park, Bristol - Infrastructure funding to support local business creation.
2. Vermont Livestock Ferrisburgh - Slaughterhouse improvements to support the local agricultural economy.
3. Vermont Food Collaborative, New Haven - Expansion/marketing to support local agriculture.
4. Childcare facility, Middlebury: Expansion and improvement of an existing facility to increase capacity and services.

Fred also noted that this list will be submitted Friday, but he expects he will need to recreate priority projects for the next few years. He invited ACRPC and municipalities to make suggestions to ACEDC for priority projects that they would like to see developed in the short term.

VI. Delegate Staff Recognition: Adam thanked Jeremy Grip for his work putting together the energy recommendations from the plan as quickly as he did.

VII. Old Business:

Maple Broadband Addison County CUD Update: Steve Huffaker, the Chair of Maple Broadband spoke on behalf of Maple Broadband. Steve noted that the ARPA funding can also be used for local telecommunication improvements. He noted that Maple Broadband is the local CUD trying to bring fast, reliable affordable broadband to all people in the Addison Region. He presented a PowerPoint that he is also bringing to selectboards in the region. It explains who Maple Broadband is, what it hopes to accomplish, how much its plans will cost, and then requests that each selectboard consider giving a portion of the ARPA money they will receive to help Maple Broadband build out broadband services in the region.

Systems Updates: Adam noted that work on updating and improving ACRPC's website is complete and the new website is up and running. John Van Housen has been leading this project for us. John will present the website at the next meeting. In the meantime, if you have questions, please contact John jvanhoesen@acrpc.org. April has all of the books in Quickbooks and is now working to complete transferring payroll to PayData. PayData will run its first payroll on May 5th.

Other: None.

VIII. New Business:

Nominating Committee: Cheryl Brinkman reported that the Nominating Committee had met, considered its options, spoken with the existing executive committee members, determined that they are all eligible and willing to serve, and re-nominated the existing Executive Committee as its proposed slate of officers for a vote at the annual meeting in May. The slate consists of:

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

Cheryl also noted that the Commission would take nominations from the floor both at this meeting and at the annual meeting. No nominations from the floor came forward.

Steve thanked Cheryl for her report and reminded all we would vote on the slate at our May meeting.

Preliminary Budget: Adam noted he had distributed a preliminary budget in the package. He asked all to review it. We do not vote until the June meeting. Adam will distribute another draft budget in May that we will look at in more detail.

Discussion Regarding Covid - 19 Meeting Policy: Steve postponed this discussion until the next meeting. Adam noted he had posted changes to the office policy on the website as we begin to re-open.

ARPA funding for Municipalities and regional Priorities: Adam noted he had sent a letter to each municipality offering to help organize regional or sub-regional infrastructure or projects should the municipalities decide that is how they would like to proceed. Otherwise, we have spoken earlier tonight about the ARPA funds. ACRPC staff will continue to monitor the rules and make them available to your municipality as they are published by the Treasury and the State of Vermont.

Other: None.

- IX. Member's Concerns/Information:** Ed Payne expressed concern regarding Fish and Wildlife buying local farmland and preserving it for wetland conservation.
- X. Adjournment:** There being no further business, **Tim Bouton moved adjournment and all voted in favor. The Commission adjourned its meeting at 8:55 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Lougee
Director