

1 CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
2 PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE - MINUTES
3

4 DATE: Wednesday, June 9, 2021
5 TIME: 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
6 PLACE: Virtual Meeting via Zoom with link as published on the agenda
7

Members Present:

Joss Besse, Bolton (leave at 3:30pm)
Paul Conner, So. Burlington
Darren Schibler, Essex
Katherine Sonnick, Jericho
Melinda Scott, Williston
Robin Pierce, Essex Junction
Alex Weinhagen, Hinesburg
Sarah Hadd, Colchester (leave at 3:45pm)
Eric Vorwald, Winooski
Zachary Maia, Colchester
Owiso Makuku, Essex

Meagan Tuttle, Burlington
Virginia Clarke, Richmond

Staff:

Regina Mahony, Planning Program Manager
Melanie Needle, Senior Planner
Taylor Newton, Senior Planner
Charlie Baker, Executive Director

Other:

Christian Matthews, Underhill Planning Commission member

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9
10 **1. Welcome and Introductions**

11 Joss Besse called the meeting to order at 2:36 p.m.
12

13 **2. Approval of May 12, 2021 Minutes**

14
15 Paul Conner made a motion, seconded by Katherine Sonnick, to approve the May 12, 2021 minutes. No further
16 discussion. MOTION PASSED.
17

18 **3. Town of Underhill Plan Update**

19 Joss Besse stated that this Plan was previously reviewed by the PAC last April 2020. Joss Besse asked Taylor
20 Newton to provide information on this agenda item. Taylor Newton stated that the required edits that the PAC
21 requested last April have been incorporated into the latest draft of the Plan (future land uses compatible with
22 neighbors, educational and vocational training goal, and a strategy that more clearly promotes energy efficient
23 buildings). Regina Mahony described Underhill's process over the last year and added that the additional revisions
24 are in the attached memo. Regina Mahony stated that the changes don't impact consistency with the goals and
25 elements so staff recommends that the recommendation for approval that the PAC made last spring still stand.
26 Planning Commission member Christian Matthews reiterated that the memo covers what has been changed and the
27 process they've been following. The draft Plan can be found [here](#).
28

29 Paul Conner stated that since no action is needed on this plan, he asked CCRPC staff to consider requesting stronger
30 policy statements for promotion of energy efficient buildings in the future, rather than simply reiterating what
31 Town's are required to do (promote use of building energy standards).
32

33 **4. FY22 Funding & Programming**

34 Regina Mahony stated that there are several funded programs coming to the CCRPC in FY22 and we'd like to gauge
35 interest from the PAC on these programs. These include ARPA project prioritization, housing bylaw modernization
36 and energy implementation.
37

38 Regina Mahony stated that RPC's have some funding to assist municipalities in project list development and
39 prioritization for **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)**. Regina added that VLCT is leading this effort, and much of
40 the guidance is still being worked out. Regina asked members if their communities have started having these
41 conversations (acknowledging that this might not be on the planner's plates) and if there is any clear path for how
42 CCRPC can help? Members responded that for the most part this work has not been tasked to them. But some
43 communities have begun talking about it: Jericho has thought about broadband and water infrastructure; and

1 Burlington plans to have a public process later in the summer to get feedback on it. There was a suggestion for
2 CCRPC to provide the municipalities with information on how much money each municipality is getting and clarity
3 on what the state's funds can be used for as it would be advantageous for the towns to access those funds. Regina
4 Mahony added that CCRPC will be pulling together broadband coverage options for Chittenden County and will hold
5 a meeting to try to decide what path to take. Regina Mahony added that the amount of funding is still not 100% clear
6 because there is an issue with the county funding. Charlie Baker clarified that currently the Treasury believes that
7 Vermont does have a "general purpose government" in the side judges. They've made exceptions for other New
8 England states, but have yet to do so for Vermont. The state delegation is making the case that the side judges really
9 aren't a "general purpose government". The amount of funds coming to the municipalities will depend on how this is
10 decided. Of the eligible activities the side judges could use it for revenue shortfall (at 4%).
11

12 Regina Mahony stated that there is \$650,000 for **bylaw modernization work specifically for smart growth**
13 **housing**. ACCD has asked the RPC's their thoughts on whether this funding should go through the Municipal
14 Planning Grant process or should it be allocated to the RPCs for direct work with the towns. Regina Mahony asked
15 the members if they have housing bylaw work ready to go for FY22, and if they prefer how the funding should be
16 distributed. The upside to distributing the funds to the RPCs is that it can be used more quickly than the MPG process
17 (though there is an issue of staff capacity at CCRPC). There was a question about if the funding goes through the
18 RPC's if that means CCRPC staff would do it or consultants. Charlie Baker stated that the idea would be to use the
19 MPG process if you want to use a consultant. There was quite a bit of discussion about completeness of the work in
20 FY22 (adoption would be nearly impossible), what specific tasks can be included (at this point CCRPC staff thinks it
21 is specific to housing bylaw work), and whether a match would be required (all municipal budgets for FY22 are fixed
22 at this point so they can't add anything in to cover match). Overall, the feedback included: the sooner the funding can
23 become available the better; the more time the funding can be used the better (or at least not require adoption within
24 the timeframe); and the more flexible on tasks the better. Few members expressed tasks that would be a good fit
25 (potentially Essex and RPC assistance would be best); more members expressed current workplans do not include
26 this work directly but if it were flexible, they might have some projects that would fit (Hinesburg, Winooski).
27 CCRPC will get some questions answered and provide feedback to ACCD. This will be decided in the next few
28 weeks because it will either be added to RPC FY22 contracts or not.
29

30 Lastly, Regina Mahony stated that the RPCs are getting funding to assist municipalities with **implementation of**
31 **their energy plans**. CCRPC anticipates getting \$129,000 for this work. The intent is for this to be year 1 or three
32 years of funding, but only the first year is committed. CCRPC is planning to hire a staff person for this work,
33 however we want to make sure that we have enough demand. Regina Mahony asked members if they have projects
34 that could benefit from this staff person. There was as discussion that most energy committees do not have staff, so
35 providing staff support would be helpful (Essex, Jericho, Williston). However, it was discussed that we will not be
36 very successful in moving the needle on energy if we only staff committees and don't have any real deliverables to
37 show. Other ideas included: address transportation issues that really can't be done at the local level; work on
38 community net metering projects; grant writing to access \$1 million in state funds for climate and energy; scoping
39 projects; etc. Regina Mahony suggested that CCRPC will put out a minor solicitation to the Towns (Managers,
40 Planners, Energy Committee Chairs) for real action-oriented projects. This would help us figure out how to ensure
41 we do tangible work and to distribute the work equitably. At the same time CCRPC will start advertising for the
42 position.
43

44 **5. Members Items Open Forum**

45 Regina Mahony asked if any members had any items to discuss with each other.

46
47 Members congratulated Sarah Hadd on her move to Town Manager of Fairfax.

48
49 Meagan Tuttle told folks to save the date for the VPA Executive Committee. It will be on Friday, July 16th – in
50 person with potential for a social event.
51

52 **6. Regional Act 250/Section 248 Projects on the Horizon.**

53 Regina Mahony asked the PAC to email Regina and Taylor any Act 250/Section 248 updates.
54

1 Paul Conner asked Meagan Tuttle to update the group on a 9 to 10 story building approved in Burlington. Meagan
2 Tuttle said that the project is next to People's Bank on Pine Street, and was able to take advantage of the reduced
3 parking requirements. It may not go to Act 250 due to the number of inclusionary housing units in the project.
4

5 Regina Mahony asked Meagan Tuttle about the status of the City's proposed short-term rental regulations. Meagan
6 reported that they will move to City Council after the City Council is done with the budget process.
7

8 **7. Other Business**

- 9 a. CCRPC is working with three other regions (Addison, Rutland and Central VT) on a combined Comprehensive
10 Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) currently called the West Central Vermont CEDS. While Chittenden
11 County already has a CEDS this will help us update that component of the ECOS Plan (in 2023); and set us up
12 for the possibility of becoming an [Economic Development District](#), which could provide a more consistent
13 amount of EDA funding in the region. **You should have received an invitation for the first public**
14 **engagement event on June 17th. We hope you can join us.**
- 15 b. State Comprehensive Energy Plan – Chittenden County input meeting. Save the Date – June 28th 6 to 8pm.
16

17 **9. Adjourn**

18 Meeting adjourned at 3:45pm.

19
20 Respectfully submitted, Regina Mahony
21