

1 CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
2 PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE - MINUTES
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4 DATE: Wednesday, January 12, 2022
5 TIME: 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
6 PLACE: Virtual Meeting via Zoom with link as published on the agenda and in Main Conference Room at
7 CCRPC (no one attended in person)
8

Members Present:

Joss Besse, Bolton
Eric Vorwald, Winooski
Owiso Makuku, Essex
Ravi Venkataraman, Richmond
Meagan Tuttle, Burlington
Larry Lewack, Charlotte
Alex Weinhagen, Hinesburg
Paul Conner, South Burlington
Cathyann LaRose, Colchester
John Alden, Essex Junction
Katherine Sonnick, Jericho

Adele Gravitz, Shelburne
Darren Schibler, Essex

Staff:

Regina Mahony, Planning Program Manager
Melanie Needle, Senior Planner
Taylor Newton, Senior Planner

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11 **1. Welcome and Introductions**

12 Joss Besse called the meeting to order at 2:33 p.m.
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14 **2. Approval of December 8, 2021 Minutes**

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16 Eric Vorwald made a motion, seconded by Paul Conner, to approve the December 8, 2021 minutes. No further
17 discussion. MOTION PASSED.
18

19 **3. Housing Draft for 2023 ECOS Plan**

20 Regina Mahony walked through the draft housing section for the 2023 ECOS Plan update that was included in the
21 PAC packet. Regina explained that while the Long Range Planning Committee is responsible for this work, input
22 from the PAC on key topic areas will be very helpful.
23

24 PAC comments/questions included:

- 25 • Alex Weinhagen asked if there will be more goals; and remarked that the need for more affordable housing is
26 lost and the need should be elevated in some way. Some of the actions seem inadequate with regards to
27 affordable housing as well. Regina stated that it's a great point and we can bring greater emphasis to the
28 actions; but we are unlikely to add another goal. Owiso Makuko suggested that a statement could be added to
29 the end of the goal to indicate that additional focus is needed for affordable housing.
- 30 • Paul Conner asked for consistency in terms – in particular the goal at the top without a target, and the
31 Building Homes Together goal with a target is confusing to the reader.
- 32 • Ravi Venkataraman asked if there would be housing targets established by Town. Ravi added there is a lack
33 of clarity at the local level when there is just one large county level goal. Regina stated that we intend to
34 include additional information as a guide at the local level. This may include a table of facts: total homes by
35 town; % of county total; affordable by town; % of county total, etc. CCRPC also intends to take a look at this
36 from a planning area and transit corridor perspective. Regina added that we likely land short of targets, but
37 we are open to feedback on this. Darren Schibler stated that he is in favor of having the facts; and added that
38 maybe we don't have targets as much as set an expectation of the overall goal and an understanding that not
39 every municipality is like to help meet the goal in the exact same way. Katherine Sonnick supported Ravi
40 and Darren's comments.

- 1 • In the chat Meagan Tuttle asked “would the share of housing by town be related to the population projections
2 that the RPC prepared a few years ago?” Regina stated that the forecast is based on historic growth and we
3 haven’t been growing enough; so the Building Homes Together target is likely higher than the future
4 forecast. However, staff will look at that.
- 5 • Ravi Venkataraman asked if we can add a lens of municipal growth capacity (e.g. sewer capacity) as part of
6 this presentation on how the Building Homes Together targets break-down to the municipal level. Regina
7 remarked that she wasn’t sure how to elevate these towns over others, but that it is a good point.
- 8 • Paul Conner stated that the overall housing need is helpful and important; but what about including needs in
9 terms of type and # of bedrooms? Paul added that a lot of studios and 1 bedrooms are being built, but not so
10 much for families in the small a affordable category. Form doesn’t matter as much as “is the housing being
11 built meeting the demographic needs of the community?” Alex Weinhagen agreed and pointed out that the
12 Housing Needs Assessment is really thin on this, but it would be great if CCRPC can figure out how to
13 answer this question. Meagan added in the chat: “Great point Paul-- however, I think some of this might be
14 highly variable by muni, and based on land area available for growth within each.” Regina stated that
15 CCRPC will talk with VHFA about this question.
- 16 • There was a discussion about what the short term rental data includes. Regina stated that this data comes
17 from the Housing Needs Assessment, and they used AirDNA. Melanie Needle provided this link in the chat:
18 <https://www.airdna.co/airdna-data-how-it-works>. Meagan Tuttle added in the chat “We've looked into this in
19 BTV: AirDNA is both VRBO and Airbnb, which is about 90% of STRs.”
20

21 Additional comments specific to the Strategy/Actions included:

- 22 • Ravi Venkataraman suggested inclusion of first time homebuyer programs.
- 23 • Darren Schibler stated that the actions appear to cover all things planners need to do but doesn’t address
24 other big challenges to housing construction and affordability such as labor and materials. Including actions
25 regarding workforce development is important particularly in making it clear that zoning isn’t the only
26 challenge. Also perhaps there should be a better connection to the housing – employment connection here.
27 Regina stated that these are great points. Regina added the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
28 is also being updated and will be incorporated into the ECOS Plan update. These issues will be addressed in
29 other sections, but also CCRPC hopes to use a HUB Site for the plan to better make these cross-connection
30 issues clear.
- 31 • Alex Weinhagen suggested changing action item #5 title from Housing Affordability to Housing Proximity.
- 32 • Comments from Meagan Tuttle in the chat: “love the idea of the plan as a hubsite!” and “A small note I
33 noticed about the Building Homes together targets- 1000/year is 2026 as a goal year.”
34

35 4. Legislative Items

36 Regina briefly mentioned a few items, and pointed folks to the VPA legislative committee’s weekly update.

- 37 • Budget Adjustment Act for current fiscal year (22-0441) – There were some asks to make an early budget
38 adjustment to fully fund all MPG and Bylaw Modernization grants applied for this fall; not clear if this is
39 going to happen.
- 40 • The Covid-19 Municipal Annual Meeting bill (S.172) is in the Governor’s hands and will likely be signed
41 into law this week. It provides municipalities with very similar flexibility to what was granted to
42 municipalities during the COVID state of emergency with regard to annual meetings – i.e. to hold town
43 meetings via Australian ballot or to delay the in-person meeting to a later date. Regina added that there is
44 also a bill to extend the open meeting law hybrid options to January of 2023. The RPCs are also interested in
45 making virtual meetings permanent as these meetings are attended by folks throughout the County (or
46 counties in the case of other regions).
- 47 • Act 250 Reform – There are a few bills on the table already.
- 48 • There is also a proposed bill on the creation of the Municipal Fuel Switching Grant Program (H.518). This is
49 intended to provide municipalities with funding for weatherization and electrification of thermal systems in
50 municipally owned buildings.
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52 5. Members Items Open Forum

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1 Alex Weinhagen asked others what they are doing with their ARPA funds as it appears challenging to clearly
2 determine eligibility. A few towns mentioned that they've been gathering public input in a variety of ways. Regina
3 added the Treasury issued final rules last Thursday; and there may be an avenue for using all funding under the lost
4 revenue category (up to \$10 million of your award, and only Burlington has a bigger award than this) AND this may
5 mean that these funds can be used in a very flexible manner including use of these funds as match for other federal
6 funds. VLCT is suggesting that municipalities pause for a moment while the financial requirements of using the
7 funds in this way can be clarified.

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

10 Joss Besse asked the PAC to email Regina and Taylor any Act 250/Section 248 updates.

12 **7. Other Business**

- 13 a. Melanie Needle will be sending out the request for development activity for 2021 by the end of January.
14 This request asks for residential and commercial development that received an approved CO and for
15 Bike/Ped infrastructure built in calendar year 2021.
- 16 b. The FY23 UPWP Applications were sent out before Thanksgiving. They are due on Friday, January 21,
17 2022. Please let Staff know if you have any questions or want to discuss any potential projects.
- 18 c. VNRC Applications for the Small Grants for Smart Growth special round will be due on January 17th!
19 Applications are due January 17th, 2022. VNRC's Small Grants for Smart Growth program includes a
20 special round of seed funding: To support the ability of communities to implement the smart growth
21 recommendations included in the recently released Vermont Climate Action Plan, Small Grants for Smart
22 Growth is offering one larger grant of \$5,000 in a competitive grant round for affordable housing,
23 sustainable transportation, or climate resilience/adaptation solutions that meet smart growth criteria.
24 Applications for awards of up to \$1,500 will still be accepted on a rolling basis. Learn more at
25 <https://vnrc.org/small-grants-for-smart-growth/>.
- 26 d. VT Bond Bank Capital Planning Contest – the intent is to develop a catalogue of good capital plans. They
27 are also planning to host a Capital Plan Forum in April.
- 28 e. Upcoming Fair Housing Workshop: Removing Barriers to Strengthen Communities: Affordable Housing
29 and Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing at the Local Level DHCD training on Jan. 25:
30 <https://accd.vermont.gov/housing/events>
- 31 f. The Cannabis Control Board will be holding its public hearing for the purposes of hearing comment on its
32 first two proposed rules. Members of the public are welcome and encouraged to join either in person, or
33 via Microsoft Teams. When: Friday, January 14, 2022 at 11am ET. [More information and link to join.](#)
- 34 g. [AIAVT Affordable Housing Charrette Call for Submissions - AIA Vermont](#)

36 **9. Adjourn**

37 Meeting adjourned at 4:00pm.

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39 Respectfully submitted, Regina Mahony