



Northwest Regional Planning Commission

155 Lake Street, St. Albans, VT 05478

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Towns of Franklin & Highgate Conduct Hazardous Materials Incident Simulation

During the month of September, the Towns of Franklin and Highgate, in partnership with the Franklin County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), Vermont Emergency Management and the Northwest Regional Planning Commission conducted hazardous materials tabletop exercises. A tabletop exercise provides a simulation of an emergency situation in a stress free environment. The exercises were designed to provide a “hands-on” experience so that the Franklin and Highgate Public Safety officials can improve their ability to respond to and manage a large scale incident. The simulation was conducted and reviewed by a facilitator and evaluators using standardized Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) criteria.



Each Table Top Exercise was designed to be a one-day response exercise involving a Hazardous Materials component. The goal of the exercises was to establish a learning environment to familiarize the participating agencies with plans, protocols, and agreements in place to respond to, and manage an incident involving a hazardous material component. Participants included Franklin and Highgate Select Board members, Franklin Fire Dept., Highgate Fire Dept., Franklin Rescue, Missisquoi Valley Rescue, Swanton Fire Department, Vermont State Police, Vermont HazMat Team, Franklin Co. Sheriff's Department, American Red Cross and Vermont Emergency Management. The Franklin County LEPC has conducted similar tabletop exercises in St. Albans, Fairfield, and Montgomery in recent years.

For more information, contact Shaun Coleman, Northwest Regional Planning Commission at 524-5958 or scoleman@nrpcvt.com.

NRPC Transportation Program Highlights

October 1, 2009-September 30, 2010

Each year, the Vermont Agency of Transportation contracts with the Northwest Regional Planning Commission to conduct local and regional transportation planning and project development activities under the statewide Transportation Planning Initiative. NRPC staff works closely with a very active and involved Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) to undertake a wide variety of projects which are highlighted below. For more information, please contact Bethany Remmers at NRPC or your local TAC representative.

Transportation Studies Completed:

1. Fletcher/Swamp Road Intersection Feasibility Study (Town of Fairfax)
2. 104/SASH Intersection Feasibility Study
3. Draft of Long Range Transportation Plan, held first public hearing

Technical Assistance:

1. Completed 14 traffic counts for Enosburg Falls, Enosburgh, Fairfax, Fairfield, Swanton and St. Albans City.
2. Collected and reviewed all transportation related ordinances for all member municipalities.
3. Completed speed study on Fletcher Road in Fairfax.
4. Participated in 3 road safety audit reviews.
5. Prepared or assisted with 5 municipal enhancement grants and 2 recreation trails grants.
6. Provided mapping or other transportation technical assistance to all 23 member municipalities.
7. Participated on the consultant selection committee for the St. Albans Streetscape and Federal Street projects.

Transportation Advisory Committee

| | |
|------------------|------------------------|
| Alburgh Town: | Douglas Medor |
| Alburgh Village: | Paul Hansen |
| Bakersfield: | Brian Westcom |
| Berkshire: | Claude Charron |
| Enosburg Falls: | Richard Roberge |
| Enosburgh: | Joey Clark |
| Fairfax: | Colleen Steen |
| Fairfield: | Greg Christie |
| Fletcher: | Terry Riggs |
| Franklin: | Scott Choiniere |
| Georgia: | Jerry Baitz |
| Grand Isle: | David Borthwick-Leslie |
| Highgate: | Georgette Johnson |
| Isle La Motte: | Robin Gutierrez |
| Montgomery: | Mark Brouillette |
| St Albans City: | Chad Spooner |
| St Albans Town: | John Whitney |
| Sheldon: | Jack Dufresne |
| South Hero: | John Roy |
| Swanton Town: | Warren Fournier |

Public Outreach:

1. Held 9 TAC meetings with an average attendance of 15.
2. TAC ranked projects for the Agency of Transportation FY 2012 Capital Program and confirmed conformance with the regional plan.
3. Coordinated the Morses Line border crossing public meeting with the Towns of Franklin, Highgate and Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation.
4. Prepared and distributed materials for Way to Go Commuter Challenge.
5. Held a road erosion workshop for road foremen.
6. Funded rail trail coordinator position and reprinted rail trail guides.



Statewide/VTrans Transportation Efforts:

1. Collected sufficiency rating data for 35 miles of major collector roadways in the region.
2. Collected 6 bike and pedestrian usage counts.
3. Served on the committee to update Town Road and Bridge Standards in response to Act 110.
4. Analyzed accident data and nominated intersections and road segments to participate in the High Risk Rural Roads Program. The intersection of Pond and East Sheldon Road (Fairfield) and the Berkshire Road corridor (Berkshire) were selected to participate.

New or Updated Tasks for the Coming Year:

1. Collect up to 20 traffic and turning movement counts.
2. Complete Rail Siding/Transload Facility Feasibility Study for St. Albans City to determine if there is a market need for rail sidings and/or transload facilities, identify potential locations and document the potential truck volume reduction on highway system.
3. Review and update access management classifications for state highways in the region.
4. Complete Long Range Transportation Plan update.

Notice of Municipal Planning Grants for FY 2011

The State Department of Economic, Community and Housing Development announced they will award Municipal Planning Grants for 2011. All municipalities with a Confirmed Planning Program are eligible to apply. Funding will be allocated regionally throughout the State based on the number of eligible Towns. Projects eligible for funding include zoning and subdivision bylaw updates that bring them into conformance with the municipal plan, infrastructure planning or related projects such as community surveys, feasibility studies, and capital improvement programs, and projects related to growth centers and designated downtowns or village centers. Individual towns may apply for funding amounts between \$1,500 and \$15,000 and consortiums may apply for up to \$25,000. There is a required 50% match from the municipality for any amount awarded over \$8,000 for individual Towns and a 50% match over \$15,000 for consortiums. The grant application deadline is November 30th. Recipients of the grants will be announced by the end of the calendar year.

NRPC staff can provide assistance on preparing the application for any eligible municipalities. Contact us if you have any questions or would like more information at 524-5958.

NRPC Training & Conference Re-cap

NRPC staff attends professional meetings and conferences to stay informed about current issues and trends related to the various aspects of planning. Staff attended several trainings this fall and look forward to applying what they've learned.

In late September nationally recognized planners from the Form-Based Code Institute gave several talks in the area as well as a full day workshop. Form-Based Codes have gained popularity in U.S. as an alternative or complement to traditional Euclidean Zoning which focuses on separating uses. Form-Based Codes emphasize the form and appearance of buildings and sites rather than specific uses.

The Northern New England Chapter of the American Planning Association held its annual conference in early October. Planners from all over the Northeast came together in Portsmouth, NH to listen to speakers, attend workshops and share ideas about topics related to this year's theme, Sustainable New England.

The Vermont Emergency Preparedness conference this week in Stowe featured training opportunities in shelter management, incident command, emergency operation centers, and emergency response planning.

The National Association of Development Organizations had their National Rural Transportation Partnerships conference in St. Louis, MO this month. This provided informative workshops and discussions about planning for rural transportation especially in the changing economy and in relation to energy and climate change issues.

Upcoming state-wide meetings of the VT Planners Association, VT Community Development Association and the VT Housing Finance Agency will provide valuable information about best practices in Vermont and elsewhere. Participation in these and other professional meetings allows NRPC staff to continue to learn new techniques, gain additional insight and fresh perspectives on planning.

e-Vermont Offers Free Digital Resources for Rural Towns

Deadline November 17th

Vermont towns can get free help in learning how to take full advantage of the Internet to create jobs, drive school innovation, provide social services, and increase civic involvement. Eleven communities plus Grand Isle County are already seeing benefits from the e-Vermont Community Broadband Project including consulting for businesses that want to grow their e-commerce, a digital forum to connect neighbors, computers for selected school classes, expanded access to the Internet at town libraries, and free trainings in computer skills.

Twelve more communities statewide will be selected to participate, but local groups must apply no later than November 17 to be considered. Municipal leaders and other local organizations that are interested in learning more can visit www.e4vt.org or contact Helen Labun Jordan, e-Vermont Project Director, at 802-225-6091 or by email at Helen@vtrural.org. The complete application guidelines, background on e-Vermont, and a summary of what the first 12 pilot towns are working on are all posted online.

Northwest Regional Board of Commissioners

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|------------------|---|
| Alburgh Town: | Terry Tatro Barbara Baker |
| Alburgh Village: | Andrea Beaderstadt One Vacant Seat |
| Bakersfield: | Nancy Hunt Dennis DeBevec |
| Berkshire: | Claude Charron Richard Ross |
| Enosburg Falls: | Richard Roberge Michael Manahan |
| Enosburgh: | Ronald Duso Lloyd Touchette |
| Fairfax: | Randy Devine Colleen Steen |
| Fairfield: | William Kittell Marilyn Savoy |
| Fletcher: | Bruce Douglas One Vacant Seat |
| Franklin: | Doug Clark Dan Larivee |
| Georgia: | Jerry Baitz Kirk Waite |
| Grand Isle: | Edwin Gelinas David Borthwick-Leslie |
| Highgate: | Pete Paquette One Vacant Seat |
| Isle La Motte: | Sylvia Jensen Robin Gutierrez |
| Montgomery: | Barry Kade Darlene Marrier |
| North Hero: | John Lambert One Vacant Seat |
| Richford: | Melissa Wells Connie Burns |
| St Albans City: | Joseph Luneau Lazarus Scangas |
| St Albans Town: | John Gray Paul Larner |
| Sheldon: | Patrick Howrigan One Vacant Seat |
| South Hero: | Michael Guernsey Bob Buermann |
| Swanton Town: | Harold Garrett Robert Manning |
| Swanton Village: | Christopher Leach Neal Speer |

NRPC NOVEMBER CALENDAR

Nov. 10th, 5:30pm, Policy/Project Review Mtg., NRPC Conference Room

Nov. 11th, 7:00pm, Transportation Advisory Committee Mtg., NRPC Conference Room

Nov. 17th, 7:00pm, NRPC Board Mtg., WIB Site, Robin Hood Drive, Swanton

Nov. 18th, 3:00pm, Brownfields Steering Committee Mtg., NRPC Conference Room

Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail News



November 8th - Rail Trail Meeting

The Northwest Vermont Rail Trail Council will hold its next business meeting on Monday, November 8th, 6:00 pm. at the Northwest Regional Planning Commission office, 155 Lake St., St. Albans. All are welcome.

November 18th - Winner Announcement Reception & Presentation on Bicycle-Friendly Cities in Europe

The Northwest Vermont Rail Trail Council will hold a reception at 5:00 pm. on Thursday, November 18th at the Sheldon Elementary School library to announce the winners of its 2010 Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail photo contest.

Following the winner announcements, Jon Kaplan, the Vermont Agency of Transportation's Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Manager, will make a presentation showing how several cities in Europe accommodate bicyclists. Jon visited Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, Germany and the United Kingdom to observe their best practices relative to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. We hope you will join us! This event is free of charge and open to the public.

For more information on either of these events, contact Cynthia at (802) 933-8851 or cynthiascott@myfairpoint.net.



155 Lake Street
Saint Albans, VT 05478