



Northwest Regional Planning Commission

75 Fairfield Street, Saint Albans, VT 05478

Phone: (802) 524-5958 / (800) 564-5958 Fax: (802) 527-2948 Website: www.nrpvt.com

Inside This Issue



Better Roads Grants Awarded to Nine Northwest Towns 1

Do You Want a Say on What Water Quality Efforts the State Funds 2

Brownfields Program Undergoing Targeted Area Wide Planning in St. Albans City 2

2016 Legislative Revisions to the Open Meeting Law 3

In the Next Newsletter 3

HUD Manufactured Home Installation Program 3

Energy Planning and Permitting- Guidelines by November 1st 4

Vigilant Guard Exercise 4

List of Commissioners 4



Better Roads Grants Awarded to Nine Northwest Towns

The Vermont Better Roads Program (formerly known as the Better Backroads Program) has awarded over \$150,000 to municipalities in Franklin and Grand Isle Counties to address road related water quality issues. The program is supported by the VT Agency of Transportation and the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources with the goal of promoting erosion control and maintenance techniques that save money while protecting and enhancing Vermont's lakes and streams.

The funded projects include completing erosion inventories and implementation plans (called Category A projects) and stabilizing ditches either by establishing vegetation or stone lining. The program was expanded this year to also include culvert replacement and streambank stabilization projects.

Awarded Projects for FY 2017

Alburgh - Road Erosion Inventory and Implementation Plan

Bakersfield - Road Erosion Inventory and Implementation Plan, Stone Lined Ditch (sections of Lost Nation, Waterville Mountain and East Bakersfield/King roads)

Berkshire - Stone Lined Ditch (section of Ayer Road)

Enosburgh Town - Road Erosion Inventory and Implementation Plan, Stone Lined Ditch (section of Woodward Neighborhood Road)

Enosburg Falls - Culvert Upgrades (Duffy Hill Road)

Fletcher - Road Erosion Inventory and Implementation Plan, Stone Lined Ditch (section of River Road)

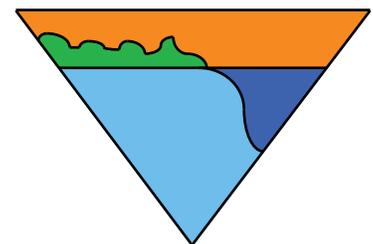
Highgate - Stone Lined Ditch (section of Shipyard Road), Culvert Upgrade (Tarte Road)

Richford - Stone Lined Ditch (section of Berry Road), Slope Stabilization/Culvert Upgrade (Corliss Road), Streambank Stabilization (North Branch Road)

Swanton Town - Streambank Stabilization (Waugh Farm Rd)

Better Backroads

Clean Water You Can Afford



NRPC staff will follow up with the communities that did not receive funding this round to identify next steps for those projects. For more information, contact Bethany Remmers at (802) 524-5958 or bethany@nrpvt.com.

Do you want a say on what water quality efforts the State funds?

Fill out the Vermont Clean Water Fund - Priorities Questionnaire!

The Clean Water Fund Board is asking for public input on Vermont's Clean Water funding priorities for the next state fiscal year. A questionnaire is available for completion at the following web link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FY18CWF>.

All comments must be received by July 30th. The online questionnaire will be open until 4:30 pm on July 30th. Mailed comments or surveys must be postmarked by July 30th.

To submit written comments without completing the questionnaire, you may do so by sending an email to anr.cleanwatervt@vermont.gov or mailing comments to:

Attention: Vermont Clean Water Initiative
Department of Environmental Conservation
1 National Life Drive, Main 2
Montpelier, VT 05620-3522



To request a printed copy of the survey, contact Bethany at bethany.sargent@vermont.gov or (802) 490-6131.

CLEAN WATER FUND

The Vermont Clean Water Fund was created by Act 64, also known as the Vermont Clean Water Act, which was passed by the legislature during the 2015 session and signed into law by Governor Shumlin on June 16, 2015. The purpose of the Clean Water Fund is to provide additional state funds to help municipalities, farmers and others implement actions that will reduce pollution washing into Vermont's rivers, streams, lakes, ponds and wetlands. The new law also established a Clean Water Fund Board to administer the Fund.

Please see the Clean Water Fund webpage (<http://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/cwi/cwf>) for links to supporting documents.

Brownfields Program Undergoing Targeted Area Wide Planning in St. Albans City

The NRPC Brownfields Program is beginning a planning effort to produce ideas for revitalization of the area around the intersection of Catherine, Market and Stebbins Street in St. Albans City. This intersection is along the planned Federal Street Multi-Modal Connector project and will be a prime spot to focus revitalization efforts given the imminent sidewalk and roadway improvements, proximity to downtown St. Albans and the fact that many properties are vacant or underused.

A brownfields area wide plan is a market-based visioning and revitalization planning effort that will seek to achieve the following goals:

1. To encourage private investment in the area;
2. To guide private and public investment around a community supported vision for the area; and
3. To provide property owners and potential developers with useful information and tools that will facilitate redevelopment and improvement of high priority sites.

The project will consist of the following main components;

1. The investigation of land use, environmental and market conditions for the area;
2. A public visioning/design workshop;
3. Reuse concepts for selected sites with corresponding feasibility assessments and renderings; and
4. A compiled area wide plan and implementation suggestions.



To complete this exciting planning effort, NRPC has worked with the project Steering Committee to hire a consultant team led by White and Burke Real Estate Investment Advisors. On White and Burke's team are the environmental firm Sanborn Head and landscape architects SE Group. A visioning and design workshop is planned for the beginning of December. The project will wrap up by next summer.

Any questions may be directed to Greta Brunswick at gbrunswick@nrpcvt.com or (802) 524-5958.

2016 Legislative Revisions to the Open Meeting Law, Act 129

This Act amends several provisions and makes some clarifications to the Vermont Open Meeting Law. This Act provides that:

- When one or more members of a public body are participating in a meeting electronically and a vote is taken, only votes that are not unanimous are required to be taken by roll call;
- If a quorum or more of the members of a public body will attend a meeting without being physically present, the meeting agenda shall designate a physical location where the public may attend and participate in the meeting, rather than requiring special public announcement of such a meeting;
- Minutes from a public meeting must be available for inspection and posted to a website, if one exists, no later than five calendar days from the date of the meeting
- If a public body is required to post meeting minutes on a website, the minutes must remain posted for at least one year from the date of the meeting, unless they are draft minutes that have been substituted with updated minutes;
- The time period for a public body to respond to a notice of alleged violation, and the time period for a failure to respond to such a notice to be deemed a denial, is 10 calendar days;
- Certain violations of the Open Meeting Law require the public body to cure the violation by either ratifying, or declaring as void, any action taken at or resulting from the meeting; and
- No one is subject to criminal liability for any violation of the Open Meeting Law's agenda posting requirement that occurred before July 1, 2015.

For more information on Open Meeting Law check out these resources:

VLCT's summary - <http://vlct.org>

Text of the Act as enacted - <http://legislature.vermont.gov>

In the Next Newsletter!

Stay tuned for the August Newsletter that will include a summary of the 2016 Legislative Revisions to Vermont's Planning and Development Act and what the changes will mean for communities in our Region including:

- Municipal Plan Adoption Extends to Eight Years - Act 90 (H.367) amends 24 V.S.A. §4350, 4385, and 4387.
- Helping Municipalities Create Efficiencies with Inter-municipal Service Agreements - Act 89 (H.249) Creates a new provision codified at 24 V.S.A. § 4345b
- Incorporating the Health and Connectivity of our Forests into Municipal and Regional Plans - Act 171 (H.857) amends 24 V.S.A. §4302, §4303, §4348, §4382, §4413.

Summaries of Legislative Changes from the Department of Housing and Community Development are available at:
<http://accd.vermont.gov>

HUD Manufactured Home Installation Program *New Requirement for Zoning Administrators*



On May 1, 2016, Vermont became subject to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Manufactured Home Installation Program. The authority for HUD to administer this program is found in the Code of Federal Regulations Title 24 §3280, §3282, §3285, and §3286. While some states have opted to adopt and administer their own manufactured home installation programs, Vermont is considered a "HUD-Administered" state because it has not created its own program.

The Manufactured Home Installation Program will apply to all new mobile homes and manufactured homes in the state. The program requires that trainers of installers planning to work in HUD-administered states are registered with HUD and that persons planning to install homes in HUD-administered states are licensed by HUD.

There is one other important change that this program requires that applies to local Zoning Administrators. A Zoning Administrator must now be shown a completed HUD 309 Form before a Certificate of Occupancy can be issued for a new manufactured home. A HUD 309 Form is a form to be completed by a licensed manufactured home installation inspector certifying that the manufactured home has been installed correctly. This process should resemble the process currently required for the Vermont Residential Building Energy Standards (RBES) program. Zoning Administrators are not required to become home installation inspectors!

Please remember that these regulations went into effect as of May 1, 2016. More information about the HUD Manufacture Home Installation Program can be found at: <http://www.manufacturedhousinginstallation.com/>. For any specific questions about the HUD Manufactured Home Installation Program, please contact Taylor Newton at tnewton@nrpcvt.com.

Northwest Regional Board of Commissioners

Alburgh Town:	Terry Tatro Vacant Seat
Alburgh Village:	Terry Tatro Vacant Seat
Bakersfield:	Dennis DeBevec Bill Irwin
Berkshire:	Claude Charron Richard Ross
Enosburg Falls:	Leonard Charron Vacant Seat
Enosburgh:	Polly Rico Billie Jo Draper
Fairfax:	Randy Devine Colleen Steen
Fairfield:	Alisha Larocque Vacant Seat
Fletcher:	Lori Ruple Vacant Seat
Franklin:	Yvon Dandurand Dave Bennion
Georgia:	George Bilodeau Kirk Waite
Grand Isle:	Barclay Morris David Borthwick-Leslie
Highgate:	Richard Noel Shawn Neill
Isle La Motte:	Paul Hinman Sylvia Jensen
Montgomery:	Charlie Hancock Vacant Seat
North Hero:	Gerry Carton Vacant Seat
Richford:	Rowena Brown Vacant Seat
Saint Albans City:	Lazarus Scangas Vacant Seat
Saint Albans Town:	Albin Voegele Bruce Cheeseman
Sheldon:	Patrick Howrigan Greg Stebbins
South Hero:	Bob Buermann Michael Guernsey
Swanton Town:	Harold Garrett Ross Lavoie
Swanton Village:	Christopher Leach Neal Speer

Energy Planning and Permitting- Guidelines Developed by November 1st

Energy planning and permitting are in the midst of major changes as a result of Act 174, the Energy Development Improvement Act (<http://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Documents/2016/Docs/ACTS/ACT174/ACT174%20As%20Enacted.pdf>) that was signed into law on June 13, 2016. The Act includes language that encourages and rewards comprehensive energy planning at the local and regional level. Per Act 174, if the plans meet the standards for consistency with state energy policy then land conservation measures and specific policies will be given greater weight – i.e. “substantial deference” – in the Section 248 energy permitting process before the Public Service Board. In order to achieve “substantial deference” local and region plans must be consistent with all aspects of state energy policy, not only policies related to energy generation and siting. The Department of Public Service (DPS) is tasked with coming up with standards to evaluate local and regional plans by November 1, 2016; a draft should be completed in September. DPS will be seeking input from the public through an online survey and other public outreach. DPS is also meeting with experts with insight into the nexus of transportation, land use, and energy, for the purposes of helping develop the standards by which municipal and regional plans will be assessed. NRPC is one of three pilot regions currently developing a comprehensive energy plan and will assist in the development of the Act 174 standards. A draft of the NRPC regional energy plan will be distributed for public comment in August.

Vigilant Guard Exercise

Operation Vigilant Guard, a state-wide full scale emergency exercise, will take place from July 25-August 2 in several areas of Vermont including our region. Participants will involve 4,000 Local, State and Federal emergency responders including hospitals and the National Guard. Regional Planning Commission staff throughout the state will cover various shifts at the State Emergency Operations Center in support of the exercise. The exercise will involve a large scale weather event that impacts several areas of the state. Additionally, a portion of the exercise will simulate a cyber terrorism intrusion within the power distribution network. This is the first time an exercise of this scale has taken place within the state to test communication systems and procedures to better prepare Local, State and Federal partners for real world events.



75 Fairfield Street
Saint Albans, VT 05478