



# Northwest Regional Planning Commission

155 Lake Street, St. Albans, VT 05478

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## Annual New Board Member Training

NRPC's popular New Board Member Training is back again this spring. The workshop offers members of Planning Commissions, Development Review Boards and Zoning Boards an opportunity to gain the basic knowledge needed to serve effectively. Topics include: History and Legal Context of Planning and Zoning in Vermont, Roles and Responsibilities for all the players, Types of Local Permit Reviews and Conducting Effective Meetings and Hearings.

### Mark your calendars!

**Monday, March 29th, 2010**

The Abbey Restaurant, Route 105, Sheldon, VT  
7:00-9:00 p.m.

**Thursday, April 1st, 2010**

The North Hero House, Route 2, North Hero, VT  
7:00-9:00 p.m.

Please RSVP by March 22 to [gbrunswick@nrpcvt.com](mailto:gbrunswick@nrpcvt.com) or [dperry@nrpcvt.com](mailto:dperry@nrpcvt.com) or call Greta or Deb at 524-5958.



## 2010 Vermont Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Grants

The Vermont Agency of Transportation's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program has announced approximately \$1,000,000 in grant allocations for participating SRTS schools/communities. The funding can be used for technical assistance, planning, design and construction of infrastructure projects with a goal of removing barriers that deter students from walking and bicycling to school. Notice of intent is due to VTrans on March 15, 2010. Application due date is May 14, 2010. Award announcements are estimated to be in July 2010. To review the application, go to <http://www.aot.state.vt.us/progdev/Sections/LTF/SRTS/VTSRTS.htm>. For further information, contact Aimee Pope at 828-5799 or the NRPC at 524-5958.

# NRPC Brownfields Program Assistance Available

One of the legacies of the Northwest Region's rich economic past is an inventory of commercial and industrial properties. Sometimes these properties (or properties nearby them) are abandoned, idled, or underused because business expansion or site redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination. These sites are known as brownfields. Developers find it easier to build on undeveloped land rather than face unknown costs and liability issues of redeveloping a brownfield. The Northwest Region Brownfields Program is aimed at leveling the playing field for brownfield properties by helping owners and prospective developers address these environmental challenges.



NRBP services include:

- ☛ Conducting research and site interviews to flag areas of a property that would benefit from further investigation (Phase I environmental site assessment);
- ☛ Conducting soil, water, and/or air tests to confirm whether contamination exists, and if so, to what extent (Phase 2 assessment);
- ☛ Developing corrective action plans (including an investigation of alternative solutions and their costs) to protect construction workers, to develop clean up plans, and/or to help the site clear any regulatory hurdles. Redevelopment planning is part of this service; and
- ☛ Providing technical assistance to address site specific issues, such as understanding liability laws and insurance and creating strategies for funding cleanup and redevelopment.



All assessment activities and testing is completed by environmental professionals in accordance with the most recent federal standards. Our program helps you investigate both known and suspected environmental contamination, including hazardous materials, petroleum products, lead, asbestos, and environmental fungi (mold). Participation in the program is strictly voluntary and free of charge. Inquiries into the program are held confidential to the extent possible to protect property owners who are undecided about program benefits.

The NRPC was awarded \$400,000 from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2003 to launch the Brownfields Program. The Commission has since received an additional \$800,000 dollars in grant funds to sustain the program. A total of 10 properties have received assistance using close to \$300,000 in assessment funds. Approximatley \$400,000 in assessment funds remain in the program. Our goal is to help recycle properties back into use as industrial or commercial sites, as green space, or for housing, non-profit or municipal uses. For more information on the brownfields program, or to nominate a site, contact Greta Brunswick at [gbrunswick@npcvt.com](mailto:gbrunswick@npcvt.com) or 524-5958.

## Town Officer Education Conference

**Start Date:** Monday, April 5

**Place:** St. Michael's College in Colchester, VT

**Coordinating Organization:**

University of Vermont Extension <http://www.uvm.edu/extension/>

**Summary:** The TOECs are an annual educational event for municipal officials across the state. Many land use topics will be included.

**General Information:**

☛ Registration fee is \$60.00 (lunch included)

☛ Registration desk open at 8:00am

☛ Opening session is at 8:45am

☛ Workshop Sessions are 9:45am-3:30pm

**For More Information Contact:** Sally Cleveland

**Phone:** 802-773-3349

**Email:** [sally.cleveland@uvm.edu](mailto:sally.cleveland@uvm.edu)

**Website:** [www.uvm.edu/extension/eventpdfs/toec2010.pdf](http://www.uvm.edu/extension/eventpdfs/toec2010.pdf)



# Recovery Zone Economic Development Bonds

## A less expensive alternative to municipal bonds

*Available only in 2010*

The Vermont Municipal Bond Bank (VMBB) has received authority from the State of Vermont to issue up to \$90.0 million in Recovery Zone Economic Development Bonds (RZEDBs) in 2010. RZEDBs are a category of Build America Bonds (BABs), used to fund public infrastructure, facilities and equipment in “recovery zones.” The entire State of Vermont has been declared a “recovery zone.” RZEDBs are sometimes known as “super BABs.” Regular BABs are taxable bonds with a 35% tax credit feature. RZEDBs are also taxable bonds, but with a 45% interest payment subsidy. By passing the subsidy on to participating municipalities, the VMBB is able to make a 20-year Recovery Zone Economic Development Bond between 15% and 20% cheaper than tax-exempt municipal bonds.

Eligible RZEDB borrowers include: counties; cities; towns; villages; school districts; and other state recognized districts – the same definition as those able to borrow on a tax-exempt basis through the VMBB.

Recovery Zone Economic Bonds can be used for the following:

1. New money capital expenditures for real and personal property;
2. Public infrastructure and facilities; and
3. Expenditures for job training and education programs.

The VMBB will be using the same application process for Recovery Zone Economic Development Bonds as that used for tax-exempt bonds. A municipality wishing to be included in this July’s RZEDB pool will need to file a VMBB application by May 15th along with the following: a CPA audit of your municipality’s most recently completed fiscal year, a preliminary bond counsel’s opinion; and three years of annual reports. See VMBB’s website for further information on municipal finance and making application for admission to the VMBB bond pool ([www.vtbondagency.org](http://www.vtbondagency.org)).

To see if you qualify for Recovery Zone Economic Development Bonds or for more information on Recovery Zone Economic Development Bonds and tax-exempt bonds contact:

Robert W. Giroux, Executive Director  
Vermont Municipal Bond Bank  
20 Winooski Falls Way  
Winooski, VT 05404  
802-654-7377  
[bobg@vtbondagency.org](mailto:bobg@vtbondagency.org)

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<u>Land Use Planner</u> Deb Perry
<u>Regional Planner</u> Cristina Mastrangelo
<u>GIS Technician</u> Emily Hubbard



## Northwest Vermont Rail Trail Council Meeting

The Northwest Vermont Rail Trail Council will hold its next regular business meeting on Monday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 6 p.m. at the office of the Northwest Regional Planning Commission, 155 Lake Street, St. Albans. All are welcome. For more information contact Cynthia at 933-8851 or [cynthiascott@myfairpoint.net](mailto:cynthiascott@myfairpoint.net).

## Northwest Regional Board of Commissioners

Alburgh Town:	Terry Tatro Barbara Baker
Alburgh Village:	Andrea Beaderstadt One Vacant Seat
Bakersfield:	Nancy Hunt Dennis DeBevec
Berkshire:	Claude Charron One Vacant Seat
Enosburg Falls:	Richard Roberge Michael Manahan
Enosburg:	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 Gelinus 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 Ann Lavery
St Albans City:	David Peirce 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 MARCH CALENDAR

March 9<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm, Energy Committee Meeting, NRPC Conference Room

March 10<sup>th</sup>, 5:30pm, Policy/Project Review Meeting, NRPC Conference Room

March 11<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm, TAC Meeting, NRPC Conference Room

March 31<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm, NRPC Board Meeting, WIB Site, Swanton

## Specialized Training for Your Town

The Municipal Education Grant program (MEG) provides municipalities with funds for training volunteer boards and commissions to help them perform their duties. Municipalities may apply for a grant of up to \$800 any time before May 15, 2010. Communities in our regional have successfully used this program to bring training on a variety of topics directly to Board members. NRPC staff can provide assistance in organizing and providing trainings on a number of topics including:

- ☛ Roles and Responsibilities (Introduction or Advanced)
- ☛ Conducting Meetings/Hearings
- ☛ Making/Writing Decisions
- ☛ Public Participation
- ☛ Bylaw and Plan Pre-Adoption
- ☛ Water Quality and Stormwater Considerations
- ☛ Downtown and Village Planning
- ☛ New Board Member Orientation
- ☛ Customized Training for Special Topics



For more information about the MEG program or to discuss a particular training need, call Catherine or Greta NRPC at 524-5958. Program materials can also be found at: <http://www.dhca.state.vt.us/Planning/MEG.htm>.



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