

**Southern Windsor County  
Regional Planning Commission**  
Monthly Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, February 19, 2013  
Martin Memorial Hall, Ascutney, VT

**Commissioners Present:** Hal Pyke, West Windsor; Norm Vanasse, Ludlow; Tom Bock, Chester; Don Barrett, Springfield; Carol Lighthall, Baltimore; Clayton Paranto, Windsor; John Mitchell, Reading; Joe Fromberger, Andover; Derek Suursoo (Alt.), Chester.

**Guest:** Jim Mullen, Weathersfield Town Manager

**Staff Present:** Tom Kennedy, Jason Rasmussen, Katharine Otto, Cynthia Porter, John Broker-Campbell.

12:15 pm Tom Bock opened the meeting.

**1. Secretary's Report**

Don Barrett made a motion to approve the January 15, 2013 Secretary's Report. The motion was seconded by Hal Pyke. Motion carried.

**2. Treasurer's Report**

Hal Pyke made a motion to accept the January 2013 Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded by Don Barrett. Motion approved.

**3. VAPDA Statewide Broadband Plan**

John Broker-Campbell handed out a summary of the SWCRPC section of the Broadband Plan and gave an overview of the project as a whole. In 2011/2012, the SWCRPC met with towns, businesses and other town services (e.g. libraries), to discuss what it would take to make a more tech-friendly Vermont. Governor Peter Shumlin has a goal for Vermont to be the first state in the country with complete broadband access by 2013. Tom Kennedy gave an update on the project – since there were funds remaining at the end, each SWCRPC has been provided with a flatscreen TV, camera and, therefore, now have the ability to host Go To Meetings and other webinar/ conference call events. The Board discussed ways to improve engagement within the region – including an example the weekly town blog email from Tom Marsh (Windsor Town Manager), and using websites and other media (such as Facebook) to provide timely access to town and SWCRPC documents and other useful information.

Motion to endorse the VAPDA statewide broadband plan made by Carol Lighthall, seconded by Hal Pyke. Motion approved.

**8. Updates (Brownfields)**

**Perkinsville School**

Jim Mullen (Weathersfield 's Town Manager) gave an overview to the board of the town's proposal for the Perkinsville school site. The Town of Weathersfield is requesting \$188,232 from the RLF – which is 80% of the \$234,000 cost – for the remediation and demolition of the 1954 and 1969 Perkinsville School additions. Total costs for the entire project is approximately \$400,000. Town had hoped to re-use the buildings but it would have been prohibitively expensive to bring the two modern school additions up to standards (including HVAC). Currently, the town doesn't have firm plans for the re-use of the historic school house, but are hoping once it is brought up to standard, it can be used as an additional meeting space, thereby preserving the 135 year old building.

The Board asked about why the cost of tearing down the old school was not considered as part of the new school cost estimates. Jim explained that there had been hopes that the school could be re-used.

Motion to authorize the SWCRPC to grant to the Town of Weathersfield \$188,232 for Asbestos remediation in the 1954 and 1969 additions to the Perkinsville School prior to their demolition. The award of the sub-grant is contingent upon the approval of an article at the 2013 Weathersfield Town Meeting authorizing funds for demolition of the additions and renovation of the site into recreational fields. Motion was made by Hal Pyke, seconded by Don Barrett. Motion approved with one person opposed.

### **Windsor Phase 1 reports**

The Brownfields Subcommittee is seeking to fund Phase 1 environmental assessments on four properties in Windsor – three behind the Windsor Diner as well as the rail-yard area behind the Windsor Station. The properties behind Windsor Diner used to be owned by the Rockingham Area Community Land Trust, and now by the Windham and Windsor Housing Trust. The bank is foreclosing on the properties, which as of last week are now going to purchase by the Windsor Improvement Corporation (WIC). All four sites have had Phase 1 environmental assessments done in the past and three sites have had work done on them in the past. Unfortunately there is a 12 month expiry date on Phase 1's so these need to be done again before closing. The properties would be used for long term redevelopment in the area – a plan which the Town has been looking to implement for many years.

Given the speed at which the bank wants to close on the sale of this property, it is expected that a decision will need to be made by the Brownfields Committee prior to the next SWCRPC meeting – thus asking for permission. Currently unsure at cost, but hoping will be much less than \$16,000. Requesting RFPs for all four properties in one proposal rather than 4 separate proposals – in an effort to save money since several properties are directly adjacent. If costs in RFPs are too high, the Brownfields Committee may reconsider funding the Phase 1's – since Brownfield Assessment funds are getting low.

Motion to authorize the SWCRPC Brownfields Committee to review proposal submitted in response to an RFP for four Windsor properties (133 and 135 Marcoux Drive, 139 Etta Fraiser Drive, and the Railroad Property adjacent to the former Windsor Station Restaurant). Furthermore, the Brownfields Committee requests that, after their review, they are allowed to accept or reject any and all proposals and, if a proposal is accepted, they be allowed to enter into a contract with the successful firm. Motion was made by John Mitchell and seconded by Carol Lighthall. Motion approved.

### **4. Emergency Management**

#### **New Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF) Rule**

John Broker-Campbell outlined the new ERAF Rule. In an emergency, 75% of funds for re-building come from FEMA and the remaining 25% comes from a combination of state and local funds. The ERAF Rule incentivizes local hazard mitigation strategies and defines the match amount that the State will contribute based upon the strategies employed by each town. In October 2012, the ERAF rule was amended, modifying the required elements for reduced local match for FEMA Public Assistance funding. Towns have about 20 months to adopt the required elements in order to qualify for the reduce local match amounts – including adopting the most current town road and bridge standards, flood hazard bylaws, local hazard mitigation plan, and a local emergency operations plan. An additional reduced local match requires a town to maintain an active rating classification under FEMA's Community Rating System, or adoption of river corridor or floodplain protection bylaws that meets or exceeds the model state regulations.

Other issues discussed included how to improve the accuracy of FEMA maps.

No action was required of the Board. It is more about stressing the importance of this new ERAF rule and its requirements back to the towns. Tom Kennedy also stressed the importance of reviewing development applications within the Floodplain and make sure engineers understand what the Town flood hazard regulations say. If in doubt about whether the flood regulations apply to a property – get elevations done so the floodplain boundaries are more clearly defined. If a town is considering modifying their flood hazard bylaws, the state model regulations more clearly define the NFIP standards and requirements.

### **Year Basic Emergency Operations Plan (BEOP) update**

John Broker-Campbell gave a quick reminder for the Board to encourage their towns to update their BEOPs and get them back to him as soon as possible after town meeting day and town organizational meetings.

### **5. Update of Regional Plan**

Tom Kennedy talked with the Executive Committee last week. Originally the Regional Plan was an information source. Staff is currently talking about revising the Regional Plan to become more of a policy document. The goal is a shorter, more web and reader friendly document with more specific policies. Staff is going to choose a chapter to start with (e.g. Housing) – look at it, remove the vague policies, make more specific policy suggestions, and then bring it to the Board for their Review. Tom Kennedy emphasized that the data is not necessarily going away – but is going to be moved to appendices, or make direct references to external data sources.

### **6. Review of ACT 250 Applications**

#### **Timber Creek 2**

A second (maybe final) hearing is scheduled for February 22<sup>nd</sup> to revisit traffic and affordable housing issues.

#### **Killington/SP Lands**

There are still issues with traffic impacts of this project – particularly in the ski corridor. Tom Kennedy is still strongly pushing for a contribution towards a Regional Ski Corridor Study, despite recent developments with the Rutland Regional Planning Commission.

### **Review of ACT 248 Applications**

#### **North Springfield Biomass**

In November the SWCRPC received a letter from Chester about their traffic concerns. Tom Kennedy included a draft letter in response to this from the SWCRPC – to be signed by either Tom Kennedy or the SWCRPC Board. The letter was included in the agenda packet and reviewed during the meeting.

Joe Fromberger made a motion to authorize the SWCRPC Board Chair to sign the letter. The motion was seconded by Don Barrett. Motion approved, with an abstention from Tom Bock.

### **8. (continued) Updates (Transportation)**

The SWCRPC has visited nearly all the town selectboards for their input for the Regional Transportation Plan Update. A draft of the update should be forthcoming in the next few months.

### **Old Business**

None.

### **New Business**

Tom is meeting with Donna Sweeney from the state legislature to make 3 changes to the responsibilities and liabilities of RPCs as defined in the Legislation:

- Liability protection for those involved in Brownfields

- Clarify whether RPCs can own assets (currently unclear)
- allow RPCs to accept donations from private foundations

The next meeting will be March 19th.

**Adjourn**

John Mitchell made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Hal Pyke. The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 PM.