

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING**  
**NORTHWEST REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
***April 26, 2017 Draft Meeting Minutes***

The meeting of the Board of Commissioners was held at Swanton Village Offices in the Village of Swanton.

**ATTENDANCE:**

Commissioners: See attached. A quorum was present to conduct business.

Staff: C. Dimitruk and G. Brunswick

Chair B. Buermann began the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

**ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA**

None.

**WELCOME**

B. Buermann welcomed everyone to the meeting. Each Commissioner and staff introduced themselves.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**MINUTES**

B. Buermann asked if there were any amendments to the April meeting minutes. There were none.

*H. Garrett motioned to approve the March 2017 minutes. Y. Dandurand seconded. Motion carried. D. Borthwick Leslie abstained.*

**COMMISSION REPORTS**

**Finance/Operations**

H. Garrett referred commissioners to the profit and loss statement included in packet. He noted that the end of the year is coming and that the budget is pretty much on schedule. He reported that the Commission is showing negative income, but only because the Commission has not yet received expected payments. H. Garrett reported that the office will be buying a new copier. C. Dimitruk reported that staff tried one that crashed and will be trying a new one. It will cost 8-12 thousand dollars depending on which one they choose. C. Dimitruk also reported that the Commission will need to do some roof repair sooner than later because a portion of the standing seam came up and caused a leak in one office. This cost was not built into the budget, so there may be some impact. The building committee is working to come up with a solution to fix the roof. A. Voegelé suggested that the Commission do the whole roof and not spend money on piecemeal repairs and noted that the Commission has some obligation to make the building as nice as the other buildings on the block.

1 **Personnel**

2 See packet.

4 **Executive**

5 See packet.

7 **Policy/Project Review**

8 See packet. A commissioner asked for an update on Swanton wind. C. Dimitruk reported that  
9 there is no new information. She noted that there is mounds of paperwork involved in the  
10 Public Service Board Certificate of Public Good Process but fortunately most of this project is  
11 filed electronically.

13 **Transportation**

14 See packet. The board will review and endorse project rankings later in the agenda.

16 **Energy**

17 See packet. The board will hear a presentation on Act 174 and our regional energy planning  
18 effort later in agenda.

20 **Brownfields**

21 See packet.

23 **Vermont Association of Planning and Development Associations (VAPDA)**

24 See packet.

26 **Regional Plan**

27 See packet.

29 **Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) and Downtown Board**

30 See packet. St. Albans City came in with an application for Downtown Designation renewal,  
31 which was unanimously approved.

33 **Green Mountain Transit (GMT)**

34 See packet.

36 **Clean Water Advisory Committee**

37 See packet.

39 **Office**

40 G. Brunswick reported that the brownfields program has been keeping her very busy. She  
41 highlighted three of many assessment projects: 1) the 1, 3, 5 Canada Street site in Swanton  
42 Village will be redeveloped as an Ace Hardware. NRPC will be doing a second round of phase 2  
43 assessment there. 2) NRPC will be doing a phase 1 assessment at 14 St. Armand Road in  
44 Highgate Center, which the Town is interested in purchasing for redevelopment. 3) NRPC will

1 also do a phase 1 at 14 Stebbins Street in St. Albans City. There is a prospective purchaser  
2 interested in redeveloping that property. The Brownfields program will also be wrapping up  
3 the two area wide plans in June – one in the Stebbins, Catherine, Market Street area of St.  
4 Albans City and the other in the Northern Gateway of Swanton.

5  
6 C. Dimitruk reported that as of right now, the FY 18 budget includes level funding for regional  
7 planning and municipal planning funds and regional planning commissions have \$300,000 to do  
8 expanded energy planning. In the middle of the fiscal year, NRPC will work with ANR on more  
9 planning to implement water quality projects.

#### 10 11 **REGIONAL PLAN AMENDMENT, ENERGY**

12 C. Dimitruk gave a presentation on the recently completed Regional Energy Plan, which is  
13 drafted to be compliant with Act 174 and enhanced energy planning. The Energy Committee  
14 has spent considerable time developing this plan, and the Regional Plan Committee will be  
15 reviewing the plan on May 8. The enhanced energy plan will allow NRPC comments to receive  
16 substantial deference as opposed to due consideration under Certificate of Public Good  
17 proceedings. It is also intended to further the State's energy goal of 90x50, or 90 percent  
18 renewable by 2050.

19  
20 C. Dimitruk reviewed data on the region's current energy use and targets for the future from  
21 the regional energy plan illustrated by smart graphics and charts. S. Jensen asked that Figure  
22 5.7, the solar potential diagram be amended to show the impact of the solar development  
23 target on open/non-forested land, in addition to total land and prime solar land. C. Dimitruk  
24 agreed that this could be done.

25  
26 Following the presentation, the Commissioners continued to discuss the energy plan. One  
27 commissioner inquired how many small wind towers would make up our wind target of 19MW.  
28 C. Dimitruk replied that it depends on location, size and efficiency but it would range from 20 to  
29 50 towers. She also emphasized that the committee intended the wind target to be met on the  
30 later range of the time period – so closer to 2050.

31  
32 C. Dimitruk referred the Committee to the adoption schedule for the regional plan amendment  
33 in their packets and reviewed the schedule. The first hearing will be on May 30, with the  
34 second hearing on June 28. The Board could adopt at the June 28 meeting if there are no  
35 changes made to the plan since the first hearing. C. Dimitruk noted that she needs  
36 endorsement of this adoption schedule to being the hearing process.

37  
38 *A. Voegelé motioned to approve the regional plan adoption schedule and being the hearing*  
39 *process. Y. Dandurand seconded. Discussion: H. Garrett asked whether towns can start to*  
40 *incorporate the information from the regional plan into their municipal plans once the regional*  
41 *plan is adopted. C. Dimitruk replied that the quick answer is yes and she can elaborate when*  
42 *the motion is complete. Motion carried.*

1 C. Dimitruk explained that as part of the regional planning effort, the legislature appropriated  
2 funds for regional planning commissions to help municipalities do energy planning. She  
3 explained that NRPC will be working with 3 towns right away and that they will have funding to  
4 help more over the next 10 -18 months. In the meantime, NRPC will be providing all towns in  
5 the region with all the data produced for the regional energy plan translated to the municipal  
6 level by April 30. Each municipality will receive this data, including all the maps.

7  
8 The regional plan amendment and the energy plan appendix will be on website. Also, there will  
9 be a workshop Monday night May 1<sup>st</sup> for anyone that wants to attend and learn more about the  
10 energy plan. It is at 6:30 at the Northwestern Medical Center's Green Mountain Conference  
11 Room.

12  
13 C. Leach noted that there are 2 EV (electric vehicle) stations at the far end of Swanton parking  
14 lot and that all town and village street lights are LED. It was clarified that he believes the EV  
15 stations are rapid charge.

#### 16 17 **FY19 TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES**

18 C. Dimitruk referred the commissioners to the memo from B. Remmers on capital  
19 transportation projects in the packet. H. Garrett reviewed the details and the ratings  
20 recommended by the TAC for each project. C. Dimitruk asked the commissioners to take note  
21 of the Georgia Bridge B1, which has been a high priority for 5 years and is top priority this year.  
22 G. Bilodeau supported this priority by explaining the danger to public safety the bridge poses.  
23 C. Dimitruk elaborated on the Alburgh passage bridge (state bridge priority #3), explaining that  
24 the TAC wants to make sure the new bridge can accommodate walking, biking and fishing. The  
25 bridge is currently used for all these purposes, but new bridge design does not fully support  
26 them.

27  
28 *R. Noel motioned to endorse the FY19 Transportation Priorities as recommended by the TAC. D.*  
29 *Tanner seconded. A. Voegelé suggested a friendly amendment by adding particular emphasis*  
30 *on the priority of the Georgia Bridge B1 replacement as it has been a priority for five years*  
31 *straight with no action. R. Noel and D. Tanner accepted the amendment. Motion carried.*

#### 32 33 **I-35 CONSTRUCTION RESOLUTION**

34 C. Dimitruk explained that the Eastern Townships of Quebec and Vermont partners are looking  
35 to pass a resolution to support the need and mutual benefit of completing AutoRoute 35 for,  
36 which connects I-89 to Montreal by 4-lane highway. There is a draft resolution prepared by  
37 FCIDC in the packet for the commission's endorsement.

38  
39 *A. Voegelé motioned to endorse the draft resolution as prepared by the FCIDC. D. Tanner*  
40 *seconded. Discussion: The Commission discussed the seventh statement in the resolution*  
41 *relating to employment statistics for enterprises in neighboring regions. It was clarified that this*  
42 *memo was prepared so that it could be adopted by NVDA and CCRPC as well. G. Carton noted*  
43 *that he thinks the highway will have a great impact on reducing traffic on local roads in Quebec*  
44 *and Franklin County. R. Noel asked and A. Voegelé confirmed that the route will connect with I-*

1 89 in Highgate Springs. A. Voegelé suggested that Vermont needs to start talking to our  
2 congressional delegation about improvements to the Highgate Springs border crossing to  
3 accommodate increased traffic. He also suggested that the memo be translated into French. C.  
4 Dimitruk explained that FCIDC would be doing that. Motion carried.

5  
6 **COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

7 C. Dimitruk noted that she will be in touch with the nominating committee to set up a meeting  
8 date. It was asked whether the energy committee will keep going. C. Dimitruk and B.  
9 Buermann explained that this is a topic that should be discussed.

10  
11 C. Steen motioned to adjourn at 8:19PM.  
12