

**Mad River Valley Planning District
Steering Committee
August 26, 2010**

Present were:

Fayston: Jared Cadwell, Selectboard;

Waitsfield: Bill Parker, Selectboard; Steve Shea, Planning Commission

Warren: Kirsten Reilly, Selectboard; Jim Sanford, Planning Commission

MRV Chamber of Commerce: J. Halavonich

Sugarbush: Margo Wade, Win Smith

CVRPC: Laurie Emery

MRVPD: Joshua Schwartz

Others:

The minutes of the April 15, 2010 Steering Committee were accepted as amended to reflect the Mad River Valley Chamber of Commerce as the affiliation of J. Halavonich on page 2, second paragraph.

Executive Director's Report: The Executive Director summarized the variety of projects being assisted by MRVPD, including: the *MRV Path Association* where easement language is being redrafted, the dog owner committee has been established, and the Path Association Executive Director, Autumn Foushee, is meeting with the boards of selectmen of the 3 towns. The *MRV Housing Coalition* is working on the affordable land initiative making connections between land availability and interested groups, such as Habitat for Humanity. Work is progressing on the *Mad River Byway* signage, but the Ap Gap sign will be put off due to financial constraints. The *Valley Futures Network* is working with the UVM Service Learning class using the Valley as a classroom and getting involved in developing interpretative information for the MRV Path, the bicycle research project, and mapping MRV's food system. The *MRV TAC* met in July; the Mad Bus ridership decreased for the Access Road and Mountain condo routes, but increased on the Warren shuttle and Saturday evening service. The 3 towns are receiving energy audits and related weatherization improvements through the *Central Vermont Energy Program*. J. Schwartz is working with the Waitsfield Planning Commission incorporating energy issues in the municipal plan. The *Waitsfield wastewater committee*, of which J. Schwartz is a member, is making progress on exploring decentralized wastewater options and the Town received a municipal planning grant to fund some of this work. The MRVPD *MOU committee* has met and discussed contributing entities, contribution amounts, and potential amendments to the MOU. The *MRV Chamber* calendar is online and provides the opportunity to populate municipal calendars.

Sugarbush Report: The end of the ski season data was reviewed noting where there might be anomalies or data errors. Sugarbush personnel will review and report back on any updates. It was noted that the number of vehicles in the parking lots was not counted in March as had been previously agreed. Sugarbush is discussing with Green Mountain Power the total energy usage in the Valley by residential versus commercial and what's available for future growth.

In discussing employee housing, it was queried whether it would be possible to survey other businesses to see where their employees live. Fifty percent of Sugarbush's employees live in the Valley towns.

Based on utilization, there is a stronger correlation between snow and skier visits than there is between the economy and skier visits. Utilization by season pass holders is increasing. It was also noted that wastewater usage correlates to skier visits and could be used as a measure.

The MOU monitoring days for the 2010-2011 ski season will not include vehicle counts in March unless there's a peak day.

Summer business is very encouraging; golf course usage is up 31% and summer business overall is up 40%. The wedding business has also increased, predominantly for larger weddings.

Sugarbush Development Projects: The Access road is now open; 70% of snow making pipe is completed; and they will soon move to the Mt. Ellen work. Both lodges are coming along well. The next projects will be the Mountain wastewater treatment recertification which is required every 5 years, and the surface lift at Mt. Ellen with GMVS. MRVPD supports the recertification of the Mountain wastewater treatment facility, and will provide a letter of support for the Mt. Ellen surface lift.

State Byway Committee: A new committee is being formed regarding byway work with a representative on the committee from each VT Byway. The Committee will develop a state byway plan. J. Schwartz and S. Klein are members of the MRV Byway Committee, but are not necessarily available to represent MRV on the state committee. The state committee will do a lot of work with tourism, and someone from the Valley should be on the committee. They would meet 4 times a year for a full day each meeting. It was suggested that S. Gladzuc from the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission be asked to represent the Valley.

Renewable Energy in the MRV: Waitsfield wants to have more discussion with residents about wind power and other forms of renewable energy before pursuing any town plan changes. It was stated that MRVPD needs to recognize that development of the ridgeline is a Valley-wide issue and needs to be addressed. Some of the associated issues are the town plan as a vision, but being interpreted as regulatory; town plans need a clear community vision in order to have boards, such as the Public Service Board, rule appropriately. We still need to discuss the energy future of the Valley, including consumption, amount of supply, demand and types of energy supply. Residents need to know the full cost of energy in all forms. With VT Community Foundation funding, it is hoped that the Orton Foundation can be used to facilitate a discussion on the Valley's needs, supply, and interest in a variety of renewable energy sources.

MOU Committee Update: Members met with Mad River Glen representatives to discuss what MRVPD is and try to get MRG involved in the data collection and have them attend the next Steering Committee meeting. It's important to recognize that MRG is a member of the Chamber, the Chamber has a member on the Steering Committee, but the Chamber doesn't contribute to the MRVPD's budget. The MOU Committee is looking at the fee structure of the MRVPD. A review of the MOU requirements is being prepared by J. Lisai for the September meeting.

Next Meeting of the Steering Committee: September 16, 2010 at 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Emery