

Mad River Valley Planning District

Steering Committee

March 16, 2017, 7:00 P.M.

General Wait House, Waitsfield

Present were:

Fayston: Chuck Martel, Selectboard

Waitsfield: Kari Dolan, Selectboard; Steve Shea, Planning Commission, Bob Cook, Planning Commission

Warren: Bob Ackland, Selectboard; Jim Sanford, Planning Commission

Sugarbush: Margo Wade

CVRPC: Eric Vorwald

MRV Chamber of Commerce: Peter MacLaren

MRVPD: Joshua Schwartz; Kristine Keeney

The meeting opened at 7:00pm. Bob Ackland, Chair, brought the meeting to order.

I. Meeting Minutes from the February 16, 2017 Steering Committee Meeting

- a. Bob asked if there was a motion to accept the meeting minutes from the February 16, 2017 Steering Committee meeting. Peter McClaren provided the first motion, and Steve Shea seconded.

II. Executive Director's Highlights of Staff Report: J. Schwartz provided the Committee updates on the various efforts and projects that staff have been working on over the last month. He highlighted projects related to economic development, transportation, housing, recreation, data, and municipal assistance.

Economic Development

- a. V-DAT - Warren Main Street Improvement Project
 - i. Phase II of the State Environmental Review is almost complete; there will be a 30-day public comment period following the completion of the Environmental Review before the bid period can begin.
 - ii. Kristine wrote a Letter of Support for the Town of Warren's grant application to the Better Back Roads program to help cover the cost of needed stormwater improvements on Main Street.
 - iii. Kristine is working on completing a grant application for the Animating Infrastructure program at the VT Arts Council for an artist bike rack on Main Street.
- b. V-DAT- Waitsfield Pocket Park/Lovett Park Project
 - i. All permits have been secured and the project team is currently working on finalizing the ADA review.
 - ii. Phase II Environmental Review approved and released on 3/15. Project Manager Isaac Wagner is currently working on developing bid documents.
- c. December Killington rescinded their LOT on sales at Town Meeting.
 - i. They will continue to collect LOT on meals, rooms, and alcohol
 - ii. Killington Resort and the Chamber of Commerce are planning on spending additional money for marketing, to make up for the loss in revenue from the LOT.
 - iii. Bob Ackland pointed out that the vote to repeal the LOT sales tax passed by a very small margin.

Flood Resilience/Water Quality

- a. Joshua is serving on the Ridge to River Taskforce's Planning Technical Team, which met on 2/23. Joshua is working with members of the PTT to develop a generalized suite of stormwater

recommendations/best practices. In addition, the VLCT representative to PTT is putting together recommendations for driveway policies.

- b. The 2017 Leahy Center Environmental Summit will take place 3/24-25 at the ECHO Center in Burlington. The MRV is expecting to bring a team to this year's event, which is entitled *Our Clean Water Future - Building Resilience and Creating a Culture of Clean Water*.
- c. The Watershed Resilience Guides introduced at the December Ridge to River public event, Embracing a Mad River, are now available online.
- d. Joshua had a follow-up conversation with the EPA Sustainable Communities Office inquiring as to the MRV's progress since their Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) project. Joshua provided a variety of updates, such as the MRV Hill Farm Research Project, Waitsfield Decentralized Wastewater Project, and the Ridge to River effort, amongst others. They asked Josh to come to DC.
- e. Jim asked about the FEMA Customer Experience event that took place in August 2016. Josh said it was lightly attended and there were representatives from the Town of Warren. Jim said he wasn't aware of the event. Josh explained that he was notified last minute.
- f. The Clean Water Roadmap has just been released by the State of Vermont, with support from Keurig Green Mtn and The Nature Conservancy. It's a web-based mapping tool that geographically shows and quantifies phosphorus sources by land use sector across the Lake Champlain Basin in Vermont. <https://arcgis.limno.com/CleanWaterRoadmap/Home.vbhtml>

Transportation

- d. The MRV Transportation Advisory Committee met on 3/8 and discussed ongoing MRV transportation projects and marketing and outreach efforts that will increase Mad Bus ridership.
 - i. New MRG GM, Matt Lillard, was in attendance to work with the group to iron out details related to possible service to MRG next season to help alleviate their current parking problems on busy weekends. MRG will be promoting SnowCap service for the weekend of 3/19-3/20 to help alleviate parking issues. Peter asked if that is only once in the morning and in the evening? Margo confirmed only limited service is currently available to MRG on the Mad Bus.
- e. Dan Currier confirmed that one leg of the traffic counter at the intersection of Route 17 & Route 100 is damaged. There will need to be conversations with the MRVPD, Sugarbush, CVPRC, and VTrans about fixing or entirely replacing the counter. The group is currently engaged with VTrans with the hope that they will replace, and hopefully, take over ownership of the counter due to its location at the intersection of two state routes.
- f. Kristine provided the group an update on the VTrans paving prioritization process- MRVPD ensured all three towns had a representative at the 2/28 CVRPCTAC meeting and compiled data in support of prioritizing Route 17 at the regional level. Route 17 was listed on VTrans's paving list as #57, but the town representatives and Kristine were able to persuade the group to prioritize it as the #2 priority for the region.
 - i. This effort bumped Route 17 up to #39 on VTrans's paving list, however, due to the limited funding available this construction season it was not chosen for repaving. VTrans said that Route 17 would receive patching and spot leveling.
- g. Kristine is working with VT's Bike & Pedestrian Coordinator regarding:
 - i. Adding Rt. 17 as a test site for VTrans new bike counters this spring/summer, as well as Rt. 100 through Waitsfield
 - ii. Working with District regarding restriping of Rt. 100 (adjusted location of a Shared Lane Marking in Waitsfield Village).
 - iii. Replace Bike Lane Ends sign with a Bikes May Use Full Lane sign.

Housing

- h. MRV Housing Study 2017
 - i. Kristine will be attending a Rotary breakfast on 3/22 to talk about the Housing Study.

- ii. Kristine met with the Waitsfield Planning Commission on 2/21 to discuss the recommendations of the Housing Study for consideration in the update of the housing chapter of their Town Plan.
- iii. Kristine held a meeting in Waitsfield for 2/24 related to tiny house code and zoning with Waitsfield Zoning Administrator, Will Eberle (Agency of Human Services), Downstreet, and a representative from Norwich University's Creating Affordable Sustainable Architecture (CASA) Initiative in attendance. The group discussed at length how tiny houses fit within the existing zoning code either as single-family dwellings, accessory dwelling units, or a grouping as a PRD.
- iv. The Housing Study is being finalized and a shorter summary document will be created.

Recreation

- a. Mad River Path Update: MRPA just hired a new Executive Director, Ned Farquhar, to lead the organization. His first day will be on 3/20. Joshua and Kristine have scheduled a kick-off meeting with Ned on 3/21.
- b. Joshua is scheduled to attend an Outdoor Recreation & Conservation Forum being held by VHCB & VT Land Trust on 3/22, which is focusing on conservation & economic development, resiliency & water quality, and collaboration.
- c. Josh will also be attending a conference in May conference related to econ. Development and trail; he will be presenting the MRV Moves plan.

Data

- a. The 2016 Data Report is available on the MRVPD's website:
<http://mrvpd.org/MRVDataReport.php>
- b. Hard copies were distributed to all three towns before Town Meeting. Copies are available for all Steering Committee members in the MRVPD office.

Municipal

- a. Joshua and Kristine both attended the Waitsfield Town Meeting.
- b. Kristine has organized a roundtable with ZAs from all three towns on 3/23 from 12:00 am-1:00 pm at the General Wait House. Planning Commission members are encouraged to join.

III. New Business

a. Housing Study Recommendation Presentation

- i. Kristine presented the recommendations of the draft Housing Study to the Steering Committee.
- ii. Bob said that it is obvious that there's a housing affordability problem, but we still don't understand why there is no demand to develop new housing. He suggested talking to developers to understand what it would take to make new development happen in the MRV. Kristine explained that she has spoken to a local developer and she suggested that the costs associated with development make it very hard to keep the selling or rental price affordable and still make any money. Jim Sanford said that in his experience this is the challenge in developing affordable housing.
- iii. In the "development" recommendations section, it was suggested to change the colors on the MRV Housing Opportunities Map in order to better differentiate between Town Owned Parcels and Other Priority Parcels. There were also two suggestions for properties for Adaptive Reuse including Mad Bush Inn and Eagan's Pub.
- iv. Kari Dolan asked staff to categorize the study recommendations by town and collective efforts.

b. CVRPC Energy Survey

- i. This item was removed from the agenda because there was not enough time to complete it. Eric Vorwald encouraged a representative from the Selectboard and Planning Commission in each town to submit a survey. He said they have received two responses

from the Fayston Selectboard but not one from the Planning Commission. Warren has only submitted a survey response from the Planning Commission.

c. Sugarbush Update

- i. Margo provided an update from Sugarbush:
- ii. Sunny D and Village Double lifts will be replaced – Both Fayston and Warren will have to review the applicable projects. The projects will also be reviewed by the Forest Service and will go to Act 250 as small projects.
- iii. Mt. Ellen will host the Friendly Gathering Music Festival the weekend of June 29th- July 1st.
 1. The event organizers wanted Sugarbush to try and amend their Act 250 permit to related to playing amplified music past 11:00pm. Sugarbush does not believe it would be possible to get it amended in time and is supporting the 11:00pm cut off time. The Fayston selectboard will be writing a letter to Act 250 saying they're concerned about amplified music past the time stated in the permit.
 2. Sugarbush said they could play non-amplified music after 11pm. She said if the event goes well and the community is on board, next year they will consider Act 250 permit amendment.
 3. Margo said the event should only draw about 3,500 people.
 4. A member of the committee asked about shuttle service from Mad Bus and Margo said it would have to be an event of "regional significance." She explained that other events in the Valley have asked for Mad Bus service in the past but have not received it.

IV. Old Business

a. Community Vitality Project Update

- i. Bob said the CVP group is focusing on recreation and they feel that they are in a place to support 3 of 4 projects. Their next meeting will be held on 3/22.

Bob Ackland made a motion to adjourn and Steve Shea seconded it. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristine Keeney