

**Mad River Valley Planning District
Steering Committee
March 24, 2010**

Present were:

Fayston: Jared Cadwell, Selectperson; Chuck Martel, Planning Commissioner
Waitsfield: Sal Spinosa, Selectperson alternate
Warren: Kirsten Reilly, Selectperson, Jim Sanford, Planning Commissioner
MRV Chamber of Commerce: Jim Halavonich
Sugarbush: Win Smith
CVRPC:
MRVPD: Joshua Schwartz
Others: Autumn Foushee, Laura Brines, & Betsy Jondro, MR Path

The minutes of the February 18, 2010 Steering Committee were accepted as written. Thanks was given to Steve Shea for serving as minute taker at the February meeting.

Director's Report: J. Schwartz updated the members on various events and activities in which the Planning District is involved, including: Costs are being finalized for fabrication of MR Byway fabrication kiosks and interpretive signs - installation is expected by June; Six project submissions have been received in preparation for the second installment of the MRV focused UVM Service Learning Class entitled *Local Community Initiatives* - Joshua is working with the UVM instructor to identify three viable projects for the course to take place fall 2010; All three towns and two schools met the 2/23 final application deadline for the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants (EECBG) Competitive Local Government Sub-Grant program - final determination is anticipated in April; The Central VT Energy Program, sponsored by CVRPC, has a 4/30 application deadline for municipal building audits and related weatherization improvements; The MRV Trail Summit on 3/10 successful involved over 20 participants; MRVPD provided a letter of support to Waitsfield Telecom for their application to the ARRA Broadband Initiatives Program for \$30 million in funding; and the Forest Wildlife Communities Project recently received three funding opportunities: 1) \$15k from the National Forest Foundation, 2) \$93k from USDA's State & Private Forestry Program, and 3) \$5k from the National Wildlife Federation.

Mad River Path Update: Autumn Foushee has served as MRPA's Executive Director for the past 5 weeks. Autumn is finishing a Masters in Natural Resources Planning from UVM and is originally from a farming family in Kentucky. Some of Autumn's primary work up to this point has been contacting existing landowners. Members of the MRPA Board and Autumn met with Elwin Neill to discuss renewing the Path agreement for the Greenway. MRPA is partnering with Sugarbush for the Sugarbush Adventure Games. So far MRPA has garnered \$6k in sponsorships. MRPA is also helping with gathering volunteers. Proceeds will be going to MRPA. MRPA's membership drive is in full swing. 1000 letters were sent the previous week and another 2000 are planned within the month. One primary change has been moving the membership year to a calendar year (instead of fiscal year). The response to the letters has been positive. In 2008 MRPA had 180 members – in 2009 membership grew to 360. 100 of those members had lapsed. In addition to membership letters, MRPA will be starting up the newsletter again this summer. After a few years off, the newsletter will be sent out 2x/year. MRPA is now in sound financial footing thanks to MRV Rec District funds and other efforts culminating in the hiring of Autumn. In comparison to its deficit a year ago, the organization has \$30k in the bank, and an additional \$5k recently came through a trust. MRPA is looking to support a MRV Dog Summit on 4/27 to be facilitated and organized by Karen Anderson. With representation from each town, the summit will brainstorm about a future dog park and other ways to address issues regarding dogs on public paths and land. The Path doesn't see dog control within its mission. Sal Spinosa offered to clarify Waitsfield's dog ordinance. The intent is to identify ordinance continuity between the three towns. Trail work season is about to commence. Primary focus is on Kingsbury Farm and a grant funded bridge project near Riverside Park.

Welcome new Warren Selectboard Representative (Kirstin Reilly): Kirstin provided an update on activity within Warren. The Warren SB has approved mapping of the path linking the Warren School and the village and sees the path as a public right of way. The path is currently in litigation. The SB held a forum to discuss the proposed park and ride lot at E Warren Community Market. The town will install a gravel surface with no lighting. The town is finalizing a safe routes to school infrastructure grant. If funded, Warren will fund similar projects currently being undertaken in Waitsfield and Moretown – radar feedback signs, improved path to school, Brook Rd. sidewalk connecting Flat Iron and Main Street.

Appointment of Officers: On motion from Chuck M. and seconded by Jim H., the board unanimously approved the following officers for FY11: Jared C. Chair, Jim S. Vice Chair, and Laurie E. Secretary/Treasurer.

GMTA/CCTA Restructuring Sub-Committee Update: Joshua, Jared, Jim H., and Margo met on 3/17 to discuss MRVPD's options in the face of GMTA's proposed structural changes. The Legislature is currently discussing a structure change that will result in MRVPD losing its seat on the GMTA Board of Directors (currently held by Margo). Although the loss of a Board seat is unavoidable, the 3/17 meeting yielded the following action items: Margo will explore how Stowe is handling this similar situation, Margo will speak with Chris Cole, CCTA's GM, and express our concerns and explore other future involvement, and Joshua and Margo will look to reinforce the work of the MRV Transportation Advisory Committee.

Law Enforcement: Win Smith shared examples of police coverage in the valley that is "bordering on outright harassment." Sugarbush guests have threatened to not return due to the prevalence of "unproductive" police coverage (tickets for rolling stops, multiple State Police on German Flats Road at one time, road blocks off I89 exit 4 during Christmas week, etc). While traffic control is up, it was stated that response to thefts and break-ins has proven to be extremely slow. It was stated that more balance is needed between the two types of coverage. Kirstin Reilly stated that the Warren SB is hosting an open meeting on 3/29 to discuss crime, traffic control, and working cooperatively with the businesses and town. Suggestions for action include directing Wa. County Sheriff to drive around during high break-in times and individual SC members to speak with those that they know who work at the Middlesex Barracks. It was stated that Peter Laskowski has begun forming an association with local constables in order to enhance communication and collaboration.

FY 2011 MRVPD Work Plan: On motion from Jared, seconded by Sal, the Steering Committee voted to accept the FY11 Work Plan as presented. Of high priority is exploring the MOU, which will include the creation of a sub-committee with monthly reports.

Sugarbush Construction: Win shared the amended Phase 1B plans for Lincoln Peak. Phase 1B was originally approved in 2009 and consist of an adult ski school/rental building and children's ski school building, and related improvements. The amended project reduces the overall square footage by 5,500 sq ft, consists of two buildings instead of three, and results in various façade changes to those buildings. Demo for the project is slated for the first of April. In addition, SB is looking at replacing its snowmaking artery along the Access Rd. and German Flats Rd in the summer. The Access Rd. pipe has been losing water at a rate of 1200 gallons/minute.

Next Meeting of the Steering Committee: April 15, 2010 at 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joshua Schwartz