

Steering Committee
Mad River Valley Planning District
Minutes
June 23, 2011

Present were:

Fayston: Jared Cadwell, Selectmen; Chuck Martel, Planning Commissioner

Waitsfield: Bill Parker, Selectman; Steve Shea, Planning Commissioner

Warren: Bob Ackland, Selectman; Jim Sanford, Planning Commissioner

MRV Chamber of Commerce: Jim Halavonich

Sugarbush: Margo Wade, Hardy Merrill, Win Smith

CVRPC: Laurie Emery

MRVPD: Joshua Schwartz

Others:

The minutes of the April 28, 2011 Steering Committee were approved as written.

It was moved, seconded, and unanimously voted to approve the People's United Bank resolution authorizing Jared Cadwell and Charles Martel as signers on the MRVPD account.

Director's Report: New zoning administrators have been hired by Fayston (Carol Chamberlin) and Waitsfield (Susan Senning). Municipal planning grants applications are due September 30. Funds up to \$8,000 do not require any match; funds above \$8,000 to the maximum available of \$15,000 require a cash match (not in-kind time). MRV energy coordinators are developing a series of 5 presentations on energy topics through the VECAN grant program. The Legislator passed a "fix" for the issues with the PACE (property assessed clean energy) program. Waitsfield will now be able to move forward with their district. The Localvolts farm to plate presentation May 10 was a big success. The Mad River food hub facility is being renovated and is located at Irasville business park. Several grants have been awarded for this project, including \$10,000 from the VT Housing and Conservation Board and \$7,500 from the VT Sustainable Jobs fund. Other grant applications are being considered by various funding organizations. The MRV Recreation District awarded the MR Path Assoc an additional \$5,000 to fund the MRPA Director's position full time. MRVPD served as a host site for the wildlife and habitat planning webinars being presented by ANR staff. The Forests, Wildlife, Communities project is developing a web site that will be part of the MRVPD web site. J. Schwartz continues to work with the Waitsfield wastewater committee regarding next steps. The MRV trail Collaborative committee met and is working on updating the MRV trails map, inventory of easements, identify a rail projects list, and will be organizing a trail summit for the fall. The MRVPD economic development committee has started to identify information required to keep businesses in the Valley through awareness of baseline data and required infrastructure. The Rural Resource Commission is working on grants associated with the Mad River Glen historic designation, the Warren Dam historic designation, and the Warren Blair barn. The MRV Housing Coalition is working on a pilot project with land in Fayston to be donated by Sugarbush.

Sugarbush MOU Monitoring Day Data: M. Wade pointed out the trends as illustrated by the data. Traffic is up, but only by a little. More people are traveling in one vehicle. This season was longer than last season; the resort opened earlier and closed later. After discussion, it was agreed to add the historical number of days Sugarbush has been open. They are now reporting a full year's worth of energy usage. Based on completed surveys, 52% of the Sugarbush employees live in either Fayston, Waitsfield or Warren. This is a 4% increase

over the previous year. Regarding ski area utilization, there is high growth in the season passes which is different from 5 and 6 years ago. This seems to be the national trend, as well. The demand for seasonal rentals is also up, and there is higher spending per visit.

For the 2011/12 season, Sugarbush would like to stay with the same monitoring days representing peak Saturdays and Wednesdays of each month. Adjustments are made, as needed, which is primarily based on the weather.

The summer season is getting more active with more weddings and other program increases. The number of room nights are up about 1,000 for the year, much of which is for the summer time. It's also noted that many second home owners are young couples and families. It seems that the housing market trend is improving.

Round table discussion: Reapportionment: It would be good if the 3 towns had a unified message on not splitting Fayston away from Waitsfield and Warren. Since the 3 towns are unified by history, watershed, economy, and geography, it seems that we could have a unified position on reapportionment at the July meeting of the Steering Committee. Adam Greshin will be attending the July 21 meeting, and Chip Sawyer will be presenting information on the 2010 Census and reapportionment.

It was suggested that we need to continue to look at *unified infrastructure* among the 3 towns, too.

Central VT Regional Planning has offered to assist in the application process for the State's *park and ride grant* program. The Regional Transportation Plan identifies 2 sites in Warren.

The *Mad Marathon* is scheduled for July 10.

Next Meeting: The Steering Committee is scheduled to meet next on July 21, 2011, the third Thursday.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Emery