

# NEWSLETTER

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## REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION ASSESSMENTS

As part of the Challenge for Change, the Rutland Regional Planning Commission, along with the ten other Vermont regional commissions, is engaged in a review of its activities, policies, and programs through both a statewide assessment and a self-assessment.

During late February and early March staff of the National Association of Development Organizations [NADO], which has been contracted by the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies, will be interviewing federal, state and local officials to assess their views on regional planning commissions. This information will be combined with the RPC survey, designed by NADO and used successfully in other parts of the country. The survey, a self-assessment, to be taken by regional commissioners, executive directors and staff, will analyze various aspects of each regional planning commission. Areas to be considered include the commission's role in a modern era of regionalism, how relevant the commission is to the region's communities, what the relationships are with local government, federal and state officials, and governance issues. Finally, there will be a peer review of each commission. All of this information will be incorporated into a report identifying where regional commissions are performing well and areas where improvements can be made.

At the conclusion, the 11 commissions, individually and collectively will have a much better sense of how they are perceived around the state and how they can improve what they are doing to provide services to their communities.

A focus of these efforts is to identify where regional organizations, particularly regional commissions and development corporations, can work more effectively to improve economic conditions within their regions, build an environment that encourages the creation of jobs, and interact more effectively with other regional organizations to provide needed services in a cost effective way.

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## T.O.E.C. - NEW FORMAT

The annual Town Officers Educational Conference (TOEC), sponsored by the University of Vermont's Extension Service, will again be held at the Rutland Holiday Inn on April 27<sup>th</sup>. Other sessions are scheduled for April 6<sup>th</sup> in Burlington at the Hilton, April 7<sup>th</sup> at Johnson State College, and April 20<sup>th</sup> at the Lake Morey Inn.

The format has been dramatically revised to encourage greater attendance by those volunteer public officials that work during the day. For the first time the schedule is designed to provide late afternoon and evening sessions with dinner available as part of the registration fee. As before, the Regional Planning Commission will cover the cost of attendance for planning officials from member communities. Sessions will also be offered during the day for public officials who are working for communities with lunch available as part of the registration fee.

There will be six blocks with four to five sessions in each block. Most sessions will be an hour and fifteen minutes in duration - longer than in past years - with evening sessions running for an hour. While still in the planning stages, there will be a variety of topics designed to provide useful information to any attendee.

For planning officials, zoning administrators, development review boards/board of adjustment members, emergency management personnel, and others. Topics being considered are a double session on the basics of planning and zoning, a session on broadband programs, a roll-out of the model energy element being prepared by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns and the Vermont Natural Resources Council, a session on emergency management basics, and the ever popular planning and zoning roundtable.

### Finding us on the web

Don't forget to check out our website at [www.rutlandrpc.org](http://www.rutlandrpc.org)

**RRPC - Commissioners**

- Benson - Tom Bartholomew
- Brandon - Ethan Swift  
*(Secretary-Treasurer)*
- Castleton - Charles Jacien
- Chittenden - Carolyn Schwalbe
- Clarendon - Carol Geery
- Danby - Annette Smith
- Fair Haven - Bonnie Rosati
- Hubbardton - Robert Gibbs
- Ira - Tim Martin
- Killington - David Rosenblum
- Mendon - Larry Courcelle
- Middletown Springs - Erick Erickson
- Mount Holly - Annette Lynch  
*(At-Large)*
- Mount Tabor -  
Pawlet - Eric Mach
- Pittsford - Trish Lewis
- Poultney - Tracy Carris
- Proctor - William Dritschilo
- Rutland City - Kevin Coleman
- Rutland Town - Fred Nicholson  
*(Chair)*
- Shrewsbury - Mark Goodwin  
*(ViceChair)*
- Sudbury -
- Tinmouth - Robert Lloyd
- Wallingford - John West
- Wells - Rebecca Dittmeier
- West Haven - Christopher Hoyt
- West Rutland - Denis Licoln

**Area-Wide Citizen Interest Members:**

- Natural Resources - Peter Upton
- Housing/Low Inc -
- Regional Libraries - Paula Baker

**Ex-Officio Members:**

- REDC - Jamie Stewart
- WIB - Larry Sudlow
- RRCC -

**RRPC STAFF**

- Executive Director - Mark Blucher
- Assistant Director - Susan Schreiberman
- Finance Administrator - Judy Holcomb
- Senior GIS Technician - Mary Trombley
- GIS Manager - Steve Schild
- Regional Planner - Ed Bove
- Planner - Philip Picotte
- Planning Intern - Kyla Jaquish

**Suggestions? Comments?**

Contact the RRPC  
 Newsletter Editor —  
 Ed Bove  
 Email: [ebove@rutlandrpc.org](mailto:ebove@rutlandrpc.org)

**BROWNFIELDS**

**RRPC TAKES LEAD ON FLORY PLAZA REDEVELOPMENT**

Through the RRPC's Brownfields Program, Flory Plaza is on the verge of having all environmental site assessment work completed. When finished, the site will be primed for redevelopment, as any developer will have full understanding of site conditions.

The Johnson Company is currently completing a Phase II site assessment work while concurrently creating a Corrective Action Plan (CAP), which details remediation and development possibilities on the site.

The RRPC has been working directly with the Rutland Economic Development Corporation (REDC), which will facilitate the redevelopment when all assessment work is completed. Funding for environmental assessment work comes from the EPA, which has awarded over \$1 million in grants to the Rutland Region Brownfields Reuse Program since 2004.



**HISTORIC SITE ASSESSMENT IN PROCTOR**

Environmental assessment work continues at the former Vermont Marble facility in Proctor. The 12-acre property and associated buildings served as VT Marble's primary marble processing facility from 1880 to 1978. The site was owned by OMYA from 1978 to 2007 and purchased by CSS Stoneworks in 2007.

Currently, most of the site and buildings are used for storage, as several former buildings have burned. The Phase I Environmental Site Assessment has been completed and Phase II work has commenced. A smaller adjacent property used for ancillary marble operations and currently owned by OMYA is also undergoing environmental site assessment work.

**RUTLAND CITY "GATEWAY" SITE REDEVELOPMENT**

The Rutland Redevelopment Authority has completed remediation work at the former Hour Mart property on West Street. The remediation and future redevelopment into a "pocket park" with gateway signage to Downtown Rutland comes on the heels of four years and approximately \$100,000 in environmental site assessment work conducted by the RRPC Brownfields Program.

The site had been contaminated by petroleum products resulting from the former gas station. A technique called phyto-remediation (using vegetation that "eats" petroleum) is being used to clean the site. All site work including signage will be completed by fall 2011.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

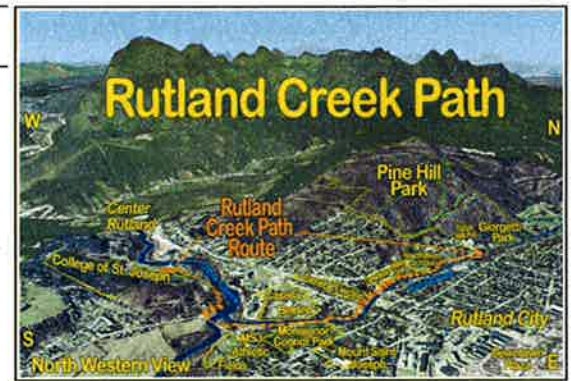
**BASIC EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLANS STREAMLINE LOCAL RESPONSE**

In 2009, Vermont Emergency Management (VEM) revised the long-standing Rapid Response Plan into the Basic Emergency Operations Plan (BEOP). The BEOP combines essential pre-planning (identifying vulnerable areas, high risk populations, problem culverts, etc.) with on-scene handiness, detailing emergency contacts and delegation of authority. It is designed for the local fire chief or town emergency management director, but also ensures that VEM knows the right person to call when a disaster is imminent. The BEOP is also one of the three required elements for National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliance that offers grants to municipalities; the other steps are NIMS adoption and training.

Six Rutland County towns have adopted the BEOP so far: Brandon, Chittenden, Hubbardton, Mount Holly, Poultney, and Shrewsbury. Clarendon, Danby, Middletown Springs, Mount Tabor and Rutland City are currently reviewing their BEOPs to prepare for adoption.

## RUTLAND CREEK PATH

Rutland Creek Path is now in the right-of-way acquisition process, where easements are being negotiated with landowners for Segment 1- which extends from Giorgetti Park to State Street at the intersection with Lalor Ave. Stafford Technical School's forestry students and GE volunteers worked clearing and grubbing the area behind Northwest Primary School, which is city-owned land, as part of the local match for the grant. With a total estimated cost of \$1.8 million, fundraising for the local share of \$360,000 has also ramped up. For those interested in walking it, we are planning more treks. And maybe along the way we can find that pot of gold to build this wonderful asset for our Region. Any clues and help are welcome. For more information- check out the website- [www.rutlandcreekpath.com](http://www.rutlandcreekpath.com)



## TRAFFIC STUDY AT GREEN MOUNTAIN PLAZA

The RRPC has been involved with the District Environmental Commission's decision to require an additional traffic study at Cop John Drive and Green Mountain Plaza. In response to Hearing Recess Order #2, representatives from the Rutland Regional Planning Commission, Rutland Town, Chase Enterprises, RSG Inc. their traffic consultant, Taco Bell, Farrell Distributing, and Hampton Inn met and agreed to share in the cost of the revised traffic study, which is underway.



## CROSSROADS OF VERMONT BYWAY

VT Byways Program is expanding and the RRPC was involved in the Corridor Management Plan with the Killington Economic Development and Tourism office, chambers and towns along US 4 from West Rutland through Hartford to seek designation as the Crossroad of Vermont Byway. The Scenery Preservation Council made a positive recommendation to the Transportation Board, who's hearing is February 10th, at 5pm in Killington.

## CORRIDOR PLANNING

The RRPC is currently working with Broadreach Planning and Design and Stantec Engineering on the Vermont **Route 22A Corridor Management Plan** located within the Towns of Fair Haven, West Haven, Benson and Orwell, from the southern town line with New York State to VT 73. The RRPC has completed build out analyses for the towns based on their current zoning and the consultants will take this information to project traffic to 2030. If you are interested in the current or future condition of Route 22A, or have questions on the corridor or the work, please contact Susan at 775-0871 ext 204 or email [susan@rutlandrpc.org](mailto:susan@rutlandrpc.org)

## SIGN RETROFLECTIVITY

The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices was revised with new requirements for retroreflectivity, size and lettering height in signs. This is adopted as Vermont State law. All signs along public roads must meet the new retroreflectivity sign standards, which increase the amount of light bouncing off of the signs making them easier to read at night. These changes apply to NEW signs only. This is directed towards promoting greater visibility and safer driving conditions (reduced crash rates particularly at night time). Since retroreflective sign materials degrade over time, local governments will also be required to regularly update their inventory and upgrade signs in order to maintain compliance. Key changes and deadlines consist of:

By **January 9, 2012**, all street name signs require 6" lettering height for upper case, 4.5" lettering height for lower case (no longer all upper case letters), on 12" aluminum stock of High Intensity Prismatic sheeting grade, although the sheeting grade does not have to be compliant until **January 22, 2018**.

By **January 22, 2012**, all local governments must inventory their signs, assess sign retroreflectivity and establish a process to upgrade existing sub-standard signs.

By **January 22, 2015**, all local governments must ensure that all regulatory, warning and ground-mounted guide signs comply with the new MUTCD rules.

By **January 22, 2018**, all local governments must ensure that all street name and overhead guide signs comply with the new MUTCD rules.

RRPC can help your towns with creating the inventory as the first step in managing your signs and eventually meeting these new requirements. Please call Susan - 775-0871 ext 204 if you have questions or need help.

**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN GREENER MOUNTAINS EXPO.**

The first annual *Greener Mountains Expo* drew hundreds of local residents on Saturday, December 4, to the Holiday Inn in Rutland Town. Organized by RRPC and REDC, the event focused on the latest in “green” for homeowners and businesses. A dozen experts on energy efficiency, renewable energy, green building, and local food presented instructional workshops, while local businesses demonstrated various products and services designed to reduce environmental impact. Efficiency Vermont displayed the full range of energy-saving lighting products (including dimmable and three-way CFL lightbulbs), and the RRPC highlighted the work of the town energy committees and the Commission’s energy program.

The Rutland Area Farm and Food Link (RAFFL), showcased the benefits of “Farm Fresh Delivery to Your Worksite,” “Dozens of local farms run CSAs—community supported agriculture—to offer families the freshest seasonal food each week. RAFFL is helping local businesses create the opportunity for their employees to receive delivery of farm fresh products to their place of work,” accruing health and wellness benefits, stated Executive Director Tara Kelly.

There was a clear focus on energy and green building. Architect Jean Terwilliger profiled an energy-efficient Sudbury home she designed with extensive local materials. John Blittersdorf, proprietor of CV Solar & Wind in Rutland, highlighted installed solar energy projects in southern Vermont. And, Ken Welch of NeighborWorks of Western Vermont introduced HEAT Squad, a new program open to all Rutland County residents that assists homeowners significantly reduce energy costs through comprehensive weatherization efforts. To sign up, visit [www.heatsquad.org](http://www.heatsquad.org) or call 438-2303.

**PUBLIC BUILDING ENERGY PROGRAM**

The Public Building Energy Program completed seven technical energy and lighting audits of municipal buildings in 2010, including the town offices of Danby, Proctor, Killington, Middletown Springs and Ira. The Rutland County Courthouse and Rutland Free Library also received audits. Six audits have been scheduled for 2011.

**The Program will also be providing grant assistance to selected towns for limited building improvements.** If your town has not submitted a Building Nomination Form, please contact Ed Bove at [ebove@rutlantrpc.org](mailto:ebove@rutlantrpc.org) to get your town building enrolled in the program.



**You are hereby challenged to:**

- Increase energy savings in 2011 by 10% over 2010 amounts
- Reduce monetary and environmental costs of energy through efficiency and conservation
- Increase use of renewable forms of energy
- Serve as a model for the rest of Vermont

The Rutland County Energy Challenge is a broad range of programs that individuals, businesses and municipalities can participate in to achieve energy goals of the region. Programs include the Public Building Energy Program, Way-to-Go, Neighborworks of Western VT HEAT Program, Button-Up workshops and many more.

The Rutland County Energy Challenge is guided by a Steering Committee with representatives from the following organizations:

- Rutland Regional Planning Commission
- Efficiency Vermont
- NeighborWorks of Western VT
- Rutland Herald
- CVPS
- Vermont Country Store
- Keyser Energy
- Green Mountain College

Learn more at [www.RutlandCountyEnergyChallenge.com](http://www.RutlandCountyEnergyChallenge.com)

**POULTNEY WOODSHED PROJECT**

Green Mountain College (GMC) and the Hubbard Brook Research Foundation (HBRF) are collaborating on a plan called the Poultney Woodshed Project to fuel the College’s new biomass facility from local sources of sustainably harvested woodchips. The \$73,658 project is funded in part (\$35,000) by the Rutland Regional Planning Commission with funds from the U.S. Department of Energy’s, Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program. Other funders include the High Meadows Fund, Riverledge Foundation and the Luce Foundation.

The Hubbard Brook Research Foundation (HBRF) is working with GMC to secure woodchips harvested from privately owned forestlands located relatively close to Poultney. If successful, this project will produce carbon savings resulting from lower transportation distances for woodchips and support the local economy by engaging traditional stewards of the forest: landowners, foresters, loggers, chippers and truckers.

“The biomass project substantially reduces the use of number six fuel oil, which was the College’s main fuel source until this year,” said GMC President Paul Fonteyn. “As much as possible, we want to use woodchips from sustainably harvested local sources, which is environmental friendly and helpful to the local economy.”

The two organizations will recruit private and public partners working cooperatively to determine if biomass harvesting protocols set forth by the Forest Guild are acceptable to local landowners, foresters and loggers; to determine if sustainable harvesting practices can be done cost effectively; and to determine the amount of biomass that GMC can hope to purchase from local landowners over time. The overriding question the Poultney Woodshed Project will answer is this: “Is there a viable market for sustainably harvested, locally sourced woodchips?”

**Congratulations MPG recipients!**

**Rutland Town (\$7,905) - Zoning Bylaw**

**Town of Poultney (\$7,684) - Infrastructure Planning**

**Town of Benson (\$8,000) - Infrastructure Planning**

**IS YOUR BYLAW READY FOR 2011?**

In 2004, comprehensive changes to Vermont’s zoning enabling laws were passed in Act 115. With those changes came two compliance deadlines: 2005 and 2011. The 2005 deadline dealt with several mandated provisions requiring all zoning bylaws to come into statutory compliance on Statutory Definitions; Required Provisions; Limitations; Adoption, Administration, Enforcement; Appropriate Municipal Panels; and Appeal Procedure.

Now, the September 1, 2011 compliance deadline is on the horizon. It’s the right time to start looking at your Zoning Bylaw to determine if any amendments are needed to be in conformance. The 2011 deadline is the expiration of the “Savings Clause.” With the exception of the 2005 provisions, the Savings Clause allowed zoning bylaws in existence prior to the passage of Act 115 to continue until September 1, 2011 at which point they must comply with the rest of the provisions.

The 2011 deadline essentially deals with enabling provisions, not mandates. An enabling provision is one that a town may take advantage of, but is not required to have. These provisions are found in Sections 4414-4433 of Chapter 117, Title 24 of the Vermont Statutes. Some examples of enabling provisions include waivers, interim zoning, unified bylaws, subdivision bylaws, and transfer of development rights. The key to understanding what is required is to make sure that whenever “shall” is used in the statutory language, your Zoning Bylaw complies with that directive.

If you have questions about the 2011 compliance deadline, please contact the RRPC. (Article courtesy of the Windham Regional Commission).

**REGIONAL TECHNOLOGY PLANNING**

The Regional Planning Commission will be working with the Vermont Telecommunications Authority to play a significant role in implementing the state broadband plan at the local level.

The RRPC will establish a Regional Technology Planning Team comprised of representatives of member municipalities, businesses, libraries, education facilities, health care facilities and regional development corporations.

The Technology Planning Team’s efforts will be focused on building cross sector partnerships and developing a Regional Technology Plan. The Plan will identify gaps and needs for training, connectivity and hardware within the Region. The goal is to increase the broadband adoption and use by local governments, education and health providers and others to identify partnerships that build sustainable economic development and stronger communities.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**FEBRUARY**

- 10th Transportation and Community Character - Walter Kulash. 7:00 PM. Dana Auditorium, Middlebury College.
- 16th Legislative Day - State House, Montpelier

**MARCH**

- 10th The Municipalities Role in Public Service Board Proceedings. 6:30 PM. Vermont Interactive Television locations throughout Vermont. [www.vlct.org/eventscalendar/](http://www.vlct.org/eventscalendar/).
- 31st Vermont Community Development Association - Winter Meeting. Capital Plaza Hotel, Montpelier. [www.wtcd.org/](http://www.wtcd.org/)

**APRIL**

- 3-5 Brownfields 2011 Conference. Philadelphia Convention Center, Philadelphia, PA. For details, contact [www.brownfields2011.org](http://www.brownfields2011.org)
- 9-12 American Planning Association - 2011 National Planning Conference. Boston, MA For more details, contact [www.planning.org/conference](http://www.planning.org/conference):

- 27th Town Officers Education Conference. Holiday Inn, Rutland, VT. Contact: [www.uvm.edu/extension](http://www.uvm.edu/extension)

**MAY**

- 13-14 Strengthening Community Agrosecurity - Extension Disaster Education Network. Howe Center, Rutland.
- 18h Salvage Yards: Municipal Action, Regulation and Enforcement. 6:30 PM. Vermont Interactive Television. [www.vlct.org/eventscalendar/](http://www.vlct.org/eventscalendar/).

**PDM PLANS COMING TO YOUR TOWN**

The Rutland Region All Hazards Mitigation Plan (PDM Plan) and 27 Rutland Region Annexes have been reviewed by FEMA and returned to the RRPC for creation of the final plans.

The Selectboard of each Rutland Region municipality must adopt the Regional Mitigation Plan and the local annex to qualify for VEM grants. RRPC staff will be visiting each town in March to assist with the process.

# NEWSLETTER

## ACRONYM CORNER

The term *acronym* is the name for a word created from the first letters of each word in a series of words (such as *SCUBA*, created from Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus); although the term *acronym* is widely used to describe any abbreviation formed from initial letters. Here are ten common planning acronyms used in Vermont and elsewhere.

AICP – American Institute of Certified Planners  
 ANR – Vermont Agency of Natural Resources  
 FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency  
 FHWA – Federal Highway Administration  
 LEPC – Local Emergency Planning Committee  
 PDM – Pre-disaster Mitigation  
 PSD – Vermont Department of Public Service  
 ARRA – American Recovery and Reinvestment Act  
 EECBG - Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant  
 VCGI – Vermont Center for Geographic Information  
 VTrans (VAOT, AOT) – Vermont Agency of Transportation  
 MPG - Municipal Planning Grant

Check out these sites for more information:

[www.vpic.info/resources/acronyms.htm](http://www.vpic.info/resources/acronyms.htm)  
[www.vem.vermont.gov/about\\_us/acronyms](http://www.vem.vermont.gov/about_us/acronyms)  
[www.acronymfinder.com](http://www.acronymfinder.com)

## 2011 RRPC MEETING SCHEDULE

### FEBRUARY

- 15th RRPC Committee & Commission meetings, 5:30 & 7:00 (RRPC Conference Room, The Opera House)
- 24th Transportation Council, 7:00 pm (RRPC Conference Room)

### MARCH

- 15th RRPC Committee & Commission meetings, 5:30 & 7:00 (RRPC Conference Room, The Opera House)
- 24th Transportation Council, 7:00 pm (RRPC Conference Room)

### APRIL

- 19st RRPC Committee & Commission meetings, 5:30 & 7:00 (RRPC Conference Room, The Opera House)
- 21th Transportation Council, 7:00 pm (RRPC Conference Room)

### MAY

- 17th RRPC Committee & Commission meetings, 5:30 & 7:00
- 19th Transportation Council, 7:00 pm (RRPC Conference Room)



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