



Regional Plan Draft Review Committee April 1, 2014 from 4-6pm, CVRPC Office Economic Development & Substantial Regional Impact*

PURPOSE: To finalize the Economic goals, review the progress of the Economic Development working group and review CVRPC's definition of Substantial Regional Impact.

ATTENDANCE:

Laura Hill Eubanks, *Northfield*
Scott Bascom, *VTrans*
Mike Miller, *Barre City*
Dara Torre, *Moretown*
Ed Larson, *Barre Granite Association*
David Rubin, *Central Vermont Community Action Council*
Tim Carver, *East Montpelier*
Kim McKee, *CVRPC Staff*
Stephanie Smith, *CVRPC Staff*
Amelia Norris, *CVRPC Staff*

SUMMARY:

- **Staff Updates:** Staff provided updates on the public engagement efforts, including the launch of the *Plan Central Vermont* website, monthly e-newsletters and Community Input Map.

Staff shared the Commissioner's comments on the Vision and Guiding Principles with the committee. These included a recommendation to shorten the Vision statement and correct a grammar error in the Guiding Principle, referring to the principle beginning with "minimized contribution" and potentially adding enhanced before "preparedness." A Commissioner also recommended adding a reference to "resource extraction" to the Guiding Principles. The grammar error will be corrected and the Committee will consider the Commission's recommendations when finalizing the Vision statement before Plan adoption.

- **Economic Development:** Staff presented the Draft Strong and Diverse Economy Goals representing broad themes that were determined at the

2/4/14 meeting. The committee provided comments and chose specific language for each goal, while anticipating some specific actions or policies that may be included in the Regional Plan. The revised goals are as follows with comments for each listed below:

1. Full employment and high quality job opportunities in a diverse range of occupations.

Comments: The concepts of full employment and sufficient incomes should be kept as two separate goals. Preference was noted to use the word “diverse” instead the word “wide” when referring to the range of occupations. A footnote clarifying the definition of “full employment” would be helpful in the final draft. It was noted that Towns need to continue to consider the need to provide jobs and employment opportunities for all residents when drafting land use regulations that pose restrictions to certain business-types.

2. Incomes sufficient to meet basic needs at a minimum with opportunities to achieve and maintain financial security.

Comments: The Committee discussed whether or not to use the term “livable wage,” as it has a statutory definition. Concerns were expressed that such a strictly defined term may exclude needed jobs that do not meet the livable wage threshold for certain reasons. It was recommended that the term may be better suited for a policy related to this Goal.

3. Sustainable and viable agricultural and forest lands.

Comments: The word “agricultural” should be used instead of “farms” to represent the more diverse types of agricultural enterprises in Vermont. Preference was noted to avoid the term “working landscapes” as the “land doesn’t work itself.”

4. Dynamic and resilient downtowns, villages and commercial districts.

Comments: The question was posed as to whether industrial districts or areas of industrial use should be mentioned here or within another goal. Some Committee members felt that the need to identify appropriate and viable industrial space is better suited as a policy/strategy under Economic Goal #5 with more detail in the Land Use element; others felt it deserved reference in an overarching Goal.

5. Effective business retention, growth and development that anticipate and meet market opportunities.

Comments: Preference was stated to use the word “effective” instead of “strong.” No need to mention “meeting workforce needs” as the concept is covered in Goal #1.

The committee also reviewed and discussed the progress of the Economic Development working group.

- **Definition of Substantial Regional Impact:** Staff gave a brief overview of RPC participation in Act 250 and Section 248 and the role of the Regional Plan.

The committee then reviewed and discussed CVRPC’s current definition of Substantial Regional Impact, but did not make any decisions surrounding a more rigid set of criteria to abide by when reviewing future projects.

Continued discussions surrounding an updated definition of Substantial Regional Impact will occur at future meetings. It was determined that the Project Review Committee may be better suited to make recommendations to the Regional Plan Draft Review Committee for consideration in the Regional Plan.

- **Wrap-up and Next Steps:** The next meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, May 6 from 4-6 PM.

Staff will circulate progress from the Economic Development working group prior to that meeting.

* In the context of the State of Vermont planning practice, a proposed development has a **Substantial Regional Impact** (SRI) if a policy of this Regional Plan that is relevant to the determination of an issue in an Act 250 or Section 248 proceeding makes recommendations that are more specific about one or more characteristics, features, standards, or conditions relating to the proposed development than the recommendations of the municipal plan. SRI is an impact of Land Development that triggers the requirements of 24 VSA 4345a (16), (17), and 4348 (h). An SRI is not automatically in conflict with a regional plan. An SRI is not always an Adverse Impact. 24 VSA 4345a (17) requires each RPC to define SRI as the term is to be used with respect to its region in its Regional Plan.