

**Mount Ascutney
Regional Commission**

Minutes of Monday, May 24, 2021
MARC Offices, Ascutney, VT
and via Zoom

Commissioners Present: Tom Bock, Chester; Kathy Rondeau, Reading; Peter Daniels, Weathersfield; Tom Marsh, Windsor; Wayne Wheelock, Baltimore; Tom Kenyon, West Windsor; Terry Carter, Ludlow; Walter Martone, Springfield.

Staff Present: Tom Kennedy, Jason Rasmussen, Cynthia Porter, Chris Yurek.

Tom Bock opened the meeting at 12:01 PM.

1. Changes to the Agenda
 - a. None
2. Secretary's Report
 - a. *Peter Daniels made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 19, 2021 MARC meeting as presented. Second by Walter Martone. Motion passed unanimously.*
3. Treasurer's Report
 - a. *Tom Kenyon made a motion to receive the April 2021 financial report. Second by Tom Marsh. Motion passed unanimously.*
4. Nominations Committee
 - a. Tom Kennedy reported that election of officers will be needed at the annual meeting in June. The present officers are willing to continue with Tom Bock as Chair, Kathy Rondeau as Vice Chair and Tom Marsh as Secretary/Treasurer. Other nominations can come from the floor.
5. Discussion of FY22 Draft Budget
 - a. Tom Kennedy gave an overview of the draft budget for FY22 (July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022), and answered questions. Given the uncertainty of certain additional funding, the Board will likely need to amend the budget in six months. Staff can provide a list of newer revenue at the next meeting.
6. Recommendations from Brownfields Steering Committee
 - a. Tom Kennedy and Peter Daniels reported for the Brownfields Steering Committee.
 - b. 3 Maple Street, Windsor: 7 Maple Street in Windsor is unsafe and will be demolished soon. However, related PCE contamination was found next door at 3 Maple Street. The Committee recommends funding PCE remediation at this site.

Peter Daniels made a motion to award up to \$30,000 for PCE remediation at 3 Maple Street in Windsor to come from program income. Second by Tom Kenyon. Approved unanimously.

- c. Windsor Armory: The armory building has been demolished. The Town intends to acquire the property for use as a dog park, community garden and recreation fields. The Committee recommends funding a Phase 1 assessment before the town buys the property.

Peter Daniels made a motion to award \$1,500 for a Phase 1 assessment of the Windsor Armory site prior to being purchased by the Town of Windsor. Second by Tom Kenyon. Approved unanimously.

- d. Windsor Gas and Light Building: Someone is interested in buying the adjacent Hebert Building, and further assessment at the Gas and Light Building is needed before the acquisition goes through. The Committee recommends funding a Phase 2 assessment at this site.

Peter Daniels made a motion to award up to \$37,000 for a Phase 2 assessment of the Windsor Gas and Light Building to come from either assessment funds or program income. Second by Tom Kenyon. Approved unanimously.

- e. Park Street School: There was a small slide at the Park Street School resulting in about 30 cubic yards of materials needing to be removed from the adjacent State Office Building site. The material has been removed and is currently being stored at the State prison. SRDC wants funding to sample the soils for contamination. The Committee recommends awarding funds for this purpose.

Peter Daniels made a motion to award up to \$1,500.00 to SRDC to sample the soils from the slide at the Park Street School-State Office Building site. Second by Terry Carter. Approved unanimously.

- f. Thetford Landfill: There is a lack of brownfields funding in the rest of the state. Green Mountain Economic Development (GMED) is asking for funding to complete a soils analysis prior to a planned solar project at the Thetford Landfill site. We have adequate funding, and the Committee recommends awarding funding for this purpose.

Peter Daniels made a motion to award a grant to GMED up to \$6,000 for a soils data analysis at the former Thetford Landfill site. Second by Kathy Rondeau. Approved unanimously.

- g. Receive new brownfields funding from DEC for Springfield: Tom Kennedy reported that the Legislature passed a bill this year with significant brownfields funding. Some of the funds will go toward assessments statewide. Five sites in the BERA program will receive funding, including up to \$7 million for the J&L 1 Building and other sites in Springfield. SRDC agrees with MARC receiving and administering these funds. MARC would in turn subcontract with Stone Environmental, a clerk of the works, and a contractor to complete this work.

Peter Daniels made a motion authorizing the Executive Director of the Mount Ascutney Regional Commission (MARC) to enter into a cooperative agreement with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, and for MARC to receive up to \$7 million to administer and complete the J&L 1 demolition project and other eligible brownfields projects in Springfield, which will include subcontracting with consultants and contractors to complete the brownfields work. Second by Walter Martone. Approved unanimously.

7. Keys to the Valley Update

- a. Jason Rasmussen reported on the Keys to the Valley housing project. The planning work is coming to an end in June, and the three RPCs and partners are discussing ways to continue an effort to implement the plan over the next few years. The scale of the housing problem is big: a projected 10,000 new homes are needed by 2030 and about 1/3 of existing households spend too much for housing. The pandemic has made the problem worse. The plan is implementation focused. A project website was developed to provide information about what can be done to address the housing problem. Outreach events are ongoing, but recordings are available for anyone that missed them. Jason will provide links for the website and where to find the recordings.

8. Job Position Updates

- a. Tom Kennedy reported on a few staffing changes. Carl Mitchell is retiring from his solid waste auditor position. MARC received funding from the Department of Environmental Conservation to continue that position, and Chris Titus has agreed to take that job. As a result, we have an ad out right now for an administrative assistant. We received 13 resumes to date. Considering the funding levels, we are also seeking a new planner, someone with a few years of experience. Tom also reported his intent to retire as Executive Director and stay on to work on solid waste, brownfields and other tasks starting in January. The Executive Committee is currently reviewing job descriptions and working on a transition plan for Jason Rasmussen to take over as Executive Director.

9. Transportation Project Selection Process

- a. Jason Rasmussen gave an update on the pilot effort to modify the way projects are selected and delivered by VTrans. The TAC is currently reviewing potential new projects for VTrans to consider for funding as part of this new pilot process. The TAC will make a recommendation and the Board will be asked to ratify the new projects at the June meeting. The TAC meets at 6 pm on May 25th if anyone wants to attend.

10. Basin 11 Plan Letter of Conformance

- a. Chris Yurek indicated that state tactical basin plans require conformance with the Regional Plan. The Basin 11 Plan is nearing completion. Chris has reviewed the Basin Plan and compared it to our Regional Plan. He found that not only is the Basin 11 Plan in conformance with the Regional Plan, but it also helps to implement the Regional Plan. Chris discussed the draft letter that was prepared and documents those findings.
- b. *Peter Daniels made a motion to authorize the Executive Director and the MARC Chair to sign the letter as presented. Second by Terry Carter. Approved unanimously.*

11. New Business

- a. None.

12. Adjourn

Wayne Wheelock made a motion to adjourn at 1:15 p.m. Second by Tom Kenyon. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Rasmussen