Natural Resources Committee  
January 15, 2014 meeting  
Approved Minutes

Attendance  
Commissioners: Andy Toepfer, John Whitman, Steve Skibniowsky, Maggie Bartenhagen, Nick Bartenhagen  
Staff: Dinah Reed

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm

Minutes - Draft Minutes of the November meeting.  
ACTION: Moved to be accepted as written.

Discussion of Implementation Chapter of Regional Plan

- In general J. Whitman felt the chapter could use stronger language in some places, but overall did not see any problems with it.  
- A. Toepfer said the section under “information and Training” needs to mention the WRC website.  
- The Committee was in consensus that the Development Review section needs to explain how “regional significance” is determined. Is it equitable? Is there a checklist? Provide checklist parameters in WRC Regional Plan.  
- We may want to substitute the use of word “it” for who “it” represents.

Discussion of TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) Meeting regarding Lake Champlain  
Questions were asked about the purpose of meeting and how the TMDL problem impacts our region. Dinah said she was planning to attend meeting and would report back afterward.

Discussion of future Forum Topics

- Informing Realtors – what does a natural forest look like? How to help them talk about this when selling forested land to potential buyers.  
- Land use as it relates to the siting of alternative energy developments  
- Status of re-licensing of hydro dams along the CT River  
- Rights and responsibilities of being a land owner in VT  
- Beavers, Bats, Bees, Bobcats Habitat (For SUMMER forum)  
  - Contact Kent McFarland  
  - Chemicals used that upset bee colonies (??)  
- Agriculture – SPRING forum – Suggested that Dinah talk to CO-OP about local producers, research state legislation on topic, talk to VT Land Trust. Issues to cover:
Niche crops
Agriculture economics for region
Farm to Plate project – follow up to that. How big has the localvore industry come?
What are the setbacks to the industry?
What’s realistically possible to grow here?
Sustainability and pollution control – support of agriculture but also keeping the environment in mind.
CSA, Apple orchards, Sugar maple products, Cheese makers, Hops fields, Wineries

Future Presentation Topics for Committee Meetings
Dinah will make calls to bring a speaker to our February meeting.

- Biomass
- Geothermal (Integrated Solar)
- Wind Power, Iberdrola viewpoint and opposite viewpoint
- VT Yankee – future of site
- Gravel pits – how many are in the region? How much resource is available for how many years? Geologically, where are the best places to excavate but haven’t been tapped yet?

Next meeting February 19th at 4:00 pm
The meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm

Respectfully submitted, Dinah Reed