

WRC STAFF ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

This summary highlights staff activity during the month of MAY 2026

The lead staff person is listed in parentheses by each programmatic area heading.

We said farewell to Senior Planner Alyssa Sabetto as she heads to Washington County, Maryland where she'll be the new County Planning Director. We have hired Liana Rice, a UMass-Amherst graduate, who was engaged in the 4-town flood adaptation planning project in the Deerfield Valley last autumn. She'll begin work on July 1st.

Brownfields Redevelopment (*Susan Westa*)

- 81 Royal Rd., Brattleboro – Received final signed cooperative agreement for cleanup.
- Bellows Falls Bike Project and Train Station – Addressed eligibility questions for cleanup.

Community Development (*Susan Westa*)

- VT Association of Planning and Development Agencies and Department of Housing and Community Development – Participated in joint Work Plan Meeting.
- Alyssa Transition – Attended meeting to plan for Alyssa's departure.
- SEVT Housing Coalition – Attended monthly meeting and Housing Development Subcommittee meeting with presentation by Main Street Arts, Saxtons River.
- Convening of Planning Educators - Attended meeting in Montpelier with Chris.
- SoVT Economy Summit – Attended annual regional gathering/conference at Mt. Snow.
- BiTown Housing Committee – Attended meeting with Dover and Wilmington.
- Let's Build Homes – Participated on call about how they can help towns.
- Windham Aging – Attended monthly meeting.
- Downtown Brattleboro Alliance - Participated in Executive Committee Call and regular monthly meeting.

Emergency & Resiliency Planning (*Alyssa Sabetto*)

- Participated in monthly regional planning commission meeting with Vermont Emergency Management (VEM).
- Put together materials needed by VEM for the Emergency Management Performance Grant additional submittal to FEMA.
- Developed and shared two floodplain bylaw update summary sheets for Rockingham.
- Drafted Townshend flood hazard bylaw update.
- Met again with the Townshend Planning Commission to discuss the draft floodplain bylaw.
- Met with potential funding partners to explore ideas for funding the north end culvert at Snow Lake. Funding still needed.
- Put together and submitted a Design Implementation Block Grant (DIBG) application for a floodplain storage enhancement project in Whitingham that was scoped in a former DIBG round.
- Attended a site visit along with ANR staff in Weston to see the Weston Theatre and discuss wet floodproofing plans.
- Attended Vermont Planners Association event in Brattleboro.

- Talked with Weston about approving the Scope of Work for Stone Environmental to begin fieldwork.
- Received word from Senator Sander's office that the dispatch tower project was approved for submittal to the federal level for Congressional Directed Spending. We will now await to see if the project is awarded at the federal level.
- Met with Meghan Arpino of Stone Environmental, and Margo, to discuss transition of Weston CDBG-DR work.
- Communicated with the Emergency Management Directors and other local, regional and state partners about my departure from the WRC.
- Connected with Stratton about both their Local Hazard Mitigation Plan update and floodplain bylaw update.
- Visited the new Whitingham culvert funded by the Flood Resilient Communities Fund and met with Gig about a couple of projects.
- Met with the Rockingham Planning Commission to discuss the floodplain bylaw update and answer questions from members of the public.
- Received the final Guide to Flood Adaptation for Historic Villages prepared by graduate students at the Conway School: <https://windhamregional.org/news/introducing-a-new-flood-adaptation-guide-for-historic-villages/>

Energy (*Mike McConnell*)

- Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP)
 - Attended two BGS check in meetings
 - Attended Halifax Selectboard meeting to discuss MERP projects
 - Attended Grafton Selectboard meeting to discuss MERP projects
 - Met on site with reps from window companies to discuss Grafton Window project
 - Received and responded to questions regarding Solar+ RFP for Wardsboro MERP projects
 - Received bids for Wardsboro Solar+ and Prime Design, Grafton Windows and Boiler replacement, Halifax Boiler replacement projects.
- Attended monthly energy planners meeting

GIS/Mapping (*Jeff Nugent & Lisa Donnelly*)

- Completed drafts of all Wilmington town plan map updates.
- Lots of prep for, and hosted, the Windham Region road foremen's meeting. Topics included the basics of capital planning (VLCT), salt purchasing, and road crew hiring and retention (VLR). Ten towns, 22 people total in attendance.
- Completed drafts of all Whitingham town plan map updates.
- Created a draft Bellows Falls Riverfront Trail map for use by the town in communicating about the proposed trail connection.
- Attended and helped to host/facilitate Vermont Trails and Greenways Council annual meeting at Northwoods Stewardship Center.
- Provided information to US Fish and Wildlife staff on VT Culverts content.
- Emails/coordination for Grafton Village Park Trails & Grafton Town Trail maps.
- Attended Vermont Walk-Bike summit in Bennington.
- Updated our internal traffic count map with new Vtrans data.
- Prep for, and attended, meeting in Wilmington regarding parking inventory update.

- 2026 Regional Plan/Act 181 update: edits to boundaries in several towns in response to town requests; generated summary of acreage of each land use area by town; website updates.
- Met, along with Margo, with UMass staff to discuss aquatic organism passage study using Vermont data.
- Discussed Grants in Aid options with the Stratton road foreman.
- Held a VT Culverts training for the Town of Windham over Zoom.
- Ordered two new ped counters, created lock boxes for them.
- Participated in quarterly RPC GIS Teams meet-up.
- IT work on new data provider/fiber service, domain expiration.
- Quick site visit, then meeting with Wilmington Trails Committee and Great River Hydro staff to discuss mapping and improvements to the Hoot, Toot, and Whistle Trail. Created a new map for their grand opening.
- Spoke with Newfane selectboard admin about legal status of Railroad Lane.
- Downloaded new 2025 current use data, set it up for mapping for town plans, and generated summary statistics by town.
- Updated Brattleboro road maps to include the new Route 119 bridge.
- Made final edits and printed Brookline maps: culvert map and atlas, MRGP status map, road maps; delivered maps to the town and discussed results.
- Conducted FY26 GIA pre-construction site visits in Athens, Brookline, and Stratton – created maps and photo document, filled out and submitted site summaries to Vtrans.
- Created an MRGP status map for Halifax.
- Created a map sidewalk issues in Wilmington.
- Continued work on updating short structures data, edits to VTculverts data, added town long bridges, took notes for structures needing updated photos for fieldwork.
- Continued work on surface water updates and major streams coding.
- Looked at floodplain data for Townshend, compared current SFHA to preliminary data.
- Visited potential traffic count sites in Stratton and made a plan for a traffic study in June.
- Worked on the Road Erosion Inventory and culvert inventory in Stratton.
- Set up a pedestrian counter in Grafton Village Park.
- Collected bike parking data in downtown Brattleboro for May.
- Updated Halifax's culvert inventory with new culverts replaced by Green Mountain Power in 2024 and 2025.
- Field work for Halifax Road Erosion Inventory.

Municipal Planning Assistance (*Matt Bachler & Mike McConnell*)

- Continued work on the Whitingham Town Plan. Met with the Planning Commission and updated the Housing Chapter and reviewed the town plan maps.
- Weston Zoning Bylaw Amendments: Reviewed current zoning bylaws for consistency with statute. Drafted community survey questions and reviewed with Planning Commission.
- Dover Zoning Bylaw Amendments: Met with Planning Commission to review draft revisions to definitions and sensitive wildlife overlay district sections for zoning bylaw update project. Worked on updates to administrative and enforcement sections of bylaws.
- Hosted Essentials of Land Use Planning training with staff from Bennington County Regional Commission on strategies for Town Plan implementation.

- Held public hearing for request from Brookline for WRC approval of Town Plan. Provided staff recommendation to Executive Board for Brookline Town Plan approval and confirmation of municipal planning process.
- Reviewed draft subdivision bylaws for Marlboro Planning Commission and provided comments.
- Reviewed draft of Brattleboro Town Plan update and provided comments.
- Wilmington Town Plan – Sue updated goals and policies for the Enhanced Energy Plan and began working on siting standards. Prepared for and presented at the Midway Review Public Meeting. Continued updating the Enhanced Energy Plan and the Land Use Chapter. Met with Energy Committee. Prepared the Transportation goals and policies, and the Energy Plan and Chapter. Attended and presented at the Planning Commission meeting.

Natural Resources & Water Quality (*Margo Ghia*)

- Conducted outreach to Deerfield River Watershed town officials regarding appointments to the Deerfield Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee and confirmed participation from existing members.
- Finalized watershed grant agreements and subcontracting arrangements for the Deerfield Wild & Scenic study in conjunction with Deerfield River Watershed Alliance.
- Participated in meetings and coordination efforts related to the Weston Dam/Bridge replacement transition and scheduled future site visits.
- Drafted Townshend Flood Hazard Bylaws without River Corridors using the ANR model language. Participated in Planning Commission meeting with Alyssa.
- Coordinated with multiple partners on the Wilmington Community Center stormwater project and explored opportunities to combine stormwater planning efforts with the Town Emergency Center.
- Launched and coordinated the Rockingham Transport Park stormwater project, including consultant management, landowner outreach, and project boundary discussions. Processed and distributed drone imagery for stormwater assessment and erosion documentation for Rockingham Transport Park.
- Conducted outreach and coordination related to Imtec Lane stormwater improvements, including permit compliance, funding applications, site visits, and engagement with project partners.
- Submitted VT ANR Clean Water Grant applications for final stormwater design work at the Londonderry Town Garage and Londonderry Transfer Station. Completed outreach to all potential VT Permit staff for Londonderry projects as well as the Whitingham Floodplain Lowering project.
- Organized public meeting venues and logistics for upcoming Tactical Basin 11 (West, Williams and Saxtons Rivers) outreach efforts.
- Participated in water quality monitoring coordination meetings with the Connecticut River Conservancy and stream team leaders.
- Conducted outreach and planning for southeast regional conservation commission gathering.
- Reviewed project invoices for Gates Pond Road Stormwater Scoping Study.
- Attended Full Commission and Executive Committee meetings for the Connecticut River Joint Commissions. Worked on revisions to the organizational bylaws.
- Coordinated with project partners on the Town of Stratton Handle Road Culvert project, including design review, funding discussions, and cost-reduction strategies.

Project Review (*Alyssa Sabetto*)

- Spoke with District Coordinator, Quin Mann, about a current Act 250 project and the hearing results.
- Project Review Committee meeting held.
- Submitted Act 250 comment letter for Haran campground project in Grafton.
- Submitted Section 248a comment letter to PUC for Vertex tower proposed in Dummerston.
- Shared information with the Committee about the Searsburg Wind project.
- Preliminary review of information submitted to Act 250 for the Snow Lake dam removal and stream channel remediation project.

Regional Plan Update (*Matt Bachler*)

- Met with Townshend, Rockingham, Halifax, Whitingham, Athens, and Searsburg to review draft Regional Future Land Use maps.
- Held public informational meetings at Winston Prouty campus in Brattleboro on May 7th and virtual meeting on May 20th.
- Completed application form and checklist for Regional Plan submittal to Land Use Review Board.
- Completed final draft of chapter and map updates for Regional Plan. Uploaded documents onto Regional Plan update page on WRC's website.
- Began working on notices for first public hearing on Regional Plan update in August.

Transportation (*Colin Bratton*)

- Managed activities related to the Newfane Salt Shed project, including consultant procurement, review of qualifications, and coordination of the At the Ready design process.
- Participated in project meetings regarding the Stratton Grout Pond Road Improvement project, including schedule, permitting, and next-step discussions.
- Matt continued to coordinate between the Town of Londonderry, GPI, HTA, and contractor for the Londonderry Spring Hill Road culvert replacement project. The new culvert will be installed later this summer.
- The Steering Committee for the Guilford Slate Rock Road Culvert Replacement project met to review progress on preliminary designs from Dubois & King.
- The Consultant Selection Committee for the Rockingham School St Ext Sidewalk and Intersection improvement project met to review engineering firms. A Request for Proposal was submitted to Dubois & King.
- Met with VTrans staff to discuss ongoing transportation work and statewide initiatives, including efforts to encourage municipal Capital Planning.
- Provided technical assistance to Rockingham on a grant application to the FHWA Safe Streets for All program for safety improvements on the Route 121 corridor.
- Provided technical assistance to Newfane on a grant application to the VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian program.
- Met with town staff in Rockingham to discuss potential next steps for the Bellows Falls Riverfront Trail project and sources of implementation funding.
- Reviewed engineering documents for the Searsburg Sleepy Hollow Road Flood Resiliency project.

- Met with Road Foreman in Athens and Brookline to discuss next steps for VTrans Better Roads grants.
- Met with staff from Southwest RPC (NH), Town of Brattleboro, Town of Hinsdale (NH), Friends of the West River Trail and the Ashuelot Trails Association (NH), to discuss the Fort Hill Railroad Bridge trail project.
- Hosted staff from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns and the Vermont Bond Bank at the Windham Region Road Foreman meeting to present on Capital Planning for transportation infrastructure as well as municipal bonding to fund improvements.
- The Windham Regional Transportation Advisory Committee met. VTrans staff presented on the Agency's plan for 'Non-Metropolitan Local Official Public Involvement' detailing VTrans' procedures for soliciting local feedback on state transportation projects.
- Met with staff from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns to discuss Capital Planning for transportation infrastructure projects.
- Kick off Meeting for the Newfane Village Sidewalk project was held.

Other

- Margo's workshop proposal on the Imtec Lane Stormwater Project was accepted for the Fall Northern New England Planning Association Conference. Coordinated conference presentation materials and project summaries for accepted workshop.
- Matt attended a meeting with TRORPC, BCRC, and MARC, and The Collaborative about a small grant opportunity for RPCs to work on public health implementation projects.
- Regional Planning Commission Meetup – Sue helped organized and run the meetup in White River Junction.
- VT Planners Association – Sue attended an Executive Committee meeting. Organized and moderated day long spring workshop for planners in Brattleboro.
- NNECAPA Conference – Sue participated in a conference planning meeting.
- Chris attended end of semester class presentations at UVM for projects he's been involved in related to the creation of a flood buyout reuse guide for towns, and research into how councils of government might support and simplify intermunicipal collaboration while maintaining local control and not create a new level of government.
- Chris continues to serve on the Technical Advisory Committee for the Act 59 state conservation plan.
- Chris presented at the Urban and Community Forestry Conference on flood buyout reuse with VEM staff.