

WRC STAFF ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

This summary highlights staff activity during the month of SEPTEMBER 2026

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

Brownfields Redevelopment *(Susan Westa)*

- UCONN TAB (Technical Assistance to Brownfields) – Presented to an engineering class about WRC's Brownfields Coalition Application. They will be developing components of an application.
- RLF Closeout – Fixing numbers and other attributes in ACRES. Developing final report. Call with EPA to clarify questions.
- 81 Royal Rd., Brattleboro – Working with Groundworks on reporting and invoicing. Attended new Shelter Opening, now called Hope's House, that received cleanup and assessment funds from WRC.
- Putnam Block – Attended WRC Executive Board meeting to present Putnam Block request for refinancing. Working with attorney and BS&L to review request.
- Boys and Girls Club Brattleboro – Working with BGCB who is developing an application for cleanup funding.

Community Development *(Susan Westa)*

- Leadership SEVT – Updated presentation about RPCs and WRCs work and presented to group.
- Downtown Brattleboro Alliance – Attended Governance Committee meeting.
- Brattleboro Development Credit Corp. – Attended Leadership Lunch with Lieutenant Governor candidates at American Legion, Brattleboro.
- Capital Planning Forum – Participated in workshop at the Old School Community Center, Wilmington. The WRC was instrumental in making this forum happen. BDCC had the lead in organizing it. It's the continuation of a good partnership.
- Windham Aging – Attended monthly meeting.
- Windham County Economic Development Program – Participated on Advisory Committee for the first time.
- Southeastern VT Housing Coalition – Attended quarterly in person meeting. Prepared presentation for upcoming Housing Development Subcommittee meeting about "What Towns Can Do".
- Downtown Brattleboro Alliance – Attended board meeting.
- American Institute of Architecture's Communities by Design Program – Met with Chris and Matt about WRC proposal.
- Fall RPC Meetup – Call with Meetup Planning Committee.
- Southeastern VT Economic Development Strategies – Attended meeting at Hatchspace to learn more about this woodworking makerspace.

Emergency & Resiliency Planning *(Liana Rice)*

- The WRC has been authorized to resume its work in support of local emergency planning and management through the Emergency Management Performance Grant from Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) and managed by Vermont Emergency Management (VEM).
- Capital Planning Round Table at the Old School Community Center in Wilmington which included a presentation from the Vermont Bond Bank connecting capital planning to disaster resilience

- Met with Taiga Christie, Regional Coordinator with VEM to discuss utilization of Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) funds
- Attended VT Emergency Preparedness Conference in East Burke
- Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC) Meeting was held at the Vermont Emergency Medical Services Academy (VEMSA)
- Attended monthly RPC and VEM meeting
- Chris helped organize a tour of State Treasurer staff to learn more about the challenges of post-disaster recovery and what towns are doing to implement hazard mitigation projects. He was also asked to attend a meeting with the State Treasurer on climate resilience needs and challenges.

Energy (*Mike McConnell*)

- Attended monthly Energy Planners meeting.
- Attended battery storage/solar webinar
- Worked with MERP towns to get projects contracted prior to 9/30 deadline.

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

- Grants in aid: pre-construction meeting, site summary, and mapping for Newfane and Readsboro; updates to Guilford's site plan maps; continued to work with Weston to refine their project plans; post-construction site visit, reporting, and photos for Brookline, Guilford, Halifax, Londonderry, Putney, and Stratton
- Information to a VLT staff member, parcel map questions.
- Halifax: worked with the road foreman to complete the road erosion inventory on all class 2 & 3 town highways and passable class 4 town highways
- Met with Winhall town administrator and road foreman to train them on VT Culverts and MRGP Reporter tool; follow-up info on how to take VT Culverts off-line for field work.
- VT Culverts: meet with staff from Chittenden County RPC and Vtrans staff to talk about future plans.
- Regional plan: updates to several plan maps based on LURB comments and needed edits; updates to future land use areas for a half-dozen towns, then generated new maps for all towns and uploaded everything to website; environmental justice analysis.
- Rockingham zoning: completed edits and updates to zoning data to reflect 2026 district updates; updated town and village maps; began working data documentation.
- Dover zoning: data and map to reflect proposed changes to zoning districts
- Phone call with ANR Municipal Roads Coordinator to discuss road erosion inventories and culvert data; looked into getting him backup dataset from 2022 to track culvert upgrades.
- Information to the Westminster road foreman about speed limits and 85th percentile speed.
- Stratton: worked with road foreman to complete road erosion inventory on all unpaved road segments in town; did some work on updating culvert inventory data; redid our field map to highlight culverts that need to be inventoried.
- Vermont Trails and Greenways Council: participated in monthly board meeting and special board meeting to discuss budget.
- Created maps for the Jamaica Planning Commission showing a subject parcel on several town plan maps.
- VT Culverts training via Zoom with Dummerston highway department crew
- Met with Readsboro water and sewer department head to discuss available GIS data, and how the data could be updated.

- Met with CCRPC staff member to discuss AGOL account permissions.
- Attended grants program webinar offered by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation.
- Participated in Forest Parks and Recreation's bi-monthly recreation gap analysis steering committee meeting.
- Information to a data analytics company on the accuracy of our zoning data.
- Information to the Town of Wilmington on the status of a former section of Gallup Pitch Rd.
- Worked with staff member from Winston Prouty on getting GIS data that an intern created on invasive species
- Completed final year-end VAPDA reporting.
- Updated to Regional Plan environmental justice stats
- Created a large map of the Deerfield River watershed for Deerfield River Watershed Association, and added dams.
- Created updated map of MRGP segment status for the Town of Newfane.
- Created data documentation for updated Londonderry zoning districts GIS data, and posted to our online map site for public access
- Created a map of trail counts on the Hoot Toot and Whistle trail in Wilmington.
- Looked at ANR's recreation sites and water access sites GIS data; provided edits and comments back to ANR.
- Continued work on Wilmington and Stratton road erosion and culvert inventory updates.
- Continued work on road centerline edits in Whitingham.
- Edited new driveway and drainage culverts collected in Wilmington in VTCulverts.
- Continued surface water edits in Halifax.
- Conducted traffic counts in Jamaica, Brattleboro, and Marlboro.
- Downloaded and fixed long-term pedestrian counter on the West River Trail, processed trail data.
- Collected bike parking data in downtown Brattleboro for September.

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

- Weston Zoning Bylaw Amendments: Presented at public kick off meeting for project. Met with Planning Commission to discuss project schedule. Began working on revisions to administration and enforcement standards for bylaws.
- Dover Zoning Bylaw Amendments: Compiled final draft of complete zoning and subdivision bylaws. Began reviewing and making final edits to bylaws.
- Liana worked on drafting the existing conditions section of the Housing Chapter for the Wardsboro Town Plan update.
- Responded to questions from towns about Municipal Planning Grant program and worked on several applications.
- Met with Rockingham Energy Committee Chair to review final edits for Rockingham Enhanced Energy Plan.
- Held public hearing for request from the Town of Jamaica for approval of Jamaica Town Plan and Enhanced Energy Plan. Provided staff recommendation at Full Commission meeting on September 29th.
- Replied to technical questions from towns regarding zoning bylaws and town plans.
- Margo, Matt, Liana, and Jeff collaborated on updating the Regional Plan Environmental Justice section, including the development of the Environmental Justice table.

- Prepared a revised floodplain bylaw for the Town of Townshend based on the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) stand-alone model.
- Margo finalized the draft Whitingham Town Plan report for the Planning Commission hearing and prepared a detailed task list for the required 30-day hearing notice.
- (Mike) Worked with Marlboro on providing Zoning Administration Assistance.
- Chris has participated in the inaugural Windham County Policing Council meetings in an effort to provide support to the conversation among towns with the Windham County Sheriff.

Natural Resources & Water Quality *(Margo Ghia)*

- Coordinated scheduling for Deerfield Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee meetings and participated in the in person Advisory Committee meeting in Wilmington.
- Participated in the Connecticut River Joint Commissions (CRJC) Full Commission and Executive Committee meetings.
- Drafted a Request for Proposals (RFP) for design engineering services for the Weston CDBG-DR dam removal project. Coordinated with the Town regarding landowner agreements for site access for wetlands delineation and historic and archaeological test pits.
- Finalized Amendment #1 to the DuBois & King Gates Pond Stormwater contract, extending the project deadline into late fall, and processed the associated invoice.
- Provided follow-up site visit notes and action items for the Weston Dry Hydrant project, part of the CDBG-DR initiative, following coordination with Troy Dare and the project team.
- Conducted a site visit for the Rockingham Transport Stormwater project for soil core sampling.
- Coordinated a site visit for the Searsburg Sleepy Hollow Culvert removal project with Colin and the State River Engineer, River Scientist, and DEC Watershed Planner to explore design adaptations that support clean water goals.
- Met with DEC staff to discuss the final round of regional Stormwater Master Plans and planned outreach to participating towns.
- Met with a consultant working with the Southeast Land Trust Collaborative (a collection of four land trusts).
- Provided recommendations to the Rockingham Conservation Commission regarding potential sites for small riparian buffer plantings along the Saxtons River.
- Participated in a regional wildlife connectivity webinar focused on the status of projects across the Northeast.
- Coordinated with Liana regarding planning for a fall conservation commission gathering.
- (Mike) Worked with regional water suppliers on gauging capacity and system health.

Project Review *(Liana Rice)*

- Project Review Committee Meeting to review application 2W1394 (Vikings Villages)
- Attended a site visit at Vikings Villages in Guilford, regarding application 2W1394
- Attended public hearing for 2W1394 at Guilford Town Office

Regional Plan Update *(Matt Bachler)*

- Reviewed comments from Land Use Review Board on draft Regional Plan Updates and WRC staff worked on necessary revisions, including housing, child care, archaeological resources, environmental justice sections of the plan.
- Communicated with towns about required revisions to regional future land use map based on Land Use Review Board comments. Worked on final map revisions.

- Held public hearing on first draft of Regional Plan on September 21st at WRC's office and remotely via Zoom.
- Submitted memo to Land Use Review Board with questions regarding comments on draft regional future land use map. Met with LURB twice to review questions about mapping.
- Presented final draft of Regional Plan Update at Full Commission meeting on September 29th.
- Scheduled and prepared public hearing on final draft of Regional Plan on November 5th and distributed hearing notice to towns and state agencies.

Transportation (*Colin Bratton*)

- 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 in October.
- Margo worked with the Town of Windham on final construction elements for the Windham 121 Culvert Replacement project. Activities included: confirmed substantial completion, coordinated with the Town and contractors on invoicing, conducted the punch-list site visit, reported findings to GPI, Punch list deemed complete.
- Margo processed project invoices and coordinated with the full Stratton Grout Pond Road team regarding the status of preliminary plans.
- Margo worked with the Town of Newfane and Received an updated DuBois & King cost proposal for the Newfane Salt Shed design RFP and obtained approval for the revised cost.
- Colin continued work as the Municipal Project Manager for the Athens Brookline Road Box Culvert project. The draft Alternatives designs for the box culvert were completed and reviewed by WRC, town staff and VTrans.
- Colin continued work as the Municipal Project Manager for the Newfane Village Sidewalk project. 25% conceptual design for the project has been completed and the project is currently in initial review before being moved forward for permitting.
- Colin continued work as the Municipal Project Manager for the Guilford Slate Rock Road culvert project. The preferred design was selected by the town and 25% design completed. The project is currently being reviewed by VTrans staff before moving forward in the permitting process.
- Colin continued work as the Municipal Project Manager for the Rockingham School St Ext project. A revised RFP was submitted to Dubois & King to include consideration for drainage problems on the site. The Project Selection Committee met to review the revised proposal and approved Dubois & King as the preferred consultant.
- Staff met with the Rockingham Walk Bike Committee to discuss ongoing active transportation priorities in town and discussed next steps for potential funding applications, including for the Bellows Falls Riverfront Trail project.
- Staff met with the Dummerston Selectboard to discuss concerns about speeding and pedestrian safety in priority locations in town and best practices for traffic calming.
- Staff publicized the VTrans Better Roads grant program and met with several towns in the Windham Region to discuss potential applications.
- Staff met with the Friends of the West River trail organization to discuss ongoing work and priorities for improved multimodal connectivity in the Route 30 corridor.
- Staff attended the Transportation Planning Initiative meeting at the VTrans office in Barre.
- The Windham Regional Transportation Committee met. Staff from Vermont Local Roads presented to the Committee on best practices for paving and the maintenance of gravel road infrastructure.

- Colin met with staff from the Mt. Ascutney Regional Planning Commission to discuss the Southeast Vermont Older Adults & Persons with Disabilities Transportation Committee.
- Colin met with the Grafton Town Administrator to discuss pedestrian infrastructure in Grafton village.
- The Kick Off meeting for the Guilford Algiers Village Bicycle and Pedestrian Scoping study was held.
- Staff attended the Windham Region Town Highway Hiring and Staff Retention working group meeting.

Other

- Liana and Chris attended the initial Vermont Council on Rural Development kickoff meeting in Wardsboro.
- Liana met with current Regional Planning graduate students at UMass Amherst to talk about her experience working with WRC as a student.
- Margo and Sue are on the State-wide Regional Planning Commission meetup planning committee.
- Chris participated in the annual RPC directors retreat, which this year was held in Grafton.
- Chris is working with a developing collaboration among the WRC, the Windham County Natural Resources Conservation District, the Vermont Community Foundation, and the UMass Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning Program, along with the Green River Watershed Alliance, on a bi-region, bi-state flood adaptation planning project.
- Chris continues to chair the Connecticut River Watershed Partnership Executive Committee.
- Chris was asked to kick off the Vermont Housing Conservation Board partners gathering with reflections on the connections among housing, conservation, and local food systems.
- Chris has been asked by the Chair of the legislative County and Regional Governance Study Committee, Senator Wendy Harrison, to attend meetings of the committee and was asked to testify in September about research conducted by UVM on councils of government, and to share his perspective on the work of the earlier iteration of the committee.
- Chris continues to serve on the Land Use Review Board Accessory On Farm Businesses Stakeholder Group.