



Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee

Regional Commission Newsletter

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In this Issue:

TRORC Towns Awarded \$415,000	Page 2
Outreach Begins on Ch. 117 Changes	Page 2
White River Basin Plan Hearings	Page 2
Rules of Procedure Workshop Scheduled	Page 3
Former TRORC Chair Passes Away	Page 4

Petroleum Brownfields Assessment Program

Last fall, Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission added another tool to our Brownfields kit after winning a \$200,000 EPA Petroleum Brownfields assessment grant. With these funds, TRORC will finance environmental site assessments at petroleum contaminated sites so that they reenter the local economy as useful and valued properties.

Cleaning up Brownfields is a very important component of municipal development and community revitalization. It improves the local economy (creates jobs and contributes to the tax base), reduces health threats, and avoids new development being pushed to virgin sites outside of developed cores (known as sprawl). By assisting public entities who may be acquiring sites and covering the costs of site assessment, TRORC is removing a major impediment to redevelopment of abandoned, idle, or under-used properties in our region. Further, a 2004 Vermont law now offers municipalities an option to take ownership of abandoned properties to promote a fuller range of redevelopment without acquiring the associated ownership liability.

Petroleum Brownfields sites can include those with underground storage tanks such as gas stations and town garages, auto repair shops, farms, junk yards, or any commercial building that might have had an underground tank for fueling vehicles or heating.

While Vermont has a Petroleum Cleanup Fund (PCF) that is funded annually by a tax on gasoline sales, PCF funds will not pay the costs to pull a tank. Brownfields Petroleum funds, however, can be used to pump out and remove tanks. Look to TRORC to navigate this process.

The Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission is eager begin targeting eligible sites focused on expansion, redevelopment or reuse for schools, housing, playing fields, new businesses, or open space. We'll be reaching out to municipalities, non-profits and housing groups and meeting with developers and real estate agencies in the coming months. Contact Sally Mansur at 457-3188 for more information on this program.

Sally Mansur Joins TRORC Staff

The Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission welcomes Sally Mansur to our staff.

Sally has a graduate degree from Tufts University in Hazardous Materials Management and more than 15 years of environmental experience. Sally is managing



outreach to our member towns on changes to Vermont's zoning law and the EPA Brownfields Petroleum Assessment grant. She lives in Stafford with her three children and is Chair of the Stafford Conservation Commission.



Towns Awarded \$415K in Enhancements

Six Towns in the TRORC region have received a total of \$415,000 in Transportation Enhancement Grant funds. TRORC staff developed a number of these applications and/or explored the options of using this grant program with interested citizens and Selectboards. We are pleased to take every opportunity we can to get these projects funded. This program is offered on an annual basis and we hope all our towns will participate in the future.

Transportation Enhancements (TE) activities offer communities funding opportunities to help expand transportation choices such as; safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities, scenic routes, beautification, and other investments that increase recreation opportunity and access. Communities may also use TE funds to contribute toward the revitalization of local and regional economies by restoring historic buildings, renovating streetscapes, or providing transportation museums and visitors centers.

- Chelsea \$75,000
Chelsea connector pedestrian path
- Fairlee \$170,000
Fairlee railroad station
CT River Byway visitor center
- Hartford \$50,000
Hartford railroad right-of-way improvements, Phase III
- Hartland \$45,000
Hartland bike/ped engineering and design project
- Thetford \$25,000
Thetford Village bike/ped improvements
- Woodstock \$50,000
Taftsville Green

For more information on the Transportation Enhancements program, contact Chuck Wise at 457-3188 or cwise@trorc.org

Outreach Begins on Ch. 117 Revisions

By now you've read about changes enacted last year to Chapter 117, Vermont's Land Use and Development Act. The primary purpose of these changes was to promote affordable housing development and to generally reorganize and update the state's enabling legislation regarding local zoning and subdivision bylaws.

Over the next five months, TRORC staff will meet twice with Planning Commissions, Zoning Administrators, Zoning Boards, Development Review Boards, and Select Boards in our region. Tailored to individual town needs, the first meeting during the winter months will provide an overview of the changes to the state statute. In the late spring, a second round of meetings will offer further detail and provide town bylaw review as needed.

TRORC Planners can assist boards in determining the extent of changes necessary to municipal zoning bylaws. While our goal is to assist towns with zoning bylaws, we also plan to meet with towns that lack these bylaws to explain how the changes may impact their other land use regulations.

Please feel free to contact Sally Mansur at 457-3188 or smansur@trorc.org with questions regarding Chapter 117 in your town.



White River Basin Plan Hearings Announced

The Vermont Water Resources Board (WRB) has scheduled two public hearings on a petition filed by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) to reclassify waters of the White River Basin. It is extremely important that individuals and organizations concerned about water quality attend these hearings and file written comments on the proposed reclassifications.

The White River Basin Plan (WRBP) is the first of the 17 basin plans drafted by the ANR. A precedent will be established for the other 16 basin plans if the WRBP is adopted as currently written.

Under state law, the basin plan must be approved by the WRB before being adopted into the Vermont Water Quality Standards.

The hearings are scheduled for:

Date: February 22, 2005
Time: 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Location: Hotel Coolidge in White River Junction.

Date: March 3, 2005
Time: 3:00 PM - 5:00PM
Location: ANR office at 111 West Street in Essex Junction.

If you have any questions please contact Kevin Geiger at 457-3188 or kgeiger@trorc.org

Rules of Procedure Workshop

Town Officers Education Conferences (TOEC) Scheduled for April

The Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission will be cohosting a workshop with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns in early March. This evening workshop will focus on how local development review bodies can adopt Rules of Procedure and Conflict of Interest Policies.

These workshops are designed for all local land use officials, including planning commissioners, zoning administrators, town planners, managers and administrators, selectboard members, and other interested parties.

Date: Thursday, March 10

Time: 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Location: Vermont Interactive Television Sites. VIT sites within the TRORC region are located at Vermont Technical College (VTC) in Randolph Center, and at Community College of Vermont in Wilder.

Contact for More Information:
Jessica Hill at Vermont League of Cities & Towns

Phone: 802-229-9111

Email: info@vlct.org

\$30 for VLCT PACIF members
\$40 for VLCT members \$75 for non-members

All our Towns are members of VLCT. Municipal officials pay the member rate.

Website for information and/or registration:

<http://www.vlct.org/calendar>

The annual Town Officers Education Conferences (TOECs) has been officially scheduled.

TOEC is an all-day, regional event with workshops for various municipal officials. Planning and zoning topics include changes to Chapter 117, demographics, water quality, and GIS mapping.

Date: Wednesday, April 13

Time: 8:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Place: Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee, VT

Contact for More Information:
Mary Peabody at UVM Extension
Phone: 223-2389
Email: mary.peabody@uvm.edu

or

Chris Sargent at TRORC
Phone: 457-3188 ext 12
Email: csargent@trorc.org

Registration has not yet begun. On-line registration and a hard copy registration brochure will be made available soon.



VTrans recently completed its East Corinth Bridge project.
Total Cost: Approximately \$745,000



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News Shorts

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Seeking New Commissioners

The Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission is proud to have such an active board of commissioners. But, not all towns in our region have active representatives. If you are in the towns of Bradford, Plymouth, Hancock, Granville or Topsham, and are interested in becoming a TRORC representative for your town, please contact your Selectboard!

We welcome the active participation and support of our towns.

**visit us on
 the web!!
 www.trorc.org**

Former TRORC Chair Peter Jennison passes away

A sixth-generation Vermonter, born on a dairy farm in Swanton, Jennison attended a one room school until his parents packed him off to Philips Academy, Andover. Next came Middlebury College, interrupted in his junior year by World War II. Jennison served three years with the Office of Strategic Services, the forerunner of the CIA, as a code and ciphers specialist, decoding messages from U.S. agents behind the lines in Germany, France and Norway. Returning to Middlebury, he graduated with a degree in American literature, married Jane, and began what was to become a lifetime spent with books.

During the 1980's Jennison was the Chair of the TRORC Board. He later went on to become a well known and decorated author who focused on his love of

Vermont and its historical and recreational value. His list of books includes the very popular "Vermont: An Explorers Guide" and "The Roadside History of Vermont". He was extremely active in local planning activities as well.

