



“From mud to spring in Vermont, it’s worth the wait, just put up with it.”

-Jim Masland

News & Notes

April 2016

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- ECV “In Action” Celebration
- Update Your LEOPs
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News & Notes

April 2016

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Planning for Healthy Communities Gains Momentum

Communities where residents feel connected to neighbors, have a sense of belonging, have safe options for walking and being active, and have easy access to services, healthy foods, and affordable housing are communities where people enjoy greater health and well-being.



These concepts resonated throughout our three-year planning process for *East Central Vermont: What We Want (ECV:WWW)*. Springfield—located in the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission, one of our partners in this planning process—is currently developing a health plan element as a direct result of the *ECV:WWW* plan. We are also moving forward in creating a “Healthy Communities” plan element for our Regional Plan.

Kudos to those towns in both regions—Woodstock and Weathersfield—who are ahead of the curve, and have already developed and included health elements in their town plans.

As we mentioned at our last consortium meeting, we will host periodic meetings to update you about how the *ECV:WWW* action plan is moving forward and to discuss how best to keep the momentum going. See the “Save the Date” below and mark your calendars for the May 26 *ECV:WWW* “In Action” Celebration.

Implementing ECV:WWW Healthy Communities Goal A; Policy A.1; Action 3: Ensure local and regional plans include a chapter specifically about health, and weave health goals and policies throughout all chapters.

East Central Vermont: What We Want “In Action” Celebration

Please **Save the Date**

for the

East Central Vermont: What We Want “In Action” Celebration

Thursday, May 26, 2016, 5:30 p.m.

The Quechee Club

Let’s get together to celebrate what’s already happening and to discuss what’s next!

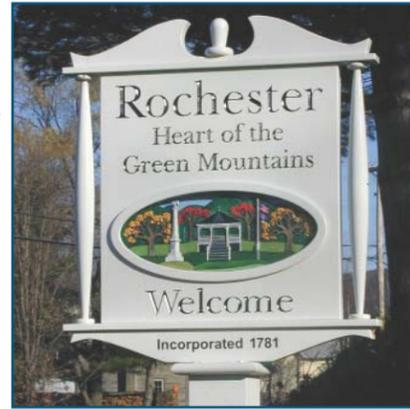
Contact Lorelee Morrow at lmorrow@trorc.org for more information

Update Your Town LEOP

Every year the Vermont Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF) requires that each town update their Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP). TRORC has provided a draft LEOP to each of our 30 towns with a request to update their plans by the May 1 due date.

This incredibly important document helps protect your community in the event of an emergency. The LEOP must be approved and signed by the Selectboard no later than May 1.

If you have any questions on how to update your LEOP, please contact Tory Levite at vlevite@trorc.org.



Thank you Rochester for being one of our first towns to submit your LEOP!

South Royalton and Royalton Obtain Village Designation Renewals

On March 28, 2016, the Vermont Downtown Development Board approved Royalton's Village Designation renewal requests for both the Royalton and South Royalton Villages. Royalton's Village Centers, which represent compact, cohesive cores that the program seeks to benefit, has been part of the program since 2006. The Village Center Designation program is a non-regulatory state program that provides benefits to communities and income producing properties for the purposes of revitalizing and sustaining villages and downtowns. Income producing properties can receive tax credits for revitalization projects in these designated areas. Municipalities with designations receive priority consideration on some state grant programs as well. TRORC was pleased to assist Royalton with their renewals, and as always, we continue to offer our assistance to other communities seeking to enter the program.

For more information about the Village Designation program, contact Loralee Morrow at lmorrow@trorc.org.

Implementing ECV: WWW Economic Development Goal D: Ensure downtowns throughout the region are vibrant, accessible, and economically successful.

VHCB Awards \$3.9 Million to Create and Rehabilitate Homes

The Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB) committed \$3,953,500 to develop, rehabilitate and preserve 220 affordable homes across the state. White River Junction (\$500,000), Bradford (\$760,000), Wilder (\$710,000), and Rochester (\$250,000) were among the many towns that were awarded. Funds will be used for a variety of projects ranging from addressing health and safety codes for a shared housing residence for seniors in Rochester, to new construction of highly energy efficient apartments in White River Junction.

VHCB's partners serve all regions of the State and are the primary entry point for income-eligible residents to enroll in the Vermont Healthy Homes program.

For more information about VHCB and these projects, go to: <http://www.vhcb.org>.



Legislative Update

Peter Gregory, Executive Director

As we do every year, TRORC participates in the review and comment on many pieces of legislation affecting TRORC towns or the region as a whole. This year is no different and we have been busy advocating for policies and programs that help our members. Legislators know about the strong connection we have to local government and are eager to hear from us. Let me touch on a few of the many proposals in play:

Energy Siting:

S. 230 was passed by the Senate and is on its way to the House for consideration. This bill enhances the requirements for local and regional plans and their energy chapters. In exchange for a stronger planning component, the law would provide for "substantial deference" of these plans by the Public Service Board in Section 248 Certificate of Public Good proceedings.

Inter-municipal Services:

The House has passed H. 249 and the Senate is reviewing the bill to enable regional planning commissions, at the direction of their municipalities, to enter into Service Agreements to provide services for one or more towns. This expanded enabling statute would make it easier for municipalities to enter into arrangements to provide services in a more effective and efficient way.

Forestry:

H.789 has passed the House and is in Senate Natural Resources and Energy awaiting consideration. This bill does many things, but its direct impact on towns is related to its changes to the planning statutes for local and regional plans. The state planning goals would also be modified to reflect greater clarity and support for forestry and forest resources.

This is a summary of just three of the dozen or so bills or sections of law we are following. If you have any questions on any of these or others, please feel free to call or email me at pgregory@trorc.org.

Congratulations to Hancock!

TRORC and White River Partnership assisted the Town of Hancock in applying for and receiving \$358,250 in Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Funds (CDBG-DR). The project is to replace an existing multi-plate culvert pipe with a larger bridge structure capable of passing the 100-year storm event at the lowest Howe Brook crossing of Churchville Road.

The existing culvert, sized for a 25-year storm event, was overtopped during Tropical Storm Irene resulting in the loss of several hundred feet of Town road and threatening several residences.

For more information, contact Rita Seto at rseto@trorc.org.

Implementing ECV: WWW Climate Change Goal A: Create a region able to withstand current and future climate changes with limited detrimental effects.



The Churchville Road culvert that will be replaced with CDBG-DR funds.