

**Vermont Climate Council**  
**November 9, 2021 -Minutes**

Date/Time: November 9, 2021, 1:30 PM  
Location: Zoom Meeting  
Physical Location to Attend in Person: Agency of Natural Resources, One National Life Drive,  
Montpelier, VT 05602 in Catamount NL D215

Vermont Climate Council members:

Abbie Corse  
Anson Tebbetts  
Bram Kleppner  
Brian Gray  
Catherine Dimitruk  
Chad Farrell  
Chris Cochran  
Chris Company  
Erica Bornemann  
Iris Hsiang  
Jared Duval  
Johanna Miller  
Joe Flynn  
Julie Moore  
June Tierney  
Kelly Klein  
Kristin Clouser  
Lauren Oates  
Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux  
Liz Miller  
Richard Cowart  
Sean Brown  
Sue Minter

Sub-committee co-chairs

Billy Coster  
TJ Poor  
Peter Walke

Staff and support:

Jane Lazorchak  
David Plumb  
Cameron Hager

Minutes By: David Plumb, Cameron Hager

**1:30 PM      Convene/Welcome/Overview and Approval of Agenda**

*Kristin Clouser, Agency of Administration & David Plumb, Consensus Building Institute*

Agenda was approved by the Council.

**1:35 PM**      **Review and Approval of [Nov. 2, 2021 Minutes](#)**  
*David Plumb, Consensus Building Institute*

Minutes were approved by the Council.

**1:40 PM**      **Just Transition Reflection**  
*Iris Hsiang, Just Transition Sub Committee*

Iris Hsiang presented a video from Time Magazine and offered thoughts about why this work is so vitally important.

**1:55 PM**      **Rural Resilience Sub-Committee proposed strategies, pathways & actions**  
*Sub-Committee Co-Chairs*

David Plumb presented the findings from the survey taken on the proposed strategies, pathways, and actions from the Rural Resilience Sub-Committee. Erica Bornemann and Catherine Dimitruk took point on answering said question. Key points of the discussion are recorded below:

**Building Resilience and Adaptation in Communities and the Built Environment**

- On **eliminate statutory barriers to school and municipal solar participation**, the Council had concerns on the recommendation not accounting for the electricity customer cost-shift that occurs through net-metering. The sub-committee clarified that the focus of the recommendation was on financing and they did not discuss net-metering. The sub-committee will take up the suggestion of referring to cost-effective programs.
- On **water infrastructure language not aligned with typical approach**, the council was concerned about the water infrastructure text not being matched with ANR terminology. However, this alignment is now happening.
- On **the relocation of villages**, the council had concern about what this actually means for historic villages especially on rivers and in floodplains. The subcommittee said there is a not a one size fits all solution for these communities. The idea is to have tools that are accessible for these communities based on a vulnerability assessment of the risks to their villages. It may lead to relocation of structures. It could look at other solutions..
- On **road funding recommendation**, the Council asked for clarity on these funding recommendations for roads. The subcommittee clarified that they were trying to find how to make up money for the costs of these plans. The council and subcommittee felt it was too early to put these recommendations in here as it needs to be given to the legislature for discussion. It will be noted in the document that this is an issue to be addressed and find resolution for.
- On **drought impacts of drinking water**, Council members had concern that this was an issue that was absent from the draft. The subcommittee mentioned that impacts were not

called out hazard by hazard. All aspects of hydrology will be up front in the section as it is not just about the drought impacts on drinking water; it's about drought as a whole. There were not any specific recommendations given, but people could send recommendations to the subcommittee to review.

- On **including high winds and heavy rain**, the Council asked for the toolkit to include how to plan for high winds and heavy rain. The subcommittee said this was the intent, but they will make it more specific.
- On **advance equitable resilience**, there was an ask to clarify what this section means as neither of the actions address that. The subcommittee clarified that it relates to the statutory charge and it was more about the assessment piece. There will be tables that address equitable program design. The subcommittee will also broaden Pathway 2 beyond ski and sugaring.
- On **communication action agencies**, council members recommended that the Community Action Agencies be identified as entities that the state can seek to resource and to address frontline issues. The subcommittee could change the name to Community Action Networks to expand the concept. There will be more discussion outside of the meeting to discuss individual assistance post-disaster for marginalized communities.
- On **relocating wastewater treatment facilities**, a question was posed about relocating wastewater treatment facilities away from rivers and lakes to reduce facility damage and to improve water quality. The subcommittee said that there is not a one size fits all solution to that issue, but it is a part of the toolkit and assessment. There was no specific suggestion, but language will be strengthened after the meeting.
- On **the link between pollution prevention programs and wastewater facilities**, a Council member asked to clarify the link between these two entities. The subcommittee stated that there is a sentiment that pollution in waterways means that a community needs help and there is a lot of inflow and infiltration in wastewater facilities. One council member felt that this could be stretch for climate action. Others felt that this is tapped into climate infrastructure.
- On **weatherization navigators**, Council members had a question on where to house this type of staff. This could be amended so that they are in multiple place. The idea would be to have increased capacity and “doors” to open to find that capacity. The language will also include the importance of coordination among navigators and how this is a whole system approach beyond weatherization.
- Councilors asked about the timeline for submitting minor written comments (24 hours). Also, Jane Lazorchak also explained Councilors will review at a later meeting a section on funding. There will also be a specific section for the LEAP modeling and other funding information in the implementation section.

3:10 PM      BREAK

**3:20 PM      Agriculture & Ecosystem Sub-Committee proposed strategies, pathways  
& actions  
                  *Sub-Committee Co-Chairs***

David Plumb presented the key issues surrounding the proposed strategies, pathways, and actions

through a survey taken by council members. Abbie Corse and Billy Coster answered questions and concerns relating to the proposed strategies, pathways, and actions. Key points of the discussion are recorded below:

### **Sequestration and Storing Carbon**

- **On "Prohibiting expansion" on existing biomass plants**, council members had concerns around the suggestions in this section and asked for clarity and revisions surrounding this action. The subcommittee was asked to make the headline of the section reflect more clearly what's down below in the section and be less broad. The subcommittee was asked to be more clear about thermal systems and co-generation systems so as to not be lumped into electric generation.
- **On changes to renewable energy standard**, the council had concerns regarding recommendations to the RES. The subcommittee mentioned that this was an aspirational concept and hoped they could expand the model into tree planting. The idea was not particularly "well-baked" at the subcommittee level and will be reexamined.

### **Adaptation and Building Resilience in Natural and Working Lands**

- **On consolidating and harmonizing compact settlement recommendations**, the council members were concerned about potentially conflicting actions that exist here. Also, it was recommended the subcommittee look into resettlement programs. An existing ANR rule could be tweaked that would not require legislative action in order to accommodate this recommendation. The subcommittee clarified they don't believe they have conflicting actions, and the focus is on river corridor protections.
- **There was a concern about linking dense settlement to areas with existing infrastructure** - having this used as a litmus test for future development has the potential to be a barrier to investment and revitalization in many rural villages without community-scale water and wastewater. The subcommittee could change the language to "adequate" infrastructure. The compact settlement definition could be discussed in the Cross-Cutting section as well.
- **On Renewable energy siting issues (Pathway F – 5)**, several council members had various concerns about the language used in this strategy, in particular about unintended consequences for rate-payers, and also wanting to keep the door open for co-location of farming and renewable energy. The Sub-committee agree to review the language.

### **Mitigation in Agriculture**

- **On food security**, there was a discussion among council members on the importance of food security in this plan. The subcommittee emphasized making sure that people have food security is only going to become more imperative. There is a statewide partnership that exists in Vermont right now that could be folded into the recommendation for food security which will be discussed after the meeting. It was flagged that supporting healthy, resilient, local food systems is also under the Ag & Eco subcommittee charge in the GWSA.

**4:40 PM      Public comment**

The following individuals participated in the public comment period:

- Mary Bryant
- Vanessa Rule of 350 VT
- Zack Porter

**4:50 PM      Next Steps and adjourn**

- Meeting the morning of the 10<sup>th</sup>
  - Picking up the conversations left from today
  - Any other strands
- Revised drafts will come from subcommittees soon.
- More documents incoming from Jane and Marian

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