

**Rural Resilience and Adaptation Subcommittee
of the Vermont Climate Council
9/13/24 Meeting - Minutes**

Location: Meeting was recorded and posted [online](#) here.
Subcommittee Members present: Andrea Wright, Eric Forand, Mike Burke, Danielle Bombardier, Dr. Mark Levine, Alice Peal, Marian Wolz, Scott McCormick, Candace Pearson, Bronwyn Cooke
State Agency Staff Present: Anne Margolis, Ben Rose, Caroline Paske for Stephanie Smith, Otis Ellms-Munroe
Minutes by: Sue Plant

12:04 PM Welcome – Andrea Wright, RRA Co-Chair
Agenda Overview

Approval of June 14 & August 20, 2024 Minutes
Minutes [approved](#)

As an introduction and grounding for the meeting discussion Andrea shared: Step 2: Review existing strategies in task groups. • Task groups should read in detail the existing Strategies/Actions that relate to the priority areas to familiarize the group with the full suite of actions. • Pause on actions listed as “Implementing”, “Advancing”, and “No Action Taken”. or Ask: ▪ is this still an important action to achieve the goals of the GWSA? ▪ Does it need more resources to be successful? or If not, suggest removing it (templates include drop downs to aid in decision making and to note group’s decision) or If yes, consider what revisions may be needed to make it actionable ▪ Look in the Status Notes or Other Notes in the master spreadsheet for insights. ▪ Is the action clear, measurable, and is there a likely implementor? ▪ If there is no good way to make it actionable, consider whether the idea is better suited for introductory text or context setting.

12:10 PM VCC / Subcommittee Membership Updates
Subcommittee Membership changes – Anna Guenther has stepped down
Andrea provided a review of several documents that were shared earlier in the week at the VCC Steering Committee meeting and that were sent to subcommittee members via e-mail from the Climate Action Office. Those documents included the Revised Cap outline, a Climate Action Office proposal for cross cutting pathways, a visual guide for Just Transitions Guiding Principles, and stakeholder engagement for the subcommittee.

12:12 PM Final Actions Lead
Marian shared the [spreadsheet](#) used at last subcommittee meeting. The focus of the discussion was on the actions in red that identified more than one task group as a potential lead. The lead Task Group for each action was determined by a recommendation that the Task Group with

responsibility over the majority of the Strategy actions would take the lead and if there are changes, to let the other Task Group know.

[Updated Task Group Spreadsheet](#)

12:47 PM Pathway 3 – CSM coordination

Andrea discussed the crossover between RRA and CSM regarding Pathway 3, the reduction of fossil fuel in rural areas. She spoke with the Co-Chairs and attended their subcommittee meeting.

[RRA/CSM Crossover Pathway\(s\)](#)

Dave Farnsworth, from the Buildings and Thermal Task Group of CSM, and Scott McCormick volunteered to take the lead on that. Scott and Dave met, and they have recommendations for revisions on strategies under pathways but not down to the action level yet. Scott said RRA would support their efforts, as the Thermal group is looking at it from the perspective of regulatory and policy and also a technical perspective. They have some clear ideas on where they want to go. Scott will sit in on their subcommittee/Task Group meetings to provide further input. He will also involve Candace as Will have discussion on the energy codes and electrification standards. May also be able to add building codes and land development codes at the local level to that discussion.

Candace Pearson volunteered to assist Scott with this. Her focus would be not creating separate programs or resiliency codes but to merge with the programs already there.

12:54 PM Task Group - Progress Updates

Scott McCormick reported that their group (Scott, Marian, Bronwyn, Dahlia, Caroline and Otis) focused on Pathways and Strategies, and they updated notes on a spreadsheet and talked about Pathway 1. Did revisions of Strategies 14a and 14b, allocated the Strategies and Actions to individuals within the task group. Interviews could be with Regional Planning Commissions, State Legislative Response representatives, Municipalities, towns, villages, cities, etc... A question arose as to whether we could do our own interviews without using CBI or whether that would violate open meeting law. Bronwyn asked about stakeholder meetings with municipalities and whether we are tapping into the same municipalities.

Andrea provided a brief overview of the Infrastructure and Built Environment Task Group's work. The group has worked its way through its responsible actions noting which may need to be revised. Noted that they are identifying themes (i.e waste water).

Alice Peal reported on the Public Health Task Group (Alice, Jared). Focused on communications, using our regional health offices and RPCs. Keeping our website up to date. VDH did a survey regarding the effect of climate change on health. These are the main areas we looked at, 1) Heating/Cooling, keeping warm in the winter and cool in the summer, 2) Air Quality, wildfire smoke, 3) Water Quality, flooding causes viruses and rapid moving water's dangers, 4) Infectious diseases, EEE problem from mosquitos, 5) Mental Health issues, people affected by flooding.

Discussed Housing and Scott brought up some of the actions as not really what we want to address. Some may be redundant or not politically viable. Using Pathway 18; there's transit-oriented development studies which relate to LDCs, weatherization electrification programs for old housing, low income housing and landlord sponsorship for weatherization programs, which all could go into that Pathway. It also deals with codes, energy codes, building codes, land development codes, which supports municipalities. It was noted that these may need be reviewed with other subcommittees as well.

- 1:30 PM Climate Action Office Support - SharePoint overview by Liz Amler & Sophi Veltrop
Subcommittee Template Overview - [SharePoint site for documents](#)
Each Subcommittee gets 2 stakeholder/focus group meetings which will be virtual in October, open to the public there will also be 2 separate municipality groups working with the Regional Planning Commissions.
Decide what the 2 main subjects you want at the meetings, who you'd like to attend (by the 27th).
In the spring there will be in-person meetings around the state.
- 1:50 PM Recap and Next Steps -
Step 3 Assess gaps, revise existing Strategies / Actions to address those gaps, developing new pathways, strategies, and / or actions, if needed.

Next meeting Friday, 9/27 12-2:00 PM
- 2:00 PM Adjourn