

**Mad River Valley Planning District
Director's Report
March 2009**

Mad River Valley Path Association

- Participated in the MRPA's 2/17 Board meeting. The Board identified priority sections for Path completion, discussed the recently completed marketing plan, and decided upon a funding strategy.
- The next MRPA Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 3/26, at 6 PM.
- The Town of Warren, MRPA, and MRVPD's VTrans Transportation Enhancement Grant for the purchase of the 3 acre Whiteside parcel is still on hold.

Energy

- The Vermont Community Energy Mobilization Pilot Project is continuing with great success. Over the last four weekends community volunteers have performed more than 40 home visits. Hundreds of CFL light bulbs have been installed, in addition to other low-cost energy saving measures. The program will continue through April.
- Joshua highlighted numerous MRV initiatives and lessons learned while a panelist at a 3/5 VLCT workshop entitled *Putting Energy Planning into Action*.

Mad River Byway

- Participated in the 2/27 meeting of the Byway Committee. The meeting consisted of finalizing Byway maps, furthering kiosk and signage content & design, and developing the 3rd annual Byway Event.
- The Committee is working on a '12 Things to Do on the Byway' list for the signage.
- Joshua is coordinating with the Warren Historical Society to develop signage for the Village sign.
- The next meeting is scheduled for 3/27.

Valley Futures Network

- The 3/13 meeting included a presentation of agriculture in the Valley by Dave Hartshorn and a discussion about the relationship between MRVPD and VFN.

Housing

- Participated in the 3/17 meeting of the MRVHC.
- Karen Winchell has continued to make progress on the Mad River Valley Housing Coalition's (MRVHC) accessory apartment project.
- John Donaldson is continuing to make process on a brochure detailing bargain sales/land bank donations.
- The next meeting is scheduled for 4/14.

Transportation

- The released date for the State's online carpooling program, GoVT, has been postponed again until April.
- The Valley Walk 'n Roll Festival group met on 3/12. Events planned for the week long festival include a bike swap, bike safety training course, a bicycling commuter workshop, a Byway event, and the release of the Mad Bikes of Waitsfield. The festival will coincide with the State's Way to Go events.
- The next Valley Walk 'n Roll Festival meeting is scheduled for 3/26.

Data

- A contract has been signed with UVM's Center for Rural Studies for MRVPD's data analysis and data update. A kick-off meeting is scheduled to be a part of the Steering Committee's April meeting.

Forests Wildlife Communities Project Steering Committee

- The FWCP Steering Committee will be meeting during the first week in April to discuss next steps for the project, which include public outreach and coordination between Conservation Commissions and VNRC regarding zoning regulation updates required by the recent Jam Golf, Inc. court case.
- Joshua is attending a 3/20 workshop with Miron from Warren on the recent Jam Golf, Inc. court case.

Mad River Watershed Conservation Partnership

- Participated in the 3/18 meeting of the MRWCP, which focused on conservation priorities within the next 5 years.
- The Two Farm Fundraising Campaign has raised approximately \$185k of the The closing for the Kingsbury Community Farm is scheduled for 3/30. The Bruce Farm closing is scheduled for late April.

Rural Resource Commission

- Met with the Rural Resource Commission on 3/12 and discussed administrative compliance, opportunities with the Byway program, the Warren Town Hall project, and potential future grant opportunities.

Sugarbush

- Presented Sugarbush with the final letter on the project.
- Working with Sugarbush and CVRPC to address Act 250's recess memorandum.

Chamber

- Attended 2/24 Chamber meeting to discuss the potential of a local option tax.
- Attended 3/12 meeting of the Chamber's new Strategic Partners Committee and VFN to discuss the philosophy and direction of VFN and how it relates to the initiatives of the Chamber.
- Attended 3/16 inaugural meeting of the Chamber's Economic Development Committee and discussed opportunities for growing/drawing niche businesses to the Valley, affordable housing, septic, and zoning. The group is also looking to reinstate the legislative breakfast series. The next meeting is scheduled for 4/20, 3:30 pm at the Wait House.

Municipal Support

- Organizing a consortium municipal education grant application to fund a series of DRB/PC trainings through the spring. The topics will be: Water Quality Issues through Regulatory and Non-Regulatory Process, Public Deliberations, and the DRB Review Process.
- U.S.D.A. Rural Development has selected Waitsfield's water project as the focal point for celebrating Earth Day this year (April 22), which is likely to involve numerous activities that draw attention to the water project, environmental protection, etc. An organizing meeting is scheduled for 3/19 at 10 AM.

Other

- Joshua spent an hour+ on 3/17 discussing planning and the Valley with David Sellers on his WMRW radio show. It will be rebroadcast on 3/22 at 10 am and will also be shown on Channel 44.