

**Mad River Valley Planning District
Director's Report
October 2008**

Mad River Valley Path Association

- The Path Association had a successful Mad Dash on September 21st.
- Town Pond & Marsh Loop
The Waitsfield Selectboard provided appropriate approval to the MRPA and Open Hearth for proposed Marsh Loop and Town Pond sections of the Village Path. An application has been submitted for required state approvals.

Housing

- The Mad River Valley Housing Coalition's (MRVHC) mini-grant application to the Central Vermont Community Land Trust has been partially funded for the development of a Valley specific accessory apartment project, consisting of a "how-to" brochure, education of local officials and builders, and exploration of local resources for apartment development. The award was \$1000 out of a \$2000 request. The remaining funds will be split between the MRVHC and the Planning District. This project focuses on Waitsfield, Warren, Fayston, and Moretown.
- The MRVHC recently discussed potential sites and issues surrounding a land bank program. The group is planning on developing a list of potential properties and opportunities. The next Board meeting is scheduled for 11/4 at 7:30 AM.

Mad River Byway

- We are currently in the planning and permitting stage of the development of Byway kiosk and interpretive signs. Nearly all locations have been identified. State permitting requests will commence once the last few locations have been shored up. The next Byway Meeting is scheduled for 10/23.
- The existing Vermont Information structure in front of the Wait House is planned to be removed by VTrans within the week. The Town of Waitsfield is planning on erecting the new kiosk as soon as the old structure is removed. I am also coordinating the design of the panels, which are proposed to be designed by the following: 1) Mad River Byway, 2) State of VT map, 3) Mad River Path, and 4) Waitsfield Historical Society.
- The Warren Selectboard will be making a decision as to the placement of an interpretive sign within the week.

Valley Futures Network

- The Steering Group continues to meet monthly. Various work groups are also meeting. A subset of the group will be discussing the group's overall structure and future viability.
- I attended VFN's Knoll Farm Retreat from Sept 30-Oct 1. It was a very positive experience making connections with residents and discussing the Valley's past, present, and future. I found the time enlightening and am honored to be working in community filled such amazing vision and passion.

Transportation

- The Valley Moves group has restructured itself into the following action oriented working groups: Van/Car Pool, Mad Bikes, Valley Walk & Roll, Safe Routes to School.
Van/Car Pool - I have passed on the responsibility of this group to James Foreman. James is writing an article for the VR discussing the program. The rider sign-up

database should be online within the next month. An informational meeting is being created for the near future.

Mad Bikes - Bikes and racks are scheduled to be stored for the winter on October 18th.

- The Mad Bus schedule public meeting went off without a hitch. The schedule has been nearly finalized. The brochure is planned to be released by the middle of November.

Energy

- A “Button Up” weatherization workshop was held on 10/2 at Yestermorrow. Approximately 45 people attended and learned techniques and devices that can minimize air leaks in their homes.
- I participated in a meeting of the Valley Futures Network’s Energy Committee. Laurence Mott was present and discussed opportunities for the development of a community based wind project. Mr. Mott is part of a new venture entitled New Generation Partners (a project of the Vermont Energy Investment Corporation), which is a non-profit focused on developing community-scale energy projects. Tara Hamilton was present to discuss an upcoming wood biomass project, a collaborative grant-funded project between UVM and the Northern Forest Alliance. Tara is looking for input in further defining the scope of the project, which has a stated goal of striving for energy independence in the Valley, in part from wood and wood products.

Barn Census

- I have been working with Carlene Marie Ramus to update the Valley’s barn information.

Forests Wildlife Communities Project Steering Committee

- I am part of a group organizing a summit for October 30th. The agenda includes presentations on forest fragmentation, community mapping results, a build-out analysis, and a prioritization exercise.

Communication in the Valley

- I met with Jim Rousseau of NoWirz to discuss opportunities for Valley-wide wireless broadband service.

Tri-Town Selectboard Meeting

- The tri-town Selectboard meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 13th, 6 PM, at the Waitsfield School gymnasium. Invitations have gone out to the three towns and the following organizations: MRV Recreation District (Ken Felderman), MRV Senior Center (Liz Laferriere), MRV Health Center (Sue Frechette), Mad River Solid Waste Alliance (John Malter), MRV Television (Alex Maclay), GMTA (Tawnya Kristen), and the Central Vermont Humane Society (Marcia Bellas). So far I have only heard response from the MRV Recreation District.

Community Calendar

- A Mad River Valley Community Calendar is being produced through a committee consisting of Tony Egan, Josh Schwartz, Brenda Johnston, Bev Kehoe, Laura Brines and others. This committee is proactively building a comprehensive community calendar consisting of visitor, community and municipal events for both chamber and non-chamber activities. This will be built through the madrivervalley.com website and then distributed to appropriate venues, such as to www.vermontvacation.com, www.centralvt.com, Channel 11, the 4-Season Guide and other RSS feeds. The calendar is anticipated to be released by the beginning of winter.

Fayston

- I am scheduled to attend the Selectboard's meeting on 10/27.

Waitsfield

- I am continuing to provide technical assistance to the ZA.
- I am providing assistance with the development of their Municipal Planning Grant application, due October 31st. The Planning Grant will focus on the impending Town Plan rewrite.

Warren

- I am scheduled to attend the Selectboard's meeting on 10/14.
- I have been coordinating with Town of Warren on the placement and design of Byway interpretive signage.