

1/16/06

## VPA LEGISLATIVE REPORT #2

### New Bills:

Given the official deadline for introduction of new bills of Jan 15<sup>th</sup>, a spate of them were posted last week. Of interest to planners:

H.639 Municipalities posting notice on the internet in lieu of one of the required local public places of posting.

S.290 Statewide emergency management organization and procedural changes (18pp)

H.654 Expanding emergency planning to include ag land preservation for food supply, water supply planning and distributed energy supply - with expanded duties and responsibilities for municipal and regional planning commissions, and the Agriculture Agency and Dept of Public Service and coordination by the Council of Regional Commissions.(17pp)

H. 656 Amending the state sign law (billboard law) to exempt campaign signs – for any candidate or for any ballot item - within any public rights of way for the period 30 days before and up to 15 days after an election .

H.659 Increases the number of children allowable in a family day care home to fourteen max. – 6 full time and the remainder part time. Note- this would change the number/definition referenced in 24 VSA Chapter 117 Section 4412(5) - in effect it would allow care for more children on a part time basis (up to 4 hours/day or for all of any school closing days) and up to twelve children per day full time during school summer vacations.

VLCT Legislative Alert: House Transportation Committee and Gov't Operations to hold public hearing on new "Ancient Roads" draft bill on Wednesday Jan 18<sup>th</sup> from 3-5pm in Room 11 of the State House. House Transportation is now calling Ancient Roads 'Identified Corridors'. Apparently the new term is meant to refer to rights of way , whether ancient or more recent, such as class 4 roads or other ways which are unidentified corridors or poorly-identified corridors. The new draft bill sets forth a deadline, July 1, 2013, by which Towns are to identify anything that allows a public right of access on their Agency of Transportation highway maps. The proposal would increase and commit a portion of municipal planning grant funds for seven years for the purpose of identifying or unidentifying (discontinuing) municipal highways. Those of you considering "throwing up" - the old Vermont term for discontinuance – or if you are just starting to feel that way thinking about this – should call VLCT at 1-800-649-7915 or email Steve Jeffrey for a copy of the current draft of the bill [sjeffrey@vlct.org](mailto:sjeffrey@vlct.org)

No new legislation yet from the Administration's affordable housing initiative. But a piece of this could be referenced in the Governor's Budget Address Tuesday afternoon.

The Senate Natural Resources Committee has been working last week on Growth Centers - the latest draft or final report version was requested from Al Boright of the Legislative Council and will be forwarded to VPA members when received.

Also, VPA members should be receiving in the mail this week the Vermont Council on Rural Development's Planning Council report "Vermont By Design".

The House Natural Resources Committee agendas this week have time on Tuesday morning and afternoon for Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiatives – featuring Richard Cowart of the Regulatory Assistance Project. Wednesday there is a joint hearing at 9am with Senate Natural Resources on Septic Rules (S. 269 ) Later in the week – Thursday there is testimony scheduled on the proposed Standards for Appliance Efficiency (H. 253) – with a scheduled bill mark-up with legislative counsel Al Boright on Thursday afternoon.

Energy is one of the subjects on which there are many bills this session – 35 bills are pending under the 'Public Service' keyword listing.

The Vermont Economic Development Study Committee will meet Tuesday afternoon 4pm on the subject of TIF's – tax increment financing - including testimony by planner Brian Schupe (representing the Vt Forum on Sprawl). The Committee will continue discussion of economic advancement tax incentive program issues in S. 165 with counsel Sam Burr and other economists consultants and tax dept. representatives.

Also introduced this week on the subject of TIF's was S. 291 - proposing TIF districts for Milton, South Burlington and Berlin for redevelopment projects.

VPA members are reminded of the VPA Legislative Cracker Barrel this Friday Jan 20<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM in the State House Cafeteria. We hope to have up-to-date information on the Growth Centers and Housing proposals and look forward to discussing these and other legislative issues of interest to you - See you there!

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