

1/15/07

VPA LEGISLATIVE REPORT

In its second week, the Legislative Committees are continuing the introductions/updates with the various agencies and entities of interest. Several of the committees have scheduled visits with the Governor and with the Speaker. The House Appropriations Committee has a full agenda on the Budget Adjustment Act. The Ways and Means and Senate Finance Committees are deep into tax reports and getting into education finance issues.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate Change was a major focus last week - and this week it continues, appearing on the agendas of the Agriculture, Transportation and Natural Resource & Energy, and House Commerce Committees – with joint meetings and consideration of possible Vermont policy initiatives as follows:

On Wednesday Jan. 17th in Room 11 from 9-11 AM with:

- Michael Roberts, FHWA
- Glen Anderson, NCSL
- Steven Letendre, Green Mountain College

And on Thursday, Jan 18th in Room 11, from 9-11 AM with

- John Boright, National Academy of Science
- Vernon Grubinger, UVM Extension Service
- Samuel Krasnow, Environment Northeast
- Dan Sosland, Environment Northeast

The House Natural Resources & Energy Committee is also meeting with the Dept of Public Service on Energy Planning (Tues. 11-noon) and with Al Boright, Legislative Counsel on past energy legislation (Tues. 3:30-4:30pm), with utility companies (Wed. and Thurs.) and with the ANR DEC (Friday morning)

Other Committee items of interest:

House Fish & Wildlife & Water Resources has a scheduled agenda item on River Basin Planning on Wednesday Jan 17th from 10:15- noon (no witnesses indicated).

As of this writing there is no published agenda for Senate Natural Resources & Energy or Senate Gov Ops.

House Gov Ops has scheduled a discussion / update on Ancient Roads on Thursday Jan 18th from 3-4:15PM with the following:

- Trevor Lashua, VT League of Cities and Towns
- John Croft, Agency of Transportation

- John Hall, Agency of Commerce & Community Development

HOUSING – INCLUSIONARY ZONING

H. 49 has been introduced in short form (by title and purpose statement, with specific language to be developed). The purpose statement states that this bill would prohibit a municipality from adopting a requirement in any form, including through an ordinance, rule, or regulation, or as a condition for granting a building permit, that establishes a maximum sales price for a privately produced housing unit or residential building lot.

The bill may evolve to cover other related issues – we’ll have to watch this and see.

The Housing Committees of the House and Senate have scheduled 10:30-11:30 Am Friday January 19th in Room 41 under the heading “Inclusionary Zoning” with two persons listed to give a presentation, organized by Tayt Brooks of the VT Homebuilders (these presenters are affiliated with the NAHB, the National Association of Homebuilders in Washington DC):

Dr. Elliot Eisenberg, Economist, Representing, Home Builders and Remodelors Association, (301) 351-2080

Debbie Bassert, Land Use Planner, Representing, Home Builders and Remodelors Association, (800) 368-5242 x8443

There is a subsequent lunch –hour discussion being organized by Tayt Brooks and Brian Pine and Fred Dunnington for the benefit of VPA members. Our intent is to create a balanced panel with these two NAHB people as well as Brian Pine of Burlington CEDO and another expert or professional with experience in this subject. The location of this is to be announced - it seems that meeting rooms in the State House that noon and afternoon are scheduled for Computer / legislative web site training and sexual harassment training for legislative Committee members.

VPA CRACKER BARREL

The VPA Legislative Committee is sponsoring an informal gathering at the State House Cafeteria on Friday January 19th from 1:15 to 3:30 pm to discuss legislative issues and visit with legislators. We will have information on the following subjects and related legislative action:

- Climate Change and Energy legislation
- New Neighborhoods
- Growth Centers Update and legislative changes
- Chapter 117 technical corrections possible bill (including H. 22)
- Vermont By Design - VT State Planning draft bill
- and whatever else is of legislative concern to planners.

Note: In the event there is not room in the Cafeteria, VPA will move the Cracker Barrel to another space within the State House - look for signs (or planners...).

Fred S. Dunnington fdunnington@town.middlebury.vt.us
VPA Legislative Liaison
(802) 388-8106