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### **At-Large Members**

Brian Shupe, AICP

Natalie Steen

David Rugh

John Adams

Alison Meaders

## **Vermont Planners Association Friday, February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes Vermont League of Cities and Towns Montpelier, Vermont**

**Executive Committee Members Present:** Dana Farley, Sharon Murray, Brian Shupe, Sarah Hadd, Chris Sargent, Paul Connor, David Rugh, Steve Lotspeich, Mike Munson, Stephanie Smith.

By phone: Polly McMurtry, Alison Meaders

**Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 10:17 by President Dana Farley

**Announcements / Additions to agenda:** Dana announced that there is a meeting on 2/23 regarding MPG funding. Mike is already going. Chris volunteered to be the other VPA rep to attend.

Dana announced that the outdoor lighting conference was successful. It was also recorded. VPA's expenses were just under \$100. Deb will submit the invoice to Steve.

Dana reported that Deb Sachs noted that the NRG grant deadline has moved to June. Deb feels that we have a very competitive shot at the grant.

**Minutes of the January 23, 2009 meeting** – Mike moved that they be accepted as amended. David Seconded.

**Treasurer's Report - January 2009** – Steve has IRS forms that we need to fill out due to our excess (over \$25,000) income from the conference. It was agreed that Steve review the required paperwork and if he felt confident he could fill it out, he would do so on behalf of VPA. Mike moved to accept budget. Sarah Seconded.

### **Business**

**Growth Centers** – Dana recapped the growth centers discussion that took place during the Legislative Committee meeting. It is agreed that changes need to be made. During the summer it might be worthwhile to hold some sort of a meeting to plan VPA's comments on proposed changes.

Dana presented Beth Humstone's letter written for VPA with comments to the Expanded Downtown Board. At our next meeting, Mike will provide his comments for the board's discussion. When the letter is sent, it will go to Kevin Dorn and Peter Young. In order for it to be included in the Expanded Board's mailing, it would need to be sent to DHCA prior to March 11<sup>th</sup>.

Polly commented that because this letter was written in October of 2008, it may be somewhat out-of-date, therefore we need to check it carefully before we send it

*The Vermont Planners Association (VPA) is an organization representing citizen and professional planners, landscape architects, housing and economic development specialists, developers, and engineering consultants from throughout the state. VPA is committed to advancing the art and science of planning.*

out.

Sarah suggested that some of the content of this letter could be included in a position paper.

**Draft 2009 Work Plan** – Dana asked the EC for input regarding her draft 2009 of the VPA work plan. Chris moved to accept the 2009 Work Plan. Mike M. seconded.

**Spring workshop w/ VNRC** – The save the date announcement was sent out on 2/20/09. The date is scheduled for Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at Vermont Law School. CM credits may be available.

**APA CPC grant update** – Polly reported that she sent out an outline for the grant to the EC and is moving forward. She has talked to Brian and Noelle about potential additional funding for this grant. Given the current financial climate she has concerns that we may not have quite enough match to make the grant competitive. The grant is planned to help towns address density, design and form in the context of smart growth regulations. Steve reminded the board that VPA has budgeted \$1000 match for this project. The grant application is due in mid-March.

**Task Force on VPA's Future** – Dave reported that he has 10 people on the subcommittee. He asked for input from the EC with regard to how they should move forward and what their goals should be. Using the list Dana forwarded to the EC which included:

- Use of part-time, event-driven interns;
- Call individual members to ask for their help on specific projects;
- Update the contract with VLCT to better reflect current needs;
- Increase partnering with other organizations, including VLCT and VAPDA;
- Re-vamp the committee structure to be leaner and more effective;
- Increase the Legislative Liaison stipend to \$1,500

Items added to this list by EC include:

- Revise 5-year work plan
- Revise bylaws

It was proposed that we check with Jessica Hill from VLCT to see what our history of memberships has been in the past 10 years. David will look into these records and come up with a historical analysis of it because it might help guide our work plan. This study might include the Executive Committee membership history as well.

Sharon suggested that we might want to coordinate with NNECAPA. They have talked in the past about state chapters becoming part of APA.

**VLS 2009 Planning Commission Summer Retreat** – This event takes place on Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup> and Saturday June 6<sup>th</sup> at Camp Ohana on Lake Fairlee. Steve pointed out that we have discussed sending our citizen planner of the year to this event. He will inquire to Nancy Malcolm as to whether or not she is interested in attending.

**Legislative Liaison stipend** – Dana checked with Secretary of State's office regarding the \$500 limit on direct advocacy. VPA can feel free to pay the liaison more on non-advocacy related

work. Sharon is of the opinion that we should not be lobbyists and we are more effective as an educational entity. She acknowledged that this position can limit our effectiveness, but if we can cultivate our relationships with the legislature so that they know they can call on us for information when needed, we CAN be effective.

Dana pointed out that the proposed increase of \$1500 would require greater tracking of expenses.

A motion was made to authorize a stipend of \$1500 for the legislative liaison with an additional \$500 for travel reimbursements for other VPA members. Sarah made the motion. David seconded.

**VLCT / VPA contract** – Dana provided EC members with a copy of the VLCT/VPA contract via email. She proposed that the task force might evaluate that to make sure it works well for VPA.

**Fall workshop on density/design** – We are planning to partner with VSLA and other organizations. There was discussion that we might want to couple this workshop with a discussion on our 5-year work plan. Should the two be independent of each other? Mike suggested that we wait to hear from the task force and keep the 5-year program discussion as a separate event based on their report.

## **Members Business - None**

## **Committee/ Liaison Reports**

**Legislative Committee** – Sharon presented a brief overview of the LC discussion that took place prior to the EC meeting. The LC discussed bills currently in progress including riparian buffers bill, a “catch-all bill” that is currently in committee (there are concerns with some elements of this bill). The LC discussed the proposed deconstruction of ACCD. VPA will get in contact with VAPDA in an effort to come up with a combined opinion on the proposed changes.

The remainder of the LC meeting was related to the Growth Centers bill. We received a great deal of comment about the program from our membership, none of which supported the bill in its current form, but positive suggestions were provided. Sharon will outline a statement or response based on these comments.

The Vermont Law School has sent out a report on the need for planning and energy efficiency to be better integrated. Sharon will review this and make comments.

**Communications Committee** – Chris reported on the web site. We are averaging 22 distinct visits per day. The news and events section are very up-to-date. Chris asked that EC members please let him know when there is an item that should be posted on the site.

Sarah asked if we could post web embedded video on our site. Chris will look into it.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00PM