Community Development Committee
Minutes from meeting: May 10, 2018
Location: WRC Conference Room

Community Development Committee present: Tim Arsenault (chair), Roger Turner, Lynn Barrett, and Stephen Dotson
Staff present: Susan McMahon

Called to order 5:36 pm

1. **Introductions/Minutes Approval**
   The minutes of 9 February 2018 was approved. The approval of minutes for the 8 March 2018 meeting was postponed until the June meeting due to only one Committee member at the May meeting was at the March meeting.

2. **Turning Stage Fright into Success**
   Susan McMahon shared the presentation that she gave at the 2017 National Brownfields Conference. The presentation showed how arts organizations are taking the lead in brownfields redevelopment and what we can learn from them. Attached is the presentation.

   S. McMahon also updated the Committee on the status of brownfields program. She discussed that the program is currently providing assessment assistance on three sites in Guilford, Bellows Falls and Grafton. Brownfields clean up grants have been signed with New England Youth Theatre and Bellows Falls Area Development Corporation. A grant will be signed shortly with Saxtons River Village Trustees for the park project and a loan will be signed soon for the Putnam Block project in Bennington.

3. **Agricultural Economy**
   S. McMahon shared with the Committee the work that has been done on inventorying the agricultural establishment in the Windham Region. She explained that we are still working on fining funding to begin the agricultural economic development plan. She did say that we were contacted by a representative of the Wealth Works program in Vermont to work on a value chain project. WRC staff is currently evaluating this opportunity and would likely work on a non-food agricultural value chain.

4. **Sister City**
   S. McMahon updated the Committee that WRC is still working with others in pursuing this opportunity. She explained that she met with Ralph Meima and Stephen Dotson on the structure of this venture and that it would likely result in a subcommittee of the Community Development Committee. Stephen Dotson discussed that we are in the process of exploring a sister city/region with the Hässleholm/Skana Region of Sweden. He also discussed that Susan and himself attended a sister city meeting in Keene. The Keene program is more about cultural exchanges.
5. **Regional Plan (added to the agenda)**
   S. McMahon explained that all WRC Committees between now and October will be responsible for reviewing the regional plan. She shared with the Committee a handout that explained the process and what the committees should be considering. The Community Development Committee decided to begin working on the regional plan housing chapter first. S. McMahon was directed to send out the chapter as well as the handout to all members and that the Committee would begin discussing this chapter at the June meeting. She was also requested to invite an affordable housing advocate and a housing developer to this meeting.

6. **Update Announcements in Topic Areas.**
   - **Infrastructure:** S. McMahon discussed that WRC and VTrans are ready to begin a VT 30 Corridor plan (Brattleboro to Winhall).
   - **Economic/Community Development**
     - Vernon Village – Tim Arsenault reported that the Planning Commission is in the process of selecting a consultant for the Vernon Village Master Plan
     - Upcoming meetings:
       - **May 30th** – *Southern Vermont Economic Development Summit* - Mt Snow, Dover
       - **June 8th** - *Annual Historic Preservation and Downtown Conference* - Bristol, VT

7. **Other Business/Next Meeting**
   Next meeting – June 14, 2018
   Meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.