Community Development Committee
Minutes from meeting: 15 January 2015
Location: WRC Conference Room

Community Development Committee present: Greg Brown (chair), Jenepher Burnell, Jane Morano Purdy, Lynn Barrett, Robert McBride, Roger Turner, Gretchen Havreluk, Rod Francis and Jodi Clark (sitting in for Laura Sibilia)
Staff present: Susan McMahon

Called to order 4:35 pm

1. **Introductions/Minutes Approval**
   The minutes of 13 November 2014 were approved as written.

2. **VY Closure Economic Impact Study**
   S. McMahon reviewed the following from the study that was done for the tri county region (VT, NH and MA):
   - The loss of total output (i.e. direct, indirect & induced) from when VY was operational to the year 2021 is a difference of $487 million. This represents the loss of the total value of wages and the total loss of goods and services produced, related to VY operations. This is an important figure for understanding the broader implications of this event to the economic climate of the region.
   - The two key data points that hold the greatest consequence from this event for our region are: the total loss of employment (approx. 1,200 jobs) and the total amount of indirect and induced output ($90 million). This $90 million in output represents the annual loss of economic activity to the tri-county business community, in comparison to when VY was operational.
   - The purpose of conducting this study is to offer an understanding of the order of magnitude for how this event will impact the tri-county area economy. These findings underline the importance and urgency for why our region must take steps to improve our economy and discover opportunities for collaboration to mitigate the losses anticipated as a result of VY closure.
   - The industry sectors anticipated to have the greatest impact (aside from Utilities, of course) is the Leisure & Hospitality sector and Other Services sector (255 jobs anticipated to be lost). These sectors often provide among the lowest wages. As a result, workers with the least amount of resources may be the most negatively impacted.

   The Community Development Committee discussed the report and asked to be invited to upcoming forums when held.

3. **Municipal Shared Services**
S. McMahon updated Committee that the Municipal Shared Services Steering Committee has met twice once (November and January). The Shared Services Committee is focusing on the following:

- Pilot project on shared IT services
- Listserv for Windham Region Administrative staff
- March meeting of Windham Region Selectboards and Town Administrative staff

4. **Village Revitalization**
S. McMahon shared with the CD Committee the draft SWOT analysis for Jamaica and Grafton. She explained that the next step was developing some draft recommendations. She also discussed that she will be working with Bennington Regional Commission on planning for a peer to peer exchange (village and downtown revitalization groups). The Community Development Committee agreed that they would like to be involved in the planning for this meeting (peer to peer exchange).

Gretchen Havreluk announced the January 20th workshop on resources available to downtown and village property owners.

5. **Update and Announcements in Topic Areas**
- **Brownfields** – WRC’s EPA Brownfields application for additional assessment funding was submitted in December. The Town of Brattleboro submitted an application as well. S. McMahon updated the Committee on the status of assessment and RLF projects.

- Housing
- Cultural and Historic
- Infrastructure
- Recreation
- **Economic/Community Development** – Governor Shumlin announce the project selected in Round 1 of the Windham County Economic Development Program. A list of the projects can be found [http://accd.vermont.gov/business/WCGP](http://accd.vermont.gov/business/WCGP).

The Forestry Workgroup continues to work on approaches to educate the region about the forest economy.

- Education
- Human Services

6. **Other Business/Next Meeting**
Meeting was canceled for February and the next meeting will be in March 12th. S. McMahon will share with the Committee via e-mail information on the village/downtown meeting. The Committee would like to begin a conversation on housing issues for the region at the March meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.