

VECAN Regional Breakout Session Notes  
Addison, Brattleboro and Rutland Counties

Elizabeth Golden led the Addison, Brattleboro and Rutland County Breakout Session, with Paul Markowitz assisting. After the introductions, Elizabeth reviewed the format we would follow and asked for suggestions for projects that could be implemented on a regional scale. The following projects were recommended:

Vermont Community Energy Mobilization Project

Summary: Ripton participated last year, accessing 60 of the 200 homes in the town to install energy saving equipment, do energy assessments of the homes, and spread the word about energy savings.

Impact: Their work is estimated to have saved 31 tons of CO<sup>2</sup> per year. The simple, energy saving devices and materials, such as programmable thermostats, window sealing, and CFLs make an immediate impact because they are installed while in the home, and they often generate interest in further energy saving strategies.

Good Model/Success Factors: The program is well organized, the materials are very useful, and the training makes all of the volunteers effective.

Collaboration Opportunities: Efficiency Vermont provided the equipment, offered a training workshop for the volunteers, and replenished their supplies within two days of their request. Warren was very pleased with their level of support. Ripton will be collaborating with Middlebury, in order to participate in the program again this year, without having to meet the 80 home minimum required. Other towns can collaborate under Middlebury's effort, or join together to participate in this program jointly.

Assistance Needed: The project needs a strong, dedicated organizer, to keep the volunteers on schedule, keep track of the supplies, make calls, and manage all of the details. There are many forms and reports that need to be completed as well.

Publicity: Ripton was successful in getting such a high percentage of participation from their towns people by using every available means of communication to publicize the opportunity, including neighbor to neighbor requests, which were the most effective means.

Eco-Driving Programs

Summary: Addison County Transit Resources (ACTR) sponsored "Way to Go" program, which promotes eco-driving through a week-long event. Individuals and businesses are encouraged to sign up on-line to register how they will save miles driven to work and other locations for one week's time. They compete for prizes and awards based on the total number of driving hours saved. Laura also recommended the "No-idling" sign campaign, energy-saving driver education displays, Safe Routes to School Program (SR2S) and the "Go Vermont" Ride Sharing Program.

She also recommended energy saving transportation infrastructure, such as electric vehicle plug-in stations, car meters and bike racks.

Impact: These programs encourage continued transportation energy savings through ride sharing, turning off engines when stopped, and encouraging pedestrian access to schools.

Good Models/Success Factors: These programs are good models because they are well developed, well publicized, applicable to all communities, easy to implement, and have long term benefits.

Collaboration Opportunities: These programs are best conducted in association with many groups, such as VEIC, ACTR, ACRPC, UVM, VTrans, and in liaison with the schools. Towns can piggyback on these programs.

Assistance Needed: These programs needed continued financial support at the State level, so they can be utilized by the towns. Energy usage reduction data needs to be collected, possibly by ACTR.

#### Vermont Community Foundation Business Competition

Summary: The Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) is supporting a competition in which businesses compete for who can reduce their energy bill the most, us kilowatt monitors. Businesses can weatherize their buildings, or implement electricity saving strategies to reduce their energy usage.

Good Model/Success Factors: The program provides a website, posters, and contacts to support the businesses. Businesses get in the habit of monitoring their energy usage, which results in substantial savings and long term participation.

Collaboration Opportunities: Towns can promote this program to businesses, and work collaboratively with CVPS, Efficiency Vermont, Middlebury and other Colleges, and the Agency of Natural Resources.

Assistance Needed: Monitors and assistance from the ANR are needed to make this program effective.

#### Green Mountain Power Smart Grid

Summary: Individual homeowners and utilities collaborate to create “home area networks”, to share utility usage with others.

Good Model/Success Factors: Energy efficiency and savings are possible through an organized effort.

Collaboration Opportunities: Utility providers and building owners must collaborate to make this program possible.

Assistance Needed: Incentives must be provided, with different incentives for renters to encourage them to participate. Individual monitoring is required and some assistance may be needed to train people how to use the monitors and record the data. The RPC can collect this data and display it in Arcview GIS maps.

### Compact Fluorescent Lighting (CFLs)

Summary: A town or group can initiate a program for citizens to exchange standard light bulbs for energy efficient CFLs, in a variety of styles and sizes, resulting in electrical energy savings for the life of the bulb. CFL have both a lower energy usage for the same intensity of light, as well as a longer life of the bulb itself.

Impact: Lower electrical energy usage and cost savings for the homeowner. The program also provides an opportunity to educate homeowners about other energy saving strategies, when they pick up their light bulbs.

Good Model/Success Factors: The program is easy to implement, by setting a place, such as a town fire house, and a time, as a one-time event. The program is affordable, as the CFLs can be purchased in quantity at a discount from VEIC.

Collaboration Opportunities: Towns can collaborate with VEIC for a discount on CFLs, if purchased in quantity, as well as promotional material and demonstration equipment, such as the electricity-generating bicycle and bulb display.

Efficiency Vermont offers a fundraiser for schools to sell CFLs.

Assistance Needed: Towns may need a grant to purchase the CFLs. A local promoter is needed to organize this program in a town. Data is needed on electrical use to measure the success of the program in terms of electrical usage reductions; and/or kilowatt monitors are needed for post-program measuring.

### Low Carbon Diet

Summary: The Low Carbon Diet is an educational program, with meetings held over several weeks.

Impact: The intent is behavioral change for the participants which reduce their energy usage and carbon footprint through enlightenment.

Good Model/Success Factors: The program is easily administered by a local educator or leader by following a written curriculum that is in easily accessible language. The difficulty is in getting people to participate, since they need to meet over a period of a couple of months.

Collaboration Opportunities: A town, an energy committee, a school, or any civic group can organize the program, and collaborate with each other, to offer the program locally.

Assistance Needed: Publicity and getting people to sign up and participate is the most difficult part of the program, so help is needed to get the word out.

### ARRA Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Retrofits

Summary: The Town or Community School may apply for a grant to do an energy saving retrofit, including sealing, window repair/replacement, insulation, HVAC system, and/or lighting.

Impact: The retrofit must produce an immediate, measurable reduction in the fuel or electrical usage of the building, and have a long term savings.

Good Model/Success Factors: The project will also serve as a model for additional energy saving retrofits in the town by way of example.

Collaboration Opportunities: The project brings together Town Energy Coordinator and Committee, the Select Board, the citizens, the Regional Planning Commission as technical consultant, local auditors, contractors, and laborers, and the community school to effect energy and cost saving retrofits to the buildings.

Assistance Needed : The Town needs to receive the EECBG funds and contribute 10% of the total project cost from their Town Budget. The Towns need to conduct an energy audit of their property to determine the best retrofit work that yields the highest savings. The ACRPC for example, will provide energy audits for a town property under its own EECBG program.

### Small Scale Hydrological Power Projects

Summary: Mini hydro pumps can be installed at the water supply, such as the Otter Creek channels, to provide electrical energy generation with a minimal impact on the environment.

Impact: Electricity can be generated for local use with a minimal environmental impact, avoiding the more tedious project approval process.

Good Mode/Success Factors: Small scale, self contained, electrical generation units would be easily installed and the project easily replicated in numerous areas along the Otter Creek.

Assistance Needed: Cooperation from the approval-granting agencies, including the Agency of Natural Resources, to pre-approve such a unit, would be necessary to make the units viable. The technology is available, but the approval process must be clear, simple and expeditious to make the technology readily usable.

### Button Up Workshop

Summary: A certified energy auditor presents an educational program on weatherization possibilities for homeowners. He also presents and offers duplicates of a video on simple

weatherization methods that homeowners can do for themselves. The local Energy Coordinator/Committee organizes the program and provides additional information on energy saving strategies.

**Impact:** Once implemented, the strategies and weatherization work can yield energy and cost savings to the homeowner.

**Good Model/Success Factors:** The presentation can be replicated in every town in the state. The certified auditors who make the presentation are also contractors who can do the work and answer any questions coming from the audience. The videos can be brought home to implement energy saving measures easily.

**Collaboration Opportunities:** Efficiency Vermont designed this program, which can be presented in every town, with the cooperation of Town Energy Committees, local energy Audits, and citizens. It can be easily promoted at the Town and Regional level with the materials prepared by Efficiency Vermont. Often, the presentation is held at the community school, offered further collaborative efforts and promotional opportunities. Multi-town presentations are also possible. Local hardware stores can be designated to participate in the program and offer money-saving coupons for energy saving products. The program can be publicized in the school and town newsletters and library.

**Assistance Needed:** The RPCs could record the entire program, and offer showing on future dates, or upload it to their websites.

**Submitted by:** Elizabeth Golden, Addison County Regional Planning Commission

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