

West Central Vermont CEDS – Strategy Committee

Friday, June 18 – 10 AM to 12 PM

Please join the meeting by clicking:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82062316313>

For those who would prefer to join by phone or those without a microphone on your computer, please dial in using your phone.
(For supported devices, tap a one-touch number below to join instantly.) Meeting ID: 820 6231 6313
One tap mobile: +16468769923,,82062316313#

Present:

Taylor Newton, CCRPC

Sam Andersen, GBIC

John Van Hoesen, ACRPC

Amanda O'Connor, RRPC

Tyler Richardson, REDC

Sarah Pelkey, RRPC

Bonnie Waninger, CVRPC

Elena Juodisius, CVRPC

Jamie Stewart, CVEDC

Ken Jones, State of VT, ACCD

Regina Mahoney, CCRPC

Ed Bove, RRPC

Taylor kicked off the meeting by welcoming everyone at about 10:03 a.m.

1. Changes/adjustment to agenda:

Taylor asked for any changes to the agenda and suggested we move discussion about consultant payment until Fred Kenney could join the meeting.

2. Minutes – April 16, 2021:

Taylor requested a motion to adopt the previous meeting minutes. **Jamie Stewart moved acceptance of the previous meeting minutes. Sam Anderson seconded the motion, which passed by voice vote.**

3. Task #3 Debrief – Workshop #1

Amanda indicated the first workshop for Rutland went well with ~17 participants. **She strongly suggested making use of a consultant to facilitate the technology backend of future workshops.** Maybe schedule more time for wrap up, potentially hard to create a summary of the conversations right away.

Amanda asked about uploading videos and potential internet bottlenecks and Regina where the videos are ultimately going; **Tyler indicated share them with Regina to upload to CCRPC.** YouTube will be embedded in the West Central VT website.

Jamie asked about number of break out groups for future workshops, Amanda deferred to other Rutland facilitators. Tyler indicated he liked the number of rooms and smaller room sizes, Sarah indicated the conversations were intimate and great to have the opportunity to interact with community stakeholders.

Tyler indicated keeping participants on track was often challenging, so encouraged facilitators to clearly state intention and that they might redirect at the beginning of the break out rooms. Tyler mentioned some technical issues but still had meaningful conversations.

John summarized ACRPC workshop; there were > 30 RSVPs and total of 20 participants but 12 were RDC/RPC staff. So, a relatively low turnout after seeing high interest in the workshop. Still great overall engagement and conversations in breakout rooms. ACRPC compressed 6 rooms into 3 to ensure there weren't empty rooms. Sarah Audet did a great job managing the technical aspect of the meetings. There was a facilitator and notetaker in each room, so that really helped ensure conversations were translated to the SOAR worksheet.

Sam indicated that having RPC staff there to take notes was very helpful and that summarizing at the end was a little difficult given the time constraint. Sam also mentioned there was likely some fatigue associated with numerous projects asking for public engagement. **Jamie stated that the CEDS process is very important and hopes that we can find a way to increase engagement.** Jamie asked whether there were any BIPOC in attendance and Sam indicated there were.

Taylor requested that all regions update their SOAR and share with Amanda and Sarah. They will update the regional SOAR and the committee can discuss in July if possible.

Taylor asked what data needs came out of the conversations: Amanda asked what type of wage and employment data do we have access to? Regina suggested any type of racial equity data. Elena has some data about racial income and housing disparities. Sarah asked about access to tourism-related data (e.g., why are people coming to Vermont). Ken indicated he has broken down dollar flows for each county based on tourism sectors and will share with the committee.

Taylor asked whether an additional industry and economic sectors SOAR analysis was useful for workshop #2? Amanda suggested we use the second workshop to demonstrate what came out of the first workshop, but they also need an opportunity to provide additional input. Bonnie asked about where business stakeholders show up and engage in these types of conversations. **Jamie indicated daytime meetings are best chance to get business community to engage.** Sam asked whether Survey Monkey or similar counts as outreach. Regina indicated this approach was used 10 years ago and supplemented with follow-up interviews. Taylor summarized the conversation that another big workshop focused on economic sectors probably isn't going to be the best approach for the second workshop. Sam and Sarah expressed concern about asking for engagement from business owners during the summer on the heels of the pandemic. **Taylor asked if really need a second workshop versus surveys or targeted outreach and the consensus was that yes, we should abandon the idea of another workshop.** Taylor asked regions to think about what information they need and how they might approach obtaining it; so essentially creating an engagement plan and then comparing regional plans to find overlap at the July meeting. **Jamie suggested we don't necessarily cancel the possibility of the second workshop, because we may need to bring stakeholders together after summer outreach efforts.** The Committee will revisit the timing and content of a second workshop at the July meeting.

Sarah suggested that the first step might be to identify regionally underrepresented groups to reach out to. **Taylor asked whether we could have a shortlist for the July meeting. John indicated that if regions sent names of people or organizations, he could summarize from the existing master database.**

Tyler asked if there was grant money available for hiring a consultant to develop and analyze a survey. Taylor indicated that EDA funds could theoretically be used for this approach, potentially from the \$20,000 allocated to hiring a consultant. Taylor requested we should only do this if absolutely necessary.

Taylor discussed payment for Sarah Audet's consulting services because we can't use EDA funds. Total bill for seven meetings was \$1,100, **Taylor asked if each partner was willing to split the cost and everyone agreed pending an invoice and ensuring it fits with each organizations budget cycle.**

4. Task #3 Engagement – Other

Taylor reminded the committee there is ~\$20,000 available for specific outreach to underrepresented communities. Sam stated she thought that money was for outreach rather than hosting events, Taylor reminded the committee that the money was to hire a consultant to help frame the outreach efforts and build stronger relationships. Regina stated that ultimately it is on the committee to increase participation and better articulate what the 'West Central Region' means. Bonnie indicated public outreach means we need to identify critical groups or individuals and go to them for input rather than expect all stakeholders to come to us. Bonnie also suggested the WCV CEDS coordinates so that regional stakeholders don't get a call from every region. Bonnie asked whether we have looked at other data (e.g., Vermont Women's Commission, Vermont Partnership Survey) that could inform the issues that have already been identified.

5. Update – UVM EDA University Center

Taylor summarized UVM's efforts to become an EDA University Center and potential for customizing data products for the needs of each RDC. Jamie indicated there would be standard data products delivered to all RDCs but there's opportunities for regional economic modeling and custom data products as needed, but no clarity about how often products would be created. **Taylor suggested that once a CEDS is established and indicators are developed, the WCV CEDS should be able to partner with UVM for annual updates based on their proprietary data sources.** Regina thinks these data products will be complementary to CEDS data products. Unclear what other data they might use or what additional data products they might generate.

July Agenda and Next Steps

Taylor scheduled the next meeting for Friday, July 16th from 10:00 – 12:00.

Agenda items will include:

Discuss Regional Outreach Plans & Overlap, Review Regional Soar Document, Review Regional Outreach Contact List, Summary of ACCD efforts.

Next Steps

- Send John names of people or organizations for targeted outreach to include in regional contact list
- Share SOAR documents with Amanda and Sarah for inclusion in regional SOAR
- Each region will develop an outreach plan and **share with Taylor by July 9**

Jamie Stewart moved to adjourn, Regina Mahoney seconded the motion. By unanimous consent, Taylor adjourned the meeting at 11:24.