

VERMONT ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

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VNRC ANNUAL MEETING

The 1973 annual meeting of the Vermont Natural Resources Council will be held in Montpelier at the Tavern Motor Inn on Saturday, December 1. Because it follows so closely the Council's tenth anniversary celebration, the annual meeting will concentrate on activity reports and the election of directors. New business which any member wishes discussed by the Council will be entertained. It would be helpful if the Executive Director could be informed in advance of new business to be brought to the attention of the meeting.

In addition to the business session the new slide-tape presentation of the State Planning Office, "People on the Land," will be shown.

At lunch Secretary of Environmental Conservation for the State of Vermont, Dr. Martin Johnson, will address the Council.

Member Organizations have been solicited for nominations to fill vacant places on the Board of Directors reserved for representatives of Member Organizations. A slate of names to fill six at-large positions becoming vacant this year is included on the following page.

Member Organizations must designate in advance of the meeting an official representative in order to vote on Council business and participate in the election of officers. Only those representatives whose names have been submitted in writing to the Secretary (send to 26 State Street) in advance may participate. The meeting is open to the public.

A reservation coupon printed on Page 7 in this newsletter may be used to make luncheon reservations for the meeting. These should reach the VNRC office by November 26.

A donation from Crowley Cheese, Inc., has supported the publication of this VER issue

NOMINEES FOR AT-LARGE POSITIONS ON VNRC BOARD OF DIRECTORS INCLUDE

Catherine Beattie, Danville.

Farms a 500-acre farm that has been in her family since 1839. Former member of the General Assembly, member of the State Board of the Vermont Farm Bureau. Member of the Vermont Bicentennial Commission. Member of Environmental District Commission No. 7.

Judith M. Buechner, Pawlet, incumbent.

Graduate of McGill University. Worked with Wildlife Preserves, Inc., in New Jersey and with the Student Conservation Association. Member of the boards of the Merck Forest Foundation, Student Conservation Association, and Vermont Chapter of The Nature Conservancy.

Harvey Carter, Pownal.

Educated at Williams College and Duke University of Law School. Has practiced law for ten years in Bennington. Member of several environmental organizations, including the VNRC, and is particularly interested in energy and transportation problems. Former member of the Vermont General Assembly. Secretary of the Bennington Regional Planning Commission for seven years.

Deane C. Davis, Montpelier, incumbent.

Graduate of Boston University Law School. Former Governor of Vermont. Formerly general counsel and president of National Life Insurance Company, presently chairman of its board of directors. President of the American Morgan Horse Association.

A. John Holden, Jr., East Montpelier, incumbent.

Vermont school teacher, Superintendent of Schools and Commissioner of Education for Vermont for sixteen years. Graduate of Harvard College, taught at Middlebury, served as acting president of Lyndon State College and now teaches "Man and Nature in Vermont History" at Johnson State College. Chairman of Environmental District Commission No. 5.

Leonard Wilson, Waitsfield, incumbent.

Graduate of Harvard College. Former newspaper man and director of State Planning Office under Governor Hoff. Practicing planner. Member of the Board of Trustees of the University of Vermont. Member of the Environmental Board.

250 DEVELOPMENT PERMIT PROCEDURE STREAMLINED

The Environmental Conservation Agency and the Environmental Board have issued new regulations to streamline application forms condensing paperwork for major types of land use permits.

Board Executive Secretary, Kenneth Senecal, was chief architect of the plan which has often been referred to as "one stop shopping" although Senecal makes it clear that such a process is not possible because of the many kinds of programs demanding close review. Mr. Senecal has summarized below the major aspects of the State Permit and Procedure Guide..

The document serves three primary purposes:

1. It represents the first compilation of all permit programs administered at the state level and provides information sufficient to assist an individual in contacting the appropriate department having regulatory authority over the project he is involved in.
2. Rather than presenting a citizen with a listing of all of the laws that may have to be complied with, a project review sheet is included to be completed by one of the district coordinators based on the description of the project being proposed by the individual. Upon completion of the project review sheet, the individual knows which state permit programs apply to his project and how to obtain any further information he may need.
3. A major element in the permit procedure guide is the consolidation of Act 250; the Health Department's subdivision regulations, public buildings, mobile home regulations, and tent and travel-trailer regulations into one application form and, consequently, the issuance of one permit rather than five separate application forms and five separate permits.

Other permit programs that have not been combined into the master application form are handled in such a way that the applicant is now informed as to exactly what permits and departmental approvals are required. Once this determination is made, a copy of the project review sheet is sent to the appropriate departments so that they are alerted that a project is contemplated. This procedure should not only eliminate a good deal of confusion but should also eliminate many of the enforcement problems simply by alerting the individual and the various state agencies administering these permit programs that their project is being contemplated.

According to Mr. Senecal, the new permit procedure guide which has been in effect since September 4, 1973, has exceeded the Department's expectations. Public reaction to date has been extremely favorable. The Department will conduct a series of ten meetings in different parts of the state to educate the public on the existence of these procedures and how to best take advantage of them. The first meeting will be held on November 28, 7:30 P. M., at the Berlin Elementary School, Berlin, Vermont.

"LIFELINE SERVICE"

Environmentalists for years have been concerned about "promotional" electric rate schedules which encourage the use of more electricity by granting lower rates to big users. Proposals have been made to reverse the schedule by giving the low rate per kilowatt hour to the small user and charging the big user with the higher rate.

Other proposals, including one in the Senate proposed by Windsor County Senator, Herbert Ogden, would establish a uniform charge for each kilowatt used. However, these proposals have made little headway because of the opposition from both large residential and industrial users who would be hit especially hard under either proposal.

According to the Vermont Public Interest Research Group, (VPIRG) momentum appears to be gathering behind a new proposal called, "Lifeline Service" which is directed at encouraging energy conservation. The proposal originated by VPIRG has been endorsed by a number of Vermont organizations including the environmental lobby, Vermont Tomorrow. The concept of "Lifeline Service" has also been endorsed by the Governor's Energy Commission. Legislation to implement it will be introduced in the General Assembly by Representative Martin Powell. Originators of the proposal feel that it is politically feasible since the impact on large users of electric energy would be relatively mild.

VPIRG spokesmen state that under the proposal every full-time Vermont resident would receive 400 kilowatt hours of electrical energy each month at the rate of 2.5¢ per kwh with a maximum charge of \$10. This wattage, they claim, is the amount of electricity needed for modest lighting, refrigeration, and furnace use--an amount that would not change regardless of price. This basic wattage is not in any way intended to represent average usage.

VPIRG says that the effect of the proposal would be a lowering of price in the very low-energy blocks and a corresponding rise in energy charges for the big users. The proposal also would create an immediate incentive for energy conservation since the closer the customer came to 400 kwh per month, the lower his charge would be.

All future rate increases would be placed on the blocks above the "Lifeline" amount thus creating an increasing incentive for conservation. Just as important, according to VPIRG, "Lifeline Service" would institute a basically standard rate schedule for the first block of power around the State. As a result Vermonters would know that if they used only a bare minimum of power their rates would not be exorbitant.

The "Lifeline" proposal recognizes the fact that few people are going to unplug their refrigerators or turn off their reading lights thus it is aimed at allowing people to have a modest amount of power at a reasonable price. It does, however, advocate that those who use large amounts of power should pay the true environmental costs of producing that power.

VERMONT CONSERVATION BANQUET

A review of the past and a look into the future were the themes of the Council's Vermont Conservation Banquet held at the Woodstock Inn on Saturday, October 27, 1973. The combination 10th Anniversary celebration and fund-raising dinner was hosted to observe the end of the Council's first decade and to launch the citizens' conservation organization into its next ten years.

Governor Deane C. Davis, VNRC Board Member and Banquet Chairman, and Dr. James Marvin, former Council Chairman, provided the 140 Council members and friends in attendance with reflections and stories of the Council and the role it has been playing since 1963.

A highlight of this portion of the Banquet was the honoring of eleven individuals who were instrumental in the Council's founding and early years. Marvin, a leader in the establishment of the Council, praised the work and dedication of the following individuals who were fellow Council pioneers: Justin Brande, Cornwall; Dick Brett, Woodstock; Mrs. Lloyd H. (Lucy) Bugbee, Bradford; Mrs. Thomas H. (Kit) Foster, Bennington; Perry Merrill, Montpelier; Fred Mold, St. Johnsbury; Sam Ogden, Landgrove; Belmont Pitkin, Marshfield; Fred Sargent, South Burlington; and Jim Wilkinson, Barre.

Russell W. Peterson, recently appointed by President Nixon to be the Chairman of the President's Council on Environmental Quality, was the Banquet's guest speaker. Upon completing four years as Delaware's Governor, Peterson was appointed the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the National Commission on Critical Choices for America, a commission organized by Governor Nelson Rockefeller to carry out the study of the modern state's role in a changing world.

His speech, entitled "The Growth of Quality of Life," offered those in attendance the opportunity to peer into the future for solutions to today's and tomorrow's environmental problems. He emphasized four determining factors that will influence the growth of quality of life: Global Interdependence; Population Growth and the Quality of Life; Food and the Quality of Life; and Economic Growth and the Quality of Life.

A Tenth Anniversary Fund with a \$10,000 goal was established to launch the Council into the next ten years. Contributions to the Fund will be used in 1974 for program support in such areas as environmental education and the publication of the monthly "Vermont Environmental Report."

To date, \$5,505.04 has been contributed or pledged to the Fund through Banquet ticket sales and donations from Council members and friends. Your tax-deductible contribution to the Fund will assist the Council to educate more citizens of the need for wise use of Vermont's natural resources for the benefit of all Vermonters.

ENVIRONMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS IN OCTOBER INCLUDED ...

Brookline. Solar power, wind power, and recycling are promising brakes to slow the runaway use and waste of resources. Richard D. Blazej is taking these energy sources seriously instead of leaving them house-hold words. Balzej, a builder, is planning 20 condominiums in two clusters of 10 each on 43 wooded acres in this southern Vermont town. Pending financial approval, Balzej hopes to break ground for Phase 1 (one cluster of housing, utilizing solar panels and waste recycling systems) in the spring. He hopes to be ready for occupancy by early fall. Staff members from Williams College, Amherst, and the University of Massachusetts plan a monitoring and assessment program at the Village.

Woodstock. In what could be a precedent setting decision, the State Environmental Board ruled unanimously that the town of Peru must have an Act 250 permit to pave and widen a small section of a scenic road between Weston and Peru.

Montpelier. A formal opinion from the Attorney General's office says the proposal to slow South Burlington's growth by limiting issuance of building permits is legal. The project under consideration by the South Burlington Planning Commission as a part of a new master plan and zoning ordinance, would restrict growth of the city to two percent a year, about half the current rate. Building permits would be issued on a first-come-first-served basis until the desired growth rate was achieved. The opinion by the Attorney General said no Vermont law prohibits the proposal.

Weston. The Rutland District Environmental Board delayed its decision on whether to continue Act 250 hearings on a proposed Mount Holly game farm pending an appeal of its findings to date. Wildlife Wonderland is envisioned by its proponents as a wildlife farm, ski touring center and nature study area. The project, if approved, may have Vermont's first zebras, camels, antelopes, monkeys and exotic birds.

Montpelier. The State's deer herd faces the threat of extinction because vast tracts of open land are being gobbled up by development according to Edward Kehoe, Commissioner of Fish and Game. During the last eight years a million acres of deer habitat have been sacrificed to development. Kehoe said the bitter winters Vermont has experienced in recent times and the lack of browsing land is taking its toll on Vermont's deer herd. He estimated that if this winter is another bad season, the State could lose 50,000 deer.

WORTH READING

Energy Conservation in the Home
Esther Knowles & Jean Reidel (UVM)
Population Policy for Vermont
David B. Van Vleck

Order From
Vermont Natural Resources Council
26 State Street, Montpelier, Vt. - No Charge
Vermont Natural Resources Council
No Charge

Citizen Action Guide to Energy Conservation

Superintendent of Documents, U. S.
Government Printing Office, Washington,
D. C. 20402 - \$1.75

CONSERVATION COMMISSION ASSOCIATION FORMED

As a final order of business at a workshop on Vermont conservation commissions sponsored by the Vermont Natural Resources Council and the UVM School of Natural Resources, the Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions was formed. Twenty participants in the workshop, held October 20 and designed to give conservation and planning commissioners an opportunity to exchange views and share problems, heard Malcolm Taylor, Executive Secretary of the New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions, and Charles Morrison of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. They discussed problems faced by conservation commissions in their respective states. Taylor showed a slide-tape presentation on the conservation commission movement in New Hampshire produced by John Karol, the maker of the VNRC 1972 production "...So Goes Vermont."

There are presently six (6) conservation commissions in Vermont. They are in: Cornwall, South Burlington, Waterbury, Shrewsbury, Milton and Shelburne. Colchester and Norwich are seriously considering the formation of commissions.

Elected as officers of the new organization were: Justin Brande, Cornwall, Chairman; Ann Wilm, Milton, Vice Chairman; and John Lindsay, Milton, Secretary-Treasurer.

The Vermont Natural Resources Council is continuing to offer \$100.00 matching grants to communities forming conservation commissions. For further information, write Seward Weber, Executive Director of the Council.

(Clip and Mail to 26 State Street, Montpelier)

VNRC ANNUAL MEETING RESERVATION

AND LUNCHEON PAYMENT FORM

- () I will attend the VNRC Annual Meeting on December 1, 1973.
- () My check for ____ luncheons @ \$5.00 each is enclosed. (All luncheon reservations must be prepaid.) Tickets will be held for you at the reservation table.

Name: _____

Address: _____

COMMENTARY FROM HARRY REASONER, ABC EVENING NEWS, NOVEMBER 8, 1973

I think it's probably true that a lot of Americans don't really believe there is an energy crisis, and they won't until it hurts. I don't mean to sound superior there, either--I probably am among them: it is almost impossible for a people coming out of generations of profligacy with wood and coal and oil and electricity to believe there is a limit. Academically, we acknowledge a shortage; practically, we cannot imagine that someday we might push a switch and nothing would happen. I think the temporary hassles at gas stations last summer and a lot of the warnings about winter have sounded to many Americans as if they had something to do with prices.

In that sense, I suppose a real problem this winter would be good for us. I don't greet various signs of the last decade that we must lower our standard of living with any Puritan pleasure, but in the case of energy we might learn to be a little more thrifty without actually losing much. Former Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall spoke dramatically about our situation the other day: here we are, six percent of the world's people using 30 percent of its energy. And wasting--to nobody's benefit--a full third to a half of what we use. The restlessly cruising taxis-- the trucks and busses bubbling away for a half hour at turn arounds and coffee stops--the overheated rooms and the lights burning in empty places: we might as well pay attention to some of these things. Most of our ancestors would say to eliminate waste is a good thing in itself, even if we have to be forced to a wall to realize it. The Arabs may have done us a favor, if they advance the date by five years when we have to look toward self-sufficiency.

One man I know says he is a patriot and will do his part. He proposes to leave his thermostat turned down while the kids get ready for school. He will himself remain in bed an extra two hours, consuming practically none of our precious energy reserves, just twitching once in a while to keep the blood moving. You can count on me, America, he says. (Reprinted with permission of ABC News.)

VERMONT NATURAL RESOURCES COUNCIL
26 STATE STREET
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