

Council on the Future of Vermont

Middlebury and Addison County Community Forum Day notes April 17th, 2008

The following notes were collected from focus group meetings and forums throughout the day spent in Addison County. These notes are in raw form – reflecting much of the inflections, quotations and feelings of the attendees at these meetings. Below is a list of the meetings that occurred during the day on April 17:

- Stark Mountain Woodworking employees
- Vermont Soapworks staff
- ACoRN Network board members
- Middlebury Elderly Services
- Maple Landmark Woodcraft employees
- Vermont Community Foundation staff
- Vermont Folklife Center staff
- Vt State Police New Haven Barracks staff

Facilitators: Paul Costello, Sarah Waring, Steve Gold

Scribes: Sarah Waring, Steve Gold, Meg Mitchell

Listening Team members: Mary Conlon, David Robinson, Harvey Smith

COUNCIL ON THE FUTURE OF VERMONT
Scribe Report, Stark Mountain Woodworking employees
May 29th 2008

Scribe: Meg Mitchell

I. What does Vermont mean to you? What common values do Vermonters share?

- A lot of polarization in Vermont in beliefs. Each town trying to figure out where the common ground is, for example Bristol's current debate over development. Some no development groups, especially from folks coming into the State.
- We are all drawn to a simpler way of life. A nice rural area with high quality of life, even if you have a diverse background and work outdoors all day or come home and want to take advantage of the recreation or beautiful area. So, yes, it's not surprising we fight over development.
- I value the small State with a government that is approachable and accessible. There's a bond and openness between those in the towns and state running government and the folks they live around.
- I grew up here, and my mom's family is old to the area. We spent a lot of time outdoors growing up. I value this place I grew up and have a connection to it.
- People are tolerant of others. We may have different values whether flatlander or native neighbors, we get together.
- A good sense of community. Live and let live attitude. Tolerant of different lifestyles.
- I like the small farms and the availability of locally raised produce and meats. Other places not as connected to where their food comes from.
- Self-sufficiency. Grow our own food. Energy independence. Being a small state we can accomplish this a little easier. My son was doing a project in school (Mt Abe) linking biofuels and small scale farms. He was impressed with how accessible the legislature was to him.
- It's all about quality of life. When ever I leave and come back, I'm so relieved to be back. We live in one of the best places in the world. We live in a bit of a bubble, we are not self-sustainable... so it's good this conversation is going on.

- There's an interest in quality here. Everyone wants to do or be the best whether woodworking, making bread, beer or coffee.
- We moved here. We liked the lake and the mountains.

II. Looking ahead through our lifetimes, and those of our children, what challenges and opportunities do you see for Vermont?

- Prices are high here. Affordability for younger families is a tough issue. Out of state students can afford a higher rental rate for housing it seems. Transportation is also very expensive.
- Price of gas.
- I'm frustrated by the recent construction of a commuter parking lot that's never full. Seems like commuting isn't really encouraged or mass transit.
- People here are on their own schedules in Vermont. Consequence of a rural area and lifestyle. Make mass transit or commuting more difficult.
- Jobs. Not small business friendly. Taxes are high and organized government (stat or local) incentives are low.
- Businesses in Bristol are moving to Middlebury. This is due to some of the Towns that are larger attracting businesses to Exchange Street.
- My wife is a small business owner and wants to employ someone but doesn't despite the number of times we've considered it. Overcoming the regulations, taxes and costs is prohibitive.
- To maintain Vermont image we don't want to bring in the bigger businesses and manufacturing, so the small businesses are very important. It's not a good thing, that the very types of businesses that are Vermont are not feeling welcome.
- Energy. It's a huge cost and going up really fast. Just heating my home. Things that are being devised for energy savings or conversion are not friendly to low to mid-income families and people. I think next winter is going to be a serious problem. Will strain our communities and even dual income people.
- As beautiful as this place is, it's not affordable. You have to move to make ends meet.
- Lots of opportunities for appropriate technology for living in a more frugal manner. Also alternative energy. Have been thinking about it here for a wood boiler that would run on scrap

or waste wood we are not fully utilizing. Frustrating that the Governor didn't get on board or support proposals for cost sharing improvements with efficiency companies to cost share efficiencies.

- Vermont and hand-made go hand-in-hand. It's definitely part of our brand. It means integrity, hard-working and quality, truth and honesty behind the brand. It's not just a con... it's the truth.
- Is green part of your ethic here? Yes, we try that with finishes and with certification, but a lot of those types of finishes aren't ready for mass use.
- Producing energy in State with all the forests we have and forestry. To me it's a missed opportunity. Wood in schools- yes, but why not generate electricity?
- Our forests we take for granted to provide all kinds of services are going to be under pressure. Well managed forests all across the globe are under more pressure for heating, costs to manage sustainability.
- Costs of higher education are a problem. Kids in Vermont can go out of state for less.
- Water is going to be really important in the future. It's not really being noticed, because we don't think about it very much in the NE. We should outlaw bottled water... and keep our tapwater clean!

III. What should our priorities be as we work together to realize your vision and prepare Vermont for the future?

- Fixing up all the problems we just mentioned above.
- Federal government is a major problem for the world, the way it's been behaving.
- Higher education is key. Get it so that kids want to stay in school in the State. UVM isn't that attractive because of money. There are better offers out of state.
- Transportation. We've built on a cheap fuel model. Really trying to figure out something that will work on a better model. Cheap affordable, small busses. Go back to village model.
- Health care. The amount of money spent on health care is a big cost item for the average person, especially as we grow older.
- Lack of current State government support for wind power and for Efficiency Vermont needs to change.

- Would be a plus if the services for efficiency improvements and health care were on a graduated scale based on a person's income. Get rid of insurance companies who are making all the money. Need universal health care... it's embarrassing in this country.
- Vermont can definitely help solve these problems, if we take advantage of our small-ness and ingenuity.
- Small farms are getting smaller and fewer. Cow power has potential if we all get behind it and support it, so we can pitch-in together to help our farms.
- Look at some of the European models (Germany in particular) should be looked at. They almost give you the solar panels. Their incentives are really powerful and they are really making a difference shifting to being energy independent. Want to have substantially larger incentives for people to capitalize alternative power. Could be huge if the majority of people are doing it...and bring the companies to build the panels so that the whole business cycle is in-state.

IV. We've been talking about Vermont, but how does this discussion concern the future of your community?

- Businesses moving out of smaller towns like Bristol in favor of larger towns that offer greater business incentives and a workforce.
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COUNCIL ON THE FUTURE OF VERMONT
Scribe Report, Vermont Soapworks staff
May 29th, 2008

Scribe: Meg Mitchell

I. What does Vermont mean to you? What common values do Vermonters share?

- The Mission Statement of Vermont Soap Organics captures the values of Vermont. So much so in fact that being in Vermont is very much a part of their brand as a company. They also specifically sought out Addison County and Middlebury for it's educated workforce with a strong work ethic.

“Mission Statement- We recognize that human beings are now at a critical juncture in relations to our planet, and that viable alternatives must be created to lead us into a sustainable future.

Vermont soap organics was created to manufacture and market high quality unique and natural personal care products of usefulness and value; and to be an example of how corporations can be a tool for positive social change. We emphasize the wholeness and integration of the company departments through communication, participation in the growth process, and acceptance of responsibility among co-workers. We pledge to conduct our business in an environmentally aware manner emphasizing reuse and recycling, the use of natural base ingredients and the application of appropriate technology.”

- We are independent.
- We like natural things.

II. Looking ahead through our lifetimes, and those of our children, what challenges and opportunities do you see for Vermont?

- Competition for oil base materials will affect their business directly. Seeds and plant oils from all over the world are becoming more expensive and supply is becoming scarce due to biodiesel competition.
- Prices for all types of materials are going up. The Dollar is in decline which is not helping us produce products. Once produced it can help us sell products.

- Having an adequate health care provider limits their recruitment of the type of employees they are looking for (well educated with a strong work ethic). She believes that current health care providers are really health insurance companies.
- They are experiencing a challenge finding qualified workforce that is well educated and with a strong work ethic.
- Energy expenditures are going up and up. In response they are looking at their renewable energy options. They currently use a little solar, but want to expand, possibly into co-gen or wood pellets.
- Growth in specialty soaps that are organic and handmade is exponential. They can't produce enough soap to stay up with their market and are growing. They are doubling and considering moving into a building double the size. Their market is limitless.
- They face a challenge getting rid of liquid by-product of the soap making process. It currently goes to a landfill, but they would like to develop a way to dispense of this or have another process/company that can use their by-product.
- They are the largest producer of hand-make organic soap in North America. They get their essential oils and base materials from around the world. They practice social responsibility and positive social change in their business practice and they feel this is a trend. Others are coming to them for advice, and they are helping other businesses with their model. They started this philosophy of business long ago, but "mainstream has now come to them."
- Another challenged faced in the future is potable water.

III. What should our priorities be as we work together to realize your vision and prepare Vermont for the future?

- Remember where VT comes from; social responsibility is our hallmark. Ours was the first Constitution, even before the Nation's. In it, we gave women the right to vote and had no slaves. We actually had to give up citizen rights to join the union. History affects our present and the future. It gives you a clue where you want to go.
- Alternative energy development.
- Socially responsible businesses.
- Health care that's affordable and not about providing "insurance" but instead, the money spent helps provide care. Dare I say... "Socialized medicine."

- Waste management options. Recycle and reuse.

IV. We've been talking about Vermont, but how does this discussion concern the future of your community?

- The company wants to and will stay in Middlebury and stay in Vermont. They like the community ethic which reflects their own, has the best workforce in Vermont.
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COUNCIL ON THE FUTURE OF VERMONT
Scribe Report, ACoRN Network
May 29th, 2008

Scribe: Meg Mitchell

I. What does Vermont mean to you? What common values do Vermonters share?

- Beauty is maintained and is less commercialized. Would like to sustain this.
- Small is beautiful. Scale of the land, scale of communities, everyone knows each other.
- Down to earth, pragmatic, not money or status oriented. Very real, genuine.
- Vermont means Community in all of its aspects.
- Ease in civic engagement. Because we are small.
- Scenic beauty.
- Easy to find people with common values. Lots of people in Vermont can say this. Leads to sense of a community. Relationships are important and are forged in work and groups of faith, and our working awareness that we are modeling good behavior.
- Being a model for behavior. Goes back 150 years... slavery, prison reform, first in lots of things.
- Opportunity to do-it-yourself. You can jump into anything almost.
- Degree of respect given across and among different social groups. I've lived places where this is not the case. Don't always agree but it's respectful and we aren't as tempted to move toward polarization. Possible to have civil disagreement here.
- Social class, education and occupation don't correlate here like other places and no one cares. That's nice.

II. Looking ahead through our lifetimes, and those of our children, what challenges and opportunities do you see for Vermont?

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- Trying to plan for and deal effectively with peaking of oil production, global warming, and in the absence of meaningful State and National leadership, we've decided to take matters into our hands here locally.
- The majority of my children have found jobs in Vermont. I'm very fortunate. It's very important to create fertile ground for the next generation. Not necessarily jobs (they are smart

and they will figure out what to do as a job) but places for them to live and health care... just help make it easy for them to live.

- Maintaining environmental quality while being economically viable. Don't bring in large manufacturing to protect. Rural character with prosperity.
- Low income households will have the most difficulty adjusting to energy demands and movement away from oil. Must help the least able to adjust.
- We will redefine prosperity. This is a defining moment. This State is very dependent on the outside for everything we consume. That suggests that we need to own our energy and our food. I'm not convinced we will source everything from China in the future, nor is it a future I want.
- We share our position with surrounding states. We are at the end of the pipeline of energy. We will be tested first. We are cold and costly. We will have to be creative.
- Our economic structure needs to be rethought. This is the opportunity. New business opportunities due to climate change, energy needs and changes in economic structure. This is happening now.
- People living at the edge are at most risk. Home heating. We will all know someone affected this winter.
- High costs of oil are just the tip of the iceberg. Will have huge ripple effects. Anyone not taking this into account in the future is missing the boat.
- Decline of oil is also the decline of American Dream. The thinking that we need a few businesses from out of state is wrong. We are in debt over our head. Just a matter of time before the world won't tolerate our debt and cheap industrial production model.
- We think it's going back local. Take the reigns and build our local economies. If you travel around Vermont, the beautiful things and buildings were built at a time when Vermont had its own economy.
- Emergency services and security will be an issue. We may not be prepared for the scale of the effects to come. The need to help others at a massive scale. We are not sure we will have enough local scale to handle.
- Though renewable energy offers potential in the long-term, but we've waited too long, and we can no longer make this transition gradually. We lost that opportunity 20 years ago. Hurst

study shows we can't make the transition smoothly. We are on the bumpy plateau where the change will be catastrophic.

- Although we feel it will be catastrophic, we are also hopeful that we can respond to some of these changes here in the local community.
- Yet, it's very important that we also must rely on networking with others. We can't draw into our own shells during this time. Networks beyond the local community will be important.
- In other countries, people are prosperous and happy, yet they spend much less and have much less than we do in this country. Our definition of prosperity will be different.
- Cash flow is a way of life now, but there is a cultural memory we can draw on. Times when that was not the case. Self-sufficiency values can be reinvigorated.
- It's part of the human condition to rise to the challenge successfully.
- American happiness peaked in the 50s. There's some opportunity in our challenges. Less consumerism, more community etc. This is not really catastrophe... crisis is a better word. We just don't have the time to adjust to these changes smoothly. There will be a small percentage that will be proactive and those that will shore up the social net. We will stumble together and the community will right itself. The solution won't be technological it will be social. Everyone will put their resources and skills on the table and work it out.
- There is pride in people's rootedness here. Wonder how we are prepared to respond to the diversity of people that will come here. Move here trying to escape effects of climate change in other places.
- Rebuild and repair the local sector of our economies. We are not the only ones in this situation. People who grow flowers for the export market yet they can't feed themselves.
- Let's not throw our energy away and we don't need many of the things we have. We have wind, water, waves, solar.

III. What should our priorities be as we work together to realize your vision and prepare Vermont for the future?

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- Relocalization. Build the resilience of communities in terms of food, energy and economy. This State gets a lot of money from Washington DC. Federal dollars won't be there.

- Help the people in mid to low level incomes. For example, expanding the efficiency programs to low income homes.
- Think outside the box and go back to the way things were done before, historically.
- We may have to look at things we don't want and consider them... the sacred cows... genetic engineering. Maybe nuclear. May have an important role to play in the big picture to get through this transition away from oil dependency.
- More greenhouses for winter vegetables with renewable energy power.
- Retaining VT's youth.
- Look at the Switzerland model... the ability to feed ourselves, educate ourselves.
- Global economic model means that what we are doing right now doesn't necessarily make sense now economically, but it will make enormous economic sense in the future. Need to bridge that gap.
- "Transition Town" is a model that comes from other countries we are looking at and involving everyone in the community to carry out the transition, get people involved and help educate people about the changes that are coming.
- We are growing local food markets through the web (www.addisoncounty.locallygrown.net). We are organizing into groups of interest. We are also forming projects around energy (oil based seed growers). We are piloting ideas here that may be used other places in the State.
- Addison County and ACoRN is planning a conference in October like no other. Explaining the crisis and then breaking out into groups to discuss how various sectors should respond like health care, energy, food, transportation etc. Getting awareness up and doing early planning in our community.
- Don't underestimate the power of the current economic structure. It will provide its own incentives once fuel is \$6 a gallon. This will create change.
- Small lending programs so people can capitalize their energy efficiencies and alternatives and then pay them back through the savings they achieve.
- Biodiesel is more expensive than conventional oil, until it can be produced with algae.
- Looking at creating a mass of demand for biofuels in the local community.
- Can't rely totally on biodiesel. The economics just don't work out.
- Must hold elected officials more accountable for strategic planning on these issues. They must plan beyond their next election cycle.

- Broadband and local media networks are key to the future. So people have access without having to drive.

IV. We've been talking about Vermont, but how does this discussion concern the future of your community?

- To ACoRN it's really all about community leadership and taking these issues on locally. They are not waiting, and believe this is the scale that change must occur.

COUNCIL ON THE FUTURE OF VERMONT
Scribe Report, Middlebury Elderly Services
May 29th, 2008

Scribe: Meg Mitchell

I. What does Vermont mean to you? What common values do Vermonters share?

- Ecologically I think people here would deprive themselves personally of something if we could be healthier as a state.
- Value the rural nature of the state and the farming. Rural New York state is similar, but people here really value the way it looks.
- Open space. Including pastures and the quietness.
- Education of our children. One of my interests now is “teens” and the lack of constructive activities for teens. Used to be bowling etc. around. I came here as a teen in the summers, but a lot of these activity centers are gone.
- Attitude of people is very supportive of each other and everyone seems to count.
- Personal contact with State officials. You can talk personally with people in the State. When you call State government officials by phone you can reach them and have a personal conversation, and service.
- We are hard-workers.
- Frugality. We never throw anything away. We saved everything when I grew up on the farm.
- A sense of community. People are willing to help, even if you’ve only been here a short time. In a moment of personal crisis, people reach out, or greet their neighbors when they move in. There is “reciprocal feeding of the animals” when people leave town, they leave their pets with their neighbors.
- Mountains. Scenery.
- Sense of simplicity. Simple lifestyles.

II. Looking ahead through our lifetimes, and those of our children, what challenges and opportunities do you see for Vermont?

- Preserving land as open space.
- Keeping downtowns and village centers vibrant. Main streets that have the essentials for living, not knick-knacks or \$50 shower curtains. Need a place to shop.
- I think Downtowns are vital, but they are for tourists, not us (residents).

- State should do something about Act 250 and the delays associated with it. It can take 10 years to get through and this is difficult for good ideas and businesses. People run out of money before they get through the process.
- Our kids can't find well paying jobs in this State.
- Mass transit and transportation. Condition of roads.
- Controlling development.
- Having a live-able wage so people can stay.
- Outside businesses buying up major businesses like Vermont Yankee. They don't have to live with the results or with their neighbors.
- Healthcare. All our money is going to insurance companies instead of actual healthcare.
- Environmental protection. Lake Champlain.
- Cost of living raises are few and far between. No regulation of this.
- Reduction of State employees. If we want people to do business in Vermont, you have to have the services and many of those come from State employees.
- Crime is getting out of hand. Need more coverage for safety.
- Sense of community threatened. We can't be separate from what's happening in the world. We must cope with a larger world community. We can't build a wall around us, we have to adapt.
- In order to keep Vermont the way we want to see it, we have to send a message to people coming up from NY and MA that some behaviors are unacceptable. Fears about lack of safety.
- Encourage neighbors knowing neighbors so that we can protect ourselves and each other.
- Too liberal and relaxed about fines in the courts.
- Opportunity to encourage farmers markets and locally grown produce and goods.
- Opportunity to involve kids in community programs. We have people who are very generous when they know how or where to help.
- Harness natural resources. As a small State we can set a big example.
- Support wind power and small hydro, manure.
- Don't want to see a lot of windmill farms because it goes against our desire for scenery.
- We march to a different drummer. We should have our own drummer and know what it is.

- Addison County is a great example of transportation services. Not just for seniors, but all others.
- Vermont has health care for 16 and under. Would love to see health care program for small businesses, so they can afford it for their employees and families.
- Health costs eat into income until you have nothing left.

III. What should our priorities be as we work together to realize your vision and prepare Vermont for the future?

- Keeping young people in the State. Small industries and incentives for young people.
- Pool of small companies for health care services so smaller companies can afford.
- Our size has great benefits, but it has great deficits. We lack “mass” and we have things that we can’t just support with our population in state.
- Education in the schools of Vermont core values such as frugality and service to others; money management, consumer ethics and civics courses for involvement in their community. Concern that kids are learning only how to buy more and need more.
- Tiny schools we can’t afford anymore, yet we still want them. Combinations are difficult and not always supported.
- Eliminate the expression “Vermont Brand” and that it’s somehow going to save us. Merchandizing ourselves is the concern.
- Growing our urban areas and already developed areas. Encourage urban and downtown growth instead of rural development.

IV. We’ve been talking about Vermont, but how does this discussion concern the future of your community?

(not answered)

COUNCIL ON THE FUTURE OF VERMONT
Scribe Report, May 29th 2008
Maple Landmark Woodcraft employees

Scribe: Sarah Waring

II. What does Vermont mean to you? What common values do Vermonters share?

- VT means home – I was born and raised here. I've only been away for 4 years, and that's the four I spent in the Navy, traveling the world and the US. The concerns and values that we had in my childhood days aren't the same that we have now. VT means more to outsiders now than it does to its own people. I look at Vt as a lifelong resident, but now I'm not sure that VT cares about me.
- I'm imported to VT but I don't want to go back. I want to live here because it's safe for my children, and I can ride my bike to work. I think VT means honesty, wholesomeness. We have to attract tourists, but we also have to do something for the people here, because it is expensive to live here now.
- Vermont is home – and there are deep roots and experiences here for me. I have no sense or respect for any other place and am very protective of it. VT talks about tolerance, but there's nothing in comparison to what there was before. In the 70's farm families took in the 'back to the land' movement youth and taught them the skills they wanted to be able to live here. But now those people have turned around and taken control of the state. Now tolerance means 'accept what we say'.
- Common sense used to be the Vermont way.
- Now there seems to be pride in being totally quirky rather than being commonsensical. The example of wasting time at a town meeting deciding to arrest Bush and Cheney rather than focusing on school budgets and important down to earth issues that affect them. People used to be able to keep their political views out of the business of running a town, and now they can't. We shouldn't waste our time with issues beyond our duty and our charge.
- I was born a Vermonter and no matter where I go, I will be a Vermonter.

II. Looking ahead through our lifetimes, and those of our children, what challenges and opportunities do you see for Vermont?

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- OPP - I think we need to have more industry – but not more pollution.
- CH -I think a challenge is that there is a large part of VT – and many of these are in power today – that don't rely on local economy to make their living. If they did, they would care more about the issues here, but instead they can see it go to waste. Vermont was a hard place to live 50 years ago, it is still a hard place to live.
- CH – keeping young people here is hard. I advised both of my children to leave; partly because the opportunities are higher elsewhere. I'd like to see more pay scale equalization so people have the opportunity to come back. I have a boy in North Carolina going to school, but he won't apply for residency because he says 'I'm a Vermonter!'
- OPP – there should be jobs here for educated kids (engineers, doctors, etc) as well as the kids without educations.
- CH – energy costs are hard. My husband and I run a building business and we build energy star homes; we won't build anything else. But the more you can educate your clients about rising energy costs, the better.
- CH – VT needs to decide that it wants a sustainable economy. They haven't gotten there because they don't need it themselves (the people in control who aren't connected to the VT economy). We need outside income right now to make VT work, but we need to be sustainable in our economy in state.
- OPP – Vt earns enough to pay for itself for us here. But 90% goes outside for our products instead. Sure, we can't be isolated (we need to import things like cars, and bananas)but we need to find ways to keep \$\$ here instead.
- CH – there is a disagreement about whether there are 'no good jobs' for Vermonters, or 'no good workforce' for employers. I think this is a disconnect between the different sides of the same issues, but the piece that is missing is training. You need to ensure that kids have a job to do – to learn. In the long-term we need trades people. Since manufacturing is seen as being 'dead, dirty, undesirable' then we need to work on the other sectors of our economy. But it is a reality that there is no other sector of the economy that houses so many skills under one roof – and it's better and more satisfying that pumping gas for \$12/hr in another state!

- CH – it is a bleak picture unless you make it affordable (which is taxes!) and have training for jobs here (to keep people in state). They drive more businesses out of VT with Act 250, and instead we need to let business come here to the state. Right now VT is an artificial identity – just cows and skiing!
- CH – we’re being taxed to death and we’re insurance poor. The burden is on the employers for their workforce and the regulations around sub-contractors are particularly bad. Worker’s Comp has skyrocketed and now everyone is trying to appear as sub-contractors. This is needs to be consistently enforced across the state.
- OPP – VT BRAND – it’s a big tool and we use it here, even though we recognize it perpetuates a quaint view of VT. It creates instant credibility and good will. Other companies are using it too, and hopefully using it well. It shows integrity and craftsmanship – and the people we’re selling to now think of Vt as ‘a place apart’ and ‘green and clean’. We’re playing both sides, but it’s true to some extent.
- CH – while you can’t show one statute that says VT is unfriendly to business, it happens in 100 little ways. One example is that VT overturned the Federal ADA exemptions – and ignore the impact that paying for all the ADA requirements has on small businesses.
- OPP – Necessity is the mother of invention and there might be opportunities related to the energy crisis.

III. What should our priorities be as we work together to realize your vision and prepare Vermont for the future?

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- Soon the bulk of VT will be on fixed incomes and we need to think about costs instate.
- We need to ‘unbundle’ VT – take apart the regulations that are unfriendly and allow business to come here, allow the state to grow and quit trying to micromanage how it grows. I want more choices and I want to be able to go to lower cost places (Friendly’s, Sears, etc) rather than being forced to shop locally and high cost.
- Creating job training for kids should be a priority. Aligning our public education to really get value for the money we spend on it. We need to support our students to have the skills to earn themselves a living.

- We need to re-examine zoning controls. VT's economy comes from self-incubated businesses, so we should make it easy to be one of these. We need to allow businesses to grow beyond a protected home operation into a sufficiently scaled operation to employ people.
- Also, we need to think about MIXED USE for a number of reasons. (Right now in VT there is a pressure not to put manufacturing in towns or near homes) We need mixed use to keep transportation costs low and we need it because it is the historical way we grew in VT.
- We need to keep the community involvement and public participation.
- People in general are resistant to change, but Vermonters speak their minds about what they want. Change is what VT has always been about. There's a desire to keep what's here because that's what always been here. But we have to go where the economy takes us – we shouldn't be trying to preserve things that don't help us.
- Change always costs someone money. People are resistant to change because they know it's going to cost you dollars and not save them. It feels like you're having your rights taken away.
- Wood products in VT have held up remarkably well relative to other parts of the country. The global competition has been unrelenting and this is why the need to produce it locally will come back – simple economics. It makes perfect sense to grow and produce it here – the Natural Resources Economy in VT has to be supported rather than trying to support a 200 person factory to come here. The same people in VT that are eating locally and organically are the ones that say that manufacturing is dead, but it's not true.

IV. We've been talking about Vermont, but how does this discussion concern the future of your community?

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- Middlebury – it looks the same now as it did 60 years ago. I want more choice here; I drive out of town to do all my shopping and recreating. I want Middlebury to grow.
- I want towns to run with town meetings – people are always looking for community and participation. In comparison to other places in the country, VT still has this. Even though we differ on what our priorities should be, we still have the tradition of coming together.
- I'm afraid that the ability to participate is being lost. The honest people who know that they don't understand the issues stay home and don't get involved in town meetings. The average person now can't get a school budget report and understand it and make an informed decision. The systems are getting too complicated for local control, and so you end up with only the

people coming who have an ax to grind. (example of a movement in town meeting to put an irrelevant issue first on the agenda so that the people who came to advocate could do so and then leave.) It's a surface level of discussion only.

- I see things differently because I came here recently; this is still a place where a lot of safety, security and public participation exists in comparison to the rest of the US.

COUNCIL ON THE FUTURE OF VERMONT
Scribe Report, May 29th 2008
Vermont Community Foundation staff

Scribe: Steve Gold

1. What does Vermont mean to you? What common values do Vermonters have?

- Vt is home
- A place where kids can call a friend to get a ride to school if they miss the bus
- A comfortable place to live and raise kids
- A place with an identity where there is a bond of being a Vermonter
- Trust of neighbors, much more than the rest of the USA
- Connection to the land
- Small, rural communities where people are interdependent
- Safety, Low crime, leave things unlocked
- Small scale where one can make a difference
- financial and socio economic differences are real. There is real poverty resulting in very different worlds for different Vermonters.
- Openness and generally welcoming to immigrants, though not totally
- Sense of community and inclusiveness
- People get involved with there communities and are committed to them
- Resilient and tough due to climate, economy, cost of living

2. Looking ahead through our lifetimes and those of our children, what are the challenges and opportunities that you see for Vermont?

- C Affordability re the tax burden and transportation costs to get to a good job
- C Affordable housing for young people, middle income as well as low income
- C Quality of education to prepare youth for the future. They need to have their hopes and dreams stimulated.
- C Job creation for people just starting out
- C Difficult place to start a business re taxes, availability of a skilled workforce, lack of IT infrastructure
- C Tightly knit communities can be insular and parochial, making it difficult to start new things. There is a resistance to looking outside for new ideas.
- C Drugs and violence. There seems to be a growing culture of drugs and violence that is more than about jobs and economy.
- C Disconnect between the idyllic landscape and natural beauty and the other side of poverty, hopelessness and despair.
- O Philanthropy
- O VT is a great lab for scaling rural programs. The government is unusually open and accessible. We need to find models around the nation and scale them here.
- C Flatlanders versus Woodchucks

- C Fewer people are intentional about living here than was true 20 to 40 years ago.
- O Time is right to do new things.
- O Local energy and food production given what we have in our organic farmers, small tight communities, focus on green values. Century of Small
- C Transportation costs leading to isolation of small communities
- C Lack of public transportation
- C Difficulty of working local versus relative ease of shopping local
- C Support of non-profits and lack of volunteer time for non-profits.
- C Information dissemination throughout Vt is difficult.

3. What should our priorities be as we work together to realize your vision and prepare Vermont for the future?

- Organizational for CFV - Growth of Philanthropy
- Transportation
- Alcohol and other drug issues
- Economic development - good jobs - family financial capacity
- Climate change and green energy
- IT infrastructure

4. We've been talking about Vermont, but how does this discussion concern the future of your community?

- Work with philanthropists on their agendas rather than focusing VCF on identifying a set of issues i.e. be responsive rather than proactive re issues identification.
- Grow philanthropy not just in terms of dollars but in terms of how to make philanthropy more effective.
- Cluster issues that are related, as they emerge, for consideration by philanthropists.
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COUNCIL ON THE FUTURE OF VERMONT
Scribe Report, VT Folklife Center staff
May 29th, 2008

Scribe: Sarah Waring

III. What does Vermont mean to you? What common values do Vermonters share?

- I came to VT recently and for the opportunity to work with a nationally recognized team of folklorists doing creative projects, which is very rare. There are always people coming to VT and often there is an image or sense of place that includes ‘white church , small town, rolling hills’, but the cultural landscape is less static and more fluid. We traditionally think of the old time Yankee sensibilities and also of people associated with the Northern climates.
- I’m also an immigrant here and from what I see in my neighborhood any values we have cut along social and economic lines. It’s always been that way but now it is more aggravated. Rural farm people are highly entrepreneurial and have a libertarian strain, but the character is changing. People used to be tolerant of these behaviors but now we’re in a siege mentality and people feel threatened. The things that make VT are 1. scale and 2. geography (built and land). Isolation was a factor of creating VT identity in the past – people could be screwballs but they were integrated into the community. This integration happened for reasons of economics and for reasons of demographics. However, these old systems no longer exist and yet people look back on the past and attempt to integrate behaviors superficially. Behaviors that may have integrated or pulled a community together in the past are meaningless if they are brought piecemeal into the present.
- Vermont is very diverse.
- Vermont has these layers: there is a marketing image outside of Vt which is true, but is one-sided. Then there is the reality of people living here who aren’t always connected with the past and with the place they live, because they aren’t interested.

II. Looking ahead through our lifetimes, and those of our children, what challenges and opportunities do you see for Vermont?

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- CH – to show the larger story of VT – the context and history.

- CH – to overcome the apathy of people coming here who aren't interested in past ways of life. There is romanticism to preserving old ways of life that is not realistic; we want to focus on things being adapted to use, rather than ossified. We are challenged to discover the ROLE and goal of any traditional activity.
- CH – issues of class and social divide are a challenge, and we tend to lean towards, support and focus on the underdog.
- OPP – how do we put this into place? How do we ask questions that reach as many voices as possible to show the diversity and reality of Vermont? We like to think that we are not recording the past, but documenting the present for the future and enabling people to figure out what they want.
- OPP – Apprenticeships is something that the Center helps to do. We assist in finding those meaningful things to keep alive and changing and find a way to support it. People need to want to sustain an activity.
- CH and OPP – if we can't talk about VT being complicated then we lose out. (for example, the native American presence in Burlington was systematically exterminated and a dominant social class was forced). We need to be able to think critically about our history (not just romantically) and learn about all sides of an issue.
- CH – healthcare! I would like to see it state supported.
- CH – mass transit – it should be viable, and the state should recognize that expanding our roads system is not viable.
- CH – VT is expensive for young people!
- OPP – more and more organizations in VT are looking to the Folklife Center to help them do a 'look back' and compiling the lessons learned. It's more than nostalgia, but it's trying to learn from the past. These are often in the environmental sector and they are powerful voices that want the stories told – its cultural conservation projects like these that are encouraging. We are at a cutting edge place: we're thinking about who determines program and therefore the impact of the program and the word. (i.e. if you take a topic like energy, it immediately becomes highly politicized and hard to determine impact).
- VT Folklife Center doesn't determine our projects based on what we think will happen politically as a result. Nor do we try to push an agenda in doing our work; rather we do fee for service (such as these organizations coming to us for help with their historic background) and

we take on some topics that are important simply for better understanding and relations between people (example of the refugee stories and the migrant farm labor project).

- People always ask us “what are you going to do when all the old-timers die?” , so our challenge is to let the state know about nuances. Our interest in the past is an interest in the present – you can talk about and who where you are now.

III. What should our priorities be as we work together to realize your vision and prepare Vermont for the future?

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- Federal and state appropriations to support the Folklife Center. We could ask questions for the state that no one has asked, such as “How was land used culturally in the past? How can we avoid land conflicts today?” For example, if we want to keep agriculture viable here, we need to know WHAT it was used for.
- We should have pre-development surveys that tell you about land prior to residential or commercial building projects. We need trained, qualified professionals who would do this work for the state (not just CRM and archaeological digs for material culture) to understand the behavioral patterns on the land and illuminate how to avoid conflicts. We need to put the idea of intangibles into the landscape behavior patterns that exist here.
- We need to have money to do field work, to digitize our archives and to run our educational programs. We have 4500 plus interviews and it would be great to preserve them adequately and efficiently.
- A big function of the work this organization does it is to train people to do the work we do. We’ve developed more education programs and ethnographic methods/place-based education and community history projects. We’re in the business of creating knowledge and taking it back to the communities. But often participants in our programs are from other states – so we’re looking now to work on VFC and Addison County in particular; how do we engage students and design community history projects that are interesting to them?

IV. We’ve been talking about Vermont, but how does this discussion concern the future of your community?

- Being a passionate person means to be engaged in your community as a new Vermonter. People need to take their ideas out the community they live in.

- Historic cluster development that we see on the land today is great, and sprawling development ultimately undermines the things about community that we like. If we want to preserve something that's unique we need to respect historic land use with jobs in the communities here.
- We should focus on light rail around Middlebury and to and from Chittenden.
- The impact of national guard deployment on communities is a potential challenges. No one imagined these extended tours, the periods of time and manpower needed, the emotional costs and the impacts on VT children and families.
- At the end of the day, it's important to remember that our scale makes things feasible!
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COUNCIL ON THE FUTURE OF VERMONT
May 29th, 2008 Scribe Report
VT State Police Barracks New Haven

Scribe: Steve Gold

1. What does Vermont mean to you? what common values do Vermonters share?

(In conversation this was combined with challenges, because respondents told us that police routinely deal with negative situations – they have less of an opportunity to view the public good.)

- Police deal with negative situations
- The people we deal with

- struggle to make ends meet
- struggle with alcohol
- are involved with domestic issues that are alcohol and other drug related
- lack education and will power to change
- have generational patterns in their families including living in squalid conditions and domestic violence
- while there may be opportunities they don't feel there is a problem or are reluctant to reach out for help
- these families are dug into holes and cant get out of them
- there seems to be a hopelessness among the poor

- People have to want to help themselves
- There are more opportunities for people in poverty than for middle income people
- The main issue is alcohol
- VT has made progress with driving and alcohol
- VT has not made progress with domestic violence
- Police work is 80% social work and 20% police work
- The values of a good work ethic, honesty and integrity used to come from families
- A serious issue is children out of control of their parents. Little that can be done in severe cases.
- Many children on medications who have behavioral issues
- Poor families are trying to do the best they can
- Dealing with social work issues for police is relatively recent. Not so in the 80s.
- Parents call about their teens not obeying them, but these parents are not willing to be parents. They need to provide good supervision and time and attention to their teens and they need to be willing to enforce consequences, like taking driving license away from 16,17 year olds.
- There is a generational issue that is a problem in the workforce, even among new police recruits, which involves questioning authority. This is progressively getting worse. Obedience to authority is an important value for police.
- The Golden Rule is not practiced among youth today. It is about what is in it for me.
- The right things are not being taught at home.

- It is important to have real life, local role models rather than those from TV or sports.
- A model community is Danville, where people are involved and one gets confronted if one is not involved.
- Community service is an important value.
- Support for law enforcement is important and is the case in Addison Cty.

3. What priorities would you identify for Vermont in the next generation?

- Economic issues are key. They drive everything. For example, towns that are better off, the kids behave better, parents are involved, there are good role models in the community.
- People themselves have to have their own priorities based on good values.
- The future needs to be brighter for high school kids. National politics and policies, lack of jobs in VT, higher education debt all are problems.
- Law enforcement recruitment is a challenge and a priority. The current applicant pool is not high quality. The pay in VT is not as good as in neighboring states.
- Addison Cty. is a safety zone between Chitt. and Rut. Cties. Need to preserve that.
- Deployments to Iraq are a challenge which contribute to a coverage challenge for State Police which in turn leads to burnout and early retirement or leaving police work.
- Take Back Vermont. We need preserve rural communities and are not doing that.
- Need to take better care of each other and get back to basics

- Respect each other

- Get involved in our communities

- Take personal responsibility and accountability.

COUNCIL ON THE FUTURE OF VERMONT
Scribe Report, Public Evening meeting
May 29th, 2008
Unitarian Universalist Society in Middlebury

Scribe: Sarah Waring

IV. What does Vermont mean to you? What common values do Vermonters share?

- The main thing that VT means to me is a good place to raise children. That was the main goal in buying the farm and living here for 40 years.
- VT has low population density; and a balance between human endeavors and wilderness (or land where people are uncommon).
- The level of community here is really important. This defines the small towns here.
- An old story – just because your cat had kittens in the oven doesn't make them biscuits. But people who come here come for a reason – and do those of us who come here from other places want to retain or jettison from our past. If there's a common denominator to all of this – there's a sense of scale and community. But the more attractive we make ourselves the more we put that as risk.
- Grew up in Sweden – my ideal rural VT was here – beautiful, bucolic past it is all encapsulated physically, culturally and socially here. VT is the soul of what is good about the United States.
- I've lived in the corn belt for quite awhile. What's different about Vt is that we stick up for our own locally grown and produced things. We like to keep our small businesses and arts and theater. We don't just take what corporate America wants to sell us.
- I came here to camp when I was 12 or 13, but when I came back when I was 22; what was good for me was the proximity of the hills. I wanted the mix of intellectual and mountains.
- The wonderful ability to testify to our state government. The folks in other places feel powerless – and although I had to kick myself to get to Montpelier – the experience informed me that everyone has the opportunity to participate here.
- Place both reflects and influences who we are and what we value. Wilderness, working landscapes and dense villages. Inventive, innovative, progressive, conservative and common sensical.

- I think it's a lost cause! I think that it's like trying to bring people back to life. It's going downhill all the time; and I don't think the democracy can last. If you let everybody vote then the lower end of the scale is going to end up predominating and most people don't want to work very hard. I've done everything I could do to try to improve things, but although I've been trying to do things for years, it's just going downhill.
- Vermont is hard to put to all together because there's 57 years of VT for me. It is changing and I've been in the military as well and traveled. But its changing a lot slower than other places – you can still come back and recognize the same stores. To me, I see it as a place that I don't want to leave and its still pretty important to me.
- General sense of caring about each other. I think this is evidenced by the large amount of volunteerism that we see.
- A shared valuing of Vt and communities – it shows an attitude that things can be fixed and bettered. There's no community problem that can't be looked at with many eyes and worked on with many hands. Scale is important
- I've always been impressed by the creativity and the inventiveness of most of VTers. Especially with few resources.
- Honesty is the first one that comes to mind. Most people are taken at face value and trust is the immediate reaction – both personally and professionally. There's a high degree of hard working industry. It's not a choice that people work very hard. And third, ingenuity. Making do and being creative at an economic level that will present a lot of challenges.
- Related to scale VTers are unique as seeing schools as real centers and resources.
- I think there's a hardiness to Vters that's valued. When the climate is decent, the bugs are out. But the climate is tough, work is tough.
- A value that we hold is related to the democratic process and town meeting, etc. It's related to the scale comments and participatory work – we can and must. Because of the scale we have it's something you can imagine doing and so we do.
- I think there's a sense of personal responsibility for our neighbors and the people in our communities. There's a sense that it's not an impersonal face who has a need but our neighbor or someone we know.
- There's a sense of quality of life instead of standard of living. Here it is an undercurrent.

- I love town meeting – I go to six of them every year. You can watch two people have a ripsnorting argument one minutes and then sit down together the next minute. Respect and tolerant of each other.
- You either like Vermont or you don't. There's no in between – and if you don't you don't stay.

II. Looking ahead through our lifetimes, and those of our children, what challenges and opportunities do you see for Vermont?

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- As we inevitably we attract a more diverse population what are the threats or challenges that come with it? What are the impacts?
- Massive challenges to the agricultural economy of the state. Nation wide we've created a big business model for agriculture which doesn't translate to Vt very well. It doesn't seem that what we're doing now for Ag is sustainable in the long term.
- Demographics – we know that we're aging, we know that we're graying. We need to think about keeping our own young people here, but also about making this a vibrant place for people to come here. It's a very serious issue for being welcoming and continuing to be welcoming – and creating a population that isn't overreliant on one part of the population.
- It's true that the only part of the population scheduled to grow is the over 65 – but in order to increase the balance with these retirees – the solution is in conflict with keeping a stable population, which was mentioned before. If those steps are not taken properly then its just a growing population. I'm concerned that the worry about young kids leaving is exaggerated and that solutions that are offered are just inviting population increase that would change the character of Vt.
- CH – to instill in our children the love of Vt that we do have. It's not easy to live here, but the quality of life well makes up for what we do have. It's our challenge and our opportunity.
- Ch – as must as getting families to move here, we don't hear from the people whose needs are closer. I'm observing that as we look at our boards and community systems; that generation isn't taking the powerful role yet. Partly that's because they are so stressed with immediate concerns, but we need to hear from them and start incorporating them into the conversation.
- Making sure that we don't use all the other ways that are being used across the country – but making new ways to do it here. Create our own model.

- Creeping Chittenden County – this is a problem and it cannot sustain what we value.
- The challenge of the socioeconomic gap.
- Part of the challenge is control. The Government and politicians would like to direct things in certain ways. Examples from slate and wood mills; controls from the state that tax payers have to support. I read somewhere about energy – sun and wind may not reach to the kind of capacity that we need (5% or 15%), but we have dams all over the state that can produce local energy – but the state rules and regulations make it impossible to handle.
- What is Vt? It's a finite resource – we're losing 10 acres per new citizen. We have the worst record of land conservation in the country which is oxymoronic. IF this Vt will not be intact then there's no point in having some of these discussions?
- The family – where will kids get jobs? I have to pat myself on the back because 5 of the 7 kids have gotten jobs here.
- Ch- young people live here leaving the state. I think it's important to have the young people live here and stay here. There's a cultural gap – a young person who was born here but doesn't think of himself as a Vter. But energy is another issue – the challenge is to cultivate the small stores so we don't drive the long distances. The opportunity could be to start staying local and can't afford to go up to WalMart all the time.
- The small scale of VT and the trends that are going on nation wide – these trends don't fit in VT. But companies say that we don't do business here – and it's really hard to fit the large scale enterprises in a place like this.
- The quality of education in our public schools – the test results for our state lead the country in some areas, but are really poor in other areas. If we're going to have a QOL then we need to have very high standards for education. Secondly, high speed internet access – it's very difficult to do the work that I do without the high speed internet. I'd like to see that be a reality – it will keep us in touch with other parts of the state and reduce transportation costs.
- In the line of keeping this sense of VT – especially keeping wilderness and wildness will be hard.
- To me the largest challenge facing VT is to adapt to these things bombarding us. But adapt while retaining what we like. We talk about health care and wanting that – but we don't want people here. Our kids, grandchildren, tend to leave the state but that's because its hard to live here. Can we continue to stay the same population, but support those people who are here?

Darwin proved that organisms that don't change, die. Hopefully we can adapt and retain what we like.

- Precisely those things that we cherish can be double edged swords. We want to be very careful about knowing those Vters who want big boxes and those who don't. We have to be aware that one very small group of people can slow down or stop something. We have to accept our reality of that – we have to adapt but not to try to retreat into the past. We have to doubt each of us a little bit about whether we represent all of Vt.
- CH – Keeping communities STRONG. Homeownership and socio-economic diversity. The challenge for us is to deal with the high cost of housing especially for young people.
- People have got to learn to work. They've all got to eat and have a roof. We have a lot of drugs and alcohol around – but if we had a work program where people would work for their supper then this burden would be relieved from taxpayers.
- Support for small businesses. I believe that the statistic is that 95% of Vt businesses employ under 10 people – this is a challenge. As we're looking to business for more and more solutions these smaller ones can't provide that kind of support.
- Many of our larger organizations are non-profits. The school and hospital systems are also non-profits.
- I think VT prides itself in being a state with a lot of first. It has the opportunity to be a leader in energy. We have that opportunity. VT is first in a lot of social equity issues. A lot of VTers are concerned about energy prices and urgent and panicked about home heating costs. My concern is that we'll have a period of dislocation where we have people who are most vulnerable being hit hardest.
- Future challenges in terms of law enforcement – they aren't hiring people; slots for state police, for fish and game wardens, etc. With the price of food going up we have a lot of untilled land here in the state of VT – it would be really interesting to see the value of tilling land going back to farms rather than building condominiums.
- A great opportunity is our scale. On a whole range of issues whether it's energy, health care, uninsured; our numbers are smaller and we can make real change, where larger systems can't change.

- Energy, conservation, innovations in energy. We also have to talk about transportation in a rural environment. If people are at home and isolated, how can we help them get the services and transport they need?
- Vt has the highest percentage of interest and dividends personal income than any other state. When one's income isn't derived from where you live, your opinion about whether econ development is needed is different. (it doesn't matter to me, my income is from elsewhere). Maybe the opportunity is as a home grown solution and having people to invest in locally.
- We got to have something that inspires the student. They've all got to work, no matter what their ability is! Instead of sending things to Mars and spending money there – we should use it here with the smart people and figure out how to get water, sunlight, and carbon dioxide – sugar is a food- can you imagine how much food we could make if we were successful?
- I see some serious economic stress with energy prices ricocheting thru the economy – and this economy isn't very deep yet in terms of what we have. The cost of living and doing business here will continue to be a stress. Businesses trying to find places to start or stay alive – I'm concerned about the economic stress and how we can make that transition. For a lot of VT history they've used the value of land as a source of wealth – we're an attractive place for people to live. The pressure will get even greater.
- We're looking at a time when only the people who are well off will be able to heat their homes or visit friends, etc.
- VT family who grew up talking about what was in place during shared hard times. I think we're coming up on another time where people will be left behind. We need to decide as a state that we're not going to leave people behind.
- OPP – biofuels and particularly grass and wood products.
- OPP – income from dividends and non-profits. We need to use the one to support the other.
- OPP – education and diversification for courses, different languages, etc. The internet and technologies offer something to offset our scale.
- OPP – no one has mentioned higher education. We have a lot in VT – and these systems can offer professional support.
- I think there's a lot of OPP in terms the challenges we're going thru. Biofuels, public transport – the demand for public transport will continue to rise. But we have to wrestle with how we fund it, etc. I see incredible opportunities in this upcoming disruption. Connecting higher ed to

high schools as a model! It doesn't have to cost a lot of money. With a small population, we need people in all kinds of jobs. We could invest in VTC or voc-tech for our high schools so that they can use them. It's a matter of finding economically viable ways to access them.

Those of us thinking creatively about it, especially in small communities have a lot to gain.

- OPP – not leaving any one behind. Fuel oil and costs; I would hate to see this undercut our schools. What do we sacrifice when we're faced with this? We have to be careful.
- VT has a chance to get back into the manufacturing. We need to be able to produce things here. In Springfield VT it had economic stature for manufacturing – but its falling in.
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III. What should our priorities be as we work together to realize your vision and prepare Vermont for the future?

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- I think we need to make sure we have an education systems that educates our kids for the world of the future. It's going to have to reflect all of the opportunities. When they are ready to raise kids, our young people come back. But they won't come back if there aren't jobs for them – you have to have the basics of how to do math, how to use a computer. Education for all kinds of reasons.
- The standards of education need to be raised all over the state.
- One social security check doesn't cover one month's supply of heating oil. Most businesses are caught between cost of fuel and property taxes. It's an extremely important issue – how we finance our services in the state? Other states have been able to create models.
- Priorities; transportation (public), and fuel costs are most important.
- Ag diversity issue – this is a top priority. Moving from dairy to diversified dairy, biofuels, other types of agriculture.
- Health care: this needs to be addressed in terms of affordability, accessibility, all types of things.
- We need to invest in things that have an economic reason to be here and are needed here. Biofuels is an excellent example of that. We shouldn't focus on things that can be produced elsewhere because that won't help us.

- We pay the true cost of driving with property tax, because other than schools, the property taxes go to pay for roads, police, etc. If we can pay the true costs of things, then it will really change what they spend their money on.
- We need to keep environmental protection in mind when we think about the future. For example, if we grow more biofuels – using grass or manure for this is good, but converting grass to soy beans would be bad.
- Thoughtfulness. It's what we're doing here. It's about finding the time to be able to consider things here- there are a lot of organizations (and businesses!) that would like to make the decision for us. But everyone of us needs the time to digest things, and education to be able to think about these things.
- Education which needs to be populus wide – we need people to be aware of things, or they will be blindsided. We need to elect public officials who are willing to think ahead. If the leadership isn't there, it doesn't always happen.
- We're resting on our laurels for being a green state!
- A variety of economic classes live work and thrive here. It is under stress right now. We have to be able to have that diversity here.
- I think that tourism is a big factor in VT and that it needs to be stressed more and provided for in as many ways as possible. It's always been about the Grn Mtns – we need to be careful about not too many wind towers going up on the mtns. I realize not every mtn has the wind, but the focus is that tourism and the green mtns go together and both need to be preserved.
- Building on our brand for economic development is important. I would like us to show as a priority in our public policy in our state level and local level to show traditional development patterns.
- I would underscore the critical importance in investing at the local and community level; making the scale work for wind or solar, etc.
- We also need to be careful that we include all Vermonters in whatever our situation is. There are plenty of people who feel that we're going in different directions. The attempt to include everyone has to be very big. There's a very strong dichotomy that isn't reflected in the comments that we're hearing tonight – people disagree.
- If you look at the books written on the history of VT they aren't being read by Vters!

- I've been impressed by the idea of COOPs in vt and how much they've taken off. We have a food coop, we're looking at an energy coop, we have Homeshare. One thing that people realize is that one person in a car or a house means that you're producing a lot more carbon. In my neighborhood we're looking at trading resources and sharing more.
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IV. We've been talking about Vermont, but how does this discussion concern the future of your community?

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- First, we need to be careful to use the assets that people are already doing. For example, United Way did a survey that asked thousands of people about these questions – I hope that we don't reinvent the wheel. That's specific to this community, because I think it's amazing that people have a desire to be a part of these conversations overall. But that said, there are certain things that we are forcing people to travel to Chittenden county or elsewhere for – but it's because we don't want that kind of store in our area. If we only want the small, local and expensive types of businesses there are going to be trade offs (example of car seat and getting it only at Walmart on a fixed income).
- Education- here in middlebury it has for many years been acted on – the college is like a braintrust from professors and students.
- As we go forward I think we need to be sure that our schools are kept; we need to have them at the center because these places have no stores or community place. We need to educate them, give them diversity and support, but maintain our towns at the same time.
- I'm growing concerned about the health of our smallest rural towns. They are vibrant compared to upstate NY, but whether its because socially responsible or global warming – does it become not okay to build far out and rural? I'm a little worried going forward about that.
- In Bridgeport, recently people are drifting together – sharing food and resources. It's kind of an underground economy. It's got a good feeling to it but there's hope to it.
- People in Ripton called 'Riptiles' – we have 560 about and we're a bedroom community to Middlebury. I'm co-chair of the transportation committee. We recognize that the largest part of our carbon footprint is driving cars up and down the mountain. We have some resources in

the wind and water power area. There has been some progress in the net metering for both water and wind power.

- In Shoreham and Bridgeport they are right along the lake. The wind never stops blowing off that lake – I envision small wind turbines in places like that which would decrease the cost of energy locally.
- I could imagine with the Middlebury Town Hall Theater to open – there's an incredible opportunity there. Applying it to both our creative power and our environmental status. They want information but they don't have time to get the information. People come to me all the time looking for information – where can it go? Middlebury should have a public information center.
- The Town Hall Theater will be a winter home for the Farmer's Market.
- OPP – next year with the Quaddrecential it would be great to have towns jump in, draw more tourists, etc.
- Starksboro – discussion of biofuel concerns my community. But no gas station and only one store there.
- I look at VT as a place that people can adapt to rather than a state that needs to adapt to the people.
- I think that attitude plays a big part in the way we attack problems and how we face our own lives. I would like to see the opportunities to do some new things; seeing all of this as opportunity rather than problems. Challenges to go forward; one of the things I have always treasured in the years I've had connections with VT is history. And that history is about being scared to death, but pushing ahead anyway.
- I think all of us should go back to our communities and take back what we've heard tonight – one thing that I've heard is involving all ages in the decision that we make.