

Revitalizing All Marshfield and Plainfield: RAMP Into the Future

Community Forum Notes

Compiled from focus group discussions held with over 120 Marshfield and Plainfield residents and the VCRD Visiting Team on April 30, 2019

Although the prioritization work of RAMP requires the towns to decide what is most important as they move forward with Task Forces, nothing is lost in the process from the long list of concerns and ideas expressed in early community focus sessions. Many interesting and diverse thoughts are represented here, and are presented as a reminder of issues explored, and a possible foundation for future projects.

Growing local foods and a working landscape while preserving healthy forest, waters, and ecosystems

Visiting Team: Paul Costello (facilitator), Ben Doyle (scribe), Megan Roush, Kate McCarthy, Nancy Everhart, Tim Tierney

What are the Assets in this Area?

- The Plainfield coop is committed to buying local food—vehicle that gets food into the community.
- Great bookstore.
- Community health center.
- The Plainfield opera house.
- There are lots of trees in this community—they are working to soak up CO². They are on a mix of public and private land. Large town forest in Marshfield. 25 acres in Plainfield.
- Lot of local producers, Baltic farm, Robinson Hill (beef), Cleary Family Farm, East Hill Tree Farm, Nob Hill, Newton Farm.
- Hollister Hill Farm does raw milk.
- Distillery (technically in Cabot).
- Kimchi producer.
- Lot of maple syrup. Forest farmers (large new producer). Bottle drink sap.
- Limited amount of hunting and fishing.
- Immense assets in wildlife, wetlands.
- People have land and want to keep it welcoming for wildlife. Using cedar woods to select harvest trees and produce affordable housing.
- There is a sustainable ethic. Lot of producers.
- Trail system in the Groton State Forest. Outdoor recreation.
- Lots of trails on in the town forest. Rail bed trails.
- Washington Electric Coop is very active.
- 20 to 30 minutes to food hub, 30 minutes to USDA processing facility.
- Plainfield farmers market.
- Lots of under-employed or retired folks in the communities.
- There are opportunities for regenerative agricultural process.
- The coop is convening a conversation to aggregate crops for sale.
- Tremendous existing wisdom in old-time Vermonters, but how to share it.
- Earthwalk nature program.
- Route 2 is an asset (plenty of traffic).

What are the Challenges?

- Hard to know how to manage smaller tracts of land for carbon sequestration.
- Exposure to pesticides specifically things like Round-up.
- High cost of land makes it hard for young to start farming.
- People who have land who want it farmed.
- Invasive species. Wild parsnip, honey suckle, ticks, ash trees and the butternut.
- Young people are pushed out because of looking for land.
- How can a young farmer get an equity stake in a farm that works for both them and the existing owner?
- Zoning is a challenge. There is a push to expand the residential district.
- Lack of market opportunity and market coordination / communication.
- Lack of coordination around logging (it's all happening at the same time). We need to respect wildlife coordinators.
- High cost of living (taxes, electricity, retail).
- Unclear if zoning impacts ag producers.
- Educational system—tough to connect kids to the working landscape.
- How much has the dairy industry changed? Definitely fewer farms.
- Cheap food system makes it tough for a young family to actually make it as farmers.
- The villages seem emptied out—there needs to be a bigger draw for people so they don't have to go to Montpelier.
- Trouble to source wood locally—tough for smaller value-added producers.

Opportunities: What Should Be Done?

- There should be an economic development group that can focus on the well-being on both towns.
- More people should buy at the local coop. Help people see that the coop's success is critical to the larger towns.

- Look to more stable markets than high-end value-added (coop responsible grazing for examples)—a broad land sharing opportunity.
- Encourage opportunities for wilderness/outdoor recreation.
- Continue trail development to market to young people.
- Get better broadband/cell service to increase attractiveness for young people.
- Build a bike path that could connect towns to Montpelier.
- Split farmers market so that it switches every week between towns.
- Build connections to the school to help foster the working landscape. Continue to foster programs like farm to school program, Green Team, school garden, eco club. The school is on 80 acres. More could be work.
- Increase local foods in the school cafeteria.
- Make connections, build resources, for making connections between consumers and producers.
- Bigger agritourism/beer/spirits with visibility on Route 2.
- Ag producers come together to share their wares—this existed but seems to have gone away. Could it happen again?
- Bring generations together through mentorship programs—this could be similar to a home share or age well.
- Have a celebrate Marshfield and Plainfield day. Do more advertising to let people know.
- Build a farm-based event—with trail races etc.
- Build an arts cooperative for the creative economy—build a makerspace.
- Emulate Cabot’s cooperative land sharing model.
- Foster working affinity groups (farmers, woodworkers, etc.). Build networks and skill share opportunities—utilize existing knowledge.
- Develop CBD market.
- Activate the onion river campground so that its resources could be better used. The house in front could be used more successfully.
- We should ban poisons in the community (pesticides).
- Build regional approach (include Cabot, East Montpelier, etc.) to have a greater impact.
- Have a way to invite people into the community—how to communicate coordinate more successfully. Who could do this work?
- Make the kiosk in Plainfield more visible.
- Leverage the success of the community suppers. Have people buy shares to support a local restaurant.
- Brand community for outdoor recreation.
- Increase awareness around the weaving school and build the opportunity for school of traditional schools.
- More opportunities for teenagers. Every project should bring in teenagers.
- Build some kind of entity that could mediate disputes in the community (if it’s bigger than anything in the community).
- Support the farm stand that will be opening on Route 2.
- Build more energy generation (are we looking at rivers).
- Lobby the state for traffic calming on Route 2.
- Have a combined community business fair.
- Have more places where people could “bump into each other.”
- Resource directory.
- Goddard has so much infrastructure that could be more successfully used. The library (which is open to the community) isn’t utilized.
- The local radio station is an asset.
- Make stronger connections between agriculture and the climate economy.
- Build a land coop or land matching program.
- Old maple valley is an asset. Build microbrewery.
- Support maple valley. Build a community that brings people.
- Turn school into civic/community center. Look to expanding.

Reflections of the Community Visit Team

- Build sharing opportunities/infrastructure.
- Implement strategies to slow traffic.
- Build access to trails between two towns. Build that connector. Develop great asset. Develop recreation assets.
- Great asset in diversified ag. Lots of appreciation for forest land. Take a look at zoning to see if there is proactively a way to ensure zoning works for you (and acceptable uses). Develop the business through the economic development committees.
- Build a more structured way to share the existing assets—what are the structures or systems that could make that happen. Increase public participation on community committees. The school is such an asset for community building but there needs to be other ones too for people to come together. The best asset in town is the people. They pitch in.
- Community is not network. Has old structures for organizing. Great opportunities for network building. Plainfield is going to be the land of milk of honey when the world ends. We have a responsibility to the soil as patriots.

Developing vibrant communities

Visiting Team: Paul Costello, Ben Doyle (facilitator), Megan Roush (scribe), Kate McCarthy, Tim Tierney

What are the Assets in this Area?

- Pop up taco stand.
- Four libraries.
- Open town meeting.
- Food Coop.
- State and town forest.
- Recreation field.
- Plainfield opera.
- Music in opera.
- Radio station on Goddard campus.
- Good walking, winter walking, vast trail.

- Snowmobile trails.
- XC skiing.
- Unique and beautiful land.
- Clean forests.
- Plainfield is a compact walkable village, and everyone looks after each other.
- Cool parades and community festivals – Halloween, Old home days (need more members), and foliage day.
- Plainfield community space – above Coop and it's not very expensive to rent.
- Community meals happening with both communities.
- Summer music at Goddard College Thursday nights.
- Plainfield Farmers market.
- Hay barn field – Goddard College.
- Coop Vermont – Youth in Central Vermont summer camps and day camps.
- Both towns have an interesting and amazing collection of people that are active within the community.
- Town identity.
- Health center.
- Schools offer reading programs and renaissance program which allows children to study anything they want if they have a mentor for it.
- Artist/writers/craftsmen.
- Weaving School.
- Farms – Littlewood, Allen, Pig.
- Yoga Center – Riverside
- Churches (Christ Covenant) offers play group every Wednesday morning, movie series, and knitting group.
- Twin Valley Senior Center located in Montpelier but services both towns.
- Small Businesses.
- Public transport that links to everywhere.
- Gamelan – Indonesian instruments and music.
- Spruce Mountain.
- Positive Pie.
- Cemetery.
- Playground.
- Stone wall in village by the bookstore is a nice meeting place.
- Each town has a post office.
- Old growth forest.
- Vermont Neighbors Day in June.

What are the Challenges?

- Under seen and underutilized trails.
- Vacant houses and business on Route 2 (4 houses beyond repair in Plainfield). How do we find a way to restore homes? Challenging to draw people in when town looks dilapidated.
- No affordable housing.
- Marshfield has one of the highest child poverty rates in Washington County.
- High water costs.
- There is a challenging and dangerous intersection in Plainfield.
- Both towns have no control over route 2 because state highway.
- Unsafe walking in villages.
- Winooski river – Flood and evacuation issues. Goddard Hay Barn is the evacuation location and you can't get to it from across the river once it's too high.
- Boundaries between towns. People are living in Plainfield and Marshfield – Pay taxes in one but they care about voting in the other town because they feel like they are more a part of that town.
- Not a strong sense of unity between towns.
- Aging population and lack of families moving in.
- Schools are shrinking.
- Trying to find the recreational activities/opportunities within the town. There is a lack of maps, signage, online resources. They are mostly found by word of mouth.
- Lack of senior housing – No senior housing where people can age in place.
- No full-time public pre-kindergarten. No full-time private pre-kindergarten. They are currently unaffordable.
- No paper or communication within towns. No newsletter anymore and Front Porch Forum is only one channel that doesn't fit everyone needs.
- Older folks don't have access to computers.
- School population has gone down 100 students.
- The towns are losing kids in high school. They are changing schools.
- Strip of stores in Marshfield are empty.
- Maple Valley has been foreclosed upon.
- Coop having serious financial challenges.
- Town meetings overlapped so you can't attend both.
- People who live in the neighborhoods don't know each other.
- Many introverts in the towns because people love their space.
- Demographics.
- No kids in school because we are all old.
- Goddard College is dealing with a lot of challenges.
- Town offices not well staffed.
- Towns lack civic participation.
- There is a need for more outdoor recreation.
- Struggling families – how to identify without identifying and get them help.
- Not enough diversity – don't come and don't stay.
- No conventional products or affordable products within towns.
- Coop is competing against Walmart.
- There is a need for traffic calming.
- Only grocery is the Coop and there is nothing affordable.
- Who's working on economic development? No one?

Opportunities: What Should Be Done?

- Become a refugee resettlement community.
- Take in climate refugees – how do we incorporate them while also keeping space that people want?

- Broadband keeps people here.
- People talk about individual issues and tonight we are talking about issues across the board. We need a committee to address these issues. There is a need for a comprehensive community committee.
- Housing and building vacancies. Privately owned? There is a need to find out inventory of vacant properties and the vacancy rates.
- Larger buildings could be turned into apartments.
- Friends of the town hall is in bad condition and is going to be knocked down. A farmers market could go there.
- Hay bales to slow down traffic.
- Coop still needs some good PR and more conventional products. Town can put into coop sweat effort/equality to make it work.
- Maplefields put covenants on town so no other food/grocery stores can be in the community.
- Affordable food.
- Buying club – buy a pallet of food and get into the town.
- House center – prescription for food – Connect them with the coop?
- Bring income into town by building downtown, restaurant events, Pop up events, Creative space, Farm to table dinners in town hall, church and community center.
- Expanding to know your neighbors and town by creating events, celebrating more together.
- Monthly events – hiking, kickball, etc.
- Communication – field notes (town newsletter from the past that could be started again).
- Dormitories at Goddard college – turn dormitories into multifamily housing – communicate with Goddard help them survive.
- More business to employee people. Take an inventory of businesses.
- Towns need a holistic committee which discusses housing, business, and development.
- Look into why some businesses aren't zoned industrial.
- Tool library – where people could borrow tools from other towns people.
- Inventory of skills that people have in the towns to connect people looking for help or offering help.
- Committee to blend communities so that we can share and identify all the assets that both towns have.
- Plainfield's town plan has expired. The new town plan is a great opportunity for to be a part of the planning process. Zoning implement's the town plan. They will be meeting two times a month and it's on the town calendar if anyone wants to join.
- More intergenerational pot lucks.
- Create a group to lead us to a vision. And then back that up with data and give good suggestions. The hospital doing a study now to gather data.

Reflections of the Community Visit Team

- This town is home to one of my favorite signs – coop/gun sign. I like the diversity within the towns. Usually economic development committee will help the town.
- Reaching out to the college to plan events can help bring the younger generation into the town and maybe recruit them to stay for a longer term. Assessing the housing inventory will be important in addressing next steps.
- Community only works when you own it and it's organic to the values and the natures of the place. Democracy is an experience. The community will make choices on what they want to do. This is an engine. Set a direction and use the power. There are some really good ideas. All ideas you can evaluate together. When you start this and then you can have momentum to do many things.
- Both towns have a diverse ecosystem of activities. Housing raised as an important issue. Aging in place and aging within the community. Cultivate what you have for housing. Economic and community development a can be whatever you want. Nurture your community. Maybe you're not a regular but join the meeting. The process brings people together.
- I enjoyed your focus on both the physical and personal aspects of the communities.

Improving local infrastructure and transportation options

Visiting Team: Jon Copans (facilitator), Jonathan Harries, Rachel Kennedy, Michelle McCutcheon-Schour (scribe), Bill Powell, Bonnie Waninger

What are the Assets in this Area?

- Commuter bus that goes from St. Johnsbury to Montpelier that stops in Plainfield.
- Both towns have water and wastewater in their villages.
- Rail bed that connects the two communities and to Montpelier.
- Plainfield's electric vehicle charging station.
- Roads (maybe a mixed bag) some are state, and others are under the town.
 - Town roads are in good shape; state roads less so.
- Winooski River.
- Side question: How do people get to school?
 - Mostly via buses.
- They have an opera house, park and ride, libraries, town solar in Plainfield.
- Co-op; Marshfield Village Market that gives people access to local produce without travel.
- Multiple electrical utilities; Green Mountain Power & Washington Electric Co-op.
- Town committees and governance are strong.
- Senior center that is in East Montpelier but it serves the towns.
- Radio station.
- Food shelf in Marshfield.
- Large waterfall.

- Good groundwater.
- 600 acre town forest.
- Lots of parks:
 - Community center in Plainfield.
 - Town forest in Plainfield as well.
 - Covered bridge and park.
- Vast trail network
- Side walk in the village really helps seniors get around.
- Route 2 brings people to the community – if they didn't have it, they wouldn't have as much business.
- School is a massive asset.
- Motels for visitors .

What are the Challenges?

- Route 2 is a challenge:
 - A lot of volume.
 - Amount of traffic along with the speed of the traffic & weight of the vehicles breaks down the road; safety is a big concern; speeding trucks.
 - Riding a bike on route 2 is super dangerous;
 - People get hit – someone shared their own experience with being hit about 18 years ago on Route 2.
 - The road floods.
 - The surface is very dangerous; you can't ride a bike on it; when you drive you are swerving to avoid pot holes; people go very fast.
 - Almost no shoulder which doesn't leave room for walking or biking.
- Both towns lack cell coverage; they need a tower.
- Connectivity (cellular and access to the internet):
 - People can't work from homes because access is bad.
 - Some people simply can't get internet.
 - The Motel has cell access because they are on Route 2.
 - Once you get off Route 2 and on the secondary roads you don't have many options.
 - Even if you have access, the reliability of the electrical infrastructure makes it difficult.
 - Makes it hard for the hotels (because people want to be able to call).
- Both towns are small – cost of taking care of the infrastructure can be a lot for small towns.
- Lots of vacancy (buildings that have gone empty) in town; lots of properties not being taking care of.
- Lack of affordable housing.
- Drop in the number of people actually makes it hard to maintain the wastewater.
- Wastewater system is aging; especially the parts that they can't see.
- Inadequate town parking in Plainfield.
- Public transportation:
 - GMTA was trying to cut back routes but the public's advocacy stopped that; GMTA is no longer going to cut back on the route.
 - You need to leave before 7 am if you want to use the bus.
 - Even those who want to be aware of their environmental impact can't use it.
 - You can't go from P/M to Barre on public transit; would like to request adding times to those schedules.
 - It's hard to take the bus because there are long wait times between transfers.
 - What if there was more service – would more people take it?
 - Maps on the GMTA website are hard to read.
 - Service seems to be focused on people who work in Montpelier.
 - You can't get from P/M to the airport – easier to go down to Boston then get to Burlington.
 - The roundabout should be a hub for GMTA.
 - Even if they up the routes it may be unlikely that people will take the bus; it will also be costly to add those routes; don't think looking at GMTA for everything is the solution.
 - In the winter you are stuck on the street because things aren't open.
 - Ridership on the morning route is low.
 - Why can't you have smaller buses that don't use the same amount of fuel?
 - Ride share doesn't mean much if you don't have anything to share – For non-drivers sharing the ride is hard.
 - If you live off public transit, there is no night or weekend service; makes the elderly and disabled more isolated.
- Neither town has a laundry matt
 - Because the water hook-up is super expensive
 - Price is based on state regulation

Opportunities: What Should Be Done?

- Uber type app for town.
- Create a sharing economy – rides, tools, farm equipment, car, scooter, bikes, etc.
- Integrate school with transit options; why can't the public ride the school bus?
- Getting the trail off Route 2; there is currently a bike path that connects the towns can we get that off route 2 and connect it to Montpelier?
- Rail bed could be legitimized
- Some network that would get people to urgent care that isn't ambulance – like Urgent Car
- Can we come up with a system to make hitchhikers visible and marks them as a credible rider – I'm a safe driver; maybe we can connect people.
- Can Uber and Lyft come to town?
 - Cultivate Uber/Lyft as an alternative.
 - Limited by communication.
 - Quebec used to have a system; a call center where people could call in for rides.
- Caution to do it in a Vermont way:
 - Concerned with the people who are trying to make a living from providing rides.
- Commuter rail. Is it feasible?
- How will the younger generation want to transport themselves:
 - How do we attract younger people?
 - What are models that aren't based on private vehicle ownership?
- Can we increase charging infrastructure? The more electric vehicles that come the harder it gets to find a charger.
- More localized resources.
 - Move away from having to drive everywhere for things.

- Community solar for town energy.
- Think about how we can change to attract younger families.
- There are \$10k grants in Brattleboro to change their house into apartments:
 - Montpelier is thinking about doing the same.
 - Creating more duplexes rather than private homes.
- Affordability is everything!
- Home sharing and smaller footprint.
- Employment opportunities. Currently the school is the largest employer.
- Can we combine the town garage; share some muni resources?
- If there was really good internet access, then those who would like to live here and could work from here.
- Community work space where people who are self-employed can access internet and community.
- Is there legislative access that can be taken to build cellular access? Are there any road blocks that they should consider?
- Seniors need housing. Need to think about how to solve that.
- Project citizen:
 - Twinfield kids would generate ideas.
 - How to use the kids as resources to come up with ideas.
 - Engage youth to solve problems.

Reflections of the Community Visit Team

- VTrans is trying to do the most it can with the \$8 million budget. Launching many online options. VTrans wants to work with the towns!
- There are a lot of assets: Water/wastewater, railbed can attract tourists.
- Plainfield has broadband and AT&T service.
- Broadband opens the door to so many things.
- Access to utility poles and how to solve that? Washington Electric owns the poles.
- Communications Union District (CUD) has been solved south of here. 16 local towns have created a CUD.
- Working on a new municipal entity to bring fiber to the area and help members get fiber in the home. Helps with long term financial investments. Community members will be asked if they want to pay into it.
- There are grants for connectivity.
- Town of Cambridge was very successful in working with the provider. They worked with the provider to prove that there is enough people to sign up.
- You get transit two ways: through advocating and riding the bus! Cost per person goes down when more people are on the bus.

Energy generation and efficiency

Visiting Team: Jon Copans (facilitator), Jonathan Harries, Rachel Kennedy, Michelle McCutcheon-Schour, Bill Powell, Bonnie Waninger (scribe)

What are the Assets in this Area?

- Molly's Falls Dam generates power as a peaking plant; it could be more than that.
- Goddard Collage's biomass heating plant is an asset and was controversial.
- Marshfield completed energy efficiency upgrades to its municipal buildings and installed solar to serve them.
- The school has a pellet boiler and installed efficient lights. It still needs sealing at the eaves.
- We have a robust forest that can be a material source for wood heat.
- The owner of a biofuel company lives downtown. The biofuel is used mostly for heating.
- WEC is 100% renewable!
- The Park and Ride solar array powers the municipal building.
- Plainfield has a public EV charging station.
- Ridership is increasing on the Rt. 2 commuter bus.
- We have a local supplier of cord wood.
- Our farmland could be used to grow biodiesel crops for on farm use.
- Medical needs can be handled locally at the Plainfield Health Center.
- We could generate power by installing a turbine at the old Batchelder Mill dam site in Plainfield Village.
- Lori Barg, a hydropower specialist, lives in Plainfield.
- The Plainfield Coop is local food store.
- We can buy local at farms and wood-based businesses, which keeps our money in the community.
- The Plainfield Farmers Market!
- Local businesses are skilled at energy projects, such as installation of insulation, heat pumps, and pellet wood stoves and complete energy audits.
- GMP's incentives programs now serve people who have installed their own energy generation devices.
- The WEC Button Up program funds for weatherization and other devices, and its Tier III energy transformation program focuses on building conservation (heating, cooling, water needs) to help people transition off fossil fuels.

What are the Challenges?

- Financing of efficiency improvements can be challenging generally.
- People without taxable income, such as low income households, cannot use tax credit rebates to help them finance efficiency projects.
- Energy projects can be more expensive when a roof must be upgraded to install solar panels.
- It is difficult to move people from energy audits to project implementation. Saving money isn't enough to move people to take action.
- It can be daunting to sift through all the information about energy. Learning how to do projects is difficult and time consuming.
- EV charging stations use different apps for payment. There is a learning curve when driving an electric vehicle. With the

charging Apps, you spend time downloading them when you want to pay.

- The cost of fossil fuel is missing externalized costs. If those costs were incorporated, it would not be the cheapest fuel.
- Technologies are costlier when they are new, making it difficult to be an early adopter.
- It's hard to cut your own wood as you get older. This forces you to change to other fuel sources.

- Pellet boilers are twice as expensive as fuel oil boilers, making it difficult for homeowners to buy into their upfront costs.
- People perceive that alternative, non-carbon program activities can only be done by wealthy people, in part because of how state and federal incentive programs are structured.
- Rebates are not offered or are too low for do it yourself actions.

Opportunities: What Should Be Done?

- Local education, such as hearing from neighbors about projects that work, can help people take action.
- Financing programs such as Pay As You Save (PAYS) and To The Meter can increase the number of improvements.
- We can encourage or help low income residents buy a solar panel or install one efficiency measure per year rather than promote full installations or renovations only.
- We can promote a micro solar program to install a 6x6 foot solar panel on every house.
- We can invite Electric Vehicle owners to a share-and-learn event at the library.
- We can structure programs that help the to grow better by thinking about the Air BnB model, which made renting your home accessible to more people.
- We can bring young people into this conversation; they want to solve problems.
- We can bring model technology, like the Penn State Fuel Nugget, to our town. The Fuel Nugget converts waste plastics into fuel with minimal emissions.
- We can set up a mentoring program that connects residents with experience to residents who want to do projects – a hand-holding support network to help people through the steps.
- We can connect local expertise with local needs, similar to Efficiency Vermont's pilot program in Northfield.
- We can host home tours that focus on a particular technology or whole homes so that people can meet their knowledgeable neighbors.
- Bob Atchison, Ed Hutchinson, and Rich Phillips were early adopters and can provide coaching.
- We can implement new programs and make people aware of existing programs that encourage change, such as requiring energy audits when older homes are transferred to new owners or reminding people that the Zoning Administrator must be provided with a builder certification that new home construction meets the law.
- We can provide funding and resources to assist people to help people.
- We can work with the school to incorporate programs to assist children to learn about efficiency and how to achieve it.
- We can update our creative economy program list of people in town with talents and knowledge they can share.
- Can we work with the Spaulding Tech Center program to learn efficiency?
- We can build a program similar to Putney's transition town movement. 60 people meet regularly, and they identified skilled people to help.
- We can promote financing and incentive programs, such as VSECU's small loan program and Efficiency Vermont's Do It Yourself program.
- We can design small projects that can be done with small-loan money.
- We can create challenge programs, such as a solarize challenge or wood heating challenge. These programs implement ideas like district heating or having people make energy changes at the same time. They usually help people take advantage of an incentive program simultaneously.

Reflections of the Community Visit Team

- Plainfield and Marshfield have a lot of assets (resources, knowledge, initiatives completed). Water and sewer is often the biggest user of electricity and can be an energy generation source. If efficiency is a community priority, USDA has funding programs that can support it.
- Resiliency of the aerial electric system is key. To maintain what we have, cleaning the right of way of trees is essential.
- Take advantage of work others do (communities, utilities) by using them as a resource.
- Convince people to think of their kids and the long view.
- WEC can be helpful if you want to bring the network of contractors together.
- Build on the enthusiasm of neighbor to neighbor learning.
- Help Efficiency Vermont connect their programs to low income residents.
- If you find your local people (resources), the regional planning commission will help you create publications that make neighbor to neighbor connections.
- Reach out to your neighboring communities to ask about their successes with financing projects and special events. Vital Communities in the Upper Valley's template was successful.
- The Clean Energy Development Fund's wood heating program is a good investment to help people stop using fossil fuels for heating needs.
- Be a catalyst for action!