



March 2026

March is a month of transition. It definitely isn't spring yet but winter is fading. We have Town Meeting, sugaring, and spring skiing. It's also a time to think about summer projects and new challenges. Read about what we've been doing and what we'll be doing this summer.

LCPCVT.ORG

Introducing our Board Members

Steven Hatfield



My wife and I moved to Vermont from Central New York in 2017 to be closer to family. My oldest daughter is an RN at Copley and I have three grown Grandkids in Vermont. Five of my seven great grandkids live in the area. My oldest great grandson is six and loves to come over and build bird houses and wooden toys with me.

I originally came to Vermont in the seventies and bought some land in Elmore with a nice sugar woods. I built a cabin with wood salvaged from an old barn and lived off the grid. Work was very scarce in the early 1970s and I got a job in a CETA crew upgrading ties on the Lamoille County railroad. In the winter I worked for a logger in Elmore.

Now I enjoy riding the Lamoille County RailTrail and reminisce about my days on the CETA crew. I also love to cross country ski, paddle in the Green River Reservoir, and walk the dogs around Johnson.

When the village had an opening for Village Trustee in 2020 I volunteered to fill that vacancy. This led to a five year stint on the Village Board where I learned a lot about how small town government operates. During the year when I was Board Chairperson, the Village Manager and the Electric Department Foreman both resigned. Things were pretty stressful until we hired a new manager. We also had the pandemic and the flood to deal with. When my second term was complete, I opted to retire. Now I am a volunteer with Lamoille Neighbors. I have again stepped up to fill a vacancy, this time on the LCPC Board. I love Vermont and the sweet village of Johnson and feel grateful to be here.

Spring Flood Seminar

To help communities prepare for potential spring flooding, the State of Vermont is offering a series of Spring Flood Seminar videos via [YouTube](#).

Presenters include the National Weather Service, FEMA, VT National Guard, VTTrans, Agency of Natural Resources, Division of Fire Safety, Regional Planning Commissions and the Department of Public Safety. The videos contain information for local officials on preparedness and potential impacts of the upcoming spring flood season. It also outlines what resources are available from the state and how to access them.

A virtual question-and-answer session will be offered on Thursday, February 12, at noon.

For more information visit [2026 Spring Flood Seminar and virtual Q&A Session | Vermont Emergency Management](#)



Homes for All

The VT Department of Housing & Community Development, along with partnership support, is launching the [802 Homes](#) project and the rollout of the new [Small-Scale Developer Training Program](#). Both efforts are focused on addressing Vermont's housing needs through collaboration, creativity, and shared problem solving. 802 Homes is a catalog of 10 ready-to-build, code-compliant home designs that will be pre-approved for use in Vermont communities. The plans will be available at no cost to homeowners, builders, and municipalities

to help cut red tape, save time, and lower home costs. The developer training program is for small-scale housing developers with workshops, a six-week online course, and coaching. The workshops are scheduled and open for registration by completing the [Homes for All Intake Form](#). There is no cost for Vermont residents to register. The training is designed to support new and emerging developers and to complement tools like 802 Homes by lowering barriers to entry.

Proactive Flood Mitigation along the Lamoille River

In the wake of devastating floods in 2023 and 2024, communities like Wolcott are proactively preparing for future events. Its work to increase flood resilience aims to lower the height of floodwaters, have fewer people in harm's way, and reduce damage to critical public infrastructure. Wolcott exemplifies a watershed-scale approach, partnering with state agencies, regional groups, and non-profits.

Wolcott's flood mitigation blends natural solutions with vital infrastructure upgrades. A core focus is restoring natural floodplain lands, allowing rivers to soak up and store floodwaters—a cost-effective approach. A project with the Fish and Wildlife Department included removing berms off Elmore Pond Road to ease water flow and creating stabilized, anchored log jams along the Wild Branch of the Lamoille River to prevent the erosion of North Wolcott Road. The town is seeking grants to remove old bridge abutments on Route 15 that are pinching river flow, allowing an open floodplain and flood benches that let flood waters disperse.



Wolcott is systematically upgrading its infrastructure. Many culverts are undersized, so the town adopted Agency of Transportation (AOT) standards for future upsizing. When a particular culvert was expected to soon fail, Wolcott Selectboard Chair Linda Martin sought a grant from the state to have an engineer design the replacement. A hydraulic study, some of the permitting, and easements were also completed. This foresight meant that when the culvert washed out in 2023, replacement was completed in just two months. Martin credits Wolcott's successes to pre-planning and strong partnerships. She advises other municipalities: "Be in a place where, if a funding opportunity is available, you're prepared. I think that's the biggest thing."

Another significant infrastructure project involves relocating the town's wastewater system. Existing system components are near the river, prone to flooding and pollution. Wolcott is constructing a new system and moving the leach field to the elementary school, a location above the floodplain. This required coordinating with AOT for sewer force main placement on the new School Street bridge, and with Northern Rivers Land Trust for the force main to cross protected forestland. Extensive community outreach ensured town approval.

Wolcott is proactively addressing flood risk by assisting landowners with buyouts of damaged homes and buildings within the floodplain. This strategy opens up land to provide more space for floodwaters and offers relief to residents traumatized by repeated events.

This broad array of projects is possible thanks to strong partnerships. Martin emphasizes networking as an ingredient to success: "One thing I like to do is just get to know the players. Then I know who to ask and I can shoot ideas out to them and get advice." The Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) has been instrumental in providing technical assistance, flood modeling, and project administration. Other key partners include AOT, FEMA, Vermont Emergency Management, Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, and Watersheds United Vermont.

Funding, staff capacity, and technical assistance remain key needs of small, rural communities. Wolcott's upstream neighbors in Hardwick and downstream neighbors in Morrisville, Johnson, Jeffersonville, and Cambridge are also hard at work undertaking similar projects benefitting their communities. These towns show that even with constraints and obstacles, we can take meaningful steps towards a climate-resilient future by planning ahead, forging strategic partnerships, and seeking out peer-to-peer learning. When such projects occur along all parts of a stream network, from small headwater streams to bigger rivers, communities throughout the watershed benefit.

Courtesy of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources



LCPC Annual Meeting & Marvin Awards

This year's LCPC Annual Meeting and Marvin Awards will once again be held at Barnes Camp in Stowe. **Save the Date - June 9th.** We are now accepting nominations for the Marvin Awards, both Community Service and Project Design. The nomination forms, can be found on the lcpc website at <https://www.lcpcvt.org/marvinawards>.

LCPC Awarded CDBG-DR Grant for Countywide Flood Resiliency & Mitigation Planning & Project Development

In December of 2025, LCPC was awarded funding through the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program to advance long term flood mitigation and resiliency in Lamoille County. This four-year planning and project development endeavor has three focuses: Flood Restoration and Mitigation, Critical Facilities and Services, and Community Adaptation.



Component 1: Flood Restoration and Mitigation Planning & Project Development

Prioritizing municipalities inundated during the 2023 & 2024 flood events, the goal of this work is to reduce surface water elevations and velocities, leading to reductions in damage, loss, and disruption. Four sites were identified for advancement through hydraulic and hydrologic modeling and community engagement.

Morristown/Lamoille River

Location: Oxbow Park

Proposal: At Grade Floodplain Restoration with Revegetation & Community Use/ Benefit Plans.

Johnson/Gihon River

Location: VT-15 Bridge and Buyout Properties

Proposal: Flood Mitigation and Floodplain Restoration with Revegetation & Community Use/Benefit Plans.

Johnson/Lamoille River

Location: Wescom Property and Buyout Properties

Cambridge/Seymour & Lamoille Rivers

Location: VT-15 Bridge and the Areas Surrounding the Confluence

Proposal: Flood Mitigation, Floodplain Restoration, Revegetation & Streambed Restoration Plans.

Component 2: Critical Facilities & Services Planning & Project Development

Wolcott Fire and Highway Facility Relocation

In July of 2023, the fire and highway facility was inundated by two feet of water resulting in significant damage to the structure and its contents. The goal of this work is to advance relocation of the facility through the identification of suitable alternative locations and developing a viable relocation plan.

Furthermore, it will investigate post-removal floodplain restoration and mitigation opportunities, if and where suitable.

Identification of Other Critical Facilities & Services

Other municipalities in Lamoille County share similar concerns related to the ongoing threat to critical facilities and services located in flood prone areas and a repeat of the damage, loss, and disruption endured during the recent flooding events. Through a community engagement process, this project will identify critical facilities and services that would benefit from relocation outside of flood prone areas and/or assist with the advancement of on-going relocation and/or mitigation efforts. Furthermore, this element of the project will investigate post-removal floodplain restoration and mitigation opportunities, if and where suitable.

Component 3: Community Adaptation Planning & Project Development

This component of the project will implement a three-prong county-wide approach to provide technical assistance with the following objectives 1) shift development outside floodplains and flood-prone areas, 2) recover from the impacts of recent flooding events and 3) develop long-term resiliency. This three-pronged approach is known as community adaptation planning and project development and offers three types of technical assistance to communities to address unmet needs and resilience building, which include 1) planning technical assistance, 2) infrastructure technical assistance and 3) housing technical assistance.

Planning technical assistance will assist municipalities in developing and/or updating municipal land use documents (i.e. ordinances, bylaws, plans, assessments, and mapping).

Infrastructure technical assistance will focus on infrastructure needs, including but not limited to expansion of public water, wastewater, electricity, and communication services to safer areas adjacent to Village Centers and Downtowns in order to shift community development outside of floodplains and flood-prone areas.

Housing technical assistance will identify resources to develop housing outside of floodplains and flood prone areas to offset losses and individual/household displacement caused by buyouts and/or abandonment with a goal to increase low to moderate income housing beyond units lost due to flooding.

In the coming months, LCPC will begin requesting meetings with each of our municipalities to provide additional details and develop a list of potential projects.

News from Belvidere

The Town of Belvidere was awarded a FY26 Municipal Planning Grant to advance reuse planning for the former Belvidere Central School. The Town recently acquired the 8,000 square foot building, built in 1996, with plans to transform it into a municipal, community, economic center. The building is located in the Village Center and adjoins the new Town Forest and Belvidere Community Club property. The Town is partnering with the newly formed Belvidere Community Trust to advance the project.

The Town of Belvidere was also awarded a FY26 Building Communities Grant to construct a new public playground. The Town is partnering with the Belvidere Community Club which is hosting and assisting with development of the new playground.

Clean Water Service Provider Projects

Centerville Brook Dam Removal Project

Spring of 2022, the Town of Wolcott received a grant from the Flood Resilient Communities Fund, administered by Vermont Emergency Management, for Final Design and Implementation of a floodplain restoration project along the Wild Branch at the North Wolcott Recreation Fields. The town has

contracted with the Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) to provide grant management and project coordination support. The Town of Wolcott and LCPC will be undertaking Floodplain Restoration on 3.7 acres of land along North Wolcott Road, currently used as town recreation fields. North Wolcott Road frequently floods near this river/road conflict area along the Wild Branch. During the Halloween flood of 2019, North Wolcott Road and the Town Recreation Fields experienced significant fluvial erosion. This area is a key location identified for streambank restoration in the 2020 Wolcott Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.



This project expands upon previous hydraulic modeling efforts along the Wild Branch. Recent modeling and stream channel restoration 2.5 miles downstream has demonstrated that this work is critical to floodplain function and management. Floodplain Modeling has identified that smaller sites like these near the Town Recreation Fields can result in multiple benefits (flood hazard mitigation, storm water mitigation, nutrient retention, reduction in runoff velocity). Floodplain restoration has been shown to be an effective tool for attenuating phosphorous and other nutrients.

The final design work will quantify nutrient and sediment reduction for floodplain restoration scenarios at this site. This project involves removing a gravel parking lot and revegetating the area with thick, woody vegetation. The parking lot will be relocated to a safer location south of the recreation fields on the Town owned parcel. The addition of a vegetated “flood bench” will act as a floodplain and convey floodwaters in large storms.



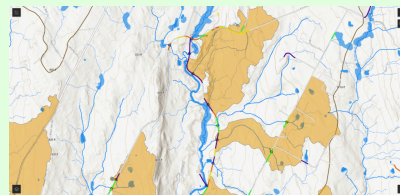
Vermont Studio Center Floodplain Restoration Project

In April of 2024, the Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) in partnership with the Vermont Studio Center (VSC) received a \$35,782.14 grant award from the Lamoille Basin Clean Water Service Provider for preliminary design and flood modeling for a Floodplain

Restoration project along the Gihon River. The 0.4 acre proposed floodplain restoration site is located at 113 Pearl Street in the heart of Johnson Village. After the devastating flood of July 2023, the Vermont Studio Center was faced with removing a campus building (Former Johnson Town Garage site) behind the Wolf Kahn Building due to substantial flood damage. The VSC has a history of being good stewards of the environment and historic fabric of the Town of Johnson.

Over the past year the VSC worked with the LCPC and SLR International Corporation to explore alternatives to restore natural floodplain conditions along the banks of the Gihon River. This would entail removing existing fill and riprap as well as reducing the gradient of the current riverbank. This project would slow the velocity of the river (by 1.9 cfs) and provide more water storage for future flooding. The flood modeling conducted by SLR demonstrated this site is a valuable location to restore the natural floodplain to reduce future debris jams, flooding impacts, phosphorus loading, and increase flood storage capacity. Flood modeling analysis predicts this project would contribute to a 0.3ft (4 inch) reduction in flood waters if implemented. This project will yield an estimated total phosphorus reduction credit of 17.5 kg.

In 2024 the VSC planted a native pollinator garden and installed an educational pathway near the Wolf Kahn Building. The proposed floodplain restoration project would occur adjacent to the pollinator garden/pathway to restore the floodplain and natural habitat. This restoration project and recently installed pathway will also serve as a community connection and public access to the Johnson Arboretum. The VSC and LCPC are currently seeking funding to complete the Final Design of the proposed floodplain restoration project. For more information on this project, contact LCPC Regional & Natural Resources Planner, Meghan Rodier, at 802-851-6339 or meghan@lpcvt.org.



Training Announcement

Lamoille County Planning Commission will host a regional roundtable with the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and Vermont Local Roads on May 27, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The event will cover the ANR D.I.R.T. Tool, standards and best

practices, available funding and resources, and include a field training component in the host community.

This training is intended for municipal staff, Selectboard and Planning Commission members, and road crew personnel, providing guidance to help towns make informed decisions about road drainage

improvements with watershed health in mind. The location will be announced in the coming weeks and will be within Lamoille County. Lunch will be provided by the Lamoille County Planning Commission. For more information, please contact Alec Jones at alec@lpcvt.org.

Changes at LCPC

Marc Mastrangelo and Conrad Becker, our Interns, turned Assistant Planners, turned Planners, have both left to pursue other things, Marc a PhD and Conrad his first love, GIS. they were both important parts of LCPC and will be missed.



March Mastrangelo



Conrad Becker

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