**EDEN PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT**

The Eden Planning Commission is a group of community members appointed by the Selectboard. Appointments to the Planning Commission are made right after Town Meeting for the term of one year. Although the Planning Commission has the potential for 5 members, there are currently only 4 appointees so there is an opening and anyone interested in participating may ask to become involved. The 4 members of the board currently are, Keren Ferrari (our newest committee member who has also been appointed to represent Eden on the Lamoille County Regional Planning Board), Charles Leone (acting as chair), Tracey Morin (acting as recording secretary, and organizer of all the paperwork and email reminders), and Candace Vear. We meet in the afternoon, usually at 4:00 pm on the third Monday every month. All meetings are open to the public and are a forum for discussion. We welcome community participation and attending a meeting is a great way to see just how much fun we have!

One of the roles of the Planning Commission is to review any developmental changes happening in town throughout the year. Any new construction, change in use of a property (such as sub division) or upgrade (such as replacement of a failed septic system) would involve State regulations and a permit from the State would be required. Copies of all permits are then sent from the State to the Town Office for local review. Should any of the changes in property use involve an Act 250 hearing, the Eden Planning Commission and the community would have the opportunity to respond to these changes. All regulations and official paperwork is solely addressed by the State as Eden does not have any zoning bylaws or subdivision regulations in place.

As of this writing, we have completed the review and update/overhaul of the 2013 Town Plan. This has been a 2-year process and we were able to finish a few months before our previous plan was due to expire in 2018. Thankfully, the State Legislature has recently extended the time between updates from a 5 year to an 8-year interval meaning that the current plan will be good through 2026.

We wanted our Town Plan to be an informative, concise and easily read document that accurately reflects our values and we worked hard to try and make those goals a reality. Although few will probably read all 80+ pages, we hope that the document serves the whole community respectfully.

One significant change to the “new” plan is the addition of a chapter that pertains solely to energy that was required by the State and relates to the parameters outlined in Act 171 and Act 174. Vermont has set an extremely ambitious goal, to have 90% of all the energy we consume (to turn on the lights, drive to work, heat our homes and run our businesses to name just a few) come from renewable sources such as wind, solar, geothermal, biomass and hydro by 2050. In the most idealistic world, this may be possible but we have a very long way to go to make this happen. The Eden Planning Commission had some options. One was an “enhanced” energy plan that included maps identifying where potential sites for renewable generation for “our” share of the energy consumed in Lamoille county could be identified. Or, we could write an energy chapter that was less specific and still meet the requirements of the State. All Eden Planning Commission members agreed that more time, research and community feedback was needed before we could go ahead with a more specific plan. In the 6 months that we worked almost exclusively on the energy chapter, there were so many changes at the regional and the State level that we believe the decision was a wise one. Changes can be made at any time as long as the required procedures for any amendment are followed including opportunities for comments from the community and a public hearing.

With our new regional representative, we will continue to participate in the planning process at the county level and we appreciate all the help that the Lamoille County Planning Commission provided as we worked on the Town Plan revisions. There is a copy of the updated plan at the Town Clerk’s office should anyone be brave enough to read it!!

**Eden Planning Commission:**

Keren Ferrari Charles Leone Tracey Morin Candace Vear