

November 9, 2021 Upper Valley Climate Change Migration Forum

(Notes taken from the Zoom Chat after small group discussion)

Name	Share one or more key takeaways from your conversation in the chat. We will collect all of your great ideas and share them with you after tonight.
HEALTH	
Rebecca B. MacKenzie:	The new NH Healthcare Workers for Climate Action is focusing on the health impacts. This is another avenue to engaging our more conservative neighbors.
SCHOOLS	
Barbara Slaiby:	Plan for schools as have an influx of students. They need to have ability to expand.
SOCIAL SERVICES	
cloud pair:	where do orphans go? What social services are in place for children who re abandoned?
TRANSPORTATION	
Meghan Butts, UVLSRPC:	transportation is key! multimodal!
Jeanie McIntyre:	more people but without more cars
INFRASTRUCTURE	
Meghan Butts, UVLSRPC:	more capital funds for towns to actually fix and upgrade infrastructure to support more people
Brad Truax:	More people plus the drought plus old leaky water systems stressed our water supply during COVID-19. A harbinger of what will happen with climate migration. Need to attend to water supply issues as drought likely to continue.
aina bernier:	infrastructure needs to be enhanced to accommodate population influx, and this takes time and money. Need to start ASAP
HOUSING	
Meghan Butts, UVLSRPC:	renovate current housing stock
Meghan Butts, UVLSRPC:	focus density where infrastructure is
Lindsay Dearborn, Lebanon, she/her:	Local architects need to organize around this issue!!
Nicholas Holt:	To a previous point - local architects can and should rally around this issue. I'm in!
Brad Truax:	Affordable housing plus better transportation infrastructure to get workers to potential jobs.
Gary Dir:	Create a regional master plan around meeting the 2025 and 30 green house specs and housing for new people.
Kati Gallagher, VNRC (she/her):	Housing is key! Are there ways to think outside of the box to house construction workers for housing? For example, pre-fab or temporary housing
Paul Morrison:	Our group focussed on housing, and on the dilemma that part-time people with second homes add a great deal to the tax base and very little burden on the schools or social services, and typically pay for their housing (don't need subsidies. Yet, this doesn't seem a totally healthy economy. Could wealthier people be allowed to develop their large houses but be asked to make a payment or something to the town, similar to the way developers sometimes do to get permitted, to help the towns develop the compact, small-footprint multi-family housing that we really need? Real concern with maintaining our forests, ecologies, wildlife while balancing human need for housing.
NATURAL RESOURCES	
Shawn Phelps:	Lack of zoning in towns can be a big issue. There is a need for towns to conduct natural resource inventories to know which ares should not be developed.
JoAnn Berns:	will zoning, however patchwork, be important in the short term... many changes that are already happening to local character & environment cannot be undone
wonderama:	our water will be sold out from under us, if the laws are made to allow it.
John Bennett, WRC:	Need to keep environmental impacts in the conversation. Need to work hard at the local level where many things happen, such as pursuit of infrastructure (water/wastewater) to support dense settlement in villages and protect enviro resources.
Kevin Geiger, TRORC Senior Planner:	That as we get more people, we will need more accessible public lands handy to where people are so that folks stay connected to nature, even as we have more people.
amber:	I believe that the only way we will have a state of Vermont is if we manage to make the green spaces, farms, forests and lands personally valuable to everyone who moves here. To that end, I'd like to see every school be allowed a food forest/farm/ community garden area. Every public green be allowed a habitat area. And all utility owned lands be given directions for making wildlife corridors and habitat locations. During 2020 everyone in the country wanted to be in the forest and see the wild. Everyone planted gardens. We know we need them and they matter personally to each of us.

Jeff Grout: It is sad that we are doing this planning in response to an environmental tragedy. Planning for it seems to admit defeat. Much of the regions climate that makes it special, forests, wildlife and recreation will change. How long until Vermont becomes undesirable? The forests, wildlife and recreation are what makes VT a special place (NJ once had as much forest as Vermont, so be careful with development). Would like to see Vermont commit to preserving at least 35% of its forests to capture carbon. Also, development should focus on alternative transportation such as bicycling and walking to work. Structure communities so that people live near their work and preserve/renovate downtown areas. Reduce sprawl!

PLANNING

Laurel Green, Bellows Falls, VT, USA: It is so important for town committees, town staff, local orginazations to think and act on having an expanding, more diverse population here. Sewer, water, housing and conservation planning are key.

Adair Mulligan: badly done political redistricting could hijack efforts at meaningful planning

Sarah Jackson, she/her, Vital Communiti Importance of raising awareness and having good data to inform decisions

Nicholas Holt: Understanding what climate change and the impending migration are going to really require...not just what we have always provided for development and growth, but new ways of growing and making this transition.

Autumn Scott, SRPC: In the planning sphere-when interfacing with the public, making climate adaptation more digestible and relatable, valuing the experiences of community members and ensuring all populations are included in planning and decision making processes esp. when we consider those who are migrating are the people who already have access to resources to do so

Sarah Jackson, she/her, Vital Communiti Need to learn from other parts of the US - intrigued by the "Receiving Communities" organization that Elena mentioned

Autumn Scott, SRPC: definitely a mismatch between ideals/preserving community character and what may be required for communities to adapt

Nicholas Holt: The optimist in me thinks this doesn't have to mean a mismatch if the planning is done properly...but there are so many historic bad examples of migration that folks rightly have some trepidation about his.

wonderama For me, focusing on housing, etc., and assuming that there will be space for a public conversation, is incorrect and dangerous. as the pressure and force of big money flows in to shift public opinion, a delusion may sweep the community, as is happening elsewhere in the country. We are already under threat from mis-information and a degrading of our democratic space. we are being driven to totalitarianism... and, remarkably, many americans are accepting it. even npr, a supposed liberal voice is using the language of republicanism and corporatism. we must address this, first, as a community. to allow the drift toward right wing politics to take hold will lead to this very discussion being irrelevant. our resources must be focused on preserving the public space, rebuffing the corporate control that is already taking hold in our region. for me, to focus on infrastructure is hard, costly and difficult. We must assure the public voice, first, it is already being degraded. we must oppose the gerrymandering of nh, as that will render useless many of the communities best efforts. our water will be sold.

HOW TO INCLUDE ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE IN THESE CONVERSATIONS/EFFORTS

Adair Mulligan: Abenaki withstood the original migration - they should be a part of the conversation going forward

Melanie Riddle, LCPC: Infrastructure needs to be built while including the lower/middle income folks. It has already become very expensive to buy a house and housing is almost impossible to find. Figuring out how to bring people together and create a sustainable solution that works for all people.

Marie Caduto: This conversation and the importance of the issue needs to reach into the very local - municipal boards and decisionmakers if it is going to get traction.

Steve: Group 5 discussed the need to have early and strong communication with local residents as the migration begins and intensifies. Do all possible to avoid we / they issues

Erika Hoffman-Kiess, GMEDC: Good leadership is critical - at a statewide "rallying" level, and at the local implementation level

Meghan Butts, UVLSRPC: make the UV a place where 25-45 year olds want to live and work!

Melanie Riddle, LCPC: It's important to bring more people into the climate migration and adaptation conversation. I think climate change needs a re-branding. In order to make change and increase awareness/education about issues, we have to figure out how to converse and work with people who may not agree.

Meghan Butts, UVLSRPC: support current residents as well as incoming

barbarahirai:	People are going to come here. How to we welcome in way to encourage their positive participation in our community that respects our way of life?
Rebecca B. MacKenzie:	We can do this better with the focus of this group and others we call into the process. This is a building block of important genius and compassion that is needed to get serious about creating the region we want to be.
HOW TO TALK ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE	
Erika Hoffman-Kiess, GMEDC:	Framing the cause as based in reality while at the same time remaining positive
amber:	I like using the term Civilization: climate civilization involves all of us.
Meghan Butts, UVLSRPC:	It is hard to want to focus on opportunities coming to NH and VT as a result of something so sad like Climate Change
jody schubert:	there is fear of the area being overwhelmed by more people than we can handle, but there is a great need for more people and younger, more diverse people to replace the aging demographic of the UV. To bring ideas and grow the businesses for our combined future is essential. Affordable housing is
Jay Shafer - Northview Weather:	Good planning can be agnostic to climate change, the politicization of "climate" will make it hard for local communities to move forward around climate-forced issues. Local education is needed.
Meghan Butts, UVLSRPC:	our own climate resiliency