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# 2022 PROPOSED SLATE OF OFFICERS – CANDIDATE BIOGRAPHIES

**Candidate for President**

**Alex Weinhagen:** Alex is the Director of Planning and Zoning for Hinesburg, Vermont – a town of 4,500 people in southern Chittenden County. Like most small town planners, Alex wears several different hats, from land use planning to development review to GIS map making to economic development to neighbor dispute therapy. He has worked for the Town of Hinesburg for over 19 years, during which time the community has seen significant change and positive growth – both in terms of village area development and rural land conservation. He is extremely fortunate to work in a community with a

long-term commitment to progressive planning. He currently serves as VPA’s Vice President, chairperson of VPA’s Legislative Committee, and as one of VPA’s representatives on the NNECAPA Executive Committee. He served as VPA’s Legislative Liaison from 2016-2020 and served on VPA’s Professional Development Committee for several years prior to 2016. Alex has a MS in Wildlife Biology from the University of Vermont, and a BS in Zoology from the University of Rhode Island. In his previous profession, he spent time chasing after all manner of wildlife including black- backed woodpeckers, cormorants, and woodcock. He resides in Burlington.

# Candidate for Vice-President

**Catherine Bryars, AICP:** Catherine (Cat) works as senior planner at the Bennington County Regional Commission serving 17 member municipalities in southwestern VT. At BCRC, she holds primary responsibility for comprehensive community planning, Act 250 and Section 248 application review, enhanced energy planning, and state designation program support. As she has time, she engages in implementation projects in transportation and open space and recreation development.

# Candidate for Secretary

**David W. Rugh:** For over a decade, David has been an attorney at Stitzel, Page & Fletcher, P.C., where he provides a broad range of services to its local government, institutional and educational clients, including addressing real estate, environmental, and zoning and land use permitting issues and litigating commercial, land development and real estate disputes in Vermont’s state and federal courts. In addition to his law practice, David has also been a member of the Vermont Planners Association (VPA) Executive Committee since 2007, the organization’s Secretary since 2016 and served as the Chair of the VPA Awards Committee since 2017. David received his J.D., cum laude, from Vermont Law School in 2004, where he was a Note Editor for the Vermont Law Review and a member of the Moot Court Advisory Board. In 2001, David received his bachelor’s degree in American History from Northwestern University. David would welcome the opportunity to continue serving as VPA’s Secretary for 2022.

# Candidate for Treasurer

**Steve Lotspeich, PLA:** Steve is the Community Planner for the Town of Waterbury, Vermont, a position he has held for the past 27 years. He is a registered Landscape Architect and has been in public service in the fields of Planning and Landscape Architecture for a total of 36 years at the state, regional and local level. His current job involves all aspects of municipal planning including disaster recovery, transportation planning, promotion of economic development, preservation of historic buildings for affordable housing and community use, development of parks and recreation facilities, and conservation of agricultural, natural and scenic resources. Steve’s personal interests include gardening, woodworking, skiing, and playing music.

# Conference Representative to NNECAPA

*Vacant*

# Candidates for Director At-Large

**Chip Sawyer:** Chip is the Director of Planning & Development for the City of St. Albans, VT. There he oversees the City's land use planning and permitting program, community development, stormwater planning, property valuation, grant funding and special projects. He manages staff support for the Planning Commission, Development Review Board, Design Advisory Board, Downtown Board, and Historic Preservation Commission. Chip is a part of the leadership team that has revitalized Downtown St. Albans and facilitated a community renaissance with more than $70 million of public and private

investment. He previously worked as a Program Manager at the Center for Rural Studies at the University of Vermont and as a Senior Planner at Lamoille County Planning Commission. Chip holds Master’s degrees in Public Administration and Natural Resource Planning

**Ravi Venkataraman, AICP**: Ravi is the Town Planner for the Town of Richmond. He has more than ten years of experience employing community engagement practices, including five years of experience as an urban planner in various capacities. Since January 2019, he has served as an at-large director and the Professional Development Officer for Vermont Planners Association, helping to provide resources and opportunities to expand the skillsets of all Vermont planners. He holds a Master’s in Urban and Regional Planning from Virginia Tech, and a Bachelor of Arts in Communication from the University of Washington.

**Eric Vorwald, AICP:** Eric has been a professional land use planner for the past 19 years. He has worked for regional planning agencies in Georgia, Pennsylvania, and Vermont; including the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission. In July of 2018 Eric became the Planning & Zoning Manager for the City of Winooski where he works to implement the City’s unified land development regulations and support the City’s vision for the future. Eric regularly participates in meetings of the VPA Legislative Committee and was the Chair of the Program Subcommittee for the 2021 NNECAPA Conference.

**Susan Westa, AICP:** Susan is a Senior Planner with the Windham Regional Commission in Brattleboro, VT, where she is the Community Development Lead and the Brownfields Program Manager. Susan has over 30 years of experience, previously working with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, Connecticut Main Street Center, University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension and as a consultant in upstate NY. When Susan was the Co-Director of the Green Valley Institute at UCONN, the organization received APA’s 2005 Public Education Award. In 2021, Susan served on the NNECAPA Conference Committee. Susan has also been the CT APA Chapter’s Professional Development Officer and Program Committee Co-Chair. She is a Certified Planner and has a Master’s degree in Environmental Science.

**Greta Brunswick** is a Senior Planner at Northwest Regional Planning Commission.  She has 17 years’ experience working with communities in Franklin and Grand Isle County on community development projects, land use planning and manages NRPC’s brownfields redevelopment program.  Greta has a Bachelors of Science in Community Development and Applied Economics from the University of Vermont.  She lives in Fairfield with her husband Jim, children Eleanor and Ivan, and dog Rita.

**Sarah Wraight, AICP** has worked for Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) as a Regional Planner since 2018. She originally hails from upstate New York and has over a decade of experience in community outreach work around environmental and social justice issues. Sarah received her master’s degree in City and Regional Planning from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2017, with a focus on Land Use and Environmental Planning. Following her graduate studies, she spent a year working as a regional transportation planner for the North Central Texas Council of Governments, then headed back north to serve with TRORC in eastern central Vermont. Sarah is passionate about the process of building vision and momentum toward community goals through inclusive and equitable engagement.