



Dear {{Salutation or 'Local Energy Leaders'}},

Happy New Year! 2024 dawns with both promise and the need for concerted work to ensure our communities become more energy efficient and generate more in-state renewable energy while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. We are excited to be putting together a Winter Webinar Series, as one tool to more consistently learn together and collaborate. Our first webinar will be on [Wednesday January 17th at Noon](#), where we will be joined by the Agency of Natural Resources Director of Environmental Justice and Civil Rights Karla Ramundi, Vermont Climate Office's Community Engagement & Communications Coordinator Sophi Veltrop, and Vice President of Conservation Law Foundation Vermont Elena Mihaly speaking about *Environmental Justice: An Equitable Approach to Energy Transition*. The Winter Webinar series will have webinars every other Wednesday at Noon so please plan to join us for our future events on January 31st, where we'll have a Heat Pump webinar and on February 14th we'll have a webinar featuring the community education offerings of the Vermont Energy Education Program.

Also, as you know the 2024 legislative session just commenced, and climate action and resilience efforts will be a core focus. **We will need your help to ensure we make as much progress as possible though!** We wanted to flag two important ways to stay informed and get involved in important clean energy, climate and resilience efforts this session. First, be sure to follow/sign up for weekly updates on what's happening every week via VNRC's Climate Dispatch, as well as learn more about and join a peer-to-peer Local Advocacy Network for grassroots energy leaders to bring the Town Energy Committee or key on-the-ground perspective to the state policy arena.

[Sign up for the Climate Dispatch here](#) and [opt in to the Local Advocacy Network by filling out this form](#). Or, for more information about either of these, reach out to VNRC's Climate Action Coordinator Dan Fingas – [dfingas@vnrc.org](mailto:dfingas@vnrc.org). Thanks for all you do!

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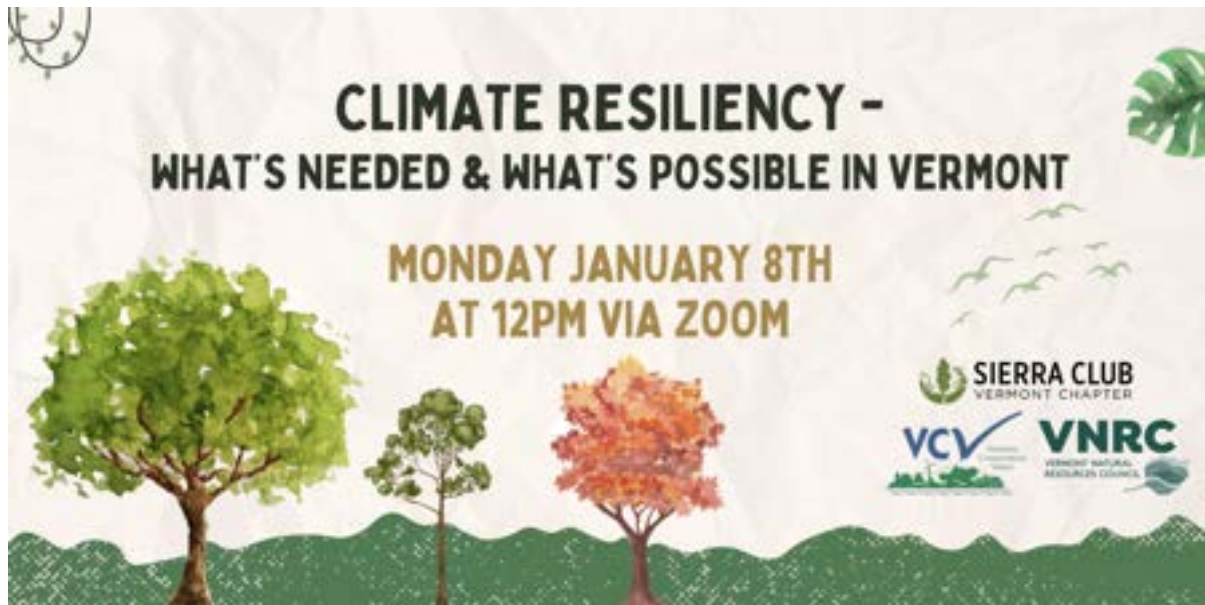
## RESOURCES & INFO

**Funding Opportunity: Better Places Grants.** Is your community thinking about expanding parks and green spaces, enhancing a lively main street, initiating public art projects, or establishing community gardens? If yes, consider applying for a [Better Places Grant](#), supported by the VT Department of Housing & Community Development, VT Department of Health, and VT Community Foundation. This statewide grant program welcomes project submissions on a rolling basis. Learn more [here](#)!

**Call for Applications: Climate Resilient Communities.** The Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD) invites community leaders and volunteers to apply for the [Climate Economy Resilient Communities](#) program for 2024. Interested participants can submit an [online application](#) until January 16th, 2024, with a rolling review process. VCRD offers tailored support to three to five communities annually, focusing on local climate action solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance energy efficiency, build climate resilience, and fortify the local climate economy. Services provided, such as community engagement, strategic planning, technical assistance, and project implementation, are adaptable to each community's unique needs. The program aims to foster resilient communities that demonstrate substantial carbon reduction, address the needs of low-income households, and engage partners for effective implementation. Priority will be given to projects showcasing collaboration, equitable engagement, increased resilience, emissions reduction, and economic strengthening, with the potential to serve as models for other Vermont communities. Eligible entities include Town Energy Committees, Energy Coordinators, municipal leadership, or Climate Catalysts. For more information and to apply, click [here](#)!

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## EVENTS



**Webinar: Climate Resiliency - What's Needed, What's Possible**

As we continue to recover and rebuild in communities ravaged by floods across central Vermont we were once again reminded that our state needs to take proactive action to build the resilience we need. We must reduce flood risks with nature-based solutions, invest in climate-resilient infrastructure, improve government response and capacity, and implement a suite of funding solutions to make these critical investments. Join us on Monday January 8th 2024 at 12pm for Climate Resiliency - What's Needed, What's Possible to learn more about these solutions and how you can get involved in creating a more resilient Vermont. Register [here!](#)

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**Virtual Workshop: Project Management 101**

Join Jenna Lapachinski of the Preservation Trust of VT on January 10th at 10:30am for an introduction to project management for community revitalization projects. Learn how to organize around an initial vision, define goals and priorities, navigate funding options, and move the project from idea to implementation. Learn more and register [here!](#)

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**VECAN Winter Webinar Series - An Equitable Approach to the Energy Transition.**

Join VECAN for the first session of the Winter Webinar Series on [Wednesday January 17th at Noon](#). This session is intended to help inform and guide our collective efforts to accelerate just climate action and a clean energy economy. Get an update on what's happening related to Vermont's important environmental justice law. Hear from state leaders about their efforts – including an overview of a new resource related to core principles of community engagement – and get an update from Vermont's Climate Action Office on their environmental, climate justice and public engagement efforts focused on helping to build a more inclusive and equitable Vermont. [Register Here](#).

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**Webinar Series: Local Motion's Complete Streets Winter Webinar Series**

This winter, Local Motion is hosting a sequence of webinars aimed at assisting advocates and communities in advancing efforts to enhance walking and biking infrastructure. The next series event is on **January 11th from 6-7pm** with a session addressing the question: "What's a Walk/Bike/Roll Master Plan and Why Your Town Needs One" Local Motion staff will outline key elements of a good Walk/Bike Master Plan, common pitfalls, success stories, and more. We'll also discuss funding and technical assistance opportunities for this type of planning in Vermont. [Learn more here!](#)

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### **Webinar: VECAN Winter Webinar Series: Heat Pumps**

Join VECAN and Efficiency Vermont to find out one of the ways that Vermonters can heat their homes in the cleanest and most efficient ways. This webinar will explain how heat pumps work, and what programs are available to transition homes to heat pumps and we'll leave plenty of time to answer all your questions. [Register HERE!](#)

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### **Get Involved**

[Events](#)

[Join or Start an Energy Committee](#)

[Find & Connect with Other Energy Committees](#)

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### **About Us**

[VECAN](#) is a network of statewide Vermont organizations helping communities statewide to reduce energy costs and climate impacts through conservation, increased energy efficiency and conversion to renewable energy sources.

VECAN's mission is to start, support and strengthen town energy committees.

### **Share**

We are always looking for great stories of local action for our blog, social media and as helpful resources for our network! Please consider sending along anything you or others have accomplished or are working on by emailing [info@vecan.net](mailto:info@vecan.net).

### **Newsletter Archive**

Missed a previous month's newsletter? Check them all out in our [newsletter archive!](#)

### **Committee Changes?**

Help us keep our network up to date! Email changes in committee leadership or contact info to [info@vecan.net](mailto:info@vecan.net).



{{Disclaimer}}

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(Unsubscribing is not supported in previews)