

**WILLIAMSTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**  
**MEETING HELD ON: March 12, 2025**  
**Minutes - - (DRAFT COPY)**

PRESENT: Rich Turner, CH, Susan Lyons, David Traczyk, Horace Duke, Rama Schneider, Jasmin Couillard. Guest: Daniel Couillard

The Meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. at the Town Office.

Rich T. Is there a Motion to approve or add to the Agenda? None noted.

Jasmin C. Move to accept the Minutes from Jan. 8, 2025 as written, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Horace D. All approved.

**New Business:**

Rich T. Started the meeting by mentioning that as there was not a quorum for the February 12<sup>th</sup> meeting they just had some informal discussion on the Municipal Planning Grant. I'll begin by going thru some CVRPC updates. There is a Regional Planning Commission assessment statewide – from VAPDA (VT Assoc Planning & Development Agency). They are recommending forming “Council of Governments” instead of RPC. Christian Meyer, Executive Dir. Of CVRPC, was speaking with someone from Waterbury, CT on this. They are talking about a different structure and more involvement with the Chair of the Selectboard for instance, or a representative from the SB. The Legislature and VAPDA are discussing this statewide. The feeling is that the RPC is doing a good job now. I can send everyone a link on this, it's about 50 pages, but there an Executive Summary of about 12 pages if everyone would like to look at it. Some states have both a RPC and a Council of Government. Extra staff and different funding would be required. More discussion followed. Vermont formed the RPC in 1966 and the CVRPC in 1967

Rama S. Question - - what is the problem that's trying to be solved?

Dave T. It does seem like the RPC is trying to reinvent the wheel. Or someone is trying to.

Rich T. Part of it is can they create a structure that can better serve the towns. Offering different services. They have also talked about hosting joint meetings and public outreach on this. The RPC's are required to visit each town every so often to see if they can improve services to the towns.  
Our local Hazard Mitigation Plan is due in November, every 5 years it needs to be updated. Will have to start working on that this fall. FEMA and VT Energy Management will be reaching out to us on this.  
Discussion also on transit issues - - some services are being cut – Burlington trips for one. The Tri-Valley Transit might be able to help with different runs.  
Also mentioning the local Hazard Mitigation Plan we will have to come up with a budget – it's normally \$10,000 that is allocated for towns and the town will be responsible for coming up with a rfp (?). I will need to follow up with Keith – he mentioned that we should have already received information on this from VT Energy Mgmt or FEMA. Ours expires in Nov. so we need to get something started. Could be worked in with our Town Plan.

Rich T. Moving on to the Municipal Plan Grant application. Application opened Jan. 27, closed March 31, awarded on April 30<sup>th</sup>. Its not a guarantee for us to get it. The Grant can start on May 1<sup>st</sup>. So right now, tentatively, we have the CVRPC planning to be here at our May meeting. If we are awarded the grant it will be a kick-off meeting for the grant.

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- Rich T. (cont'd) If we are not awarded the grant they will still come and visit We still have \$8,000 in the budget. The timeline on this would be a year. I would like to have something in place by December so we can look at other things like sidewalk grants and other things. Because this is going to take a lot longer than initially thought. Initially looking at the budget of \$15,000 we have 5 different areas that will need updating. Act 171, Wildlife, #174 Energy Plan for Municipalities, #181 Land Use plan changes, #47 Home Act, #121 Flood Safety Act. Because of all these changes this puts us in a good position to compete with other towns. Our having the Village Designation Center will help us in the scoring also on the grant application. So looking at all these changes they came up with a budget of \$25,000 with our match funds of 10% = (\$2,500). Our max for funding is \$30,000.
- Rama S. This would start in May?
- Rich T. Yes, correct. How this works is that the state provides the money, the RPC will bill us for our time. Typically, the reimbursement for this is 30,30,40. The first 30% up front which gets us started, then maybe in the middle another 30% and then towards the end the balance – 40%. That comes to the Town.
- Rama S. They are going to provide the services?
- Rich T. The state provided the money and the RPC bills us and that's what we draw down. So the CVRPC acts as our consultant on this project. I will be responsible to manage the consultant through our team here, so that's basically what we would be doing. They recommend changes and we can recommend updates as required. I would take responsibility as chair to manage the team.
- Rama S. How much time in your life do you have now to do this?
- Rich T. I think we have a really good application in place, we are in a good place with all the updates that are needed. Would like to have everyone look at the application itself to see if you have any questions or responses. For example in the 6.5 Designated Area Projects: 2000 – I would like to have some specific language added on the Veteran's Park which was added in 2023. They are also asking for letters of support from the community. Eli is supposed to be sending us a form letter to use. Ask some folks who are involved with – Historical Society, the Library, Food shelf and the School system. We should try and get these in by next week due to the deadline on March 31<sup>st</sup>. There is also a letter of Municipal Resolution Planning Grant that the Selectboard has to sign off on and I will need to sign it also.
- Susan L. Jackie has this letter and the selectboard members still need to sign it.
- Rich T. I will try and get in on Friday to sign it. Again, any letters of support we get 10 points for. We need a total of 60 points for the application.
- Rama S. As far as the signature for the Food Shelf it seems like it should not be signed by someone that is on the Planning Cmsn.

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Old/New Business/Comments:

Rama S. Can I bring something up here. Its about the schools, don't want to make it a big deal but I think it should be coming of a less of a deal in the town Plan. First off it's the obvious - - Municipalities between the schools and the towns. It didn't matter much when we were within the same borders of the town – but it makes a difference now. They are making a lot of changes in the law which directly affect the school municipalities. They are going to be making more. There isn't a whole lot of direction from the RPC and I don't know if it should be brought up in this town plan or you should be going back to the RCP and maybe mentioning the fact that the schools are more separated now. It has even leaked into here as to how we fund our school systems – see the summary notes that were handed out. Advocating that it be a smaller deal in the town plan.

Rich T. These are some of the types of thoughts that we will be talking about out the kickoff meetings. Discussion followed.

Rama S. Assuming we get the grant I'll bring down my notes and offer my thoughts and suggestions.

Rich T. The May meeting will be an important meeting for everyone to attend to go over these concerns with the CVRPC.  
Spoke again on our plans for sidewalks and crosswalks. We could possible get some temporary demonstration sidewalk/crosswalks set up – maybe in the fall to track the number of pedestrians crossing Construction Hill/Rte 14. They (AOT) are offering different grants every 6 months. Time frame is up to a year.  
I need a Motion to approve moving forward with the MPG appl.

Jasmin C. I will make the Motion to approve moving forward with the Municipal Planning Grant application. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dave T. All approved - - Motion passed.

Rich T. Anything else? Nothing - -

Susan L. I will make the Motion to adjourn – 2<sup>nd</sup> Horace D

Meeting Adjourned at 7:30 P.M.

Next Meeting: April 9, 2025

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