

WILLIAMSTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MEETING HELD ON: Oct 8, 2025
Minutes - - (DRAFT COPY)

PRESENT: Rich Turner, CH, David Traczyk, Horace Duke, Rama Schneider, Susan L.

The Meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m. at the Town Office.

Rich. T. Any adjustments to the Agenda? Rama has some up-to-date material to share. We will cover that under New/Other Business.

Susan L. We do need to work on our Budget for 2027.

Dave T. Motion to add the above to the Agenda - - 2nd by Horace D. All agreed and approved.

Dave T. Move to accept the Minutes from Sept. 10, 2025. 2nd by Horace D. All approved.

New Business:

Rich T. The CVRPC had another special board meeting on Sept. 18 to meet with the lawyers in reference to the Montpelier City Plan. It had already been approved by the City Council, but there were some folks that wanted to appeal it. Because there is no appointing body there was a request to dismiss. They have up until Nov. 7th to make a decision. They did go through and approve 4 different motions.

Rama S. Not to get too deep into Montpelier's stuff, who does their Municipal Plan process?

Rich T. Their Planning Commission. It goes to the City Council and they approve it.

Rama S. Do they have a zoning administrator? Do they handle the planning?

Rich T. The commission handles the planning.

They also posted two different public hearings. I mentioned last time that they got \$67 Million dollars. One was for Flood Resiliency that they could offer to the towns for different projects and the other was on cell towers and communication. The goal of the Grant was to improve flood modeling, et al, public engagement. So, all 4 of those had a total of \$856,000.

The 2nd hearing was the next day, I wasn't able to be there, and I haven't had any feedback on that yet. It was regarding cell towers and communications – improving to have better connections. More info about the process talked about getting things back up to 100%.

Also had the Transportation Advisory committee meeting that night, Sept. 23rd. VTrans has a Better Connection Grant program. They have town study proposals; wish we could be better prepared to take advantage of these. The next VTrans meeting is Oct. 28th and the deadline for Grants is Oct. 23rd.

VTrans usually has 2 funding cycles, Fall and Spring. Something else that they just sent out is for demonstrating projects, sidewalk crossings was one. A sidewalk feasibility study would be needed, not sure how much that would cost, maybe between \$40 to \$70,000. I will continue to talk with them on that. Again, there is the Oct. 23rd deadline for Grants.

Rama S. Has the Selectboard shown any interest in any of these Grants?

Rich T. No, the Planning Commission needs to bring it up. They may hear it in different discussions and send it to us for more information.

Speaking of Land Use Mapping - - the RPC has done 8 out of the 24 towns. They will have a draft map by early December. It will then be eligible for comments and review.

Susan L. Will they send that around to towns for us to look at?

Rich T. I will get it anyway and will forward it to folks. They will probably be sending a link out to the Town Mangers, the Selectboards and the Planning Commission when it's available.

Rich T. Our Regional Plan Committee met yesterday. We now have a lot of the goals and strategies worked out. We went thru Chapter 4 – the Housing chapter. So the RP has the verbiage for each chapter with their goals. The two chapters we worked on yesterday were Economy and Working Land and the other chapter was Natural Systems. The Natural Systems will get into Forestry Blocks, connectors and invasive plants. (Read a couple of goals.) They have a proposed timeline that I will forward to you.

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- Rich T. I'm going to read the last line in the Land Use Determination. The date is for Oct. 26, 2026. The alternate date would be Nov. 23, 2026. Our timeline is roughly July.
- Rich T. On to the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. When we started the Grant process for the Regional Town Plan I asked a couple of times about HMP because I'm pretty sure that its coming up due this year in November. They told me that we weren't on their list, the VT Emergency Management would notify us. I'm going to try and come into the office and talk with Jackie about this. I asked again when I was at the last transportation meeting – I'm not aware of receiving anything from the VT Emergency Management on this. They did check – Keith Cubbon, the Sr. Transportation Planner, got back to me and said that our local HMP will expire on Nov. 12, 2025. There is a lot of implications to that obviously. The state still has funding for this.
- Susan L. Should Jackie have been receiving information on this.
- Rich T. Yes – she should, and I should as well. I will say that the federal funding pool that would normally fund that is gone. Normally it \$10 or \$11,000 to do this. When we talked about it a few months back we still had funding but everything has changed and that funding went away. There are two options, you might be able to a local hazard mitigation – like the municipal planning grant that we did with the town – or, they were also looking at – if there's no funding – the Regional Planning Commission was looking at grouping a couple of towns together that also had plans expiring and try to do a group thing. I think that Plainfield is also up. My question to the Regional Plan Cmsn is can we even apply for a 2nd Municipal Planning Grant? Maybe there is room for that as this is a higher priority with the deadline coming up. I spoke with Keith again yesterday and he checked it out and found that there had been other towns that had received a 2nd Municipal Planning Grant at the same time. Yes – it is possible. He has not heard back from the ACCD yet, they are the ones that it goes through. (Agency of Commerce and Community Development) The deadline is Nov. 3rd to apply for it. We would have to have the selectboard sign off on it like we did for the Town Plan. There is an official form that will need to be completed. Once the SB signs off on it then we will need to work with the RPC to complete the process. This is what I would like to talk to Jackie about. It would be much better to come from a Grant than have to come from the Town. (Read the letter from Keith Cubbon which also mentions checking out Barre City Flood Resiliency Plan. – Rich will send us the link to this.)
- Susan L. There is a SB meeting this coming Monday – Oct. 13th.
- Rama S. There could be concerns about who is interpreting the rules, policies and the laws.
More discussion.
- Rich T. So I would be looking for support from the Planning Cmsn and a Motion to support and apply for a Municipal Planning Grant for the expiring Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. Then I can present that to the SB. I can ask Jackie for her feedback so she can get some stuff together ahead of the SB meeting. We need to have a quorum and for them sign the form if they support it.
- Horace D. Motion is for support from the Planning Commission and a Motion to support and apply for a Municipal Planning Grant for the expiring Local Haard Mitigation Plan.
- Rama S. 2nd the Motion. No discussion - - Motion approved and passed.
- Rich T. More discussion on the steps to complete the process of the grant.
- Rama S. Could we submit what we have if for some reason we don't get approved?
- Rich T. We might not have to make many changes to the plan that we already have. Some things will have to be updated.
- Rama S. Some notable changes/improvements would be the culverts that were replaced. The dam removal. Other than that, not a lot has changed.
- Rich T. Maybe some updated damage info from the flooding and the costs involved from the Town or from FEMA. The deadline for this would be Nov. 3, 2025. Talked about not having to put this out to Bid as we are a Urban Municipality Community. The Town voted on this by Australian Ballet back in 1991 (?). More discussion.

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NEW BUSINESS:

- Rich T. Next on the Agenda is the Town Plan survey stats. Going through the end of Oct. anyway with the surveys. Eli stopped in and picked some up and I did as well. I will put a reminder out on Front Porch Forum. Lori has been inputting the data into a spread sheet.
- Susan L. Do you know how many have been turned in?
- Rich T. I did ask if they could give us some kind of printout by the end of the month. I think there might be around 40 or so.
- Discussion - - if we get 3% that would be good - - it's still open so hope to get more in.
- Rama S. Should have offered a prize for submitting. That worked when I did the school thing. I did some gift certificates and if they returned it with their name and address – their name got put in the drawing.
- Rich T. Lori had mentioned that it might have been good to have a table at one of the school's open house nights.
- Rama S. Went over the AI information handout.
- Rich T. Asked Rama if he could forward this information to the CVRPC?
- Rama S. Yes – of course. Spoke a little more about the “prompts” and how the information is accessed. Comes only from what he has input. This has been pulled from over five documents. This had made me more aware of the wording what “should” or “shall” be in some of the documents.
- Discussion on the wording. “Shall” is more definitive. It's really good to have a tool like this to pull information together. Looking at trends and patterns.
- Rich T. Next is the Budget for 2027. Comparative Budget Report handed out to everyone.
- Discussion and decisions made on the figures. Fiscal year goes from July 1st to June 30th. A current Budget Status Report was also included.
- Rama was questioning the Wages because of the Fiscal Year. (All set)
- Rich – explaining the postage figures on the BSR – going over by \$184.00 was due to the fact that the RPC only budgeted \$250.00 – they asked if we could pick up the difference. The total amount for postage was over \$1,200.
- Rama also questioned the \$146.25 expense shown on the Curren Year Budget Status Report coded under the Town Plan Consultant which showed 0.00 Budget for 2025. Thought that this should have been coded under the Grant Match expense that had \$8,500 budgeted for 2025. (What was this for?) Check into this expense.
- Rich explained more on the Town Plan Consultant and the Grant Match figures. The Grant Match was going to go towards a feasibility study _____ and as the Town's match figure was around \$2500 we raised it to \$8,500.
- Rich – The Town's Plan should be done by July and we might have a small amount left. I know that there is a way to carry forward any monies that have been budgeted but not used.
- Susan - - yes – you have to write a letter stating what we need any balance leftover to be used for and give them an approximate date as to when it will be used.

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Rich - - there might be a scoping study which will still be apart of the Grant Match - - that might be \$40,000 for sidewalks - - or a study on crosswalks and sidewalks which might be a little more. Projects like this can take from 2 – 4 years to complete.

The \$2500 that we are asking for – for the Town Plan Consultant might be going towards scoping studies for transportation for example and crosswalks, sidewalks and other state requirements that might come up.

Went over the figures by each line and came out with a new total for 2027 - - \$23,910.67

Rama S. Motion to approve a Preliminary Budget Proposal for 2027 in the amount of \$23,910.67. 2nd by Dave T. All approved and passed.

Rich T. The next meeting is scheduled for Nov. 18th Because this is a change from the regular scheduled meeting – please send out a notice a week ahead of the Nov. 12th date.

Rich T. Anything else? None - -

Susan L. I'll make a Motion to adjourn - - 2nd Horace D.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Next Meeting: Nov. 18, 2025. (Tuesday)
