

WILLIAMSTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

MEETING HELD ON: May 13, 2026

Minutes - - (DRAFT COPY)

PRESENT: Rich Turner, CH, David Traczyk, Susan Lyons, Horace Duke
Guests: "Sam" Lash, CVRPC
The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Office.

Rich. T. Any adjustments to the Agenda? None noted.
Dave T. Move to approve the Minutes from April 8, 2026 as written. 2nd by Susan L. All approved.

New Business:

Rich T. The Minutes have been approved so we will open the meeting with Sam Lash from CRPC. Introduced Sam and briefly mentioned the meeting this morning and asked Sam if she would like to re-cap it. Thanked Horace and Susan for attending the meeting this morning.

Sam L. Just wanted to mention that since the last meeting we learned that the Williamstown Parade had been cancelled for this year and we then were able to display the two Hazard informational maps and other info at the Road re-vote held at the Public Safety Building. Suggested putting this information on Front Porch Forum now and maybe again in two or three weeks. Ryan L., your Town Mgr. would be able to do this. Could leave this up so folks could have a chance to vote thru July. If you have any other community events in the meantime you could bring this information with you. This morning my colleague, Keith Cubbon from Emergency Management came to the meeting and went thru the Hazard table – information handed out on the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan – Mud Season was added to the Hazard assessment list. In order to fulfill the requirements of a local HMP, the municipality must assess the frequency, and impact, of subset of hazards (those found in the state HMP). Copy of this worksheet and information enclosed.) The group worked on this together and CVRPC will input the information and share at some point so the board can look over the scores to see if we have any questions or need to make any changes.

Also, what we had been talking about earlier today - - looking at the map where all the red dots were noted are buildings that are in the flood area. Discussion followed on the infrastructure and where there might be future backups. I made some notes of concerns - - Stevens Branch bridge on Rt. 14, south on Spider Web Farm Rd, the bridge by 14 on Brook Street, and two north and south off Falls Bridge Road, they also seem to be doing backup and causing actual fluvial impacts. This is a list that we can use later in a mitigation act – but should also be included in the town plan. Both in the transportation section and the flood section.

I did also notice that in Town Infrastructure – two streets were mentioned, one being Meadow Street as there had been a large buildup there, also the bridge on Brockway that had some backups that affected at least one structure or more. These are also conversations to be held with the Road Crew and Road Mgr. (Ryan L, Town Mgr., handling this for the time being.) I would be happy to type this list up so that they can be included in your minutes.

In terms of the river corridor there are six infrastructures on Jamieson Road that are in this area. A bunch I noted in both the southern and northern parts of the village, as the river branches out in two different ways. Both of these issues should also be noted for future building concerns.

Horace D. All these buildings in these areas should be put up on pillars. In 2023 the state had to rebuild the bridge on the bottom of Rt 14 – it was only half wide enough to handle flooding – the water jumped right over the bridge. Many roads were closed.

Sam L. Many decisions concerning how to handle future flooding and infrastructure. This brings us to looking at your Natural Resources Chapter and the Flood Resiliency Chapter. You have a very clear concept regarding these and good information in your Town Pla already. In Flood Resiliency section you do a great job summarizing and possible resources that folks can take advantage of. So a lot of this is really already here. Talking about the NFIP Program. One of the questions I had – was – you mentioned upland streams that aren't necessarily mapped that could cause some flooding risk – you talk about established developments and I'm assuming talking about wider corridor buffers, driveway permits, etc. Going thru the Municipal Plan Climate Guide – most of those towns have zoning.

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- Sam L. Obviously one of the options is that you could go down the zoning road – and the other option is that you don't have to do that. My question would be -how is the current plan working for you? There's also the question about the things that need to be added and is the implementation of the current town plan actually happening. Could I help you show some trends – for example -where are the driveway and where is the development happening in Williamstown? This way we can look to see if it is happening in the flood plan areas. These are the things that I can see to offer to enhance your town plan.
- Susan L. There is never going to be any zoning in town. The driveway permits are recorded and that is done with May E. through the Admin. Assistant's office. I don't know how far back you would want to go to get a list of the permits?
- Rich T. Maybe from the last Town Plan?
- Sam L. Yes -I was just trying to come up with some info. to see if they were particularly relevant. This might be good to look at for you to evaluate whether it is working or not. Because you mention – especially in the Flood Resiliency Plan - that you want to restrict development in these areas – might not want to use that work repeatedly but that is what flood hazards do – it would be good to have that information. We have had some of these exact issues for example in Worcester – especially when driveway permits had been spotty – try to talk about future risks.
- Susan L. Is that because their plan wasn't properly designed? They were in a flood zone? We haven't had a lot of new development in our town especially in our flood areas.
- Sam L. Yes. Where has your development gone for instance in the last 10 years?
- Discussion - - Up off Chelsea Road, off Snow Bridge Road, off Flint Road, Falls Bridge Road. All above flood zones.
- Suan L. Larry has plans for six – 2 bedroom units down below his Mother's home – located across from the low-income development. Plus the two – 2 bedroom units located on Rt 14 in town. There really isn't a lot of building spots in the Village.
- Sam L. The higher you go you do have to worry about erosion. This might come up again in the Housing Chapter. If you were to encourage settlement in town – where would it be and what would it look like?
- Susan L. The only new development in town that I am aware of is the plans that Larry Hebert has – off Business Center Road and Fox Run Road.
- Sam L. Spoke about “Brownfields” – that is in the Nat'l Resources chapter - - dealing with contamination. Listed different contaminants, and noted different areas in town that might be included. Interstate Uniform that was located by the High School and that area has been capped.
- Horace D. Spoke on the Interstate Uniform land.
Discussion followed. Saldi Field was also mentioned and discussed. Rich mentioned that he thought that area was still active.
- Sam L. Speaking on “brownfields” they are being looked at for re-development. There are some fundings available for brownfield re-development. More discussion on this.

Some discussion on the Catholic Church in town being sold and what it might be used for. Cannot be hold church services there. Possible community center.

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- Dave T. I believe that Chris Dessureau has purchased it. He has talked about using it for men's group meetings in the evening. Discussed maybe bible studies.
Discussion on the updates done to the church before it was closed down.
Possible uses – Food Shelf - - Horace mentioned that this had been looked into. Not cost effective.
- Sam L. Things being looked into in different areas - - using it for Resilience Housing. Something that can be used for everyday functions but can be scaled up for disaster recovery events. They are beginning to establish some funding in those places. Could be used as a heating and cooling shelter – food shelf, etc.
- Rich T. There is, or was, a webinar on this at some point next month. A lot of good information and possible funding available. I would like to get together with Downstreet on some of this to see how they look at all the data.
- Sam L. Could look at what it would take to do a Phase 1 assessment. Eli Toohey would be the one to reach out to on this. She is running the Brownfield Program.

So – I do have a few questions on this guide – they are a bit vague. One is – do you have any main concerns related to water quality for folks?
- Susan L. We have the town water system off Rood Pond Road.
Discussion H.D. The well at our old house up by the High School – that well is still producing good clean water. If it ever fails, they would have to hook up to the town system, at no charge because of the contamination from Interstate Uniform. They were one of the few wells that the state deemed safe to use.
- Sam L. Something that came up more recently, was drought.
Discussion There were folks last year that had trouble with their springs drying up. Having to haul water.
D.T. I had to hook up to town water last year.
Wondering if there were specific locations? I can check into this more.
R.T. I'm not sure the area of where all the town water system goes.
D.T. I know that it comes down to across the house across from me, down thru Rt 64, a branch line that goes up to the high school, then down Construction Hill into town, up Graniteville Road a ways – by the first corner and continues almost to Gilbert Road.
Sam L. I can probably ask someone for a map of that.
Susan L. There should be a map in the office – Allen Chouinard should know as he checks on the water system on Rood Pond Road. (See if there is a digital file for mapping available.)
- Rich T. The other question would be for the Sewage Treatment Plant - - is there a map on this also?
- Sam L. Reviewing quickly the different chapters in the MPC Guide and being aware of how different events affect the community. Any additional comments or concerns? (none)
Ok - - in terms of Natural Resources – my conclusion is that this might be a good opportunity to check with your consultants and ask them to come up with some additional ideas more geared towards towns that don't have zoning. That might be helpful to improve the guide.

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- Rich T. On that point there is a Technical Feedback Form that is available. They do like to get feedback from folks.
- Sam L. Check out the State Resources available.
- Rich T. I would like to check out the Forestry Block, get more specifics on that. The habitat connectors for one. Different workshops available. Not sure where all the deer yards are for example. (Ref Act 171 – that came out after our last town plan). I would like to review and look at the updated maps. I think some of the other townspeople would also be interested in looking at these.
- Sam L. We can look into that. There are different layers noted, endangered species (in our town plan now), deer wintering, vernal pools, etc. Some in our wetland maps already. We can certainly look at them to see if there are different areas that we might want to add. Some town have added their own districts, conservation districts is one, one town has a bear habitat district, we are seeing more of that one. Most of these are already integrated in your town maps. These different layers will be updated.
I would be happy to go over the ANR atlas with you all.
- Susan L. Larry Hebert had mentioned that when he was planning for the new building on Fox Run Road that he had to pay to have a deer yard established. That would be interesting to see where the state located it. There wasn't going to be an appropriate area where he was building for a deer yard, so the state was supposed to locate one. He also lost a couple of building lots because he had to put in a special culvert for the salamanders and frogs to cross under.
- Sam L. One question is how do you get people to stop and check out the plans? We could hold different open meetings, maybe at the library - - . You can go to the ANR Atlas to look things up. There are a lot of layers that can be checked out. There are also a bunch of people that are consultants and could come to a meeting. Talked about the different layers and these are available to the public to check out.
A new program to check out - - Culvert Buddies - - this is a program where folks keep an eye on them – just monitoring them. It's a volunteer program. Could be beneficial for the road crew.
- Rich T. We do have a Storm Water Master Plan here in town.
- Sam L. Was it posted on our website? (I believe so). When was it done? (Probably a couple of years ago.) I believe that it can be integrated in your new town plan.
- Rich T. We had some consultants involved – one of the areas was the parking lot at Poulin Lumber and the other was over by the Dollar General. The recommendations were made and presented to our Selectboard. I wasn't at that meeting, we weren't able to get funding for it at the time. Watershed Consulting helped us with this. We should be checking into getting some funding for it now even though there isn't any available yet.
- Sam L. I think that answers the next few questions - - on potential action plans. Some your town is already doing – mentioned road standards (these might need to be up-dated), deep slopes and natural drainage pathways.

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Rich T. The Baptist Street culvert has not been done yet – on hold because of bat habitat. Is Keith Cubbon doing an inventory on culverts? That does need to be added to the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Sam L. You might be on the list for this. Not sure. I can ask Keith tomorrow. We do have summer interns that can go out to different towns and do culvert inventories. I think that’s about all I have.

Rich T. Yes, if you could send us the link to the ANR Atlas that would be helpful.

Sam L. Ok then you will need to make sure that material gets posted on Front Porch Forum. Can someone take a screenshot of when it shows up and send it to me. I sent a burb on this to Ryan (Town Mgr.) to post. There is a link to the survey and I would encourage you all to look at it. Looking for feedback. Limited to one or two questions. If you want anything changed let me know and I can make the changes at any time. I will be gone for a month starting May 29th. Will be on an archaeology dig around Rome.

Rich T. I actually did the survey using the QR code to make sure everything was working. Pretty easily done. Thank you Sam for coming and all the information.

Rich T. Any other questions or comments? None - - -. I will entertain a motion to adjourn.

Horace D. I will make the Motion to adjourn. 2nd by Susan L.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:40 p.m. Next Meeting - - June 10, 2026

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