



# WAITSFIELD PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA

**July 6, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.**

**THE PLANNING COMMISSION WILL BE HOLDING A HYBRID MEETING. THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND IN PERSON AT WAITSFIELD TOWN HALL OR REMOTE VIA ZOOM WITH TELEPHONE AND/OR VIDEO ACCESS. THOSE PARTICIPATING MAY SPEAK DURING THE DESIGNATED PERIODS.**

To join the meeting remotely, use this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81521313898?pwd=cTF2WStvWGhpdzZ3N0poQVd2Y1pHZz09>  
**Meeting ID:** 815 2131 3898 **Password:** 792111  
**Or call:** 1 929 205 6099

**Planning Commission**  
 Kevin Anderson  
 Robert Cook  
 AnnMarie Harmon, Chair  
 Alice Peal, Vice Chair  
 Steve Shea  
 Brian Voigt

**Planning & Zoning Administrator**  
 J. B. Weir

**Town Administrator**  
 Annie Decker-Dell'Isola

**Town Clerk**  
 Jennifer Peterson

**Town Treasurer**  
*Vacant*

**Waitsfield Town Office**  
 4144 Main Street  
 Waitsfield, VT 05673  
 (802) 496-2218  
 www.waitsfieldvt.us

- 1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**
- 2. REVISIONS TO AGENDA, IF ANY (5 +/- min)**
- 3. PUBLIC FORUM (5 +/- min)**
- 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: (15 +/- min)**
  - a. June 15, 2021
  - b. June 22, 2021
- 5. UPDATE ON HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE (15 +/- min)**
- 6. UPDATE ON THE VILLAGE CENTER DESIGNATION MAP (10 +/- min)**
- 7. WORK SESSION ON ENERGY CHAPTER OF THE TOWN PLAN (60 +/- min)**
  - a. Scenic Roads as Possible Constraints (p. 21). Do we have the language right?
  - b. Tier 2 Forest Blocks as Unsuitable Areas (p. 22). Do we have the language right?
  - c. Other comments/questions on the current draft.
  - d. Permission to accept changes (minus placeholders for future data/analysis from CVRPC) and update date on draft.
  - e. Permission to send revised chapter to CVRPC for preliminary review along with request for updated maps and data.
- 8. OTHER BUSINESS AND BOARD/ COMMITTEE MEETINGS (5 +/- min)**
- 9. ADJOURNMENT**

## WAITSFIELD PLANNING COMMISSION

### **DRAFT - Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, June 15, 2021**

**Held via Zoom Meeting (Video Call)**

1. **CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL: 7:04PM.**
  - a. MEMBERS PRESENT: Alice Peal, Brian Voigt, Steve Shea, Kevin Anderson, Bob Cook, and AnnMarie Harmon (arrived ~7:15PM)
  - b. MEMBERS ABSENT: None.
  - c. STAFF PRESENT: Annie Decker-Dell’Isola
  - d. OTHERS PRESENT: Kati Gallagher (Mad River Valley Planning District), Curt Lindberg and Phil Huffman (Waitsfield Conservation Commission), and Jamey Fidel
2. **REVISIONS TO AGENDA, IF ANY:**
  - a. None.
3. **PUBLIC FORUM:**
  - a. None.
4. **WORK SESSION WITH CONSERVATION COMMISSION**
  - a. Mr. Voigt recapped updates to language changes and policy revisions to Chapters 11 and 12.
    - i. Mr. Voigt will reorganize policies and tasks thematically to read cleaner.
  - b. Mr. Voigt explained that the primary conservation areas are mostly encompassed in Tier 1 blocks, thus overlap with forest blocks maps is not a concern.
  - c. “Map X” refers to the mapping of Tiers 1-3 (yet to be named).
  - d. Section 11-H Forestry Resources: discussion of appropriate language to balance support for sustainable logging practices as economic development and recognition that the municipality can’t require specific practices.
    - i. Suggested edit to read “...such as a consulting forester and/or the Washington County Forester ...”; consultant foresters may have more time and flexibility to work with landowners, while the County Forester may be cautious regarding consultant accuracy.
  - e. Environmentally Sensitive Areas: Flood Plains & Flood Hazard Areas
    - i. Expanded Community Report from Flood Ready Vermont can be updated after the Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP) update has been finalized by the Selectboard.
  - f. Clarification that there is no intent to prohibit development in specific areas as a part of Act 171; for instance, the Energy Chapter specifies “unsuitable areas.”
    - i. Enhanced energy planning is specifically asking for unsuitable areas, whereas Act 171 aims to consider how growth should occur while minimizing forest fragmentation. Additionally, single family homes are developed by right whereas energy development is less secure.

- g. Suggestion to delete 11.L-24, which provides an exception for Irasville Village District to encroach into wetlands with limited ecological functions; Commission in agreement. Would be settled between property owner and the State.
  - h. 11.L-43: working group added language related to facilitation of movement of aquatic and terrestrial wildlife across bridges and culverts.
  - i. Considered need for a policy specific to the impacts of recreational trails on forest blocks:
    - i. Act 171 statute states that trails are not a fragmenting feature and are seen as a compatible activity.
    - ii. If identified as a municipal concern, the Planning Commission can address separately in the recreation section of the Town Plan.
  - j. 11.L-18: working group did not tackle as it is not specific to Act 171; Mr. Voigt felt unnecessary to include since it falls under the jurisdiction of the State.
  - k. 11.L-22: “Route 100 specific policy...” intent was to identify Rt. 100 crossings as a priority for restoration if opportunity presented. Suggested language change to make simpler.
  - l. 11.L-34: “two feet above the base flood elevation” is inconsistent with one foot in current zoning. Suggested language change to better reflect flooding realities.
  - m. Planning Commission commended Conservation Commission and working group on Act 171 Work.
  - n. Discussed minor updates to Land Use chapter.
    - i. Will circle back on “11.xxx new Task about housing and Act 171 mapping” with Planning Commission housing sub-committee.
  - o. Next steps:
    - i. Mr. Voigt will finalize work, including updating new maps.
    - ii. A list of substantive changes (included changes made in other chapters) will be created and sent to the Selectboard; public hearings will be held; then sent to CVRPC to sign off.
    - iii. Current timeline looking to end of 2021.
- 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
- a. April 20, 2021
    - i. Minutes reviewed by Planning Commission and Robin Morris of the Waitfield Water Commission.
    - ii. Amend to include note that the Water Commission stated the ARPA funding would be best spent updating the previous wastewater study rather than extending or connecting to the water system.
    - iii. Mr. Cook moved to accept minutes as amended; Ms. Peal seconded. All in favor.
  - b. June 1, 2021
    - i. Mr. Cook moved to accept; Ms. Peal seconded. All in favor.
- 6. TOWN PLAN AMENDMENT/VILLAGE CENTER DESIGNATION**
- a. Ms. Peal provided summary of Waitsfield’s Village Center Designation status:

- b. Language needs to be incorporated into the town plan as to why the designation is desired; Joshua Schwartz (MRVPD) has provided suggested language for Ch. 5.
  - i. Waitsfield's Village Center Designation renewal is up in 2027, but the next town plan update is 2029; would be most efficient to make needed updates now instead of waiting.
- c. The Town Administrator contacted Chris Damiani (former Waitsfield PZA), who made the 2019 maps and found original files. Kati Gallagher (MRVPD) and Mr. Voigt will finalize map updates.

## **7. UPDATE ON ENERGY CHAPTER**

- c. Mr. Anderson explained that placeholders were included to discuss further:
  - i. Scenic roads as a possible constraint;
  - ii. Appropriate language regarding forest blocks;
  - iii. Repeat the land availability analysis – CVRPC will conduct;
- d. Mr. Anderson confirmed with Clare Rock (CVRPC) that as long as the town plan is internally consistent, bylaws that aren't protective of unsuitable land don't need to be followed.
- e. Confirmed with Clare that we are on the right track
- f. Next steps: Planning Commission members will provide feedback on Energy Chapter draft at 7/6/21 meeting.
  - i. Outstanding question: are there specific guidelines for addressing scenic road constraints?
  - ii. Mr. Cook will be out 7/6 & 7/20.

## **8. OTHER BUSINESS AND BOARD/ COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

- a. Status of the PZA Hiring Subcommittee
  - 1. The Town Administrator explained that three candidates have been narrowed in; a special meeting will be held potentially next Tuesday 6/22/21 for the Planning Commission to recommend to the Selectboard. Following this time-line, the Selectboard will consider the final candidate on 6/28, with onboarding beginning as soon as early-mid July.
    - a. Mr. Voigt will be unavailable for the 6/22 special meeting, Bob is unsure.
    - b. The Planning Commission will schedule a 7:00-7:15PM 6/22 special meeting.
- a. Letter to Selectboard on status of Planning Commission work for semi-regular update.
  - 1. New PZA can complete letter with assistance from the Town Administrator, MRVPD, and Planning Commission members as needed. Will plan to submit to the Selectboard July-August.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

- a. Mr. Voigt moved to adjourn meeting at 9:05PM. Mr. Shea seconded. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kati Gallagher, Mad River Valley Planning District

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**Respectfully submitted,** Kati Gallagher, Mad River Valley Planning District

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Hemmerick, Jacob** <[Jacob.Hemmerick@vermont.gov](mailto:Jacob.Hemmerick@vermont.gov)>

Date: Wed, Jun 30, 2021, 4:15 PM

Subject: [VPA] 2021 Legislative Revisions Affecting Planning and Revitalization

To: <[VPA@list.uvm.edu](mailto:VPA@list.uvm.edu)>

Vermont's General Assembly enacted several laws and amendments affecting state, municipal, and regional planning during the extraordinary 2021 pandemic session. As in past years, we are issuing **THIS MEMO** to inform local and regional officials of changes in statute and funding opportunities.

<https://accd.vermont.gov/sites/accdnew/files/documents/CD/CPR/StatutoryChanges2021.pdf>

The [Vermont Statutes Online](#) are typically updated in October and do not include the prior session's changes until then. Links provided below connect to the bills as enacted.

In compiling these updates, we owe thanks to the [Vermont Planners Association](#)'s legislative team, especially Alex Weinhagen, and to the [Vermont League of Cities and Towns](#)' advocacy team (VLCT) for their companion legislative updates. We also value the [Vermont Association of Planning & Development Agencies](#)' work to inform significant legislation for recovery.

The year ahead presents unprecedented funding opportunities for planning and development stakeholders, and the important work of community leaders in the next year will shape Vermont's future. The Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) is thankful for the efforts happening throughout the state to recover from the pandemic and build thriving communities.

Thank you.

**Jacob Hemmerick**, AICP

Planning & Policy Manager | Vermont Department of Housing & Community Development | Community Planning & Revitalization

1 National Life Drive, Davis Bldg, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor | Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

802-828-5249

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