



MEMORANDUM

TO: Town Plan Review Committee

FROM: Eric Vorwald, AICP
Senior Planner

RE: **City of Montpelier Master Plan Update**

DATE: April 10, 2018

On March 5, 2018, the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) received a request from the City of Montpelier to review and consider regional approval of their updated master plan (town plan) and planning process. As per the statutory requirements under 24 VSA 117 Section §4350, the CVRPC shall review and approve the master plan if it finds the plan:

- Contains each of the required elements listed in 24 VSA 117 Section §4382
- Is consistent with the required goals established in 24 VSA 117 Section §4302
- Is compatible with the Regional Plan and the approved plans of other municipalities in the Region

The City of Montpelier's existing master plan was readopted in September of 2015. That plan was updated and readopted by the Montpelier City Council on December 20, 2017. Approval of the 2017 municipal development plan by the CVRPC would ensure the City of Montpelier remains eligible for grant funding and other municipal assistance provided by the state.

Overall, the City of Montpelier has continued to update and amend their master plan as conditions and community priorities change. This latest amendment addresses future development areas, updates data, and continues to reflect the City's future development goals. The 2017 City of Montpelier Master Plan includes all the statutory requirements that have been adopted by the Vermont Legislature since the plan was last adopted in 2015. This includes discussion of flood resiliency; inclusion of support to maintain their state designated areas including growth center and downtown; and an implementation program that will extend the life of the plan from five years to eight years.

In general, the 2017 Montpelier Master Plan supports the community's vision of having a vibrant, active, and pedestrian oriented downtown supported by stable neighborhoods. This vision is supported throughout the plan's goals and implementation strategies. Furthermore, the plan supports its status as the state capital and actively works to address the on-going surges in population that occur due to legislative sessions and state employment activities.

In order to ensure the statutory requirements of the 2017 City of Montpelier Master Plan have been met, CVRPC staff completed a detailed analysis including page references to each of the required elements and statewide planning goals in the plan. This analysis is intended to assist the Town Plan Review Committee identify any comments they might want to discuss during their review. If the Town Plan Review Committee agrees that the 2017 City of Montpelier Master Plan adequately addresses all the required plan components, a recommendation of approval should be forwarded to the Board of Commissioners for their consideration.

As part of this review, CVRPC staff has identified strengths and opportunities in the plan update for consideration in future plan updates. Overall the 2017 City of Montpelier Master Plan includes detailed information regarding the needs of the community. There are specific goals and recommended strategies included with each section that identify the priorities for the community, how they will be achieved, and which entity will be responsible. The plan also includes additional maps to illustrate the various conditions that exist within the City of Montpelier.

While the plan is consistent with statutory requirements, one area where the plan could be improved is additional detail in the implementation program related to priority tasks. Specifically, there is no timeline associated with the actions other than occurring within the next eight years. With that said, the plan clearly indicates that the City developed this document with a 100 year time horizon. Overall however, there are limited negative aspects of the City of Montpelier as the document outlines a clear path forward for the community to achieve its identified vision.

One item to note is that the City's future land use plan (including the map) may be viewed as inconsistent with region's future land use map. Specifically, the future land use map for the City of Montpelier identifies a smart growth district that extends into the eastern part of the city along the Winooski River. The Region's future land use map notes this area as Rural. While the map may show an inconsistency, it is only a visual representation of the goals and policies of the regional plan. The specific goals and policies in the plan discuss coordinating development in areas where services exist. In the case of Montpelier, services, including water and wastewater, are already located in this area. Therefore, the City of Montpelier's plan is consistent with the goals and policies of the Central Vermont Regional Plan.

During the Regional approval and confirmation process, specified in § 4350 of the Act, the regional planning commission is required to assess town plans and the process whereby they are developed according to the criteria of the Act. Sections of relevant statute are quoted at each question.

Required Elements § 4382		Met	Not Met
1	Statement of Objectives, Policies, Programs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Land Use Plan and Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Transportation Plan and Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Utility and Facility Plan and Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Rare Natural Resources/Historic Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Educational Facilities Plan and Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Implementation Program	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Compatibility Statement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Energy Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Housing Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Economic Development Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Flood Resiliency Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

State Planning Goals § 4302		Met	Not Met
1	Compact village centers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Economy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Natural and Historic Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Quality of air, water, wildlife, and land resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Efficient use of Energy and Renewable Energy Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Recreation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Agriculture and Forest Industries	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Use of Resources and Earth Extraction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Safe and Affordable Housing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Public Facilities and services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Child Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Flood Resiliency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

TOWN PLAN REQUIRED ELEMENTS

Title 24 Chapter 117: Municipal and Regional Planning and Development

24 V.S.A. § 4382. The plan for a municipality

(a) A plan for a municipality may be consistent with the goals established in section 4302 of this title and compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the region and with the regional plan and shall include the following:

(1) A statement of objectives, policies and programs of the municipality to guide the future growth and development of land, public services and facilities, and to protect the environment.

Met
Pages: 13 thru 23

Comments:

The introduction thoroughly discusses the process and principles that were established to guide the development of this plan including growth, public services, and environmental protection.

(2) A land use plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective land uses, indicating those areas proposed for forests, recreation, agriculture (using the agricultural lands identification process established in 6 V.S.A. § 8), residence, commerce, industry, public and semi-public uses and open spaces reserved for flood plain, wetland protection, or other conservation purposes; and setting forth the present and prospective location, amount, intensity and character of such land uses and the appropriate timing or sequence of land development activities in relation to the provision of necessary community facilities and service;

Met
Pages: 81 thru 89

MAPS
Present Land Use Plan ✓
Prospective Land Use Plan ☒

Comments:

The section on infrastructure and the built environment discusses existing land uses and outlines each of the primary neighborhoods in the City. It also discusses future land use needs in the context of infrastructure and how to maintain, evolve, and transform specific areas of the community. The future land use map identifies future growth areas to further reflect the needs of the community.

(3) A transportation plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective transportation and circulation facilities showing existing and proposed highways and streets by type and character of improvement, and where pertinent, parking facilities, transit routes, terminals, bicycle paths and trails, scenic roads, airports, railroads and port facilities, and other similar facilities or uses, with indications of priority of need;

Met Pages: 89 thru 114
MAP Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Comments:

The plan includes extensive discussion on transportation issues including transit, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian facilities, and parking. This is framed in the context that there is a large daytime population increase due to state employees therefore infrastructure needs to accommodate the population influx without overbuilding the facilities.

(4) A utility and facility plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective community facilities and public utilities showing existing and proposed educational, recreational and other public sites, buildings and facilities, including hospitals, libraries, power generating plants and transmission lines, water supply, sewage disposal, refuse disposal, storm drainage and other similar facilities and activities, and recommendations to meet future needs for community facilities and services, with indications of priority of need, costs and method of financing;

Met Pages: multiple sections of the plan
MAP Utility and Facility <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Comments:

Public utilities are thoroughly discussed including all aspects noted in statute. This information is included in multiple sections of the plan including section 3 related to the natural environment and section 4 on infrastructure and the built environment. The Plan acknowledges that in order to maintain development density in the downtown core, infrastructure needs to be continually upgraded and maintained including water, wastewater, and, more importantly, stormwater. Utilities and facilities are noted on multiple maps throughout the plan.

(5) A statement of policies on the preservation of rare and irreplaceable natural areas, scenic and historic features and resources;

Met Pages: 31 thru 80

Comments:

Even though Montpelier is the state capital and has a densely populated urban core, there are significant natural, historic, and scenic features throughout the community. This information is thoroughly described and discussed throughout the plan primarily in section 3. One notable area is the North Branch Nature Center which is located in the northern part of the city along the north branch of the Winooski River.

(6) An educational facilities plan consisting of a map and statement of present and projected uses and the local public school system;

Comments:

The plan discusses the multiple options for education in the city including the public school system, Vermont College of Fine Arts, and the New England Culinary Institute. A map is also included on page 39 that identifies the educational facilities.

Met

Pages: 206 thru 208

MAP

Educational Facility

(7) A recommended program for the implementation of the objectives of the development plan;

Comments:

Specific implementation actions are included with each section to address the various elements of the plan. Additionally, a discussion of implementation is included in section 8.

Met

240 thru 242

(8) A statement indicating how the plan relates to development trends and plans of adjacent municipalities, areas and the region developed under this title;

Comments:

The City acknowledges and discusses the fact that Montpelier is a regional hub including the state offices that occupy a portion of the downtown. It also discusses the cooperative efforts to maintain consistency with adjacent municipalities such as Berlin and Barre City to ensure the position as a regional growth center is carefully maintained.

Met

Pages: 27 thru 30

(9) An energy plan, including an analysis of energy resources, needs, scarcities, costs and problems within the municipality, a statement of policy on the conservation of energy, including programs, such as thermal integrity standards for buildings, to implement that policy, a statement of policy on the development of renewable energy resources, a statement of policy on patterns and densities of land use likely to result in conservation of energy;

Comments:

The plan discusses energy in detail. At this time, the City is not pursuing substantial deference therefore the additional mapping of resource areas is not required. A future update that incorporates this information may be considered for substantial deference.

Met

Pages: 124 thru 129

(10) A housing element that shall include a recommended program for addressing low and moderate income persons' housing needs as identified by the regional planning commission pursuant to subdivision 4348a(a)(9) of this title. The program should account for permitted accessory dwelling units, as defined in subdivision 4412(1)(E) of this title, which provide affordable housing.

Met

Pages: 114 thru 119

Comments:

Housing is adequately addressed including information on affordability, accessory dwellings, market conditions, and similar housing related issues. The plan also notes that housing should be located near services to increase affordability. The plan also discusses the housing distribution plan as noted in the 2016 Central Vermont Regional Plan.

(11) An economic development element that describes present economic conditions and the location, type, and scale of desired economic development, and identifies policies, projects, and programs necessary to foster economic growth.

Met

Pages: 150 thru 184

Comments:

The plan thoroughly discusses the economy and includes information employment noting that Montpelier is a regional employment center. The plan estimates that the daytime population of Montpelier reaches close to 15,000 persons due to the employment base. It also discusses employment, unemployment, and the sectors of the economy that are trending in the City.

(12)(A) A flood resilience plan that:

(i) identifies flood hazard and fluvial erosion hazard areas, based on river corridor maps provided by the Secretary of Natural Resources pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 1428(a) or maps recommended by the Secretary, and designates those areas to be protected, including floodplains, river corridors, land adjacent to streams, wetlands, and upland forests, to reduce the risk of flood damage to infrastructure and improved property; and

(ii) recommends policies and strategies to protect the areas identified and designated under subdivision (12)(A)(i) of this subsection and to mitigate risks to public safety, critical infrastructure, historic structures, and municipal investments.

(B) A flood resilience plan may reference an existing local hazard mitigation plan approved under 44 C.F.R. § 201.6.

Met

Pages: 34 thru 35

Comments:

Flood resiliency is discussed and the plan notes that Montpelier is one of three communities participating in the Community Rating System (CRS). The plan also includes mapping of river corridor and flood hazards to ensure information is identified. Finally, the Planning Commission proposed

additional river corridor and river hazard areas to limit future developments along the identified corridors to limit impacts from future flood events.

GOALS AND STANDARDS OF REVIEW

GOALS

24 VSA § 4302

(a) General purposes . . .

(b) It is also the intent of the legislature that municipalities, regional planning commissions and state agencies shall engage in a continuing planning process that will further the following goals:

(1) To establish a coordinated, comprehensive planning process and policy framework to guide decisions by municipalities, regional planning commissions, and state agencies.

(2) To encourage citizen participation at all levels of the planning process, and to assure that decisions shall be made at the most local level possible commensurate with their impact.

(3) To consider the use of resources and the consequences of growth and development for the region and the state, as well as the community in which it takes place.

(4) To encourage and assist municipalities to work creatively together to develop and implement plans.

(c) In addition, this chapter shall be used to further the following specific goals:

Goal 1:

To plan development so as to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside.

Consistent

Pages: 81 thru 89

(A) Intensive residential development should be encouraged primarily in areas related to community centers, and strip development along highways should be discouraged.

(B) Economic growth should be encouraged in locally designated growth areas, or employed to revitalize existing village and urban centers, or both.

(C) Public investments, including construction or expansion of infrastructure, should reinforce the general character and planned growth patterns of the area.

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

Development is encouraged in the existing neighborhoods, the downtown, or where infrastructure is planned and exists to support growth and density in order to limit the impacts on rural areas.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why :

Goal 2:

To provide a strong and diverse economy that provides satisfying and rewarding job opportunities and that maintains high environmental standards, and to expand economic opportunities in areas with high unemployment or low per capita incomes.

Consistent
Pages: 150 thru 184

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

The economy and the job market is exhaustively discussed in the plan. There is a specific section related to “green jobs” to address the environmental aspect of employment in the City.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why :

Goal 3:

To broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities sufficient to ensure the full realization of the abilities of all Vermonters.

Consistent
Pages: 206 thru 208

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

The plan notes existing facilities and options for educational opportunities, including adult, vocational, and continuing educational options that are located within the City. .

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why :

Goal 4:

To provide for safe, convenient, economic and energy efficient transportation systems that respect the integrity of the natural environment, including public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicyclers.

Consistent
Pages: 89 thru 114

(A) Highways, air, rail and other means of transportation should be mutually supportive, balanced and integrated.

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

The plan identifies bicycle, pedestrian, and transit as critical infrastructure for future development potential throughout the community and the need to balance the daytime population increase with the needs of the city’s residents.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why :

Goal 5:

To identify, protect and preserve important natural and historic features of the Vermont landscape including:

- (A) Significant natural and fragile areas;**
- (B) Outstanding water resources, including lakes, rivers, aquifers, shorelands and wetlands;**
- (C) Significant scenic roads, waterways and views;**
- (D) Important historic structures, sites, or districts, archaeological sites and archaeologically sensitive areas**

Consistent

Pages: 31 thru 80 and 81 thru 89

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

The plan discusses and inventories the existing resources which is significant due to the geographic location along the Winooski River, and the historic context as the state capital.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why :

Goal 6:

To maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife and land resources.

Consistent

Pages: 31 thru 80

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

Information is contained in the plan that supports maintaining and improving the land resources that are important to the City of Montpelier and protecting the natural and fragile wildlife, water, land, and air resources in the community. .

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why :

Goal 7:

To encourage the efficient use of energy and the development of renewable energy resources.

Consistent

Pages: 124 thru 129

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal:

Energy needs are discussed and the plan outlines information related to use and greenhouse gas emissions for consistency with the state's comprehensive energy plan.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why:

Goal 8:

To maintain and enhance recreational opportunities for Vermont residents and visitors.

Consistent

Pages: 45 thru 48

- (A) Growth should not significantly diminish the value and availability of outdoor recreational activities.**
- (B) Public access to noncommercial outdoor recreational opportunities, such as lakes and hiking trails, should be identified, provided, and protected wherever appropriate.**

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

Recreation, including the city parks, are well documented and inventoried in the plan. These public facilities ensure on-going access to these open spaces. Maintaining the parks and recreation facilities in the city is a priority that is reflected in the plan.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why :

Goal 9:

To encourage and strengthen agricultural and forest industries.

Consistent

Pages: 52 & 160 thru 162

- (A) Strategies to protect long-term viability of agricultural and forest lands should be encouraged and should include maintaining low overall density.**
- (B) The manufacture and marketing of value added agricultural and forest products should be encouraged.**
- (C) The use of locally-grown food products should be encouraged.**
- (D) Sound forest and agricultural management practices should be encouraged.**
- (E) Public investment should be planned so as to minimize development pressure on agricultural and forest land.**

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

To the extent that agriculture and forestry practices exist in the City of Montpelier, they are identified as valuable resources to be protected. This is primarily noted through agricultural soils. Local foods are also discussed and maintaining areas to produce foods locally is identified as a priority for the plan.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why :

Goal 10:

To provide for the wise and efficient use of Vermont's natural resources and to facilitate the appropriate extraction of earth resources and the proper restoration and preservation of the aesthetic qualities of the area.

Consistent
Pages: 22 & 77

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

To the extent that extraction exists in the City of Montpelier, it is noted and goals are identified to address the responsible practices to ensure aesthetics are preserved.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why :

Goal 11:

To ensure the availability of safe and affordable housing for all Vermonters.

Consistent
Pages: 114 thru 119

- (A) Housing should be encouraged to meet the needs of a diversity of social and income groups in each Vermont community, particularly for those citizens of low and moderate income.**
- (B) New and rehabilitated housing should be safe, sanitary, located conveniently to employment and commercial centers, and coordinated with the provision of necessary public facilities and utilities.**
- (C) Sites for multi-family and manufactured housing should readily available in locations similar to those generally used for single-family conventional dwellings.**
- (D) Accessory apartments within or attached to single family residences which provide affordable housing in close proximity to cost-effective care and supervision for relatives or disabled or elderly persons should be allowed.**

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

The plan adequately addresses this goal and includes information on all the above aspects including accessory dwellings, multifamily housing, and encourages housing density to be located near services to increase affordability.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why :

Goal 12:

To plan for, finance and provide an efficient system of public facilities and services to meet future needs.

Consistent

Pages: Multiple sections of the plan.

(A) Public facilities and services should include fire and police protection, emergency medical services, schools, water supply and sewage and solid waste disposal.

(B) The rate of growth should not exceed the ability of the community and the area to provide facilities and services.

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

Public facilities are adequately discussed including the available capacity related to water and wastewater, as well as emergency services and solid waste needs.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why :

Goal 13:

To ensure the availability of safe and affordable child care and to integrate child care issues into the planning process, including child care financing, infrastructure, business assistance for child care providers, and child care work force development.

Consistent

Pages: 202 thru 208

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

Childcare, including a discussion and inventory of providers, is included in the plan. This is noted in the context of Montpelier being a regional employment center so childcare associated with in-migration of employees during the day is a common link.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why :

Goal 14:

To encourage flood resilient communities.

- (A) **New development in identified flood hazard, fluvial erosion, and river corridor protection areas should be avoided. If new development is to be built in such areas, it should not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion.**
- (B) **The protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion should be encouraged.**
- (C) **Flood emergency preparedness and response planning should be encouraged.**

Consistent

Pages: 34 thru 35

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

The plan discusses flood resiliency and notes that outreach efforts through the Community Rating System program and other regulatory efforts from the Planning Commission are helping to address potential hazards and limit future impacts from flooding.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why :

STANDARD OF REVIEW

24 V.S.A. § 4302(f)

(1) As used in this chapter, "consistent with the goals" requires substantial progress toward attainment of the goals established in this section, unless the planning body determines that a particular goal is not relevant or attainable. If such a determination is made, the planning body shall identify the goal in the plan and describe the situation, explain why the goal is not relevant or attainable, and indicate what measures should be taken to mitigate any adverse effects of not making substantial progress toward that goal. The determination of relevance or attainability shall be subject to review as part of a consistency determination under this chapter.

(2) As used in this chapter, for one plan to be "compatible with" another, the plan in question, as implemented, will not significantly reduce the desired effect of the implementation of the other plan. If a plan, as implemented, will significantly reduce the desired effect of the other plan, the plan may be considered compatible if it includes the following:

- (A) a statement that identifies the ways that it will significantly reduce the desired effect of the other plan;

(B) an explanation of why any incompatible portion of the plan in question is essential to the desired effect of the plan as a whole;

(C) an explanation of why, with respect to any incompatible portion of the plan in question, there is no reasonable alternative way to achieve the desired effect of the plan, and

(D) an explanation of how any incompatible portion of the plan in question has been structured to mitigate its detrimental effects on the implementation of the other plan.

24 V.S.A. § 4350. Review and consultation regarding municipal planning effort

(a) A regional planning commission shall consult with its municipalities with respect to the municipalities' planning efforts, ascertaining the municipalities' needs as individual municipalities and as neighbors in a region, and identifying the assistance that ought to be provided by the regional planning commission. As a part of this consultation, the regional planning commission, after public notice, shall review the planning process of its member municipalities at least twice during an eight-year period, or more frequently on request of the municipality, and shall so confirm when a municipality:

(1) is engaged in a continuing planning process that, within a reasonable time, will result in a plan which is consistent with the goals contained in section 4302 of this title; and

(2) is maintaining its efforts to provide local funds for municipal and regional planning purposes.

(b)(1) As part of the consultation process, the commission shall consider whether a municipality has adopted a plan. In order to obtain or retain confirmation of the planning process after January 1, 1996, a municipality must have an approved plan. A regional planning commission shall review and approve plans of its member municipalities, when approval is requested and warranted. Each review shall include a public hearing which is noticed at least 15 days in advance by posting in the office of the municipal clerk and at least one public place within the municipality and by publication in a newspaper or newspapers of general publication in the region affected. The commission shall approve a plan if it finds that the plan:

(A) is consistent with the goals established in section 4302 of this title;

(B) is compatible with its regional plan;

(C) is compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the region; and

(D) contains all the elements included in subdivisions 4382(a)(1)-(10) of this title.

The following are procedures for Regional Planning Commission review of town plans. The first procedure pertains to review of town plan re-adoptions and town plan amendments. The second is an alternate procedure for review of town plan amendments. For review of amendments, it is up to the discretion of the Regional Planning Commission as to which procedure will be used.

Town Plan Review & Approval Process

The following may be used for town plan re-adoption reviews as well as town plan amendment reviews

1. The regional planning commission (RPC) receives a request for town plan approval.
2. If the staff review reveals a flaw that would preclude RPC approval, the town will be notified. It is the town's option as to whether they want a final decision on the plan or if the plan should be withdrawn from the approval process.
3. Staff comments, including draft findings and recommendations, will be provided to the committee or board given responsibility by the RPC's bylaws for town plan approval.
4. The RPC's public hearing will be held before the RPC makes its final decision on the plan.
5. In all cases the RPC will take final action on the plan approval request within 60 days of its receipt.

Town Plan Amendment Review Process

This is an alternative procedure for town plan amendment reviews

1. The regional planning commission (RPC) receives a request to review an amendment to the town plan.
2. Staff comments, including draft findings and recommendations, will be provided to the committee or board given responsibility by the RPC's bylaws for town plan approval.
3. The town will be notified whether or not the amendment may be approved within the context of the current regional approval of the town plan, or if the amendment constitutes a material change to the plan that is beyond the scope of the current regional approval.
4. If the amendment constitutes a change to the plan that is beyond the scope of the current regional approval, the town will be given the option of submitting the amended plan for regional approval.

**CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
TOWN PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE
February 13, 2018
MINUTES**

The regular meeting of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission's Town Plan Review Committee was held on Tuesday, February 13, 2018 at the Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce located at 33 Stewart Road in Berlin, Vermont.

Committee Members Present:

Bill Arrand, Vice-Chair –	Town of Worcester
Jerry D'Amico –	Town of Roxbury (arrived at 6:15pm)
Ron Krauth –	Town of Middlesex
Janet Shatney, Chair –	Barre City

Committee Members Absent:

Ivan Shadis –	Town of Marshfield
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Others Present:

Steve Shea –	Town of Waitsfield Planning Commission
Duncan Brines –	Town of Waitsfield Planning Commission
Don La Haye –	CVRPC Representative for the Town of Waitsfield
Eric Vorwald, AICP –	CVRPC Senior Planner

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Shatney at 6:10pm.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

No changes were suggested.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No members of the public were present for comments.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE WAITSFIELD MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Mr. Krauth made a motion to open a public hearing on the Waitsfield Municipal Development Plan which was seconded by Mr. Arrand. The Committee voted 3 – 0 to open the hearing. The hearing was opened at 6:13pm and Ms. Shatney called for any comments from the public. No members of the public were present. Mr. Arrand made a motion to close the public hearing on the Waitsfield Municipal Development Plan which was seconded by Mr. Krauth. The Committee voted 3 – 0 to close the hearing. The hearing was closed at 6:14pm.

DISCUSSION OF THE WAITSFIELD MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Mr. Vorwald provided an introduction to the Waitsfield Municipal Development Plan update and noted several items in the staff report. These items specifically related to implementation and the overall plan itself. Mr.

Shea provided an overview of the plan from the Town's perspective and noted that the base policy framework was similar to the previous plan as it is still valid. He also noted that there was a focus on housing and flood resiliency, which included recent updates to zoning for fluvial erosion hazards.

The Committee then discussed implementation of the plan related to a comment in the staff report. Specifically, Mr. Vorwald noted that including metrics to measure the success of implementation would strengthen this section. Mr. Shea noted that many of the actions listed in the Implementation Program required actions by the Selectboard. Mr. Krauth noted that it may be good to engage with the Selectboard early in these processes to help ensure they stay informed and can take actions expeditiously when requests are sent from the Planning Commission.

Finally, it was noted that the Town of Waitsfield intends to update their plan in the near future to address energy planning and pursuing substantial deference. This led to a discussion regarding a plan update versus a plan amendment. It was noted that if the energy section were to be updated, the plan would need to be brought into compliance and would require conformance with Act 171 related to forest integrity.

With no additional comments or questions, Mr. Krauth made a motion to recommend regional approval of the Waitsfield Municipal Development Plan and confirmation of their planning process. This motion was seconded by Mr. Arrand. With no further discussion, the vote was 4 – 0 in favor of the motion.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Shatney noted that minutes from the September 26, 2017 meeting were included in the packet and asked for any corrections, changes, or amendments. With none offered, Mr. Arrand made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 26, 2017 meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Krauth. With no other discussion, the vote was 4 – 0 in favor of the motion.

ADJOURNMENT

With no additional business to discuss, Mr. Krauth made a motion to adjourn the meeting that was seconded by Mr. Arrand. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 6:42pm.