

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Draft MINUTES
July 8, 2025

Commissioners:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Barre City	Janet Shatney, Sec/Treas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moretown	David Stapleton
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vacant	<input type="checkbox"/>	Joyce Manchester, Alt
<input type="checkbox"/> Barre Town	Alice Farrell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Northfield	Royal DeLegge
<input type="checkbox"/>	Phil Cecchini	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jeff Schulz, Alt
<input type="checkbox"/> Berlin	Robert Wernecke	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Orange	Lee Cattaneo, Vice Chair
<input type="checkbox"/>	Karla Nuissl, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/> Plainfield	Paula Emery
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cabot	Brittany Butler	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bob Atchinson, Alt.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Calais	John Brabant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Roxbury	Jerry D'Amico
<input type="checkbox"/>	Melanie Kehne, Alt.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Waitsfield	Alice Peal
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Duxbury	David Wendt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Don La Haye, Alt.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vacant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Warren	Jim Crafts
<input type="checkbox"/> E. Montpelier	Zoe Christiansen	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adam Zawistowski, Alt.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clarice Cutler, Alt.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Washington	Peter Carbee, Chair
<input type="checkbox"/> Fayston	Andrew McNealus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Waterbury	Doug Greason
<input type="checkbox"/> Marshfield	Vacant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Williamstown	Richard Turner
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Middlesex	Ron Krauth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacqueline Higgins, Alt.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mitch Osiecki, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/> Woodbury	Michael Gray
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Montpelier	Mike Miller	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Worcester	Bill Arrand

Staff: Christian Meyer, Nancy Chartrand, Niki Sabado, Lorraine Banbury, Sam Lash

Guests: Stephen Whitaker, Montpelier resident; Thomas Weiss, Montpelier resident; Peter Kelman, Montpelier resident

Call to Order: Chair Carbee called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm, a roll call was completed, and a quorum was present.

Adjustments to the Agenda: None

Public Comments: Chair Carbee advised there would be a three-minute time limit per person during public comment. Peter Kelmen noted he is a resident of Montpelier and has spent a lot of time on the plan since 2018 when he was on the Montpelier Housing Task Force. He has recommendations for staff to include as suggestions to Montpelier. He believes the plan should be professionally copy edited and thoroughly proofread for errors. He requested that all maps in printed and web based version clearly show their source and date; and prior to copy editing and proof reading, inconsistencies between story maps and implementation plans in additional materials must be resolved and implementation strategies while they are prioritized are not prioritized in a visually clear way. He believes someone with a design sense needs to make clear what are the highest priorities in each of the chapters, and all strategies be put in an addendum to distinguish between old and new strategies. He also suggests that the printed version be the official version, not the online version. He hopes staff can include this information in comment even with conditional approval of the plan.

Stephen Whitaker believes the process and commission needs to take a step back and really review. He believes statutorily the entire commission is supposed to hold the hearing and not the subcommittee. He stated

he takes issue with a draft resolution being in the packet. He believes the plan should be disapproved and believes the commission is doing a disservice to Montpelier by letting the Committee hold the public hearing vs. the Board of Commissioners. He requests the Board do their homework before they vote on it. He believes the plan is insufficient. He believes there was a charade of a public process and believes the way the regional planning commission is handling, including staff, is contrary to statute; and that the process in statute needs to be implemented, not rubber-stamped. He noted many people in Montpelier don't participate because it doesn't make any difference and believes we are proving why that is so; and reiterated he believes the subcommittee level is not the forum for the hearing.

Montpelier City Plan: Chair Carbee introduced the agenda item. Christian Meyer advised the City of Montpelier City Council is scheduled to adopt the City Plan tomorrow night and have requested an early review by the RPC in an effort to gauge how well the plan is meeting statute. We have followed the process we always follow which is using our Municipal Plan Review checklist which goes line by line through the statute and requires a staff member identify where and how that statute is met. He noted we work off legally defined definitions where they exist. Some complaints we have heard fall outside of the regional review and this does not mean they are invalid, just that they do not fall within our review.

Planner Niki Sabado provided a brief overview of the *Montpelier City Plan 2025*, noting that staff reviewed the draft City Plan for statutory requirements and found the City of Montpelier to be engaged in a continuing planning process and maintaining its efforts to provide funds for planning purposes and found the plan to be consistent with the State goals, compatible with the regional plan, and to contain all required elements. She also briefly reviewed CVRPC's evaluation standard.

Jerry D'Amico moved to approve, seconded by John Brabant. Significant discussion ensued regarding the process of review and having the Municipal Plan Review Committee hearing directly before the Board of Commissioner's meeting. It was confirmed that there is nothing in statute that requires the Board of Commissioners must be the host of the hearing. In many RPCs it is led by committees such as ours, in some RPCs staff leads hearings within the municipality of which the plan is being reviewed, but not necessarily in front of the full Board of Commissioners. Christian noted that prior to 2018 our full Board of Commissioners did hold these hearings, however in 2018 that transitioned to the Municipal Plan Review Committee. Further that was codified by the adoption of Rules of Procedure for each of our committees that outlines that the Municipal Plan Review Committee will hold the hearings in alignment with statute and make recommendations regarding approval to the Board. It was noted by members that a report outlining comments received and staff/committee response should be made available for Board review.

Bill Arrand, Chair of the Municipal Plan Review Committee advised that many of the comments heard during their meeting appeared to be outside the process of how the Municipal Plan Review Committee looks at the plan. He noted all requirements were met, and that suggestions were heard of how it could be done better next time. He believed most important to consider was how staff had looked at it and what they were suggesting. He noted the committee voted unanimously in favor of the plan.

Stephen Whitaker advised the process in Montpelier is what is defective. He advised various committee members in Montpelier resigned as a result of that process. He reiterated people of Montpelier will be disenfranchised by our process.

Thomas Weiss of Montpelier advised he made comments earlier before the Municipal Plan Review Committee which he believes were germane and substantive to the requirements of the statutes, and what the Regional Planning Commission is required to review. He suggested requesting a report on the hearing, and that he believed there were a few areas in the City Plan that did not conform with statute.

There was also suggestion to table and discussion as to what impact tabling the vote may have on the timeline the City has in place for the plan, which Mike Miller addressed, noting that pushing the vote out until the September board meeting would have a significant impact.

John Brabant moved to table until special meeting in August so Montpelier does not miss its deadline for growth center application.

Chair Carbee advised the is a current motion on floor must be disposed of. *Jerry D'Amico and John Brabant rescinded their original motion.*

John Brabant made a motion to table this vote on approving the Montpelier Municipal Plan as being in conformance with state and regional planning requirements until a date to be scheduled in August, at which time the Board will have received a summary of responses to comments to conduct the vote on. David Stapleton seconded. There was discussion on amending the motion to hold a meeting as soon as possible. John amended his motion to table until a meeting is decided prior to September, seconded by Jerry D'Amico.

A vote was called, which was not unanimous, and therefore a roll call vote was conducted.

Roll Call: Barre City – yes; Cabot – yes; Calais – yes; Duxbury – yes; Montpelier – abstain, Moretown – yes; Northfield – abstain; Orange – yes; Roxbury – yes; Waitsfield – yes; Warren – yes; Washington – yes; Waterbury – yes; Williamstown – yes; Worcester – yes; Middlesex – yes. It was confirmed there was a quorum with 14 affirmative – 0 no – 2 abstains, therefore the motion passes.

FY26 Budget and Work Plan: Christian Meyer provided an overview of the information outlined in the packet, noting the Executive Committee met on 6/30/25 and adopted a budget and work plan for FY26. He noted there are no major changes from previous years, overall budget is increasing by roughly 18%, much of this due to the new Brownfields program. We are looking at a small surplus and will be looking at opportunities for short term technical support for our regional plan or other planning work. Municipal technical assistance highlights include Williamstown and Orange municipal plan rewrites, culvert work with the town of Middlesex, housing assessment work with City of Montpelier. Funding is a mix of state, federal, and local, with 3% being dues, as well as interest income. Staff will be at roughly 13 FTE. The floor opened to questions and there was an inquiry of how much dues would be raised and Christian advised it would not be a large bump.

Hot Weather Emergency Planning Staff Presentation: Sam Lash shared a Hot Weather Preparedness Planning Wrap Up Summary from our work on the Vermont Department of Health (VDH) subgrant. It was noted that both warm and cold weather create health risks for Vermonters and this grant program was to start addressing that. A regional summary was completed using VDH heat vulnerability tool. The RPC and VDH came up with a guide for how to plan for hot weather and cold weather that can be used by municipalities in town plans and local emergency management plans which is available online and on the resources slide included in the presentation (available on our website). Current cooling sites were shared and it was noted libraries in the region play a key role and formalizing processes for sites would be helpful moving forward. Sam reviewed lessons learned and recommendations, noting this is an ongoing part of town planning.

Alice Peal noted what is being done in Waitsfield, and Sam encouraged creating a formal plan for the municipality.

Discussion of Meeting Recordings Policy: Christian Meyer reviewed the information in the meeting packet. He noted the non-advisory committees of the organization are the Board of Commissioners and the Executive Committee and all other committees of the Board are advisory committees which recommend action to the Board. The State requires we record all non-advisory meetings and hold them 30 days past when minutes are posted. Internally records retention policy states all meeting recordings will be held for three years. Recently

we have received records requests for all meetings for which we had recordings, which we subsequently posted on our website. Not all advisory committee meetings have been recorded as it is an individual staff decision. Christian requested Board members input in this discussion.

Lee Cattaneo moved to direct staff to develop a policy to record all meetings that are on Zoom and retain the files a period that would satisfy the 30-day requirement but could be longer if desired. Seconded by Royal DeLegge.

Significant discussion ensued noting that in an advisory setting you want to encourage open and frank discussion. There was suggestion that in advisory settings, minutes be taken vs. recorded, allowing people to be open and frank on controversial issues and feel they can express themselves fully and without fear of repercussion. It was also noted by members that recordings are helpful when a member misses a meeting. It was suggested there should be a policy on all the advisory committees that is consistent, with a minimum retention that accomplishes goals to help staff write minutes and absent staff members to catch up on a missed meeting, and that an advisory time frame could be a different time frame than non-advisory. Some members would like to see all meetings recorded and saved an appropriate length of time, and it was also noted that recordings can allow for addressing discrepancies that may exist in the written minutes. Lee reiterated his motion suggests recording meetings that are Zoom meetings. The length of retention is another issue and up for staff to determine. With this direction staff will come back with a draft of something. *Vote was called and motion passed unanimously.*

Minutes – (6/10/25):

Rich Turner moved to accept the minutes June 10, 2025; Lee Cattaneo seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Reports: Christian pointed out some of the upcoming workshops and events we are involved in. He also advised we are organizing meet ups with Selectboards and Planning Commissions to discuss Future Land Use Mapping and housing targets.

Lee Cattaneo moved to accept the Staff and Committee reports, seconded by John Brabant. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Round Table:

Lee Cattaneo suggested that a special Board meeting to review the Montpelier Plan be held 8/4 following the Executive Committee meeting. He also spoke of the amount of development towns will have to accommodate to meet population numbers given and questions if specific areas must be identified in town plans when they are updated for where new population will be accommodated. He is concerned current plans need to be redone to identify those areas.

Christian advised his understanding is a town needs to show how it would work to accommodate the number identified. i.e. short-term rentals, community septic system needed to accommodate, etc. Towns need to show how they are thinking about how they could accommodate the planning target, and if they can't meet the target, what the obstacles are.

John stated he thought it odd that we are “planning” for what may be private property not municipally owned property. He reminded that it is a national issue as well as a world-wide issue. Putting maps on paper is not going to change the fact of how expensive building is.

Peter advised he and Eli Toohey will be attending the Brownfields 2025 Conference in Chicago the first week of August as part of the EPA grants recently received.

Adjournment: *Alice Peal moved to adjourn at 8:21 pm; seconded by John Brabant. Motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Chartrand, Office Manager