

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Project Review Committee

February 26, 2026

Remote Participation via Zoom

Draft Minutes

Project Review Committee Members

X	Lee Cattaneo, Orange Commissioner
X	John Brabant, Calais Commissioner
X	Bill Arrand, Worcester Commissioner
X	Peter Carbee, Washington Commissioner
X	Robert Wernecke, Berlin Commissioner
X	Alice Peal, Waitsfield Commissioner

1 Staff: Christian Meyer, Lorraine Banbury, Reuben McMartin, Sam Lash

2

3 Public: Mike Miller, Commissioner from Montpelier, Steve Whittaker, Montpelier

4

5 L. Cattaneo called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

6

7 **Public Comment**

8

9 Steve Whitaker stated that his objection to the Country Club Road project is to the planning process and
10 framework that is being followed.

11

12 **Adjustments to the Agenda**

13 None

14

15 **Approval of Minutes**

16 P. Carabee moved to approve the 1/22/26 meeting's draft minutes, R. Wernecke seconded, all in favor,
17 motion carried unanimously.

18

19 **Downstreet Northbranch Apartment Project Letter of Compatibility**

20 C. Meyer presented a draft letter affirming that Downstreet's Community Development Block Grant –
21 Disaster Recovery (CBDG-DR) application was in compliance with the Central Vermont Regional Plan.
22 The proposal involves flood resilience improvements to several existing buildings in 4 locations: 87 Elm
23 Street, 89 Elm Street, 47 Barre Street, and 6 Monsignor Crosby Avenue, representing 45 apartments in
24 total. At the time the request for the letter was made, it was unclear if there would be an increase in
25 the number of housing units, triggering Committee review . It was later determined there were to be no
26 new units.

27

28 The project is currently in a feasibility stage and no additional housing units are proposed. Possible
29 resilience strategies under evaluation include elevating structures, vacating flood-prone first floors,
30 floodproofing buildings, or other measures that would reduce risk of future displacement. In some
31 scenarios, first-floor residential units could be converted to non-residential uses, or residents could be
32 relocated if units are removed.

1
2 R. Wernecke moved that the project has been found compatible and that the letter of February 26 to
3 Patrick Shelve be signed and sent. P. Carabee seconded, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.
4

5 **City of Montpelier Utilities Expansion and Highway Improvements US Route 2 and Country Club Road**
6 **Letter of Compatibility**

7 C. Meyer presented a draft letter affirming that the City of Montpelier's CDBG-DR application was in
8 compliance with the Central Vermont Regional Plan. The application was to: install new sewer lines for
9 the US Routes 2 & 302 roundabout to the intersection of Country Club Road and up Country Club Road
10 to the prospective future development site; elevate US Route 2 at Country Club Road by 2 feet to match
11 the elevation of Country Club Road; and to reconstruct Country Club Road with a lower grade.
12

13 P. Carbee moved that the Committee approve the letter as compatible with the Regional Plan. R.
14 Wernecke seconded. Discussion was opened.
15

16 J. Brabant asked how the Committee can weigh in on projects that could have Substantial Regional
17 Impact if they are not going through Act 250. L. Cattaneo clarified that, unless a project is before the
18 committee, there is no avenue for submitting feedback, as there is no body to whom to appeal. The two
19 avenues for Committee input that exist are Act 250 case review and letters of compatibility.
20

21 Staff summarized that the proposed infrastructure improvements included installation of new water and
22 sewer lines from the US Route 2 / Route 302 roundabout to the project site, raising the elevation of
23 Route 2 to better align with Country Club Road, reconstructing Country Club Road to improve grade and
24 safety, and adding a bicycle lane and sidewalk.
25

26 Extensive discussion occurred regarding traffic conditions and the interpretation of traffic data
27 presented in staff materials from the Transportation Advisory Committee. R. McMarten shared data and
28 explained that current conditions along Route 2 operate at Level of Service B or better during most
29 times of day based on current traffic data. There was also discussion about Act 250 triggers for
30 municipal projects.
31

32 J. Brabant raised concerns about ensuring the committee's approval is clearly limited to the
33 infrastructure elements described and does not constitute approval of future development impacts such
34 as increased traffic volumes or potential signalization at the intersection. J. Brabant proposed a friendly
35 amendment to clarify that the letter would not address future traffic flows or traffic signal installation. A
36 Peal seconded the proposed amendment.
37

38 R. Wernecke and P. Carbee indicated they did not support the amendment, stating that the letter should
39 focus on what the committee is approving rather than specifying what it does not approve. As the
40 original motion makers did not accept the amendment, it was withdrawn.
41

42 Rollcall vote on the motion was taken: P. Carbee – aye, R. Wernecke – aye, A. Peal – abstain, J. Brabant –
43 aye, with the understanding that the minutes state that statement of compatibility was limited to the
44 items in the letter, L. Cattaneo – aye. Motion carried.
45

46 *Note: with all other Committee members present, alternate Commissioner B. Arrand did not vote.
47

48 **Act 250 and Section 248 Updates**

S. Lash presented a brief update of small-scale distributed energy generation projects under Section

1 248. Staff reported that approximately 143 small solar projects were proposed during the past year
2 across the region, with an average size of roughly 11 kilowatts and a combined total capacity of about
3 1.6 megawatts. Staff noted that these smaller residential-scale projects are tracked to provide
4 information. Staff shared that, currently, there is no requirement to submit a formal notice upon project
5 completion.

6
7 Staff shared follow-ups from 1/23/26 meeting: [H.527](#) was recently passed by the House and now in the
8 Senate Committee on Finance as of 2/18/2026. H. 527 is an Act relating to extending the sunset of 30
9 V.S.A. §248a (similar bill S.159 hasn't moved out of the Senate and is in the same Finance committee).
10 Lastly, there is H.751, which proposes to change the process for siting telecommunications facilities to
11 require facilities to receive a permit from District Commissions- this bill has not moved since its
12 introduction.

13
14 Full Bill hyperlinks:

- 15 • H.527 <https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2026/H.527>
- 16 • S.159 <https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2026/S.159>
- 17 • H.751 <https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2026/H.751>

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19
20 L. Banbury shared that there were no new Act 250 applications for Committee review. The application
21 for the Barre City garage in Barre Town was submitted, but deemed incomplete.

22 23 **Conservation Easement in Plainfield**

24 A letter of notification was submitted to CVRPC about a permanent conservation easement on a parcel
25 on Country Club Road in Plainfield. This easement is consistent with the area's rural designation under
26 the Future Land Use map, and so no conflict was found.

27 28 **Next Meeting**

29 The next meeting will be on Thursday, March 26, 2026.

30 31 **Adjourn**

32 P. Carbee moved to adjourn. R. Wernecke seconded. All in favor, motion carried unanimously. Meeting
33 adjourned at 5:42 pm.

34
35 *Respectfully submitted by L. Banbury*