

Town of Richmond
Planning Commission Meeting
AGENDA

Wednesday, January 19th, 2022, 7:00 PM
Richmond Town Offices, Third Floor Meeting Room
203 Bridge St., Richmond, VT 05477

This meeting is also accessible via Zoom:

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88419874605>

Meeting ID: 884 1987 4605

Join by phone: (929) 205-6099

For additional information and accommodations to improve the accessibility of this meeting, please contact Ravi Venkataraman at 802-434-2430 or at rvenkataraman@richmondvt.gov.

1. Welcome, sign in and troubleshooting
2. Public Comment for non-agenda items
3. Adjustments to the Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes
 - January 5th, 2022
5. Nomination of a Zoning Administrator
6. Discussion on the Gateway District
7. Other Business, Correspondence, and Adjournment
 - Hearing notice for proposed zoning amendments from Town of Williston: [Planning Commission February 1, 2022 -- Public Hearing Bylaw Amendments \(Form-Based Code\) - Planning Commission Meetings 2022 - Town of Williston, Vermont](#)

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4. Approval of Minutes

- Page 3: January 5, 2022 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

5. Nomination of a Zoning Administrator

- Page 7: Memorandum on nominating a Zoning Administrator
- Page 8: Kayla Vaccaro's Resume

6. Discussion on the Gateway District

- Page 9: "Gateway – Goals and Criteria 9L" prepared by Virginia Clarke
- Page 10: General Introduction to Three Possible Scenarios for meeting goals, prepared by Virginia Clarke
- Page 12: "Gateway – Two Possible Outcomes" prepared by Virginia Clarke
- In a Google Drive link and on the Town Website
 - Maps of possible regulatory scenarios for the Gateway District
 - Maps of the Gateway District that were included in the January 5, 2022 meeting materials and a map listing parcel sizes

7. Other Business, Correspondence, and Adjournment

- Link to Town of Williston website: [Planning Commission February 1, 2022 -- Public Hearing Bylaw Amendments \(Form-Based Code\) - Planning Commission Meetings 2022 - Town of Williston, Vermont](#)

Richmond Planning Commission
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES FOR January 5, 2022

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Members Present: | Virginia Clarke, Mark Fausel, Chris Granda, Joy Reap, Lisa Miller, Alison Anand, Chris Cole |
| Members Absent: | Dan Mullen, |
| Others Present: | Ravi Venkataraman (Town Planner/Staff), MMCTV, Rod West |

1. Welcome and troubleshooting

Virginia Clarke called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

2. Public Comment for non-agenda items

None.

3. Adjustments to the Agenda

None.

Ravi Venkataraman announced that Jake Kornfeld has stepped down from the Planning Commission. Chris Granda asked how many members are currently on the commission. Venkataraman said eight. Clarke said that five members are still required to meet quorum.

4. Approval of Minutes

Clarke noted that there are no minutes for the December 15, 2021 meeting because no quorum was present, that the planning intern Kayla Vaccaro presented on clustered housing to the members present and that she appreciated the summary of the state wetlands permitting process in the December 1, 2021 meeting minutes. The commission approved the minutes as written.

5. Preparation of draft regulations on wetlands, vehicle fueling station, and nonconforming structures and uses for Public Hearing

Clarke reviewed the contents of the packet for this discussion item. Cole asked if Clarke would like a motion for all the proposed draft changes. Clarke said that motions can be made for each set of draft regulations or for all the proposed regulations. Miller said that they may not be able to finish review of all the proposals tonight and suggested focusing on the draft wetlands regulations. Clarke said that considering all the past discussions on these items, the commission should be able to address all the draft regulations during the meeting.

Clarke suggested reviewing the draft wetlands regulations first. Granda asked if under Section 6.9.3.1 the permitted paths have to be permeable surfaces. Clarke referred to Section 6.9.3.1 and its requirement to allow for the free flowing of water, and that because the regulation is for walkways within the buffer, the

requirement for permeable surfaces was not necessary. Clarke noted the allowances for crossings to circumvent variance applications, the definition of “constructed”, the cross reference to nonconforming structures, and the vegetation requirement.

Motion by Cole, seconded by Reap, to warn a public hearing on February 2, 2022 on amendments to the Richmond Zoning Regulations Sections 6.9 and 7.

Discussion: Miller asked about regulating holding tanks. Chris Cole noted the allowances for replacing existing tanks. Clarke pointed to the regulations prohibiting new septic tanks.

Voting: 7-0 (Alison Anand abstained). Motion carried.

Clarke overviewed the nonconforming uses and structures draft regulations, highlighting Section 4.7.8 which would allow for the Mobil gas station property to redevelop and is based on conversations with Tina Heath and the Richmond Conservation Commission. Anand said she appreciated Section 4.7.8(c), and asked Joy Reap for her opinion on the draft regulations. Reap said she thinks the town had been too restrictive on wetlands in general, and that the commission needs to be flexible to allow for improvements to the site. Fausel said he appreciated the language involving the role of the Conservation Commission in the review process. Clarke asked about the inclusion of a definition of buffer, considering the proposed inclusion of a definition for wetland buffer, and added that the definitions for buffer and wetland buffer are different. Anand concurred that both definitions could be included in the regulations.

Motion by Miller, seconded by Fausel to warn a public hearing on February 2, 2022 on amendments to the Richmond Zoning Regulations Sections 4.7, 4.8, 4.9 and 7. Voting: unanimous. Motion carried.

Clarke overviewed the proposed changes to the vehicle fueling station use requirements, and changes to definitions. Granda said that the dispensing of electric vehicle charge is not terminology used by the industry, that he recommends changing the reference of “electric vehicle charge” to “electricity as a vehicle fuel”, and that he recommends changing the reference to “structure” under accessory electric vehicle charging station to “facility or device”. Clarke reviewed the definition of a structure and asked if a bollard-type charger would be considered a structure. Granda said yes, adding that the charger could be a device directly connected to the wall of a building and not necessarily a standalone structure. Clarke asked about including “a structure or device” in the definition. Granda agreed.

Miller asked about the limitation on accessory structure height. Venkataraman said that he was not sure how the six-foot limitation came into being, but that the limitation is customary in zoning for fences, demarcating what is considered a reasonable fence height and what is not.

Clarke asked the committee’s opinion on the limitation of fueling islands, and noted the need to provide a basis for their decision. Miller said that Clarke’s document outlining the commission’s rationale captures the commission’s thoughts on this question.

Motion by Miller, seconded by Granda, warn a public hearing on February 2, 2022 on amendments to the Richmond Zoning Regulations Section 4.14, 5.10, and 7. Voting: unanimous. Motion carried.

Clarke reviewed the proposed rezoning of the Mobil gas station to the Industrial/Commercial District, noting that the Park and Ride could be rezoned from Agricultural/Residential to Industrial/Commercial.

Cole said that rezoning the Mobil gas station was previously discussed and that rezoning the Park and Ride makes sense. Anand asked about the Verberg farm. Clarke said that those properties are in the Agricultural/Residential District and will not be changing districts. Clarke said that the Exit 11 area appears aesthetically different from the rest of the Gateway District. Cole asked for the difference between the Industrial/Commercial and Commercial Districts. Clarke noted the key difference is housing allowances in the Commercial District, compared to the Industrial/Commercial District, but suggested that the Planning Commission should have a longer conversation at some point to flesh out all the differences between these two districts.

Motion by Cole, seconded by Anand, warn a public hearing on February 2, 2022 on amending the Zoning Map to rezone Mobil gas station and Park and Ride parcels into the Industrial/Commercial District. Voting: unanimous. Motion carried.

6. Creation of plan and timeline for upcoming Gateway District zoning discussion and update

Clarke overviewed the discussion topic, noting that the vote to expand the water/sewer district to the Mobil gas station passed, that a decision on the bond vote is impending, that an amendment to the existing Act 250 permit for the water/sewer system is probably needed, and that planning for the Gateway District that can pass the Act 250 permit criteria is necessary. Clarke said that outreach to the property owners is needed, and that the commission will need to consider site layout and design elements. Clarke said that the planning and zoning process for the Gateway will need to be complete by the end of the summer, to align with the Water and Sewer Commission's timeline and to provide them clarity on the buildout potential of the Gateway District. Anand asked if the project would qualify for federal infrastructure funding. Clarke said that that is to be determined. Miller noted how large the project is, and said that the commission should consider putting together a few plans for the public so that the public can grasp the project and provide constructive feedback. Clarke said that outreach to the property owners must be done first, but concurred that a visual component will be helpful. Granda said that planning the way Miller outlined may not be feasible, as the Town can guide residents on how to develop properties but not dictate the manner of development. Fausel said that only a few properties in the Gateway District could accommodate an alternate road. Reap said that she will be talking with Venkataraman and Clarke outside of a meeting to clarify her needs for Willis Farm, that she may step aside for future conversations about the Gateway District out of conflict of interest, and that careful planning is needed to make sure properties are able to gain a return on investment. Cole pointed out that the town has a Conflict of Interest policy that all commission members have to abide by.

Rod West recommended that the commission be practical in its approach, keeping in mind the lot size and topography, and said he had concerns about the equity impacts of placing housing next to a major thoroughfare and a freeway.

Clarke said that outreach meetings for this project are forthcoming. Granda said that with the point on improving bike/ped access, public transit access should be prioritized too. Cole said that a vision for the corridor will need to be developed, and that based on the time the commission has, it should focus on implementing Act 250 9L requirements for properties under Act 250 jurisdiction. Cole noted the equity issue of the placement of housing and the need to engage with the Richmond Racial Equity Group.

Fausel suggested scheduling additional meetings for this project. Cole said that much of the work occurs outside of meetings and that an ad-hoc committee could help prepare meeting materials to move the

work forward.

7. Brief introduction to reorganization of Zoning Regulations

Clarke said that having a reorganized zoning regulations that is consistent and coherent is going to make forthcoming revisions easier, and that Venkataraman has been working on reorganizing the zoning regulations for the last year. Clarke reviewed the table of contents of the restructured zoning regulations. The commission agreed that the reorganization is needed and supported Clarke and Venkataraman's work.

8. Other Business, Correspondence, and Adjournment

Motion by Granda, seconded by Reap to adjourn the meeting. Voting: unanimous. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Ravi Venkataraman, Town Planner

TO: Richmond Planning Commission

FROM: Ravi Venkataraman, Town Planner

DATE: January 14, 2022

SUBJECT: Nomination of a Zoning Administrative Officer

The current Zoning Administrative Officer (also referred to as Zoning Administrator) Keith Osborne will be leaving the position on February 1, 2022. The Town has advertised for the position. In the meantime, Kayla Vaccaro will be stepping in as the Zoning Administrator in the interim until the Town finds a permanent replacement.

Typically, when the Zoning Administrator position becomes vacant, the Town responds by having the Town Planner take on the Zoning Administrator responsibilities until a permanent replacement is hired; by contracting with CCRPC or an individual to be the Zoning Administrator in the interim; or a combination of both of the aforementioned. CCRPC is currently unable to provide the Town assistance.

Kayla was the planning intern for the town in the fall of 2021. She recently finished her Bachelors Degree at University of Vermont, where she studied Sustainable Land Use and Community Development. Her resume is enclosed. She is well versed with planning and zoning practices, and has become acquainted with the Richmond Zoning Regulations and Richmond Subdivision Regulations during her internship. Keith and I will be training her with Zoning Administrator position until the end of the month.

Under 24 V.S.A. §4448, the Planning Commission must nominate a Zoning Administrative Officer to the Selectboard, and the Selectboard must appoint the Zoning Administrative Officer to a three-year term. The Town has the ability to appoint one acting Zoning Administrative Officer who would have the abilities of the Zoning Administrator in their absence; I am currently the acting Zoning Administrative Officer for the Town.

To facilitate action, I have prepared the following draft motion:

I, _____, move to nominate Kayla Vaccaro to serve as the Zoning Administrative Officer for a three-year term for the Town of Richmond.

KAYLA VACCARO

✉ kayla.vaccaro@uvm.edu

📍 Burlington, VT

in [linkedin.com/in/kayla-vaccaro](https://www.linkedin.com/in/kayla-vaccaro)

☎ (978)-844-3487

EXPERIENCE

Planning Intern

Richmond, VT Planning and Zoning Department

📅 Aug 2021 – December 2021 📍 Richmond, Vermont

- Calculated average housing density within a population of over 4,000 people to compare allowable density per zoning to existing densities
- Studied Planned Unit Development/Conservation subdivision Ordinances in all 12 Vermont municipalities with existing ordinances in order to create a comparison table tool for the Richmond Planning Commission
- Drafted Planned Unit Development subdivisions on existing parcels as a model for future open space conservation and development

Wetland Delineation Job Shadowing

Arrowwood Environmental

📅 June 2021 – July 2021 📍 Lowell, Vermont

- Shadowed ecologist, Jeff Parsons, to gain insight on assessing land for development
- Identified Facultative Wetland plants
- Sampled Soils to determine wetland areas

Transportation and Parking Services Intern

University of Vermont

📅 Sept 2019 – Dec 2019 📍 Burlington, Vermont

- Assessed student need for transportation to outdoor recreation
- Engaged with 220 students in strategic data collection efforts
- Created a toolkit for students to access local outdoor recreation using survey results

LEADERSHIP

President of Logistics

UVM FeelGood

📅 Aug 2020 – Oct 2021 📍 Burlington, Vermont

- Scheduled, planned, and ensured adequate follow-through for all club events and meetings, requiring additional persistence and flexibility throughout the Coronavirus Pandemic
- Communicated with 18 officers and fostered team building through outdoor and virtual events
- Coordinated new fundraising events, raising \$1,300 in one day, and collaborated with multiple on-campus clubs to form mutually beneficial partnerships
- Peer-advised other chapter presidents across the United States and Canada as the most successful chapter within the Hunger Project's larger global domain

Previous Positions: Social Media Chair, Sustainability Officer, General Member

EDUCATION

B.S. in Sustainable Land Use and Community Development

University of Vermont

📅 Aug 2018 – Dec 2021

- GPA: 3.80
- Self-Design Major

SKILLS

AutoCAD

GIS

SketchUp

Hand Drafting

Microsoft Office

Google Suite

Ecological Design

Landscape Design

Permaculture

RELEVANT COURSEWORK

- Community Design Studio
- Introduction to Landscape Design
- Ecological Landscape Design
- Design Innovation for Sustainable Cities
- Sustainable Community Development

PROJECTS

Kay-Meyer Property: Designed circulation pathways and erosion control methods on residential property.

UVM Horticulture Farm: Redesign of a section of a farm to best use area and reflect cultural past and present of Burlington.

Dead Creek Wildlife Area: Created a landscape that consisted of native plant species serving local bird and other species. Visualized bloom time for each species by season.

Gateway -- Goals and 9L 1.12.22

1. Goal is to **prevent strip development** in a partially built up area that has been newly approved for expansion of the municipal Water and Sewer service, and will likely become a strip without proactive zoning changes.
2. By our zoning changes we'd like to create a small community that may develop some features of a self-contained walkable node close to and just outside an "existing center" (Richmond Village), to which it relates as a "gateway" or "scenic approach." There are limitations of size, location, and arrangement of existing elements. A Neighborhood Development Area (NDA) may be considered
3. The area is bordered on the non-village-center side by a gas station, I-89 Exit 11, a Park and Ride facility and, more distantly, by an Industrial/Commercial Zoning District.
4. Opposite (southwest) side of Rt 2, which is almost entirely within the flood hazard area, would remain almost entirely undeveloped, either in the A/R district as currently or reassigned.
5. Currently, the area could be considered somewhere between "scattered development" and "existing strip development." We aim to meet the "efficient use" requirement of Act 250's 9L with updated zoning principally directed at, and promoting, infill development while minimizing the characteristics of strip development and maintaining an attractive village-scale entrance to Richmond.
6. Proposed zoning should have:
 - Mixed uses with a residential component – zoning will need to accommodate and support current residential and commercial uses
 - Relatively high residential density with minimum 8 U/A
 - Internal connectivity for residents to walk or bike to businesses, schools, green space (Willis Preserve)
 - Trees, green space and landscaping (no parking lots) lining Rt 2 to provide attractive rural appearance to village "Gateway"
 - Minimal curb cuts, internal circulation of traffic and orientation of most buildings towards secondary road
 - Multistory buildings with pedestrian scale facades both internally-facing and Rt 2- facing
 - Plans for development of bike/ped infrastructure connection at least to Park and Ride facility and eventually to village if possible

FOR BRAINSTORMING ONLY!

#1 Gateway two districts

- Divide Gateway into two ZDs: **Gateway Residential Neighborhood (GRN)** (lots between Willis Farm and Fieldstone) and **Gateway Residential/Commercial (GRC)** (Willis Farm south to village)
- **GRN** zoning would be like that of the Village Residential Neighborhoods, North and South basically residential only – higher density (8 U/A), smaller lot size allowed, maybe allowing multifamily up to 4 units – shared curb cuts (no new curb cuts allowed) – larger setback to Rt 2 (possibly 35'-50')
- **GRC** would be a mixed use ZD like the R/C, possibly with slightly different mix of uses allowed
- Fieldstone and Crate Escape and neighbor to north part of **GRN**? Or **GRC**?
- Shared use path located mostly near I-89 ROW extending across all GRN lots to connect with Willis Farm businesses and across the Land Trust property to the schools
- No future curb cuts would be allowed – future buildings in both districts would be required to use the existing curb cuts (which would become shared driveways or private roads)
- Increased density (8 U/A) and lot coverage, decreased lot size (1/4 A)
- Noise buffer along I-89 in GRN required
- Consider Neighborhood Development Area (NDA) designation for GRN to promote development of affordable and market-rate housing
- Allow commercial uses for GRC that might serve residents of both districts, such as restaurant, self-storage, others (no retail or vehicle fueling station)
- Criteria 9L would not apply to residential district, and Willis Farm on its own would have an easier time with 9L

#2 Gateway Road

- Create master plan for a secondary road and shared use path parallel to Rt 2, between Rt 2 and I-89, extending from Willis Farm Rd to somewhere near the Crate Escape where it rejoins Rt 2
- Development of the lots that this road crosses would be oriented towards this road, rather than toward Rt 2 – could be mostly residential or mixed use
- Shared use (bike/ped) path would connect all buildings with the Willis Farm businesses and with the path extending from Willis Farm Road across the Land Trust property to the schools
- Would likely require an Official Map and ability to require that all lots crossed provide the Town with an (unlocated) ROW for the road at the time of sale of the lot
- Could attach the few lots between the cemetery and the village to the Village R/C ZD
- No future curb cuts would be allowed
- Increased density and lot coverage, decreased lot size
- Noise buffer along I-89 may be needed
- Consider NDA

- Allow commercial uses for Willis Farm that might serve residents as well as others
- Meets more criteria of 9L than current zoning

#3 Most Similar to Current

- Change name to just “Gateway” -- this would be a mixed use district with residential uses emphasized
- No more curb cuts – all new building to share existing ones, creating cul-de-sacs in which the buildings are oriented towards the shared driveway or private road (existing curb cut)
- Multiple buildings allowed on a lot, clustering required if multiple buildings (residential only)
- More residential uses (multifamily) allowed and encouraged
- Increased lot coverage and density, decreased lot size
- Large green space and landscaped buffer along Rt 2 (50’ or more)
- Some commercial uses restricted to >200’ from Rt 2
- Continue to advocate for shared use path along Rt 2 from Crate Escape to connect with path along Willis Farm Rd
- Shared path across Willis Farm, Land Trust property and on to schools
- Additional commercial uses for Willis Farm with design or location criteria
- Might be more likely than current to meet criteria of 9L, but with not assured
- May be the easiest to do in the time available

Gateway -- Two Possible Outcomes 1.12.22

Where we are now – 2 possible outcomes:

1. Sewer line is extended to the Mobil station
 - Expansion vote passed
 - Bond vote must pass
 - Act 250 must approve
 - Water line may or may not be extended (now or as future project)
 - Willis Farm and Mobil are added as capacity users -- water line desired
 - Failing systems of current residents improved by municipal connections
 - More development enabled along Gateway, including more housing – water line needed
 - Planned development (=/- official map) of Gateway desirable

2. Sewer line is not extended to Mobil station
 - Bond vote fails
 - Act 250 denies permit
 - Willis Farm gets private sewer line from municipal line to schools
 - Mobil station drills under I-89 for septic system
 - Gateway still remains somewhat at risk for strip development under current zoning, but less so than if sewer is extended (private water and sewer capacity limited)