

Town of Richmond
Planning Commission Meeting
AGENDA

Wednesday, August 18th, 2021, 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/83503119719>

Meeting ID: 835 0311 9719

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
 - August 4, 2021
5. Discussion and Finalization on Performance Standards, Nonconforming Lots, and Certificates of Occupancy
6. Discussion on Vehicle Fueling Stations, Powered Vehicle Service, and Powered Machinery Service uses
7. Discussion on Town Plan Goals Check-In
8. Discussion on September 1st Meeting Agenda
9. Other Business, Correspondence, and Adjournment

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 - Excel spreadsheet of Planning Commission's Town Plan action items and goals

Richmond Planning Commission
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES FOR August 4, 2021

Members Present:	Lisa Miller, Mark Fausel, Dan Mullen, Chris Granda, Chris Cole, Joy Reap, Alison Anand,
Members Absent:	Virginia Clarke, Jake Kornfeld,
Others Present:	Ravi Venkataraman (Town Planner/Staff), Lauck Parke, Stephanie Rogers, Jeff Forward, Tyler Merritt, Allen Knowles, MMCTV

1. Welcome and troubleshooting

Chris Cole called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

2. Public Comment for non-agenda items

None

3. Adjustments to the Agenda

None

4. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Mark Fausel seconded by Lisa Miller, to approve the July 21, 2021 Planning Commission meeting minutes. Voting: unanimous. Motion carried.

5. Section 248 Notice - Vermont Electric Cooperative and Green Mountain Power

Venkataraman provided an overview and an update to the substation improvements proposal. Venkataraman said that he did not note any flagging issues with the proposal. Venkataraman said that per statute, the Planning Commission can provide comments directly to the applicant, hold a public hearing with the applicant and the Department of Public Service in attendance, and/or provide comments during the PUC's public hearing. Chris Granda asked if a representative from Green Mountain Power is in attendance for this meeting. Venkataraman said no. Venkataraman added that per Section 248, direct abutters are notified by mail, and that he and the Selectboard have not received comments for this project.

Jeff Forward agreed that the proposal is minor in nature. Forward provided a history of the substation project. Forward identified the proposed lighting, noted that the lighting would only be on in case of emergency. Forward said that he does not note any visual or significant impacts with the proposal.

Miller asked about if battery banks will be in place. Forward said that the proposal does not include

battery banks, that he has talked to Green Mountain Power and Vermont Electric Coop about battery banks, that the building has a small battery backup for the relay switches for short periods of time, and that he would encourage the development of larger battery banks due to the significance of the substation.

Cole asked Venkataraman if the point of the discussion is to decide whether the Planning Commission wants to hold a public hearing. Venkataraman listed the commissions options to move forward. Forward identified the land tenure issues from the past development of the substation. Granda noted the high intensity of the lighting and the timer setting. Granda recommended that the lighting have a timer setting and a motion detector. Cole asked for clarification on the lighting. Venkataraman and Forward said that the lighting would be on for emergencies, and recommended that the commission provide those comments to the applicant to control the quality and intensity of the lighting. Forward suggested sending the applicant the town's lighting ordinance, and recommended that the applicant comply with the lighting ordinance.

Forward made note of Mary Houle's comments during the Selectboard meeting regarding the transfer of land tenure to the town. Cole said that the focus of this discussion should be on the technical aspects of the applicant's proposal, and that the land ownership matter should be handled by the Selectboard.

Cole requested that Venkataraman compile the commission's comments on the proposed lighting for the PUC, and asked when the comments need to be submitted. Venkataraman clarified that the comments would be to the applicant pursuant to Section 248, not the PUC, and that the deadline is August 24, 2021. Forward recommended sending the comments to the PUC, GMP, and VEC. Venkataraman asked if the commission would like to include comments about the battery. Cole said yes.

6. Discussion on Performance Standards for Hazardous Materials

Venkataraman presented the draft language to the Planning Commission and pointed out that subdivisions (a) through (g) are currently in the zoning ordinance and are unchanged, and that subdivisions (h), (i), and (j) are under review. Miller pointed out that proposed subdivisions (h), (i) and (j) are similar in language and intent, and asked if all three points are necessary. Cole said that the three referenced materials are similar but not the same, and that he would be open to recommendations to combine all three points. Miller noted the overlap, that all three referenced materials are "hazardous", and that combining the points would make sense.

Cole said that for future reference, if commission members have concerns about the proposed language in the packet, members should put together ahead of time and present during the meeting a revision to that language.

Miller suggested the following: "(h) Hazardous materials and wastes shall be stored on and removed from lots without causing detrimental effects to adjacent lots or to public or environmental health. These substances shall be stored only within a structure. All uses shall comply with all federal and state regulations for the use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials and wastes." Miller

suggested striking through (i) and (j). Fausel made note that aboveground diesel storage for home heating is a hazardous material not stored within a structure. Fausel said that hazard materials and wastes are governed by Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, and that towns cannot contradict the state's regulations. Fausel agreed with Miller's revision, with the suggestion of removing the requirement that hazardous materials and wastes need to be stored within structures.

Cole asked if with the suggested revisions, the language should be in a standalone ordinance. Venkataraman said that the current markup of the performance standards can be kept within zoning because it reads like zoning performance standards. Venkataraman added that typically towns keep lighter performance standards to give itself the flexibility to enforce performance standards without conflicting with agencies with greater jurisdiction, and that these performance standards will need to be placed in a different section of the zoning so that it applies to the entire town, not just Conditional Use Review. Cole asked Venkataraman's thoughts on the proposed revision. Venkataraman said that he had no qualms about the proposed changes because of the overlap in regulations. Fausel and Cole said that removing the requirement that hazardous materials need to be stored within structures does not exempt uses from complying with DEC requirements of storing hazardous materials within structures. Venkataraman said that the definition of "structure" in the zoning regulations include aboveground storage tanks.

Cole asked Venkataraman if the commission needed to vote on the proposed language. Venkataraman said that it can be voted on during the next meeting, along with the proposal to amend the Certificate of Occupancy requirements and nonconforming lots language.

7. Discussion on Vehicle Fueling Stations, Powered Vehicle Service, and Powered Machinery Service uses

Granda overviewed the proposed language for vehicle fueling station uses, noting that EV fueling takes significantly longer than fueling vehicles using other types of fuels, and recommended removing the option to install a Level 2 charger, thereby requiring the installation of a DC fast charger. Granda highlighted the difference in charging speeds among different types of chargers, citing the Kia Niro as an example. Granda said that the DC fast charger would have more utility and practicality at a vehicle fueling station. Dan Mullen asked about the cost difference between a level 2 charging station and a DC fast charging station. Granda said that the costs are changing on a month-by-month basis, and that DC fast chargers have become significantly cheaper over the course of the last few years. Granda recommended including a definition for DC fast chargers that would be modest in comparison to the technical standards for Tesla superchargers. Forward said that having an accessible DC fast charger so that community members can get enough fuel to get home would be appreciated, that the amount of energy needed for DC fast chargers would have an impact on the energy utilities and their ability to provide enough wattage, and that even though a Level 3 charger would be fitting for the Mobil station, the commission should get technical advice from the energy utility on the impacts of such a requirement. Granda said that the definition of a DC fast charger needs to be in place so that the requirement is appropriately scaled.

Cole asked how the addition of the vehicle fueling station definition would affect the gas stations currently in town. Venkataraman said that the effects will depend on a number of different factors--

whether the other gas stations want to redevelop and expand in the future, thereby forcing them to become vehicle fueling stations in order to do so--because the existing gas stations can remain as nonconforming uses as long as the scale of nonconforming use is unchanged. Grand asked for clarification on the degree of proposed change that would force current gas station owners to have to consider becoming a vehicle fueling station. Venkataraman said that that too will depend on the changes the commission would like to put in place for nonconforming uses, that typically nonconforming uses can remain unchanged perpetually, and that if expansion is being considered, he and Keith Osborne would suggest that the applicant aim to conform to the vehicle fueling station definition.

Miller raised discussion about the potential presence of EV charging stations as accessory uses. Cole said that it is currently hard to determine how widespread EV charging stations will be in the future and that he foresees people charging their cars in locations where they would stay for longer periods of time, like downtowns and shopping centers.

Forward recommended including the provision of biodiesel in the definition. Miller noted clarification is needed on the food service accessory use--namely "pre-packaged foods for off-premises consumption".

Venkataraman recommended that before the next meeting the commission look at a map to determine where they would want to have powered vehicle services and powered machinery services in order to determine the need for two separate definitions.

8. Discussion on Williams Hill Road

Cole introduced the discussion, framed the discussion on understanding the facts, and said that no decisions on the matter can or will be made. Cole reviewed Venkataraman's memo.

Tyler Merritt said that Williams Hill Road would be a useful connector for commuters and for recreational users on bike and on foot, that the town should never give up a right-of-way, and that he and the Trails Committee would support changing the road designation to a Legal Trail. Allen Knowles concurred with Merritt's statements as a member of the Transportation Committee, noted that Williams Hill Road is an excellent way to go to Hinesburg via e-bike, and that this connection would be highlighted as connection between Richmond and Hinesburg on the currently ongoing bicycle/pedestrian master plan work.

Joy Reap asked about the status for e-bikes if Williams Hill Road were to be open as a Legal Trail. Merritt said that the Trails Committee's policy on e-bikes is to be determined. Knowles said that class 1 e-bikes are not considered motorized vehicles and would not be subject to those regulations. Venkataraman said that towns can limit the types of motorized vehicles and wholly prohibit motorized vehicles on legal trails as long as the limitation or the prohibition is in an ordinance. Cole asked about the status of Johnnie Brook Trails. Venkataraman said that he understands that Johnnie Brook Trail is a Legal Trail but it is listed on the Town Highways Map as a primitive road. Merritt said that Johnnie Brook Trail is considered a class 4 road. Forward said that e-bikes are widely misunderstood, and that e-bikes are more like bikes than motorized vehicles. Reap asked about the procedure for changing the road from a Legal Trail to a Class 4 road. Merritt said that since the town retains the right-of-way for Legal

Trails, the Legal Trail can be upgraded back to a Class 4 road or higher. Venkataraman said that he was not sure about the process for turning the Legal Trail back into a Class 4 road but is aware that it is possible.

Miller asked about the status of the culverts on Williams Hill Road as shown in the enclosed survey. Cole said that the town is not required to maintain Class 4 roads, and that he is somewhat aware that the town cannot neglect infrastructure if it negatively impacts neighboring properties. Venkataraman pointed out that the culvert referenced is for the driveway, not for Williams Hill Road.

Fausel asked about the costs involved to turn Williams Hill Road into a viable trail. Merritt said that work would be involved and that because the segment is not that long, it could be done by volunteers. Cole asked if the town could retain Williams Hill Road as a Class 4 Road but restrict maintenance to make it viable to only bicycles and pedestrians. Merritt noted that Johnnie Brook Trail is maintained by the Cross Vermont Trail and that the Trails Committee does do some maintenance with its limited budget. Venkataraman said that access to Class 4 roads is done indirectly by limiting the amount of maintenance on class 4 roads, the types of uses that can use the class 4 road, and future development off class 4 roads. Miller asked if there are landlocked parcels. Cole said no, and that the right-of-way would be given either back to the parent parcels or to adjoining parcels equally.

Forward said that Williams Hill Road may be older than 1931. Merritt said that Williams Hill Road is in maps from the 1870s.

Cole asked by when the commission would need to communicate to the Selectboard in writing. Venkataraman said that the commission should provide written comments by the end of the day of September 16th.

9. Discussion on August 18th Meeting Agenda

Venkataraman said that for the next meeting, the commission will need to finalize the proposed amendments that have already been reviewed during a public hearing (state permit references, nonconforming lots, COs), to discuss nonconforming uses and structures, and to go over the status of the Town Plan goals.

10. Other Business, Correspondence, and Adjournment

Motion by Granda, seconded by Fausel to adjourn the meeting. Voting: unanimous. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Ravi Venkataraman, Town Planner

TO: Richmond Planning Commission

FROM: Ravi Venkataraman, Town Planner

DATE: August 13, 2021

SUBJECT: Proposed amendments State Permit References, Nonconforming Lots, and Certificates of Occupancy

Materials for Consideration

For your consideration, enclosed are:

- Draft amendments regarding Performance Standards
- Draft amendments regarding State Permit References
- Draft amendments on Nonconforming Lots
- Draft amendments on Certificates of Occupancy
- Modified Municipal Bylaw Amendment Report

Based on the input provided during the July 21, 2021 public hearing and the meetings after the public hearing, the following revisions were made:

- The Performance Standards section is proposed to be removed from the larger Section 5.6 (Conditional Use Review) and placed in a standalone section, Section 4.13. This change is proposed in order for performance standards to apply to all properties in town. Currently, the performance standards only apply to land development triggering Conditional Use Review and during DRB review of proposed Conditional Uses.
- The Certificate of Occupancy section clarifies permit requirements to applicants and removes unnecessary administrative requirements for staff.
- Changes to the previous iteration of the draft language to Nonconforming Lots clarifies the dimensional requirements for viable existing small lots.

Process Going Forward

When the Planning Commission has finalized the documents, it will need to approve the municipal bylaw amendment report and move to provide the proposed amendments for the Selectboard's consideration.

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

I, _____, move to approve the enclosed Municipal Bylaw Amendment Report and forward to the Selectboard proposed amendments to the following sections of the Richmond Zoning Regulations: Section 3.8.5, 4.6, 4.13, 5.2.1, 5.3.5, 5.6.2, 5.6.3, 5.6.4, 5.6.5, 5.6.6, 5.6.7, 5.6.8, 5.8.

Hazardous materials performance standards (5.6.3) ~~7.22.21~~ 8.4.21 8/18/21 (state permitting amendment)

~~5.6.3~~ **4.13 Performance standards** - ~~In addition to the specific standards listed under Section 5.6.2 for conditional use approval, a~~ All conditional uses shall also meet the following performance standards ~~prior to issuance of conditional use approval~~ at all times:

[Remove Performance Standards from Section 5.6.3. Renumber Sections 5.6.4 through 5.6.8 accordingly]

~~a) Sounds resulting from the activity shall meet the requirements of Section 4.10, Noise, of these Zoning Regulations.~~

~~b) Exterior lighting of any kind shall meet the requirements of Section 4.11, Exterior Lighting, of these Zoning Regulations.~~

~~c) a) No vibration resulting from the activities shall be measurable at the lot lines.~~

~~d) b) No odors resulting from the activities shall be discernible at the lot lines.~~

~~e) c) Smoke emissions shall not exceed number two (2) on the Ringelman Chart.~~

~~f) d) No dust, dirt or fly-ash shall exceed two-tenth (0.2) grain per cubic foot of flue gas at a stack temperature of five hundred (500) degrees Fahrenheit.~~

~~g) e) No noxious gases resulting from the activity shall be discernible at the lot lines.~~

f) Industrial ~~Hazardous or toxic materials and~~ wastes shall be stored on and removed from ~~a the~~ lot in manners as to be not reasonably objectionable to ~~without causing detrimental effects to the adjacent lots, or create a public nuisance or pollute the environment.~~ to public or environmental health. ~~These substances shall be stored only within a structure.~~

i) All uses, ~~including the storage of flammable liquids in above or below ground tanks,~~ shall comply with all Federal and State regulations for the use, storage, hauling transport and disposal of hazardous materials and wastes.

~~j) No fire, explosives, radioactive material or other safety hazard shall be permitted that endangers public health, safety or welfare, or neighboring properties or public facilities; or that results in a significantly increased burden on municipal facilities or services.~~

g) No use shall cause, create, or result in a significantly increased burden on municipal facilities and services.

~~j) k) h) No heat shall be discernible at the lot lines.~~

Clean version (new portions in red)

4.13 Performance standards - All uses shall meet the following performance standards at all times:

a) No vibration resulting from the activities shall be measurable at the lot lines.

b) No odors resulting from the activities shall be discernible at the lot lines.

c) Smoke emissions shall not exceed number two (2) on the Ringelman Chart.

d) No dust, dirt or fly-ash shall exceed two-tenth (0.2) grain per cubic foot of flue gas at a stack temperature of five hundred (500) degrees Fahrenheit.

e) No noxious gases resulting from the activity shall be discernible at the lot lines.

f) Hazardous materials and wastes shall be stored on and removed from a lot without causing detrimental effects to adjacent lots or to public or environmental health. All uses shall comply with all federal and state regulations for the use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials and wastes.

g) No use shall cause, create, or result in a significantly increased burden on municipal facilities and services.

h) No heat shall be discernible at the lot lines.

3.8.5 Other Requirements Applicable to Lots in the MHP District

~~d) State Approval of Mobile Home Parks – No Zoning Permit may be issued for Land Development within a mobile home park unless satisfactory evidence is produced to the DRB that all applicable state laws and regulations relating to Land Development have been met.~~

5.2.1 [Application, Fees, Reimbursement for Technical Review]

~~d) State Permits - All required state permits shall be a part of and made a condition of each local permit. Unless otherwise required, state permits may be obtained after local permits. In no case shall a project or use commence without all necessary state water and wastewater and local permits. When applicable, a receipt of a State Wastewater and Potable Water Supply Permit is required prior to the issuance of a zoning permit. Local permits do not absolve the applicant from obtaining applicable state and federal permits, and the applicant is responsible for obtaining relevant state and federal permits. The applicant should contact the regional permit specialist employed by the Agency of Natural Resources for additional information on related state permits.~~

~~e) **Building Energy Standards** - Unless the applicant certifies that the structure will not be heated or cooled or unless the structure is a sign or fence, all applicants for a building construction zoning permit for a structure are required to adhere to the state’s Building Energy Standards, either residential (RBES) or commercial (CBES) [24 30 VSA §§ 51 and 53], with exemptions as listed in the statute. An RBES or CBES certification of adherence to the standards from the builder will be required prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy (CO). A guide to the codes can be obtained from the Zoning Administrator, and a copy of the full Vermont Residential Building Energy Code Book can be obtained from the Vermont Department of Public Service.~~

5.3.5 Certificates of Occupancy [SEE ENCLOSED DOCUMENT FOR REVISIONS TO CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY SECTION]

~~A person shall not use or permit the use or occupancy of any land or structure, or part thereof created, erected, changed, converted, or wholly or partly altered in its use or structure until a Certificate of Occupancy is issued therefore by the Administrative Officer, stating that the proposed use of the structure or land conforms to the requirements of these Zoning Regulations and the conditions of approval, in accordance with 24 VSA 4449, and that all violations of town land use permits, Bylaws and regulations have been cured as to the property involved and all related fines paid. In addition, provision of a certificate as required by 30 VSA 51 (residential building standards) or 53 (commercial building standards) shall be a condition precedent to the issuance of any such Certificate of Occupancy. Such a building energy standards certificate shall be recorded in the land records of the Town.~~

5.6.2 [Conditional Use Review Specific Standards]

~~d) Applicable state permits for water supply and sewage disposal A State Wastewater and Potable Water Supply Permit shall be obtained, and any other applicable state permits, before the use commences.~~

~~e) d) ...~~

~~f) e) ...~~

~~g) f) ...~~

~~h) g) ...~~

~~i) h) ...~~

~~j) i) ...~~

~~k) j) ...~~

5.8 Boundary Adjustments

~~5.8.4 State Permits – All state permits must be approved prior to submission of application and state permit numbers must be included on the application.~~

5.8.5 5.8.4 New Lot Configuration

5.8.6-5.8.5 Appeals

Redlined Version

~~4.6 Nonconformities~~~~ing Lots~~

~~4.6.1 Existing Small Lots - In accordance with the Act [§4412(2)], An existing small lot is any lot that is legally subdivided; is in individual and separate and non-affiliated ownership from surrounding properties; ~~that~~; is legally in existence on *(September X, 2021)* ~~the Effective Date of any Richmond Bylaw~~; and does not conform to the minimum lot size requirement of the district the lot is located within. Existing small lots may be developed pursuant to the requirements, with the exception of the minimum lot size, of the district in which the lot is located as follows: ~~for the purposes permitted in the Zoning District in which the lot is located, even though the lot does not conform to minimum lot area requirements of the Zoning District provided such lot is not less than one-eighth (1/8) acre in area and does not have a width or depth dimension of less than 40 feet. Notwithstanding this exception to minimum lot area requirements, no Zoning Permit shall be issued for Land Development on an existing small lot unless such Land Development complies with all other provisions of these Zoning Regulations.~~~~

~~4.6.1.1 Existing small lots served by municipal water and sewer may be developed.~~

~~4.6.1.2 Existing small lots not served by municipal water and sewer service, and unable to connect to municipal water and sewer service may be developed if said existing small lots have both of the following dimensional requirements:~~

- ~~a) At least one-eighth (1/8) acre in area; and~~
- ~~b) A width and depth dimension of at least 40 feet each.~~

~~4.6.2 A lot which is nonconforming by requirements other than size may be used or developed according to the district in which the lot is located if all applicable dimensional requirements are met.~~

~~4.6.2 4.6.3 Lot Merger~~ Merger of a nonconforming lot – *(use existing text labelled 4.6.2 in RZR)*

Clean Version:

4.6 Nonconformities

4.6.1 Nonconforming Lots

4.6.1 Existing Small Lots - An existing small lot is any lot that is legally subdivided; is in individual, and separate and non-affiliated ownership from surrounding properties; is in existence on *(September X, 2021)*; and does not conform to the minimum lot size requirement of the district the lot is located within. Existing small lots may be developed pursuant to the requirements, with the exception of the minimum lot size, of the district in which the lot is located as follows:

4.6.1.1 Existing small lots served by municipal water and sewer may be developed.

4.6.1.2 Existing small lots not served by municipal water and sewer service, and unable to connect to municipal water and sewer service may be developed if said existing small lots have both of the following dimensional requirements:

- c) At least one-eighth (1/8) acre in area; and
- d) A width and depth dimension of at least 40 feet each.

4.6.2 A lot which is nonconforming by requirements other than size may be used or developed according to the district in which the lot is located if all applicable dimensional requirements are met.

4.6.3 Merger of a nonconforming lot – *(use existing text labelled 4.6.2 in RZR)*

5.3.5 Certificates of Occupancy –

~~A person shall not use or permit the use or occupancy of any land or structure, or part thereof created, erected, changed, converted, or wholly or partly altered in its use or structure until a Certificate of Occupancy is issued therefore by the Administrative Officer, stating that the proposed use of the structure or land conforms to the requirements of these Zoning Regulations and the conditions of approval, in accordance with the Act (§4449) , and that all violations of town land use permits, Bylaws and regulations have been cured as to the property involved and all related fines paid.~~

- a) ~~Notwithstanding the preceding, a Certificate of Occupancy shall not be required for a one-story building, without a basement or cellar, which:~~
 - i ~~does not have more than six hundred (600) square feet of Gross Floor Area,~~
 - ii ~~is an Accessory Structure to a Dwelling, or a temporary building used in connection with a work site while work is ongoing (other than an accessory dwelling under Section 5.9), and~~
 - iii ~~does not contain any water facilities or sewage facilities.~~

5.3.5.1. A certificate of occupancy from the Administrative Officer is required prior to the use or occupancy of any land or new principal structures, dwellings, additions to structures 600 square feet or greater, and accessory structures 600 square feet or greater.

5.3.5.2. As a condition of approval, the Development Review Board may require the applicant to receive a certificate of occupancy regardless of the nature of the proposed land development prior to the occupancy of the structure and/or commencement of the use.

5.3.5.3. In order for the Administrative Officer to issue a Certificate of Occupancy, the Administrative Officer shall determine that:

- a) The land is used and the structure is built according to the terms and conditions of an approved zoning permit, these Zoning Regulations, approved project plans, applicable conditions of approval, and any other applicable specifications; and
- b) For heated or cooled structures, the applicant has filed the applicable building energy standards certificate--either the Residential Building Energy Standards Certificate (RBES), the RBES Owner/Builder Disclosure Statement, or the Commercial Building Energy Standards Certificate (CBES).

5.3.5.4. The Administrative Officer shall act on a complete application for a certificate of occupancy within 30 days. The Administrative Officer may inspect the subject property and consult with other Town departments as needed to determine compliance prior to the issuance or denial of a complete application for a certificate of occupancy.

5.3.5.5. The Administrative Officer shall approve or deny applications for certificates of occupancy in writing. When denying a certificate of occupancy application, the Administrative Officer shall provide the applicant the reasons for the denial.

5.3.5.6. For all Zoning Permits issued after *[insert date Zoning Regulations become effective]*, Certificates of Occupancy shall be applied for prior to the expiration of the respective Zoning Permits.

b) 5.3.5.7. Certificates of Occupancy shall be delivered by the Administrative Officer to the Town Clerk for recording in the land records of the Town in accordance with Section 8.5.

**Planning Commission Reporting Form
for Municipal Bylaw Amendments
(Modifications to portions of the zoning regulations to align with 24 V.S.A. §4413)**

This report is in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §4441 (c) which states:

When considering an amendment to a bylaw, the planning commission shall prepare and approve a written report on the proposal. A single report may be prepared so as to satisfy the requirements of this subsection concerning bylaw amendments and subsection 4384 (c) of this title concerning plan amendments...The report shall provide:

(A) Brief explanation of the proposed amendment and...include a statement of purpose as required for notice under §4444 of this title:

This Planning Commission proposal modifies zoning regulations for nonconforming lots, certificate of occupancy requirements and procedures, performance standards, and permit requirements. The proposal would align the Richmond Zoning Regulations with Act 179 (2020) and clarify permit requirements as stipulated under §4414 and §4449.

And shall include findings regarding how the proposal:

1. Conforms with or furthers the goals and policies contained in the municipal plan, including the effect of the proposal on the availability of safe and affordable housing:

The Planning Commission concluded that the proposal conforms and furthers the goals contained in the municipal plan by promoting compliance with state statute. Specifically, the Planning Commission cited the following objectives from the 2018 Town Plan:

- Continue the fair and equitable application and enforcement of town, state, and federal laws
- Create clear guidelines and information resources for permit applicants, clarifying requirements and steps for permitting and approval.

2. Is compatible with proposed future land uses and densities of the municipal plan:

The Planning Commission concluded that the current amendment proposal would not affect the proposed future land uses and densities as stated in the 2018 Town Plan.

3. Carries out, as applicable, any specific proposals for any planned community facilities:

The proposed amendments does not carry out any specific proposals for any planned community facilities. In addition, the proposed amendment does not conflict with any proposals for planned community facilities.

TO: Richmond Planning Commission

FROM: Ravi Venkataraman, Town Planner

DATE: August 13, 2021

SUBJECT: Town Plan Goals and Action Items

For your consideration, enclosed are reports from the following town boards, committees and representatives:

- Andrews Community Forest Committee
- Housing Committee
- Recreation Committee
- Parking Advisory Committee
- Town Energy Coordinator Jeff Forward

I have also included the Excel spreadsheet listing the Planning Commission's goals and action items from the 2018 Town Plan.

Tangentially, Virginia Clarke prepared the enclosed statement to provide an update to the Selectboard and the public via Front Porch Forum on the Planning Commission's goals and work plan for the coming year.

Next Steps

Once the Planning Commission has made note of its progress on its action items, the plan is to have a working group with four Planning Commission members monitor and evaluate progress on the goals and actions in the Town Plan. This working group would meet with representatives from all the town boards, committees and representatives on a regular, quarterly basis. This group would also assist with coordinating committees to work together on mutual goals. The group will report to the Planning Commission on a regular basis along with board/committee representatives with their respective committees.

Town Plan Goals Check-In

Jesse Crary <jcrary@primmer.com>

Sun, Jul 25, 2021 at 5:34 PM

To: Ravi Venkataraman <rvenkataraman@richmondvt.gov>

Ravi,

Please see below and attached responses.

Best,

Jesse Crary,

Chair, Anderson Community Forest Committee

Jesse D. Crary | Shareholder

I hope everyone is doing well. The Planning Commission and I are planning to evaluate the status of the Town Plan's goals and objectives. To best utilize your time, I would like you and your respective committees (if applicable) to answer the following questions:

- Which action items have you completed since the approval of the Town plan in November 2018 (or the creation of your committee, whichever is earlier)? [See Forest Committee Tab on attached spreadsheet](#)
- Which action items are you currently working on? [Amendment of Management Plan to allow for ecological-based trail design and build](#)
- Are you working on any items that are unlisted as action items? What are those items? [Logging project is now complete and we are now more generally working to implement more aspects of the Town Forest Management Plan with the trail design and build as top priority. In connection with getting approval of the new trail design, we will be moving into a more active community involved phase that would involve community outreach about the trails, construction of trails by a mix of professional builders, Trails Committee, Richmond Mountain Trails and volunteer workers. Preparation for work would begin in fall with actual trail build starting in the spring. This will create the need for additional signage and education. Once the trails are developed, we will be able to move into meeting our educational and recreational goals per the Forest Management Plan.](#)
- Currently, which action items are you facing the most difficulty with completing? Why? [See below](#)
- Which action items paired with your respective committee or your committee's objectives will require assistance outside of you and/or your committee? How so? [Prior to proposing amendment of the Management Plan to the Selectboard, the ACF Committee must approve the new Trail Design; in order to do so we need to hold a presentation of the design by our professional ecologist/trail design team to the ACF Committee, Selectboard, Vermont Land Trust and Conservation Committee representatives. Scheduling such a meeting in the summer months is proving challenging but we are hopeful to make it happen in late August](#)
- Additional comments for the Planning Commission.

As a reference, I've attached the Town Plan. By "action item", I'm referring to the goals and objectives listed at the end of each chapter of the Town Plan. The plan has a list of all the action items, the section the action item falls under, and the board/committee/organization/representative responsible for carrying out the task on pages 41 through 51.

Please be sure to read through all the action items, not just the ones linked to you or your committee. For some of you, you may not have specific action items linked to you or your committee. But you may have already addressed or are addressing an action item supposedly unrelated to you or your committee. Similarly, some of you may be addressing action items unrelated to you or your committee in addition to the items connected to you or your committee.

Please provide a written response to the questions by July 29th. I plan to include your responses in the August 4th Planning Commission meeting materials. You don't necessarily need to provide a lengthy response; but Planning Commission members may have follow-up questions for you based on your responses.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Ravi

Ravi Venkataraman, AICP (he/him)

Town Planner

Town of Richmond

[203 Bridge St.](#)

[Richmond, VT 05477](#)

office: 802-434-2430

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 **Town Plan Implementation - Town Forest Committee (4909488_1).XLSX**
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Technical Plan	Goal, Action	Action Language	Party	Time Frame	Status	Notes
Natural Resources (NR)	4.1	Utilize a management plan for the Town Forest, and continually assess for necessary amendments to the plan to ensure best stewardship of that land and forest and to ensure that the requirements of the Grant of Development Rights, Conservation Restrictions and Public Access Easement are being met.	Town Administration, Conservation Commission, Town Forest Committee	Ongoing	ACF Community complying and monitoring	The ACF Committee will be presenting a proposed amendment to the Selectboard over the next two months. The amendment is necessary as the ACF is preparing to introduce a formal trail design that will replace the original Concept Trail Map that was made part of the Management Plan
Energy (E)	3.4	Ensure that the long term management plan for the Town Forest allow for sustainable energy production for the benefit of the town, such as sustainable biomass harvesting (firewood). Follow the goals and intents of the Town Forest management plans	Town Forest Committee Town-Wide, Town Administration	Short Term, Ongoing	Short Term Completed	The logging project on the Anderson Community Forest was fully and finally complete in early July 2021; we do not anticipate further logging for approx. 15 years. Logging proceeds will help support ongoing management of the Town Forest; some wood was donated to local charity, Wood For Good, and some is being used to build picnic tables, bridges, signs, etc. on the Town Forest
Utilities & Facilities	1.2			Ongoing		

Town Plan Goals Check-In

1 message

Sarah Heim <heim.sarah@gmail.com>
To: Ravi Venkataraman <rvenkataraman@richmondvt.gov>

Tue, Jul 27, 2021 at 9:42 AM

Ravi,

Please see below responses on behalf of the Housing Committee.

Best,
Sarah

1. Which action items have you completed since the approval of the Town plan in November 2018 (or the creation of your committee, whichever is earlier)?

- None that I'm aware of. Lots of things are in progress.

2. Which action items are you currently working on?

- CD 1,2 - When updating zoning regulations, explore ways to allow for nontraditional housing types, ways to encourage the creation of new business enterprises
- ED 3,3 - Maintain and upgrade zoning regulations and development review policies to ensure that concentrated growth occurs in designated growth centers, thus bringing residents and businesses in close proximity
- ED 5,2 - Support efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing in Richmond
- E 1,1 - Adopt and maintain a zoning ordinance based on "smart growth" principles, with most development concentrated in the village, neighborhoods, downtown, gateway mixed use areas to reduce vehicle miles travelled from housing to shopping and to public transit options
- FLU 1,2 - Create policies that encourage affordable housing development
- FLU 1,4 - Create zoning regulations that support the above mentioned uses and prohibitions
- FLU 1,5 - Create form-based zoning regulations that include architectural and design requirements to be met in certain districts, especially mixed use areas
- FLU 1,6 - Explore density-based zoning when updating the land use regulations
- FLU 2,3 - Encourage development that protects natural resources and preserves scenic and/or historic character of Richmond
- H 1,1 - When updating zoning regulations, identify opportunities for development of a variety of housing types, for example allowing mixed residential and commercial use, higher unit density, or unique accessory housing in certain identified districts
- H 1,2 - Continue to support the existence of the mobile home park, and support additional affordable housing development in the park
- H 1,4 - Encourage concentrated residential development in areas identified for growth
- NR 3,4 - Adopt zoning regulations that include Vermont's Smart Growth principles such as concentrated downtown development in order to maintain Richmond's historic settlement pattern and village character

Are you working on any items that are unlisted as action items? What are those items?

- No.

Currently, which action items are you facing the most difficulty with completing? Why?

- Many of our action items are focused on adopting new or amended zoning regulations. These conversations are also happening within the Planning Commission. It would be helpful to have more communication between the Housing Committee and the Planning Commission to get clearer objectives for the Housing Committee on where and how to focus its energy. For example, are there specific types of zoning ordinances that the Housing Committee could explore and then recommend to the Planning Commission?

Which action items paired with your respective committee or your committee's objectives will require assistance outside of you and/or your committee? How so?

- See above re: zoning.

Additional comments for the Planning Commission.--

- There are some action items which I think may be appropriate for the Housing Committee to address, but which we haven't discussed to date. For example, H 1,7 focuses on supporting seniors and low mobility residents to help them remain in their homes. Is this the type of project that the Housing Committee could/should also take on in the future?

Sarah Heim

Town Plan Goals Check-In

Kirsten Santor <kirstensantor@gmail.com>

To: Ravi Venkataraman <rvenkataraman@richmondvt.gov>

Hi Ravi,

I included the table below with all of the Rec Committee items (and any others that fell into our purview) and their status. Please let me know if you need more detailed responses for some of notes section of the table covered them).

- Currently, which action items are you facing the most difficulty with completing? Why? *As the Rec Committee is newly re-formed we are working on catching up on things that have not biggest challenge and opportunity right now is simply the volume of things we're trying to accomplish.*
- Which action items paired with your respective committee or your committee's objectives will require assistance outside of you and/or your committee? How so? *We don't currently have will need external support. However, support from others will be needed intermittently and will be sought at that time.*

Technical Plan	Goal, Action	Action Language	Primary Party Responsible for Implementation	Time Frame	Status	
Historic Resources (HR)	1,8	Work with the Richmond Historical Society to develop a walking and/or driving tour of the Town's historic sites	Recreation Committee	Long Term	Not yet started	
Community Development (CD)	4,2	Explore the creation of a town community outreach and recreation staff position	Recreation Committee	Short Term	Preliminary review done	The committee is sustainable structure opportunities long
Community Development (CD)	4,3	Identify possible methods of funding further recreation and community engagement opportunities	Recreation Committee	Short term	Ongoing	Looking into VOI opportunities, RI and used in 2021 planning
Community Development (CD)	4,5	Educate the community and visitors of Richmond's recreational opportunities through the town website and social media	Recreation Committee	Short Term	Ongoing	Rec committee c input on website hired to help create web-based brochure
Economic Development (ED)	4,2	Maintain maps and up-to-date information on the town website	Recreation Committee	Short Term	Ongoing	See above
Community Development (CD)	3,6	Support outdoor recreation opportunities and programs that include canoe access on the Winooski River, swimming, cross country skiing, skating, mountain biking, etc.	Town-Wide	Ongoing	Ongoing	The committee s community mem reviews national program opportu
Economic Development (ED)	1,5	Support the Richmond Farmers' Market and other local agricultural business enterprises	Town-Wide	Ongoing	Completed for 2021, ongoing	Provided funding expenses
Economic Development (ED)	5,1	Support mentoring, internships or community-based learning opportunities when possible	Town-Wide	Ongoing	Completed for 2021, ongoing	Hired an intern fr
Community Development (CD)	4,8	Continue to allow for public events such as festivals, parades, and vendor fairs and create a streamlined approval process for such uses	Selectboard	Ongoing	Ongoing	Creating an ever streamlining Volt Ordinance.
Economic Development (ED)	1,1	Create clear guidelines and information resources for permit applicants, clarifying requirements and steps for permitting and approval.	Planning Commission	Short Term	Ongoing	See above
Utilities & Facilities (UF)	1,1	Ensure that Volunteers Green is maintained and publicly accessible/usable for residents and visitors	Town Administration	Ongoing	Ongoing	Developing a Ce recreation space Green & Browns
Utilities & Facilities (UF)	1,5	Continue to rent or lease town spaces and grounds to businesses and organizations in order to best utilize space and maintain that income	Town Administration	Ongoing	Ongoing	

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Richmond Town Goals

2 messages

Diane Mariano <diane@gmavt.net>
To: Ravi Venkataraman <rvenkataraman@richmondvt.gov>
Cc: John Rankin <jrankin32@yahoo.com>

Sun, Jul 25, 2021 at 5:42 PM

Begin forwarded message:

From: John M Cohn <johncohn@us.ibm.com>
Date: July 20, 2021 at 4:45:34 PM MDT
To: diane <diane@gmavt.net>
Subject: Ravi note

Ravi...

The Parking Advisory Committee (PAC) began work in January 2021 to help alleviate recreational parking during high parking demands in the summer months. We have worked primarily with the Trails Committee and the Richmond Land Trust since these areas are why most folks come to Richmond to recreate. We also have worked a little with the Richmond Historical Society trying to help divert recreational folks from the Richmond Round Church parking areas.

Parking is essential to the workings of a vibrant town and parking requires land which is hard to find and allocate. Much of our work has been just that, looking for land to provide recreational parking. In looking through the town goals, it seems that parking has crossovers with multiple committees/boards. Being that PAC is an "advisory" committee and dealing only with recreational parking, what else would you like us to do for your worksheet?

I have read the Town Plan and went through the excel worksheet and put "notes" on all the goals that PAC might have responsibility or has ongoing work. Is that what you are looking for? Happy to help further, just need a little guidance.

Here is our updated version of your spreadsheet https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LkDr2lkgSPO7p9Z-N_8ugOGX0EXIItIA/view?usp=sharing

Thanks, Ravi, for being the keeper of the town goals. It's nice to see the thought and work behind them.
Also, these emails are from John Cohn's account since I am using his computer while out of Vermont.

Best to you...diane

John Cohn Ph.D,
IBM Fellow , MIT-IBM Watson AI Lab

Ravi Venkataraman <rvenkataraman@richmondvt.gov>
To: Diane Mariano <diane@gmavt.net>
Cc: John Rankin <jrankin32@yahoo.com>

Tue, Jul 27, 2021 at 2:24 PM

Thanks, Diane. This is great. I'll be sure to follow up if the Planning Commission and I have any questions.

Thanks,

Ravi

Ravi Venkataraman, AICP (he/him)
Town Planner
Town of Richmond
203 Bridge St.
Richmond, VT 05477
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Transportation Committee Feedback on Town Plan Check-In Items T 1.1-2.3

Town Plan pg 49 Transportation action items 1.1-2.3 (per A Knowles) and 2.4-4.4 (per C Cole)	Which action items have you completed since the approval of the Town plan in November 2018?	Which action items are you currently working on?	Are you working on any items that are unfunded as action items? What are those items?	Currently, which action items paired with your respective committee or your committee's objectives will require assistance outside of you and/or your committee? How so?	Additional comments for the planning commission
<p>1.1 Implement high priority actions from completed planning studies, such as new sidewalks within the village along the east side of Bridge St. and 4 new crosswalks at the Bridge/Railroad/Jolina intersection as soon as is feasible. This may require identifying funding sources and/or integrating the projects into the Capital Budget's road maintenance schedule</p>		Sidewalks Scoping; Bridge St Study		Engineering and financing	
<p>1.2 Support the construction of sidewalks and bike paths or line striping for cyclists on State and Town road projects. Consider making wider shoulders on Town roads, especially Cochran, Huntington, and Hinesburg Roads. Work with VTrans to prioritize rebuilding Route 2 (Main Street) including sidewalks and bicycle/pedestrian accommodation</p>		Sidewalks Scoping; Bridge St Study; Bike/Ped Phases 1&2		Engineering and financing and Richmond Hwy Dept and VTRANS	
<p>1.3 Work with partner agencies and organizations to identify and test (through pop-up demonstrations or other means) best practices in bike and pedestrian safety and implement low-cost improvements that have been identified such as better signage and road markings</p>	Local Motions Pop Up on east side of Bridge Street between Pleasant Street and RR tracks (2019).				
<p>1.4 Support Safe Routes to School and other walking projects, and running races on town roadways</p>		Sidewalks Scoping; Bridge St Study		Engineering and Financing	
<p>1.5 Support interconnectivity of trails and connectivity of trails with destinations such as the market or park and ride in order to provide non-motorized means of travel</p>		Bike/Ped Phases 1&2		Engineering and Financing and coordination with Trails Committee	
<p>1.6 Publicize and support the Cross Vermont Trail and other public trails</p>		Sidewalks Scoping and Bike/Ped Phase 1& 2		Engineering and Financing and coordination with Trails Committee	
<p>1.7 Consider handicap accessibility when making decisions about location of paths, parking, crosswalks, and transit routes</p>		Sidewalks Scoping; Bridge St Study; Bike/Ped Phases 1&2			
<p>2.1 Work with VTrans to adjust the signaling at the Route 2/Bridge Street intersection to improve traffic flow and safety rating and continue to support policing and traffic management during morning and evening busy times</p>		Sidewalks Scoping; Bridge St Study; Bike/Ped Phase 1 & Route 2 repaving project		Selectboard, VTRANS	
<p>2.2 Identify road segments where noise, speed, congestion or safety is/are a problem and work to develop strategies to reduce the negative impacts</p>		Sidewalks Scoping; Bridge St Study; Bike/Ped Phases 1&2		Selectboard	
<p>2.3 Work with VTrans and CCRPC to keep bridges on a good maintenance and repair schedule</p>	Check w Highway Department				
<p>2.4 Implement pedestrian and bike traffic signage in the village and heavily bike-trafficked areas</p>		Sidewalks Scoping; Bridge St Study; Bike/Ped Phases 1&2			

Transportation Committee Feedback on Town Plan Check-In Items T 1.1-2.3

<p>2.5 Implement necessary improvements for compliance with the Municipal Roads General Permit</p> <p>2.1.1</p> <p>2.2.1</p> <p>2.3.1</p>	<p>Need to check w Ravi and Highway Department</p>	<p>Need to check with Ravi and Pete on inventory, assume all municipal highway comply w State stormwater construction requirements</p>	<p>Dugway Road stabilization</p> <p>Trying to get AOT to incorporate replacing stormwater infrastructure that has failed under Route 2 as part of the State repaving project</p> <p>Have 7/27 committee meeting scheduled with GMT to discuss opportunities for expanded public transit in Richmond. Received grant for school bus pilot project.</p>	<p>The siting of new public roads would require action by the selectboard and Richmond's topography likely reduces the likelihood of new public roads.</p> <p>Selectboard, Vtrans</p>	
<p>3.1 Identify and upgrade undersized culverts to prevent washouts. Use best management practices for managing runoff during road construction or reconstruction.</p> <p>3.2 Work to site new roads away from rivers and streams, and reroute or stabilize roads that are susceptible to flooding</p> <p>3.3 Reduce stormwater runoff by using best practices and incorporating green infrastructure into town road construction, facilities and landscaping.</p>	<p>Need to check with Ravi and Pete</p> <p>Need to check with Ravi and Pete</p>	<p>Need to check with Ravi and Pete</p> <p>Need to check with Ravi and Pete</p>	<p>Have 7/27 committee meeting scheduled with GMT to discuss opportunities for expanded public transit in Richmond</p>		
<p>4.1 Support public and private policies, programs or other efforts that promote alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel such as public transit improvements, car-sharing, telecommuting, flexible work schedules and school bus usage.</p> <p>4.2 Work with other Chittenden County towns and the Agency of Transportation to add/expand Park and Ride facilities in Richmond and neighboring Towns to provide alternatives to the Richmond Park and Ride that is currently of inadequate capacity. Identify possible additional Park and Ride capacity space in Richmond, such as on the south side of the I89 interchange with a pedestrian crossing light at the existing interchange traffic light.</p> <p>4.3 Encourage "smart growth" development in the village center or downtown, or near transit options, to reduce car travel distances.</p> <p>4.4 Support social service transportation such as SSTA, Neighbor Rides and others for elderly, disabled or other non-drivers.</p>			<p>No work done on this item. AOT does not support a south side location of the I89 interchange for an additional P&R due to pedestrian safety issues.</p> <p>Sidewalks Scoping; Bridge St Study; Bike/Ped Phase 1</p> <p>Have 7/27 committee meeting scheduled with GMT to discuss opportunities for expanded public transit in Richmond</p>	<p>Selectboard, VTrans</p>	

Transportation Committee Feedback on Town Plan Check-In Items T 1.1-2.3

<p>4.5 Partner with the Mount Mansfield Modified Union school District to increase bus ridership, or create other means to reduce morning congestion at the Four Corners</p>	<p>Committee supported grant application and is monitoring status of planning project. Committee supported new light with protected left turn signal during peak commuting times as part of Route 2 paving project.</p>	
<p>4.6 Work with the school district to examine the possibility of using school buses as a shuttle system around town during hours when buses are not transporting students</p>	<p>Committee supported grant application and is monitoring status of planning project.</p>	
<p>Energy Section of Town Plan 1.2 Support public transit opportunities such as Park and Ride lots; commuter rapid transit buses such as the Burlington-Montpelier Link; a Burlington-Montpelier light rail commuter train station in Richmond if the opportunity becomes available and local shuttle bus service, carpooling, and ridesharing programs.</p>	<p>Have 7/27 committee meeting scheduled with GMT to discuss opportunities for expanded public transit in Richmond.</p>	
<p>1.6 Support the installation of private and public electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in convenient locations. Consider installing one at the Town Center, the Park and Ride and along travel corridors.</p>	<p>Meeting held with highway department and town administration on possible siting of electric vehicle charging station locations at municipal lot.</p>	
<p>1.7 Work with GMP and VEC to find funding for EV charging infrastructure.</p>	<p>No action.</p>	
<p>1.8 Collaborate with Drive Electric Vermont to publicize their webpage, host electric vehicle demonstrations, and inform residents about electric vehicle technology, incentives and resources.</p>	<p>No action.</p>	
<p>1.12 Plan upgrades to town roads to make them more bicycle and pedestrian friendly</p>	<p>Sidewalks Scoping and Bike/Ped Phase 1& 2</p>	
<p>1.13 Support upgrading sidewalks in the village to encourage walking</p>	<p>Sidewalks Scoping and Bike/Ped Phase 1& 3</p>	

Technical Plan	Goal, Action	Action Language	Party	Time Frame	Status	Notes
Community Development (CD)	3.1	Work with landowners who are willing to allow public access to privately accessed natural and open space areas	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	In progress	Currently working with Hillview Rd residents on possible conservation easement. We look forward to working with landowners on future projects and have historically worked with the Vermont Land Trust and Richmond Land Trust in partnership to conserve privately owned properties.
Community Development (CD)	3.3	Encourage collaboration between the trails committee, conservation commission, planning commission, and regional organizations	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	In progress	Collaborated with Trails Committee, Cross VT Trails ED Greg Western and town personnel Pete Gosselin and Josh Arneson on fixing the Johnny Brook Trail; worked with Bike/Ped folks on letter to state/RPC's; supported the Conservation Summit, made significant Town plan contributions involving energy planning and Act 171 in communication with the CCRPC. Ongoing Andrews Community Forest trails discussion and funding meets this goal, as does RCC involvement with Green Up Day.
Economic Development (ED)	2.3	Keep track of ongoing strategies and studies being pursued at the state and regional levels to understand the implementation and ramifications of Act 171	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	In progress	During the Town Plan meetings held by the Planning Commission, Bob Low of the RCC was instrumental in communicating with assorted parties about Act 171 and including components of that work in the Natural Resources section of the Town Plan.
Natural Resources (NR)	1.1	Identify opportunities to conserve lands containing or adjoining to above listed conservation priorities	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	In progress	Ongoing communication with RLT, VLT, other citizens. Stage Road Town Forest was conserved. Discussed conserving Peet Farm.
Natural Resources (NR)	1.2	Encourage conservation or protection of above listed conservation priorities on private lands	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	In progress	Ongoing, see above
Natural Resources (NR)	1.9	Partner with state and regional organizations to secure funding and collaborate on projects that would support conservation efforts	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	Done	We did this for the purchase of the Andrews Community Forest. Green Up Day is another example. There may be more opportunities with the big grant that FPR is issuing for recreation. Gillett Pond has been a multi-party effort, as were discussions around rivershore protection of the Winooski River. The riverbank erosion project involved Friends of the Winooski River and the River Management section of the state.
Natural Resources (NR)	1.12	Provide educational materials, and consider conducting outreach, to landowners about best management practices for sustainability, conservation, and environmental stewardship of natural areas	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	Ongoing	The natural resources sections of the town plan touch on these concepts. Fern protection outreach and signage has been produced and informational cards about the ash-free killing emerald ash borer have been mailed to all Richmond residents. The Conservation Reserve Fund was used to support stewardship of the Huntington Gorge.
Natural Resources (NR)	1.16	Support and cooperate with water quality testing efforts in Richmond and the region	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	Done	Bob Low coordinated water sampling for the Huntington River.
Natural Resources (NR)	1.17	Support the completion and updates of stream geomorphic assessments, wetland maps, and river corridor maps	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	Starting	We are planning to sponsor a wetlands inventory. We need to identify a partner who can request the funds.
Natural Resources (NR)	1.22	Support and participate in the Vermont Watershed Management Division's Tactical Basin Planning for the Winooski River and Lake Champlain basins.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	No action yet	We have been in communication with the VT Watershed Mgt Division as we are eager to see and be involved with a plan for the Winooski River.
Natural Resources (NR)	2.1	Encourage the implementation of best environmental management practices in farm or forest businesses	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	Ongoing	We pursued this goal for forestry via Ethan Tapper, Chittenden County Forester and Richmond resident and by using the Conservation Reserve Fund to assist with logging road improvements at the Andrews Community Forest.
Natural Resources (NR)	2.4	Encourage on-site projects or developments that provide ecosystem services or mitigate runoff	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	Done	We collaborated with an CCRPC stormwater project at RES in a limited manner

Natural Resources (NR)	2,7	Support property owner participation in the VT Use Value Appraisal (Current Use) Program, the federal Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) program, and other voluntary programs as options for land conservation and financial benefits	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	Ongoing	We discuss this with private landowners. We have supported and assisted Jack Linn and Jon Kart in invasive removal projects that they initiated. We would like to buy some invasive removal tools and have the library or other suitable institution house them for public use. We need to identify a sponsor who can request the funds.
Natural Resources (NR)	4,4	Control the growth and spread of invasive species on town properties.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	Ongoing	
Natural Resources (NR)	4,5	Utilize the conservation reserve fund to protect important natural resources and public access to them where appropriate	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	Ongoing	See Conservation Reserve Fund disbursement list
						Other projects that may not fit in these categories - the Vermont Master Naturalists Program; Financial support for development of a management plan for the Andrews Community Forest.

Technical Plan	Goal, Action	Action Language	Party	Time Frame	Status	Notes
Energy (E)	4,5	Work with the Town Manager to fully implement the 2007 Town Energy Conservation Policy.	Energy Coordinator	Long Term	No progress	
Energy (E)	4,2	Maintain energy consumption data for municipal buildings using the Environmental Protection Agency Portfolio Manager software for analyzing energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities and to evaluate the results from investments to reduce energy consumption and costs.	Energy Coordinator	Ongoing	No progress	Need to work with Finance Director to input bills from 2015 to present
Energy (E)	4,3	Work with the Richmond Climate Action Committee to educate the community on energy efficiency, energy conservation and renewable energy technologies and techniques.	Energy Coordinator	Ongoing	Continuing progress	RCAC sponsors regular workshops on a variety of energy topics. Progress was slowed during Covid, but still held bicycle maintenance workshops in 2020 and spring of 2021
Energy (E)	4,4	Assist the Town with applying for grants and incentives to reduce energy use and increase the use of renewable energy.	Energy Coordinator	Ongoing	Continuing progress	Applied for Congressional Discretionary Spending grant and helped Police Chief apply for Tesla grants
Energy (E)	4,6	Inform the Town about the Vermont Climate Pledge and assist with joining this organization to demonstrate the town's commitment to meeting Vermont's energy and climate goals.	Energy Coordinator	Short Term	Program no longer available	
Housing (H)	1,8	Support, and share information about, programs and resources that help to lower cost of home ownership such as energy conservation, weatherization, and utility assistance	Town Administration, Energy Coordinator	Ongoing	Continuing progress	The Town Energy Coordinator and the Richmond Climate Action Committee regularly post information about available resources in Front Porch Forum.

Transportation (T)	3,5	Partner with the Mount Mansfield Modified Union school District to increase bus ridership, or create other means to reduce morning congestion at the Four Corners	Town Administration	Long Term	Continuing progress	Helped the MMUUSD apply for and receive a grant to study the feasibility of obtaining an electric bus to transport both students and the general public
Transportation (T)	3,6	Work with the school district to examine the possibility of using school buses as a shuttle system around town during hours when buses are not transporting students	Town Administration	Long Term	Continuing progress	Helped the MMUUSD apply for and receive a grant to study the feasibility of obtaining an electric bus to transport both students and the general public
Transportation (T)	2,3	Reduce stormwater runoff by using best practices and incorporating green infrastructure into town road construction, facilities and landscaping.	Town Administration	Ongoing	Continuing progress	Worked with the MMUUSD to obtain grants for stormwater master planning and to implement specific stormwater management projects at CHMS and RES
Transportation (T)	3,1	Support public and private policies, programs or other efforts that promote alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel such as public transit improvements, car-sharing, telecommuting, flexible work schedules and school bus usage.	Town-Wide	Ongoing	Continuing progress	RCAC continues to promote and support local and regional policies to promote alternatives to SOV
Utilities & Facilities (UF)	1,8	Implement stormwater projects on town properties identified in the Stormwater Master Plan	Town Administration	Long Term	Continuing progress	Worked with the MMUUSD to obtain grants for stormwater master planning and to implement specific stormwater management projects at CHMS and RES

Utilities & Facilities (UF)	1,10	Implement building improvement projects for the library in order to maintain the use of the historical building	Administration, Library	Long Term, Ongoing	Continuing progress	The Town Energy Coordinator is a member of the the Town Center Committee which helped the library design and install a new high efficiency heating system in the library and is considering a net zero renovation on the Town Center building.
Utilities & Facilities (UF)	1,12	Modernize town buildings with energy efficiency measures and accessibility measures to ensure continued usability, especially in the historic facilities	Town Administration	Long Term, Ongoing	Continuing progress	The Town Energy Coordinator is a member of the the Town Center Committee which helped the library design and install a new high efficiency heating system in the library and is considering a net zero renovation on the Town Center building.
Education (Ed)	2,1	Work with the school district to explore the potential of electric buses. Support the school district in their current grant application for an electric bus	USD, Town Adminis	Long Term	Continuing progress	Helped the MMUUSD apply for and receive a grant to study the feasibility of obtaining an electric bus to transport both students and the general public

Education (Ed)	3,1	Support the maintenance and improvement of the building infrastructure with an emphasis on energy conservation	MMMUSD	Ongoing	Continuing progress	Energy Coordinator is working with the MMUUSD to develop a performance contract with an Energy Service Company to replace aging HVAC equipment in all of the schools in the district
Energy (E)	1,3	Consider energy efficiency and alternative fuels when purchasing municipal vehicles, recognizing there may be limited options at this time for heavy duty vehicles and vehicles for first responders.	Town Administration	Ongoing	Continuing progress	Energy Coordinator worked with the Police Chief to advocate for a Tesla police cruiser and helped apply for grant funds to offset the incremental cost
Energy (E)	1,4	Facilitate conference calls, webinars and other virtual meetings when feasible to decrease travel by town employees.	Town Administration	Ongoing	Continuing progress	Zoom
Energy (E)	1,8	Collaborate with Drive Electric Vermont to publicize their webpage, host electric vehicle demonstrations, and inform residents about electric vehicle technology, incentives and resources.	Town Administration	Ongoing	Continuing progress	RCAC has sponsored several EV workshops, posted information on Front Porch Forum on EVs and hosted vehicle demonstration events at the Town Center
Energy (E)	2,1	Identify conservation and efficiency opportunities in municipal buildings and facilities and build efficiency improvements into annual maintenance upgrades and into the town's capital plan. The Town will fully participate in Efficiency Vermont and Vermont Gas's high-performance programs whenever building, renovating or upgrading any Town buildings. Develop policies for evaluating purchases and capital improvements that use life cycle analysis.	Administration, Select	Ongoing	Continuing progress	Town Center Committee is making significant progress on maintaining and improving the Town Center building and the Library

Energy (E)	2,2	Support educational activities such as town energy fairs, the Community Energy Dashboard, literature distribution and energy committee activities that provide residents with information about energy conservation and renewable energy opportunities such as advanced wood heating, air-source heat pumps, geothermal, solar PV and programs to reduce energy use.	Town-Wide	Ongoing	Continuing progress	RCAC has hosted webinars and in-person workshops on numerous energy issues
Historic Resources (HR)	1,3	Protect, preserve and continue to fully utilize the Town Center and Library buildings.	Town-Wide	Ongoing	Continuing progress	Town Center Committee
Utilities & Facilities (UF)	1,5	Continue to rent or lease town spaces and grounds to businesses and organizations in order to best utilize space and maintain that income	Town Administration	Ongoing	Continuing Progress	The Town Center Committee helped the town to create and implement a process for evaluating tenants and leasing space in the Town center building
Utilities & Facilities (UF)	1,7	Continue efforts to create an affordable solution for the police department and their facility.	Town Administration	Short Term	Continuing Progress	The Town Center Committee is evaluating how to renovate space in the Town Center to accommodate all of the current town services in the Town Center building
Utilities & Facilities (UF)	3,3	Work with Vermont Electric Cooperative and Green Mountain Power to ensure all residents have access to reliable electricity	Town Administration	Ongoing	Continuing Progress	Town Energy Coordinator is a member of the Vermont Systems Planning Committee which does long range transmission planning for reliability and efficiency

Municipal Planning in a Time of Climate Change -- Planning Commission Goals and Update 2021-2022

We are just about three years out from the adoption of our “new” Town Plan (November, 2018). We are just emerging from a global pandemic and in the midst of a year of intensive statewide confrontation with the climate crisis. We continue to work on many of the issues identified in our 2019-2021 report, but see the emphasis in some areas changing, as new challenges present themselves. As we progress through the Zoning Regulations update process and strive to maintain the rural character and village vibrancy that we all hold dear, it becomes more clear that the vision for Richmond outlined in the plan aligns well with the climate change mitigation goals that are being articulated at the state level: a compact, walkable village center surrounded by lower density agricultural and forested land.

To this end, we are near completion of the updated village zoning districts. Our proposals protect the close-knit neighborhoods, the commercial “islands” and the iconic Round Church; provide some additional flexibility for commercial and multifamily dwellings along the main village streets; provide some gentle infill opportunities to allow for a modest increase in housing; and call attention to the need for electric vehicle charging stations as we think about parking to support the urgent need to electrify most vehicles in the near future. We have conducted extensive outreach to the residents of these areas, and have formed a Housing Committee, including a grant-financed consultant, to advise the Planning Commission on strategies to increase housing, and in particular, affordable housing. This report is due in January 2022.

We will soon consider the Gateway Zoning District. Here we face the new likelihood that there will be an extension of the municipal sewer line out towards Exit 11, and we will need to revisit our vision for this area and plan our development regulations to support that vision. We will also be considering our northern neighborhoods, our mobile home park, our industrial/commercial district, the Jonesville area and our large “Agricultural/Residential” zoning district. The challenge with the A/R district will be to balance development needs with the necessity to preserve forests and farm land to sequester carbon, an important climate change strategy, as well as to maintain our rural character and continue to support Richmond’s burgeoning outdoor recreation industry. We continue to think about ways to support commercial farming, perhaps in ways that are less fossil fuel intensive, but which provide additional opportunities for a revenue stream. Our goal is to finish the Zoning Regulations update by November 2022 – the halfway point of the 8-year lifespan of the 2018 Plan!

The statewide effort to articulate and implement a climate change mitigation strategy is called the Global Warming Solutions Act. The first phase will be completed by January 2022 with the publication of a comprehensive plan for immediate and long-term actions to reduce Vermont’s share of greenhouse gases. This is likely to involve most or all of the following pathways: electrification of most vehicles; greatly increased construction of renewable electricity-generating facilities; weatherization of new and existing buildings; land use patterns that preserve open space; travel modes that reduce single-occupant driving, and numerous others. Strategies for resilience and surviving climate-change driven weather events such as flooding and heat waves are also being scaled up from existing disaster planning programs. This work will inform and be informed by our planning work at the municipal level.

In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the inequalities that permeate our society. Richmond’s recently formed Racial Equity Committee is actively working to understand the issues and develop solutions that are applicable here in Richmond. It has become more clear that the words “just” and “sustainable” are integral to any planning effort, whether it be equity or climate change.

With these new challenges in mind, it has become more obvious that we must view our planning work through some additional lenses, beyond the traditional one of providing for an orderly way of organizing our community and creating a level playing field in which the interests of neighbors can be balanced and our traditional values be preserved. The Town Plan provides a good selection of goals towards which we can work, and as we proceed with our zoning update and other planning work, the following questions can be asked as a way to view the zoning changes that we make:

- **Why are we making this particular zoning change?**
Most fall within one or more of these reasons:
 1. To align with new or existing state statutes
 2. To be consistent with the 2018 Richmond Town Plan
 3. To meet the changing needs of the community
 4. To make the language of the document more clear, complete or concise

- **Does this zoning change move us towards our goals in one or more of these important new areas?**
 - A. **Energy**
 1. Weatherization
 2. Ready for electric
 3. Promotes/enables walking/biking
 4. Encourages/enables renewable energy generation
 5. Municipal vehicles/buildings energy efficient
 6. Promotes carbon sequestration
 - B. **Equity**
 1. Diversity of housing
 2. Variety of commercial opportunities
 3. Non-discriminatory
 4. All income levels
 5. Adequate services and amenities for all
 - C. **Zoning document transparency and user-friendliness**
 1. Clear
 2. Concise
 3. Organized
 4. Authorized
 5. Legal
 6. Incorporates historical when applicable
 7. Modernized

We will continue to look for your input as we consider these issues. We will hold public hearings on any zoning amendment we are considering. These hearings are usually preceded by public input meetings to help us develop the changes. We are grateful to our excellent planning and zoning staff – Ravi Venkataraman, our Town Planner and Keith Osborne, our Zoning Administrator and DRB Coordinator – for making our work possible. Please watch the town website for our meeting agendas and for contact information for submitting written comments.

Virginia Clarke
Chair, Richmond Planning Commission
7.24.21

