

1 Richmond Planning Commission

2 Regular Meeting

3 Wednesday, September 21, 2016

4 Approved Minutes

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5 **Members Present:** Sean Foley, Joy Reap, Brian Tellstone, Alex Brosam, Clare Rock (Staff)

6 **Absent:** Marc Hughes, Lauck Parke, Mark Fausel

7 **Others Present:** Mary Houle, Judy Rosovsky, Bob Lowe, Marcia Gardener, Chris Granda, Bruce  
8 LaBounty, Dave Healy, Alison Anand

9  
10 Foley opened the meeting and let people know the meeting is being recorded by MMCTV

11  
12 Public Comment – n/a

13  
14 Administrative Items

15 - Approve meeting minutes of September 21, 2016 – see notes

16 Motion by Foley to table the approval of meeting minutes to the next meeting,  
17 seconded by ---. All in favor, so voted.

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20 - Staff updates – Rock provided the following information:

- 21 ○ VLCT Planning & Zoning Forum, is scheduled for 11/2/2016
- 22 ○ Another Andrews Farm walk is being hosted by the Vermont Land Trust  
23 this upcoming Sunday afternoon at 3pm. The Andrews family would like  
24 to sell their 400+ acre property on Route 2 and to ensure it remains as  
25 open, conserved land. The VLT is helping to facilitate the sale. VLT  
26 presented the project to the Selectboard a few weeks ago. At this point it  
27 is uncertain who the future owner would be.
- 28 ○ Rock provided a base map to the trails committee so they can plan for  
29 future trails, Rock will check in with them regarding their progress.
- 30 ○ Rock attended a meeting at the VLT offices with Richmond property  
31 owner Sally Fellows. Fellows is in the process of estate planning and  
32 anticipates gifting her land to Richmond for perpetual open  
33 space/recreation use within her will. Rock added the potential recreation  
34 action to be included in the Town Plan will be to undertake a Richmond  
35 trails/open space plan to guide future land acquisitions and trail  
36 development.
- 37 ○ Rock attended Municipal Day at National Life on 9/9 and gave a  
38 presentation on Richmond’s Town Planning project. Rock also attended a  
39 presentation on energy siting and Section 248 proceedings and a  
40 presentation on downtown/village revitalization efforts in Wilmington  
41 and Algiers Village.
- 42 ○ REDC meeting will be held on Monday 9/26 at 9am.
- 43 ○ Local Motion will be hosting a community meeting on Monday 9/26 at  
44 6pm.
- 45 ○ Public Safety Building Update – the committee presented the feasibility  
46 report to the Selectboard on Monday evening. The report included site  
47 concepts for a combined police, fire and rescue building on the Willis  
48 Farm property, on the West Main Street property (next to the  
49 chiropractor’s office), on the existing Fire Station site and on the existing  
50 Richmond Rescue site. The report also include a few alternative concepts  
51 for just a new police and fire station also. The committee requested input  
52 from the Selectboard on a preferred alternative so they could  
53 development more specific cost estimates to present to the voters next

- 1                    March. The report should be available online or contact the Town
- 2                    Manager.
- 3                    ○ Creamery Property Update – Buttermilk closed on the property on
- 4                    Monday, and made a presentation to the Selectboard that evening.
- 5                    Presented preliminary plans for Phase I – a 4-story, 10,700 sf mixed use
- 6                    building adjacent to Sonoma Station/Blue Feed building. It'll include
- 7                    ground floor commercial/retail space and upper 2 floors with 5 or 6
- 8                    apartments. Referenced overall master plan, which includes a total of 3
- 9                    buildings, mixed use 60% commercial and 40% residential with no more
- 10                   than 45 residential units – Phase I will not include this commercial to
- 11                   housing ratio. Anticipate demolition by the end of the year and Phase I
- 12                   construction next year. Buttermilk anticipates submitting an application
- 13                   for approval under the interim zoning regulations, maybe as soon as next
- 14                   month. The project will also fall under Act 250 jurisdiction.

15  
16  
17                    Foley reviewed the agenda and suggested that since Mark Fausel and Lauck Parke were not present  
18                    the Accessory Apartment Zoning Change agenda item be postponed. The absent Commission  
19                    members have valuable input on the topic.

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21                    Motion by Foley to table the accessory apartment zoning change discussion to the next meeting,  
22                    seconded by ---. All in favor, so voted.

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25                    Regional Energy Plan, Local Renewable Energy & Town Plan

26  
27                    Rock presented an overview of the topic which included a summary of the CCRPC Renewable  
28                    Energy Presentation from the last meeting. The RPC is preparing maps which show the viability of  
29                    solar and wind generation in towns. The maps are based upon a GIS landscape analysis where  
30                    define Tier I landscape constraints have been removed as areas where renewable energy is not  
31                    allowed. Tier I constraints include lands where regulations are in place which prohibit commercial  
32                    or industrial development such as FEMA floodways and permanently conserved lands. The maps  
33                    also identify Tier II landscape features which include lands where commercial and industrial  
34                    development is not preferred/ or encouraged, such as FEMA floodplains.

35  
36                    Rock identified the need to reconcile the RPC solar and wind energy generation maps with the draft  
37                    Natural Land Town Plan maps. Plus another consideration is the Economic Opportunity vision  
38                    statement which includes promoting renewable energy. As wind energy generation is shown to be  
39                    viable on Bryant Hill, yet this is an area we've preliminarily identified as Core Habitat. It would be  
40                    in the best interest of the town to determine which of these areas is most important to Richmond,  
41                    wind energy generation or core habitat. Similarly it would be beneficial for identify areas which  
42                    Richmond would like to promote solar energy siting. This will result in meaningful town plan  
43                    language and provide Richmond a stronger standing in Public Service Board proceedings for  
44                    renewable energy siting projects.

45  
46                    Discussion followed about the value of discussing the various scales of renewable energy  
47                    generating projects – there is a difference between a commercial wind turbine vs homeowner scale,  
48                    and we should consider the various scales.

49  
50                    Discussion followed regarding the statewide data, compared to the more detailed localized data. The  
51                    RPC is using statewide data, yet Richmond has better, more detailed data for some natural

1 constraints, specifically the core habitat block data from the Science To Action Report prepared by  
2 Arrowwood. Bob Lowe and Judy Rosovsky, Conservation Commission (CC) members, raised the  
3 issue of the quality of the data, the CC also provided a memo to the PC (included in the PC packet)  
4 including a variety of GIS maps showing natural resources. In addition to Byrant Hill, Lowe added  
5 that Gillet pond is a sensitive natural area and that there are errors in the CCRPC wetlands data.

6  
7 Rosovsky suggested the PC outline a process for development review on a case by case basis with  
8 input on CC to determine the development's impact of natural resources, such a renewable energy.

9  
10 Foley requested Rock present the PC with a process of working through all this information. Foley  
11 also requested a copy of the Bennington town plan language to review as an example. Bennington  
12 Town Plan language was given deference in a solar siting projects application. The solar project  
13 was denied approval as it did not conform to the Town Plan. Foley also suggested the CC provide a  
14 priority list of natural resources. Bob Lowe will provide a copy of a viewshed study which was  
15 undertaken in 2002.

16  
17 Overall members were ok with the Tier I constraints on the CCRPC maps, but questioned the Tier II  
18 layers. Richmond PC may suggest the RPC use the more specific sub regional data (i.e habitat  
19 blocks from Science to Action). The PC will continue the discussion and Foley will talk to people at  
20 DPS about the purpose of the maps.

21  
22 At the next meeting the PC will discuss Natural and Working lands. Then the Economic  
23 Opportunity

24  
25  
26 Adjourn

27 *Tellstone made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Reap, all in favor, so voted.*

28  
29 The meeting ending at 9:00pm

30 Respectfully submitted by Clare Rock, Town Planner