

2 Richmond Planning Commission  
3 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES FOR August 19, 2020  
4

---

Members Present: Chris Cole, Scott Nickerson, Virginia Clarke, Chris Granda, Jake Kornfeld,

Members Absent: Brian Tellstone, Mark Fausel, Joy Reap, Alison Anand,

Others Present: Ravi Venkataraman (Town Planner/Staff), John Rankin

---

5

6

7 Chris Cole opened the meeting at 7:04 pm.

8

9 **2. Adjustments to the Agenda**

10

11 None

12

13 **3. Approval of Minutes**

14

15 Motion by Chris Granda, seconded by Scott Nickerson to approve the August 5th, 2020 Planning  
16 Commission Meeting Minutes. Voting: unanimous. Motion passed.

17

18 **4. Public Comment for non-agenda items**

19

20 None

21

22 **5. Discussion of possible new zoning districts in southern portion (south of Winooski River)**  
23 **of Richmond Village (7:06 pm)**

24

25 Venkataraman listed the items in the meeting packet for the Planning Commission's  
26 consideration. Virginia Clarke suggested starting with the map delineating the prime  
27 agricultural soils. Venkataraman provided further information about the details on the map,  
28 and the Act 250 point system for mitigation. Clarke asked about the differences between the  
29 letter designations. Cole said that he assumed statewide c had the lowest amount of  
30 importance. Venkataraman said that that was his understanding, as the resources he  
31 looked into did not delve into the letter differences. Cole asked if the Farr's property in  
32 question has lands considered of statewide importance. Clarke asked if the land  
33 surrounding the land considered of statewide agricultural importance to be insignificant.  
34 Venkataraman said that the land surrounding the land marked of statewide importance is  
35 unmarked and the colors one sees is satellite imagery. Clarke asked about the buffer.  
36 Venkataraman said that the buffer color applies to areas surrounding Class I and II wetlands  
37 and that the gray color is probably obscured by the color of the agricultural soils. Clarke  
38 identified the Marquis property and recommended reaching out to them for input. Cole said  
39 he was interested in determining the developability of the parcel, and the costs of  
40 developing in the southern portion of the village. Venkataraman clarified that mitigation  
41 would not be required if Act 250 is not triggered. Clarke said she could envision  
42 development occurring in the hillsides with the significant agricultural areas used for  
43 agriculture. Clarke asked about extending water and sewer lines. Venkataraman identified  
44 where the lines end, and the potential for private connections. Cole asked about the town's

45 capacity for additional development. Venkataraman affirmed that the town does. Clarke  
46 asked about creating district boundaries through parcels.

47  
48 Jake Kornfeld left the meeting. Meeting recessed due to lack of quorum at 7:20 pm

49  
50 Kornfeld returned to the meeting. Meeting resumed at 7:46 pm.

51  
52 Clarke asked for further clarification between the proposed Village Neighborhoods District and  
53 the High-Density Residential District. Cole concurred that further clarification is necessary.  
54 Clarke said she was looking for additional information on the differences in density between  
55 the High Density Residential and the proposed Village Neighborhoods Districts. Nickerson  
56 said the commission should look into the base parcel size to determine density. Cole said  
57 they will need to look into the theoretical density and practical density of these districts.  
58 Clarke said they should clarify whether the goals of the High Density Residential and the  
59 Village Neighborhoods District are the same. Clarke recommended the commission look at  
60 the draft zoning map. Clarke asked if the commission was okay with the areas demarcated  
61 as the proposed Village Neighborhoods District. Cole asked about the inclusion of the large  
62 parcel at the end of Church Street. Venkataraman said that Mark Fausel proposed including  
63 the parcel in order to allow for further development. Nickerson said that most of the parcel is  
64 probably in the Flood Hazard Overlay District. Clarke said that the commission will need to  
65 see the boundary of the Flood Hazard Overlay District. Clarke pointed out areas included in  
66 the proposed Village Mixed Use District. Cole asked if there would be any material  
67 difference between the Commercial District at the corner of Farr Road and Huntington  
68 Road, and the proposed Mixed Use District. Clarke said there may not be a difference. Cole  
69 said that the commission will need to compare allowances in the proposed Village Mixed  
70 Use District and the Commercial District to determine the need for the Commercial District.  
71 Clarke said that that portion of the Commercial District should be integrated into the  
72 proposed Mixed Use District to allow for more developability. Cole said that the integration  
73 of East Main Street was predicated upon allowing the commercial uses to not change the  
74 streetscape, and that the commission should be careful not to create unintended changes.  
75 Venkataraman said that investigating density per parcel may not provide the full picture of  
76 possibilities if the parcels are reconfigured to maximize developability. Cole said that the  
77 likelihood of someone buying multiple parcels for a single development is slim. Kornfeld  
78 asked why west side of Jericho Road are not included in the proposed Mixed Use District.  
79 Cole said that these parcels are oriented towards the neighborhoods, have smaller parcel  
80 sizes and therefore less developability. Kornfeld said that having the parcels on the west  
81 side of Jericho Road zoned as Mixed Use would appear more consistent, and would include  
82 the existing businesses. Clarke asked Nickerson his opinion on the parcels on the east side  
83 of Jericho Road. Nickerson said he had a hard time envisioning how these parcels would  
84 look in the future. Clarke said that more discussion on this matter is needed. Clarke asked  
85 about the proposed rezoning of Depot Street and Railroad Street. Clarke said that the  
86 residential parcels along Railroad Street would make sense within the Mixed Use District.  
87 Cole concurred. Nickerson also concurred and said three of four of the parcels have large  
88 barns or garages, providing precedent for the additional footprint allowances the new zoning  
89 may provide. Cole said that the commission agreed that the parcels along Railroad Street is  
90 exactly where the additional density allowance should go. Kornfeld asked how the zoning  
91 would work for residential and commercial uses on a single parcel. Venkataraman said that

92 a commercial unit would not be counted as a dwelling unit for the sake of density, and  
93 having multiple uses on a single lot requires the PUD process. Clarke said that the  
94 commission should reconsider whether multiple uses on a single lot should trigger PUD  
95 requirements. Clarke asked if areas near the Round Church and Cochran Road should be  
96 included in the proposed Mixed Use District. Nickerson asked for additional information  
97 about a historic overlay district. Cole said that the impacts should be considered, and  
98 additional consideration for a historic overlay district should be made. Clarke said that the  
99 options are to leave the Round Church in the agricultural/residential district, or to create a  
100 historic overlay district. Clarke said she was not sure if adjoining property owners would  
101 want to be a part of a historic overlay district. Kornfeld said that he was not sure if the  
102 Round Church area should remain as-is, and that opportunities for further growth could  
103 revitalize the area. Venkataraman said that the commission could benefit from having Fran  
104 Thomas in attendance to discuss what could influence the interpretation of the Round  
105 Church. Clarke concurred. Clarke said that the commission should create a schedule for  
106 public input, and systematically receive input per area of the village. Cole asked if the  
107 townhouses on the corner of Farr Road and Huntington Road is a PUD, and the conditions  
108 of its development. Venkataraman said that he would have to refer to the records but that  
109 based on the map, it appears to be a PUD. Cole asked if larger parcels could become  
110 PUDs. Clarke said yes, and that the parcel across from the Round Church green is going to  
111 be developed as a PUD. Venkataraman said that one could develop a PUD akin to a  
112 subdivision. Cole said this type of development should be encouraged, and asked if a full  
113 zoning rewrite was necessary in order to provide developers the tools to create these types  
114 of developments. Cole said he was uncertain about providing commercial in all parts of the  
115 village. Clarke asked if PUDs would allow residential and commercial uses on a single lot.  
116 Venkataraman said yes, as long as the underlying district allows such uses. Cole asked if  
117 PUDs are a tool that allows for greater density. Venkataraman said no, and that PUDs allow  
118 for flexibility in development design. Venkataraman said that in general PUDs allow one to  
119 develop outside the zoning regulations as long as they make certain concessions, and that  
120 the Richmond Zoning Regulations do not clarify what those concessions are. Cole asked if  
121 clustering development was possible without going through the PUD process. Clarke said  
122 that they would have to go through the PUD process. Venkataraman said that it would  
123 depend on how the development is designed. Clarke said that PUD requirements for all  
124 multifamily dwellings seems excessive, and that multifamily dwelling uses should be made  
125 an allowed use in the proposed Village Mixed Use District. Cole concurred. Venkataraman  
126 said that specifying design standards would lead towards particular forms in the built  
127 environment. Cole asked how the PUD standards are onerous. Clarke said that the PUD is  
128 not designed for permitting single-structure, single-lot developments. Venkataraman  
129 concurred, stating that PUDs are for large-scale master planned development, not for  
130 single-use, single-lot developments. Cole asked if the townhouses on the corner of Farr  
131 Road and Huntington Road an appropriate use of the PUD too. Venkataraman said yes.  
132 Cole asked if the commission should consider creating clustering standards. Clarke said  
133 that for multifamily dwelling uses, it's already "pre-clustered". Cole asked about methods  
134 that has encouraged beneficial projects in town and ways to protect those methods.  
135 Venkataraman said that what should be provided are logical pathways for all cases of  
136 development that should be encouraged, and that if a logical path is provided, a beneficial  
137 project would emerge. Clarke said that the exercise of revising the zoning regulations is to  
138 update it with the current state of the town. Cole said that the commission should seek

138 public input to guide the rezoning process, with three separate sessions for stakeholders  
139 from areas south of the Winooski River, the Village Neighborhoods, and the village arterial  
140 roads to speak. Clarke proposed including an outreach strategy in the next meeting agenda.

141  
142

143 **6. Discussion on creating requirements for property owners claiming exemption per 24 V.S.A.**  
144 **§4413 (8:56)**

145  
146 Clarke overviewed the documents and provided suggestions for typographical edits.

147  
148 Motion by Chris Granda, seconded by Kornfeld, to accept the draft zoning language as amended, and to  
149 warn a public hearing for September 16, 2020 on the amendments to the Richmond Zoning Regulations  
150 Sections 1.2, 2.4.5, 5.1, and 5.10.4. Voting: unanimous. Motion passed.

151

152 **7. Other Business, Correspondence, and Adjournment**

153  
154 Motion by Granda, seconded by Kornfeld to adjourn the meeting. Voting: unanimous. Motion carried.  
155 The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

156  
157 Respectfully submitted by Ravi Venkataraman, Town Planner