

RICHMOND CONSERVATION COMMISSION (RCC)
MINUTES May 13, 2025

7:30PM

Present: Kit Emery, Bob Low, Jeanette Malone, Judy Rosovsky, Ibit Wright

Pubic: Chelsye Brooks, Trevor Brooks (Zoom)

Minutes: Bob Low

Public Comment: None

Town Plan Discussion with Chelsye Brooks:

- Town Plan Steering Committee (SC) membership and website discussed:
<https://www.richmondvt.gov/boards-meetings/town-plan-2026-steering-committee>
- Timeline discussed – pasted below; milestones reviewed.
 - Goal is to vote on revised Town Plan at March 2026 Town meeting; current Plan expires November 2026.
 - SC wants RCC feedback for its 6/11/2025 meeting. Creates timing problem with next RCC meeting scheduled for 6/10/25 if RCC is to provide input.
 - SC Working Draft-1 planned by end of June (see timeline).
- SC seeks RCC input as described in RCC meeting postings – cover email,
- Overall process will be ongoing with continuing opportunities for input.
- Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) review of current plan highlights issues to address from language strengths to specific topics (see SC website postings). Also see minutes and postings of March Planning Commission (PC) meeting which was attended by CCRPC staff.
<https://www.richmondvt.gov/calendar/meeting/planning-commission-3-5-25>
- CCRPC Future Land Use (FLU) map has been posted as was described in recent Front Porch Forum (FPF) announcement. Several pulled up the map and the process of adding comment for CCRPC described. **RCC members urged to comment. Comment deadline 5/19/25.**

Some CCRPC FLU Instructions

[One-page summary](#) of the Future Land Use map.

[5-minute video](#) and [3-page summary](#) for an overview of the Future Land Use mapping process and related law (Act 181).

[Graphic](#) with more details about each land use category and [detailed list](#) describing each land use category.

<https://www.ccrpcvt.org/ecos-engagement>

<https://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/our-plans/ecos-regional-plan/ecos-engagement/#future-land-use-map>

- Conserved lands discussed: need to compare local inventory with State map with CCRPC FLU map, Vermont Conservation Design, An issue is matching with

State parcel maps that are accepted as having major issues (e.g. Andrews Community Forest eastern boundary vs ANR Atlas vs Vermont Conservation Design designations).

- Discussion of what is permissible, e.g. housing in Rural Conservation areas (CCRPC FLU Map, dark Green). Allowed in context of current one-acre zoning.
- Discussion of the ability of Richmond to modify CCRPC map as it puts together its own descriptions, goals, actions – capacity for local input may be limited.
- Important for RCC to provide FLU map comment feedback ASAP.**
- RCC needs to review / discuss renewal Town Plan Implementation elements as they develop and stem off from current ones; as well, review once again Implementation Report as it applies to current, 2018 Town Plan.
- Individual elements of the Town Plan discussed including: required statutory changes (Chelsye will send), regulatory options for different areas such as Village; opt in / opt out alternatives and their importance to statutes such as Act-250 application / restrictions.
- There are consequences of expired Town Plan. For example, could maintain current Zoning Bylaws but could not change them.
- Town governs Zoning Bylaws in context of State restrictions / stipulation.
- Town Plan 2018 Implementation Summary needs to be finalized and submitted to PC.
- Zoom Chat Comments:
 - TB: The CCRPC different designations don't follow boundary lines necessarily. They follow features from the ANR Atlas.
 - RT: You mean like geographic features?
 - TB: The highest priority forests are dark green on the CCRPC map. On some parcels it is not the entire parcel. The very back of our property is dark green, but the rest is yellow – rural general. If you want to see this look at Jericho road. There are a line of properties with the very back part as dark green (Rural Conservation), the rest is yellow.

Town Plan: RCC response to PC request for RCC input

- RCC will respond.
- Anyone can respond as individual.
- **Tight timeline:** special meeting needed. Judy will check with Duncan Wardwell about available Town Center time slots.
- Bob will send draft work so far on Natural resources, Future Land Use, Almanac-Natural and working Lands.
- On agenda for special RCC meeting: Review of Implementation Report for 2018 Town Plan: will be circulated in advance. Discuss RCC response to PC request for input.

Town Center Parking Lot Tree removal:

- Highway Department will remove trees
- Discussions with Mary Houle have indicated she is willing to plant perennials, expecting CRF funding – no application yet. She wishes to be the decider not seeking others' input. Has specific plantings in mind.

- Discussions (Jeanette) with Lee Diamond have led to possible alternatives in context of planned and funded Library raised beds.
- Shrubs desirable as part of plantings.
- Agreed Judy would discuss with Mary

Updates:

- ACFC: Tabled.
- EAB Treatment CRF funding approved.
- Volunteer's Green Tree planting
 - Judy working with Jon Kart
 - 408 trees miraculously have survived despite all the onslaughts.
 - Dan Hamilton's CHMS class will work on mulching as well as weeding / invasives removal.
- Jericho Road restoration
 - Judy had requested update from Town and Callie Ewald: has not received a response.
- Save our salamanders:
 - Jeanette reported great turnout.
 - Truncated season; big nights missed but saved ≥ 1000 – counts still coming in.
 - Highlight: Grey tree frogs.
 - Adopt a highway approach under consideration.

Green-Up Day

- Ibit reported very good turnout; awaiting final report.
- Notable groups: Hillview, Hinesburg Road, Wes White Hill, ...

River Projects:

- Proposal to work on invasives; silver maple / ostrich forest communities (remembering Jon Kart thesis). Consider signage; interpretive trail signs; fiddlehead / fern protection; Jericho Road restoration with State / ANR help.

Jolina Court and river corridor protection (see posting):

- Concern about Buttermilk build-out as discussed at 5/5/25 Selectboard meeting: need to keep on RCC radar
- General discussion of how to protect river corridors, especially with requirements associated with updated Town Plan.

Fern Signage:

- See above – River Projects.

Matters Arising:

- Invasives
 - Jeanette suggested developing an early detection program for invasives. Also consider rotating traveling groups "satellite meetings" (RCC members

138 plus, including members of other relevant Town Standing Committees) for
139 education, invasives removal
140

141 **Action Items:**

- 142 ▪ Special meeting to respond to PC request for Town Plan revisions.
 - 143 • Discuss Implementation Report for 2018 Town Plan
 - 144 • Develop RCC Response to PC request
- 145 ▪ Judy will contact Mary Houle re Town Center plantings.
146

147 **Adjourned 9:40**

Town Plan 2026 Timeline draft #2 for Town Plan Steering Committee (TPSC)

5/2/25

May – request and receive input from committees

Continue general outreach to public and “friends”

June -- TPSC reviews input received so far and assesses deficiencies

Continue to seek input from committees and friends

Continued outreach to public

Formulate rough initial draft

July – 4th of July tabling (7/4)

Charette (7/10 and 7/12)

Collect public input on initial draft

Farmer’s Market 1st tabling event

Continued outreach

August -- Farmer’s Market 2nd tabling event

Review input from charette

Continued outreach

Pool party?

September – formulate 2nd draft

Continued outreach

Present to public at end of September - 2nd charette-type public event?

October – early = full update to PC, SB and CCRPC

late = assess response to 2nd draft; work on final draft

November -- present final draft

CCRPC approval

SB approval

December -- refine draft from CCRPC and SB comments

Prepare final FINAL draft

Notifications etc.

Prepare for Town Meeting Warning

Begin promotional outreach for townwide