

**Monthly Director Report**  
**Town of Richmond Planning and Zoning**  
**August 18, 2023 – September 15, 2023**

**Background**

The following report recaps the various responsibilities and duties carried out by the Town of Richmond Department of Planning and Zoning for the dates listed above. The Director staffs three committees (RPC, RTC, RHC) and supports other boards when needed (ACF, RCC, SB, etc.). The Zoning Administrator staffs the DRB and is the day-to-day public conduit for development, permitting, flood plain management and all items related to zoning. The board can expect a monthly report for their 2<sup>nd</sup> scheduled monthly meeting.

**General Report**

**Planning Commission (RPC)**

- Meetings attended: August 23, Sept. 6
- The recent focus is the incorporation of Act 47 (S.100) in the RZR. The Planning Commission has had three public meetings on this and appears to be wrapping up the “knowledge” portion.
- Public Workshop concerning the mandated changes due to the passage of ACT 47 will be scheduled in the near future. This may be combined with the proposed VRNN and VRNS Districts as the mandates from Act 47 are partially considered technical changes (required may be more apt) and combining these two items appears advantageous.
- Work is proceeding rapidly on the proposed Village Residential Neighborhood North (VRNN) and Village Residential Neighborhood South (VRNS) Districts. The North District will/may encompass most of the parcels currently in the HDR district within the village that are served by sewer and water. The South District will/may encompass those parcels south of the river that are served by water and sewer. These are distinct and separate districts within the village. The focus has shifted to the development of supporting RZR language for these changes. See above.
- Changes to the Rogers Lane parcels are currently under consideration.
- Please see past minutes for additional information

**Transportation Committee (RTC)**

- Meetings attended: August 22, September 12.
- 2023 Ped Grant (Jericho Road West Sidewalk) was denied by the state. Director will follow-up with additional information (**see attachment**).
- Route 2 Pinch-point study presentation scheduled for September 5 was rescheduled for the October 4 Selectboard meeting.
- The THBC intersection (Thompson, Huntington, Bridge and Cochran roads) is reaching the point where the committee will be choosing a preferred alternative in September or October and will schedule a public presentation to the Selectboard for comment and consideration.
- FY 24 UPWP Grant Award for Cochran Road Corridor Study has landed, and a kickoff meeting was accomplished with both the project manager, WSP, and CCRCP on September 7. The meeting was attended by Chris Cole, Cathleen Gent, yours truly as well as Jason Charest from

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**Town of Richmond Planning and Zoning**  
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- CCRCP and representatives of the project management team. An outline of work will be discussed at the RTC September 26 meeting.
- Western Gateway Scoping Study continued with a public outreach meeting on September 7.
- Please see past minutes for additional information.

**Housing Committee (RHC)**

- Meetings attended: August 23
- RHC has finished up the report for the SB on Affordable Housing Research and presentation accomplished on September 5.
- Please see past minutes for additional information

**Zoning Administration and Development Review Board (DRB)**

- Since 1/1/23:
  - 50 Zoning permits issued.
  - New Housing: 7 Single Family Dwellings (SFD's), 4 Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's).
  - DRB applications (Subdivision, Conditional Use Review and Site Plan): 17 to date.
  - Enforcement Actions: 2 (1 active).
- Meetings attended by Tyler Machia: September 13 (No meeting in August).
- DRB has been busy with multiple development reviews. Recent reviews of note: Jolina Court PUD (Buttermilk) **Approved**, Hillview Preliminary Subdivision **Approved (Under litigation, stay tuned)**, Depot Street PUD **Approved**.
- Tyler should be lauded for the work accomplished as the Town's Floodplain Manager this past July and August as a result of the recent flooding. Further to this, he provides a steady, consistent hand concerning the administration of the RZR in general.

**Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRCP)**

- Planning Advisory Committee meeting attended: September 13
- The Planning Director has secured a spot on the Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC) overseen by the Regional Planning Commission. This was requested by the Town Manager in order to stay abreast of stormwater issues that may affect the town.

**ACT 250 Local Projects**

- Embedded Link to TOR A-250 permit database [Link Here](#) (Press Ctrl and click mouse)
- Database has local permitting history from 1970, great read...if you're into this kind of stuff.

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**Additional Comments**

**New Comments:**

The inclusion of the town on the CWAC should give us insight into stormwater issues and proposals that may affect the town. Although we are not what is known as an MS4 community due to our size, my understanding is we have combined sewer and stormwater systems in need of not only evaluation but remediation as well. Oversight is needed as well as the bandwidth for this important issue.

MS4 - Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems or MS4 is a state permit for municipal discharges into impaired waterways. This is governed by the EPA and State, more info can be found [here](#).

**Past Comments (to be recycled in time):**

**Certified Floodplain Management accreditation** – Renewed focus for P&Z as both myself and Tyler attended a weeklong training course in Waterbury in March to help prepare. This is a very complicated accreditation that will require study time soon prior to sitting for the test. **Update: Tyler will be sitting for the test in the near future. I will be seeking accreditation hopefully before the end of the year or when time permits.**

**Digitizing Files** – This is an effort that the town should explore, not just for P&Z but for other town offices. We have a large-scale plotter but may require a consultant at some point to guide us in this endeavor. The approach is to take the long view but planting a seed is the intent here. This will be a constant placeholder in my monthly report.

**Day to Day** - Generally the office is quite busy, and our door is open during office hours with few exceptions. Permitting, timely zoning inquiry response, and professionalism continue as a priority and has clearly been so prior to my arrival.

**Long term** – The zoning regulations are in need of updating with concern to a technical and housekeeping point of view. Technical fixes such as state statutes (see: Act 164 Cannabis, Act 179 Affordable Housing, Act 143 - Accessory On-Farm Businesses, Act 47 or S.100, etc.) are required and along with general housekeeping (typos, duplicate definitions, format, etc.) these issues can be addressed separately from zoning amendments. The process is the same for both amendments and technical fixes, but the subject matter is not.

The need for the ZA to continue additional training is understood and targeted planning and zoning conferences as well as state offered opportunities to be explored. This would also hold for all DRB and Planning Commission members.

Respectfully submitted by Keith Osborne, Director 9/15/23