

Monthly Director Report

Town of Richmond Planning and Zoning

October 15, 2023 – November 17, 2023

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 (RCC, SB, etc.). The Zoning Administrator staffs the DRB, supports other boards and committees as needed 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 2nd scheduled monthly meeting.

General Report

Planning Commission (RPC)

- Meetings attended: Oct. 18, Nov. 1, Nov. 15
- Please see Chair update on Richmond Planning Commissions homepage.
- Zoning Amendments for the Industrial Commercial (I/C) District:
 - Public Hearing schedule for December 6, 2023
 - Current revisions out for legal comment
 - Purpose is to reduce the regulatory barriers with regards to residential uses in the district for parcels that have a current residential use through the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process.
- The recent focus is the incorporation of Act 47 (S.100) in the RZR. The Planning Commission has had four public meetings as part of the recurring agenda and has finished scheduled outreach. However, Act 47 will be refined over time and incorporated into the zoning amendments, necessitating additional public hearings.
- RPC 10/18:
 - Act 47 and residences in the FHOD discussion
 - Current status of water and sewer extension in Gateway
 - Updates on transportation projects
 - Set public hearing for I/C Amendments
- RPC 11/1
 - Multiple Uses and Principal Structures discussion
 - Continued Village Residential Neighborhood (VRNN/VRNS) discussion
- RPC 11/15
 - Jolina Court/Buttermilk Density discussion
 - Continued VRN and Multiple Uses and Principal Structures discussion
- Please see past minutes for additional information

Transportation Committee (RTC)

- Meetings attended: October 24, Nov. 14.
- Share the Road sub-committee has been making great strides. The committee anticipates a Spring 2024 launch for the campaign.
- RTC 10/24:
 - In-progress project update:

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- Upper Bridge Street RFP
- Lower Bridge Street consultant and scoring
- Funding status for both projects
- Gateway scoping study presentation by D&K and CCRCP
- RTC 11/14
 - Cochran Road Corridor Study-WSP Scope of Work review and approval
 - In-progress project update:
 - THBC Intersection continued discussion
 - Upper Bridge Street Bike-Ped
 - FY25 RTC Budget item and clarification discussion on lack of systems in place
- Cameron Wong, committee member, tendered his resignation. There are now two vacancies that will need to be filled.
- Please see past minutes for additional information.

Housing Committee (RHC)

- Meetings attended: Nov. 7
- Town of Jericho Affordable Housing presentation debrief
 - Realization that the Town of Richmond is much farther ahead in terms of zoning changes in process.
 - Results point to some pitfalls and approaches that should be considered
- Homeless sheltering discussion
 - Volunteers' Green location for overnight parking?
 - Browns Court Affordable/Senior Housing potential for re-engagement
- Please see past minutes for additional information

Zoning Administration and Development Review Board (DRB)

- Meetings attended by Tyler Machia: October 11, Nov. 8.
- Since 1/1/23:
 - 67 Zoning permits issued.
 - New Housing: 9 Single Family Dwellings (SFD's), 4 Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's).
 - DRB applications (Subdivision, Conditional Use Review and Site Plan): 19 to date.
- Enforcement Actions in progress: 0.
- Both the ZA and Director have actively engaged the DRB to solicit comment and increase involvement with the Planning Commission's efforts to update the RZR. Please note that this fundamental collaboration is critical and protocols are currently being developed.

Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRCP)

- Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC) attended: 11/7
- Planning Advisory Committee meeting attended: 11/15
- FY25 UPWP to be considered in the coming weeks.
 - Official Map discussion in order, please see link below for additional information:
 - [Official Map \(vpic.info\)](#) (Press Ctrl and click mouse)

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Additional Comments

New Comments:

- **Jolina Court/Buttermilk Discussions:** At the recent 11/15 Planning Commission meeting, the owners of Jolina Court petitioned the Planning Commission to revise the density/commercial requirements for the district in order to increase housing, specifically for workforce and lower income applicants and to make future projects financially feasible.
- **Upper Bridge Street Bike Ped** – ARPA funded project for east side sidewalks - RFP issued
- **Lower Bridge Street Project/Richmond TAP Grant TA-23(17)** – Consultant (VHB) and Project Management (CCRCP's Sai Sarepalli) has been chosen; process is now active for the Lower Bridge Street project between Jolina Court and Esplanade.
- **Conference attended** - Zoning Administrator attended the Northern New England Planning Conference in N.H. Nov. 6-8.
- **Recreation** - Consideration to establishing a recreational staff position to support the disparate committees (Recreation, Trails, ACF, VG/BC, etc.) and manage communications and town recreational infrastructure. ***It should also be noted that most development activities of these committees fall under the RZR and require ZA review, something that appears to be a surprise to most.***

Past Comments (to be recycled and revised in time):

- **Scofflaw interest by LaBounty**– This a solution in search of a problem with a component of unintended consequences, see October 2, 2023 doc.
- **Digitizing Files** – This is an effort that the town should explore, not just for P&Z but for other town offices. 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.
- **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.
- Embedded Link to TOR A-250 permit database [Link Here](#) (Press Ctrl and click mouse)

Abbreviations used in this report: ARPA = American Rescue Plan Act of 2021; CCRPC = Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission; D&K = Dubois and King; GMT=Green Mountain Transit; PPL = Project Pipeline Document; RTC = Richmond Transportation Committee; RVC=Riverview Commons; SB = Selectboard; TAP=Transportation Alternatives Program; THBC = intersection of Thompson Rd, Huntington Rd, Bridge St, and Cochran Rd; UPWP = Unified Planning Work Program; VDH = VT Dept. of Health; VTRANS=Vermont Agency of Transportation;

Respectfully submitted by Keith Osborne, Director 11/17/23