



WAITSFIELD PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA

May 20, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

Planning Commission

Beth Cook
Robert Cook
Emma Hanson
AnnMarie Harmon, Vice-
Chair
Becca Newhall
Alice Peal
Jonathan Ursprung, Chair

THE PLANNING COMMISSION WILL BE HOLDING A HYBRID MEETING. THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND IN PERSON AT WAITSFIELD TOWN HALL OR REMOTE VIA ZOOM WITH TELEPHONE AND/OR VIDEO ACCESS. THOSE PARTICIPATING MAY SPEAK DURING THE DESIGNATED PERIODS.

To join the meeting remotely, use this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9190265312>

Meeting ID: 919 026 5312

Or call: 1 929 205 6099

Planning & Zoning Administrator

J. B. Weir

Town Administrator
York Haverkamp

Town Clerk
Jennifer Peterson

Town Treasurer
Steve Lewis

Waitsfield Town Office
4144 Main Street
Waitsfield, VT 05673
(802) 496-2218
www.waitsfieldvt.us

1. **CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**
2. **REVISIONS TO AGENDA, IF ANY (5 +/- min)**
3. **PUBLIC FORUM (10 +/- min)**
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES –MAY 6 (10 +/- min)**
5. **IRASVILLE MASTER PLAN (40 +/- min) AnnMarie/Jonathan/JB**
6. **CVRPC UPDATE (20 +/- min) Alice**
7. **WASTEWATER PLANNING PROJECT UPDATE (25 +/- min) JB/Bob**
8. **OTHER BUSINESS (10+/-min)**
9. **ADJOURNMENT**

Waitsfield Planning and Zoning Administrators Report
Planning Commission May 20, 2025 meeting

5. Irasville Master Plan

The Village Master Plan Steering Committee (VMPSC) has not met since the April 28th review of SE Group's "Planning Framework" for the remainder of the project. That document is again included in the packet. For those who have not yet watched the recording of the meeting, the link is [here](#).

The core project team will meet via Zoom with Shannon Morrison on Tuesday May 20th at 1:00pm. AnnMarie, Jonathan and the PZA will discuss the meeting with the PC that night. The purpose in meeting is two-fold: 1) to get her input on some of our initial ideas and strategies for balanced village center planning in Irasville; and 2) to discuss how we can move forward together. We see this as the first of more discussions to come and not a decision-making meeting.

SE Group will be providing Shannon with the following materials ahead of the meeting:

- Irasville Village Center Design Objectives
- Draft Irasville Wetlands Conservation & Enhancement Strategies (pulled out of the draft planning framework document with some additions as discussed)
- Irasville Conceptual Future Development Scenarios

The next meeting of the VMPSC is to be determined. The meeting has been pushed out due to the meeting with Shannon.

6. CVRPC Update

Alice will update the board on CVRPC current work, including the Regional Plan.

Included in the packet is a flyer for Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission and Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation's quarterly meeting dedicated to Housing Development in Central Vermont. CVRPC and CVEDC will be hosting a Kickoff meeting on May 21st from 4-6 pm at the Old Labor Hall in Barre City.

Also included is a statutorily-required Act 250 Advanced Notice: Green Mountain Power - Upgrades to the Irasville #39 Substation located at 236 Carroll Road.

7. Wastewater Project Update

The PZA has included in the packet the most recent update from Joshua Schwartz to the Waitsfield Selectboard with regard to the Waitsfield Community Wastewater project. Joshua will be providing the update at the Selectboard meeting on May 19th.

The Town should be receiving notice as to potential grant awards in the coming few weeks. The Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) grant application, which was submitted on 4/9, requests \$1 million. The Town should also be receiving notice from the Northern Borders Regional Commission Catalyst Program as to another \$1 million grant. The Town is awaiting an updated grant and loan package from USDA Rural Development that may exceed the numbers that were originally projected. Staff has been warned that this may be the only bite at the USDA apple given funding cuts to the program.

Final 60% design plans have been submitted to CWSRF as of May 15. Dubois & King is pushing on with 90% design, now anticipated to be finalized in January 2026. The PZA is in the process of drafting the various easements for the project – including those pertaining to individual service lines, pump stations, etc. The bidding process for construction of the advanced SBR treatment system has been reset and will culminate with another bid opening in three weeks.

8. Other Business

Jonathan may have an update on the MRVPD.

Upcoming trainings/webinars:

Spring Planning & Zoning Forum

Join Us to Learn About

- Current bills and discussion in the legislature related to land use
- Updates from RPCs and exciting news about the newly revised Zoning Administrator's Handbook
- A detailed overview of zoning administrators' (ZAs') legal roles & responsibilities

See below for descriptions of the presentations.

Continental breakfast is included for in-person attendees.

NOTE: When registering, please choose In-Person or Virtual. Everyone will receive a Zoom link that can be used if, for any reason, you are unable to attend in person. In-person registration will end on Friday, May 23, 2025.

2025 Legislative Session Summary

Join VLCT's advocacy team for a summary of the current legislative session.

Josh Hanford, Director of Intergovernmental Relations, VLCT Public Policy and Advocacy
Samantha Sheehan, Municipal Policy and Advocacy Specialist, VLCT Public Policy and Advocacy

ZA Handbook and RPC Updates

Twenty years since its original publication, the Zoning Administrator's Handbook is now updated with current Vermont statutes, case law, and special topics such as accessory dwelling units. Catherine Dimitruk will describe the handbook collaboration with VLCT and also review news and offerings from regional planning commissions around the state.

Catherine Dimitruk, Executive Director, Northwest Regional Planning Commission

Zoning Administrator 101

The role of zoning administrator (ZA) can vary from town to town, but Vermont law defines the standard minimum duties that each must fulfill. This session covers the source, scope, and limits of those statutory duties. The speaker, a former ZA himself, also discusses other zoning administrator responsibilities and special issues that ZAs may encounter. This foundational training will be most useful for new zoning administrators but will also be a valuable refresher for veterans.

Kail Romanoff, VLCT Municipal Assistance Center Staff Attorney I.

In-Person Location and Details

Capitol Plaza Hotel

100 State St

Montpelier, VT 05602

802.223.5252

*The Capitol Plaza Hotel offers in-person attendees complimentary parking in the Capitol Plaza parking lot on a space available basis. Use **Taylor Bridge to access the lot**. Parking tickets are available at the gates at both entrances to the parking lot. **Bring your ticket inside to be validated for free parking**; otherwise, standard parking fees will apply.*

Register [here](#).

Grants & Funding Chat:

This chat is a bi-monthly series to help members learn about specific funding opportunities as well as ways to make their funding applications competitive – and the advance work that is required when using someone else's money.

Each meeting focuses on a different topic. After an eye-opening 15-minute presentation on the day's topic, the format transitions to a participant Q&A, where attendees can ask questions of the

presenter and each other. Bring your questions, share your challenges, and learn from other communities.

This series is presented by Bonnie Waninger, the Project & Funding Specialist on VLCT's Municipal Operations Support Team.

Registration Information

Register once and attend all sessions! Once you register, your link to join will be the same for every 2025 Grants & Funding Chat. Zoom will send you an email with the link to join ahead of each chat.

Future Dates and Topics

Tuesday, May 13, 2025 – Housing*

Tuesday, July 8, 2025 – Transportation*

Wednesday, November 12, 2025 – Community Economic Development

* These two might switch dates due to timing of the legislative session.

Presenter: Bonnie Waninger, Project & Funding Specialist, VLCT

Website [here](#).

Vermont's Land Use Review Board (LURB) Overview

Vermont's Land Use Review Board (LURB) was established in 2025 to administer the state's Act 250 land use permitting program, which works to ensure that development contributes to the vibrancy of Vermont's communities and economy but not at the expense of the state's landscape. As outlined in Act 181, enacted last year, the LURB's responsibilities include administering the program's existing land use permitting system, reviewing and approving new regional plans, and transitioning the program to a new location-based tiered jurisdictional system.

Join us for an overview by the LURB Statewide Coordinator and learn:

Why the LURB was created and its role in the Act 250 process

Major changes to land use planning and regulation brought about by Act 181 of 2024

Status of those changes and the timeline for phased implementation

Presenters

Aaron J. Brondyke, State Coordinator, Vermont Land Use Review Board

Register [here](#).

Respectfully submitted,

J.B. Weir

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Draft

Members Present: Beth Cook, Bob Cook, Emma Hanson, AnnMarie Harmon, Becca Newhall, Jonathan Ursprung
Members Absent: Alice Peal
Staff Present: JB Weir, Planning and Zoning Administrator
Others Present: Sam Robinson (MRVPD)

II. Regular Business

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Jonathan Ursprung. The meeting was held in person at the Town Offices and remotely via Zoom.

2. Review agenda for addition, removal, or adjustment of any items

No changes were made to the agenda.

3. Public Forum

Nobody requested an opportunity to comment.

4. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of April 29, 2025 were approved.

5. MRVPD Presentation

Sam Robinson presented an overview of MRVPD's Annual Data Report, noting that the full report and further information is on the PD's website and included in the Community Dashboard which is available on the site. He explained that the report provides information related to the community, the environment, and the economy of the three towns; and then explained some more specific data regarding population, public assistance, home sales of both primary and secondary residences, area short-term rentals, trail use, and parcel size changes. Sam answered several questions raised by PC members, and confirmed that his presentation slides would be available for further review.

6. Irasville Master Plan

AnnMarie reviewed the Planning Framework document recently drafted by SE Group. She noted that core actions had been outlined, which may be undertaken before solidification of the Master Plan, covering three categories: Wastewater, Wetlands, and Slow Road Development. Also agreed to by the Steering Committee was an order of prioritization of categories to be addressed: housing development, followed by commercial development, and finally community facilities.

AnnMarie then reviewed the catalyst actions included in the report, as they cover the most important aspect of each feature to be addressed:

- Wastewater System
 - Clarification of construction details continues

- Construction to be tied in with other development, such as sidewalks, when possible
 - Food Hub decentralized system currently occupies upper 1/3 of green space along Slow Road
 - Possible to connect this to the wastewater system and make that space available for development, but this matter needs further discussion
 - Potential for seventy new housing units, but some may be located outside of Irasville
 - Wastewater system extends up to the elementary school property
- Wetlands
 - Core team will be meeting with Shannon Morrison
 - Follow up studies to be undertaken
 - Potentially funded by a further MPG award
- Establish Slow Road as Main Street
 - “First Block” project is something that PC may work on
 - Public/private partnership approach recommended by SE Group
 - Consideration of mechanisms/strategies to ensure new housing doesn’t become STRs

Next steps for the project include SE Group’s development of a survey to be conducted in early summer, and continuing work on developing a wetland overlay.

7. CVRPC Update

Jonathan highlighted that CVRPC is holding a roundtable discussion regarding housing development on May 21, 2025.

8. Wastewater Planning Project Update

JB indicated that current information was available in the meeting’s Staff Report, and noted that he is working closely with USDA Rural Development to ensure that all possible funding opportunities are addressed.

9. Other Business

MRVPD – Jonathan reported that CVRPC had provided a presentation on upcoming Land Use changes, and that the PC will be considering Act 250 Tier partitioning choices for Waitsfield.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary

IRASVILLE VILLAGE MASTER PLAN: PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The following planning framework is intended to identify priority actions that the Town of Waitsfield and its partners can undertake to build a vibrant village center in Irasville. These are not intended to be a comprehensive set of recommendations; rather, these actions represent mission-critical items that will lay the foundation for long-term improvements in the village. We intend to build a comprehensive Master Plan for Irasville around these foundational elements.

#1: IMPLEMENT A COMMUNITY WASTEWATER SYSTEM

THE OPPORTUNITY:

- Enable dense infill development in Irasville.
- Reduce cost of development for new homes and businesses.
- Protect local water quality.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE:

- Irasville is able to grow, following a sustainable infill development pattern.

CONSIDERATIONS, CHALLENGES, AND UNCERTAINTIES:

- In 2024, the Town of Waitsfield passed a \$15 million bond measure to fund the development of the wastewater system. The Town is nearing completion of the financial package to fund the project, with potential system construction in 2026 – 2027.
- The planned wastewater system is expected to provide capacity for approximately 70 new homes as well as new commercial businesses. It is possible that additional capacity for new development could be secured.
- While there is a defined wastewater service area for the planned system, there is no policy governing how much future capacity may be allocated to any particular development or sub-area.
- There may be an opportunity align wastewater system implementation with improvements to other infrastructure, such as roadways and sidewalks, in areas where wastewater utility lines will be constructed and buried.

CATALYST ACTIONS:

- **Continue to move forward with financing and implementing a community wastewater system.**
- **Identify combined wastewater & transportation infrastructure projects.** Wastewater system construction plans should consider opportunities to phase in roadway and pedestrian improvements that could be completed in a single project.
- **Develop wastewater allocation policies.** These policies could reserve wastewater capacity for a sub-area of Irasville (e.g., the area around Slow Rd) and/or limit that amount of wastewater capacity allocated to any single project.

#2: IMPLEMENT A LOCAL AND REGIONAL WETLANDS STRATEGY

THE OPPORTUNITY:

- Allow Irasville to function as the Mad River Valley's flood-resilient growth center while preserving critical local wetland function.
- Establish Slow Rd as Irasville's "Main Street."
- Explore regional strategies for wetland enhancement and flood mitigation.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE:

- Irasville is able to grow, following a sustainable infill development pattern.
- Critical local wetland functions and scenic values are permanently conserved.
- There is improved flood mitigation along the Mad River. At minimum, there is no net loss of flood mitigation function downstream along the Mad River.

CONSIDERATIONS, CHALLENGES, AND UNCERTAINTIES:

- Any proposed development with potential wetland impacts is subject to state wetlands permitting.
- Waitsfield's zoning bylaws permit wetlands impacts, provided that the impacts conform to Vermont Wetlands Rules and the development includes a vegetated buffer between wetland areas. There are no overlay districts specifically for conserving wetland areas. For proposed developments going through conditional review, the Development Review Board retains some discretion to limit wetland impacts.
- Wetland functions in Irasville range from very low to moderately high. Envisioned infill development sites would result in impacts to wetlands with low or very low wetland functions.
- Irasville does not have a centralized stormwater system and is believed to have a high groundwater table. Both conditions present uncertainties for how future infill development will impact wetlands, even in areas of low wetland function.

CATALYST ACTIONS:

- **Continued coordination with the Agency of Natural Resources.** Maintaining communication with ANR wetlands staff will be critical to understanding the pathways for future infill development that may impact low-functioning wetlands. Identifying opportunities to work proactively with ANR to identify pathways for development approvals will be critical.
- **Complete follow-up studies.** The following follow-up studies will lend additional clarity and strategic perspective related to wetlands functions and impacts:
 - **Local hydrologic study.** This study would model the impacts of potential infill development scenarios on wetlands function, including flood storage. This information would inform needs around on-site stormwater mitigation as well as any potential impacts to flood mitigation function.
 - **Regional wetlands enhancement and flood mitigation exploration.** As a follow up or companion to the local hydrologic study, this study would identify opportunities for wetlands enhancements and flood mitigation projects upstream of Irasville in the Mad River Valley watershed. This information would assist in identifying potential candidates for off-site mitigation from infill development projects in Irasville.

- **Conserving critical wetlands.** While areas of higher wetland function in Irasville are not envisioned to be developed, there is value to taking steps to permanently conserve these areas. Two tools available to the Town and its partners are:
 - **Creating a Critical Village Wetlands Overlay District.** Through zoning, the Town has the ability to sharply curtail development in wetland areas. Drawing from the 2021 Arrowwood wetlands study, an overlay district could be developed around any wetlands identified as having high scenic/ecological value and/or flood function.
 - **Conserve or acquire key parcels.** The Town and/or partner organizations can explore acquiring or placing conservation easements on targeted undeveloped parcels hosting higher function/value wetlands in the vicinity of Route 100 and Carroll Rd. Once conserved, improved wetland buffers could be established and recreational trails could be added, with connections to existing boardwalks and possibly Slow Rd.

#3: ESTABLISH SLOW ROAD AS IRASVILLE'S MAIN STREET

THE OPPORTUNITY:

- Provide a central hub for community development – homes, businesses, gathering places, and events.
- Support a dense, walkable development pattern that anchors the pedestrian network and provides a “park and walk” experience for visitors.
- Promote the orderly and efficient development and maintenance of critical infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, water/wastewater service lines) by limiting scattered development.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE:

- A dense mix of homes and public-facing businesses extending at least two blocks.
- A traffic-calmed, pedestrian-friendly street with on-street parking that can be closed for events.
- Community gathering places, indoors and outdoors.
- Parking is shared with existing nearby parking lots, reducing the amount of new parking that is needed.
- Clear signage identifies parking areas and walking routes.

CONSIDERATIONS, CHALLENGES, AND UNCERTAINTIES:

- Private landowners will need to be engaged.
- Infill development along the first block between Mad River Green Rd and Mad River Canoe Rd will necessitate retiring of the septic mound adjacent to the Shaw's parking area. This is planned to occur as part of the Community Wastewater System Project.
- North of Mad River Canoe Rd, any new development along the northwest side of Slow Rd will involve impacts to Class 2 wetlands and will be subject to state wetlands permitting.
- There is the question of timing for new development and supporting infrastructure (e.g., wastewater, road/streetscape improvements, sidewalk). Installation of buried wastewater service lines along roadways is a potential opportunity to sequence multiple infrastructure improvements at the same time, if funding is available.
- There is also the question of wastewater capacity. The planned community wastewater system service area will cover all of Irasville and Waitsfield Village. Policies may need to be considered to ensure there is sufficient

wastewater capacity to reserved to accommodate future development along Slow Rd if that is to be a community development priority.

CATALYST ACTIONS:

- **The “First Block” Project.** This project would entail a coordinated community effort to establish the first block along the Slow Rd “Main Street” between Mad River Green Rd and Mad River Canoe Rd. This area would be a logical starting point, given its location within Irasville and lack of wetland impacts. There are multiple pathways that could be considered to move this project forward:
 - **Pathway #1: let the private sector lead.** The Town can bring the community-supported vision for development along Slow Rd to landowner(s) in the project area and advocate for the landowner to initiate a project that meets identified community objectives.
 - **Pathway #2: public-private partnership.** The Town could work to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the landowner to facilitate a conceptual design and development framework for the development of block and shared use of the adjacent Shaw's parking lot. In addition to identifying the form and use of proposed development, this agreement could also cover plans for an improved streetscape and identify opportunities for the creation of community facilities, such as a pocket park.
 - This pathway would provide the Town with more control over what gets developed in the project area, but would come with additional upfront costs and demands for staff capacity to oversee the process.
 - Case Study: Burlington, VT - <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/202/South-End-Coordinated-Redevelopment>
 - It is assumed that this project could be accommodated under current zoning regulations, which permit a variety of residential and commercial uses on lots as small as 1/5 acre and up to 80% total lot coverage.
 - Depending on the pathway taken, there will need to be a corresponding strategy around the development of improved streetscape infrastructure along Slow Rd, such as sidewalks. Potential options include enacting policies around development impact fees and/or mandatory pedestrian facility improvements, considering alternative sources of revenues (such as a 1% Local Option Tax), or evaluating the use of a Tax-Increment Finance (TIF) district (see the next page for further discussion of these financial tools). There will also need to be thoughtful consideration given to the timing of infrastructure improvements that are sequenced with future development.



OTHER PLANNING STRATEGIES:

- Consider developing additional MOU's for future phases of development along Slow Rd that address new developments, infrastructure, and public spaces.

- Maintain the Mad River Path trail corridor using sidewalks, signage, and/or trail relocation.
- Consider establishing an overlay zoning district for the area along Slow Rd that permits greater density, further relaxes minimum parking requirements, and sets standards for pedestrian circulation.
- Consider establishing a wastewater capacity allocation policy that reserves a certain percentage of future wastewater capacity for properties along Slow Rd and/or limits the amount of wastewater capacity allocated to any single development project.
- Create an official Town Map for Waitsfield that shows an extended Slow Rd right-of-way.
- Continue to limit building heights to three (3) stories to align with historical character and limit the ability for a single development to utilize an excessive amount of wastewater capacity.
- Wetlands: see Pillar #2 – Implement a Local and Regional Wetlands Strategy.

ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS:

- If the Main Street project cannot move forward as envisioned, there are still many steps that the Town can take to improve village vibrancy in Irasville. Focusing on improving the pedestrian network (in tandem with the Community Wastewater Project) is a key opportunity to link existing developments and potential infill development sites.

GENERAL STRATEGIES

These are additional strategies that complement items #1-3 above.

REGULATORY

- The Town should consider adopting a Village Sidewalk Policy/Ordinance that establishes where public sidewalks and/or shared use paths are required to be constructed with new development, relevant design standards, and references relevant pedestrian infrastructure goals, plans, and/or projects that can inform how sidewalks or paths are laid out.

FINANCIAL

- The Town should consider adopting an Impact Fee Policy/Ordinance that gives the Town the authority to levy impact fees on proposed developments for the purposes of contributing to the capital cost of constructing public sidewalk and/or shared use path facilities that will serve the proposed development and neighborhood area. This could also be expanded to apply to other types of needed capital infrastructure projects. Such a policy can also provide a means for applicants to contribute to public pedestrian facilities in lieu of constructing facilities themselves.
 - Case study: Shelburne, VT - <https://www.shelburnevt.org/DocumentCenter/View/1352/Impact-Fee-Ordinance>
- The Town should evaluate a 1% local option tax (LOT) to raise additional revenues that can be reinvested in village centers. A 1% LOT can be applied to any or all of the following: sales (with exemptions for essential household goods), meals and alcoholic beverages, and rooms.
- The Town could evaluate the use of a Tax-Increment Financing (TIF) district to support infrastructure improvements in targeted areas, such as Slow Rd. Establishing a TIF district allows a municipality to finance the construction of public infrastructure by leveraging the anticipated increases in property values and tax receipts that will result in the years following the infrastructure improvements. TIF districts require significant planning and diligent management by Town staff, and can present risks should the increase in property tax receipts not be realized. In the case of Slow Rd, one potential risk is the uncertainty around future infill development that would require wetlands permitting.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Complete the Community Wastewater System and develop a capacity allocation policy.
- Identify priority sidewalk projects. Seek a variety of funding sources and implementation pathways for sidewalk construction:
 - Village Sidewalk Policy/Ordinance
 - MOU's with developers
 - Impact fees
 - Capital reserve fund
 - State grants
- Identify opportunities to sequence wastewater system construction and transportation infrastructure improvements.
 - Case study: Lebanon, NH - <https://flyleb.com/1193/Closed---CSO-Project-No-12>
- Study potential alignments for a multi-use path that connects the VT Route 100 Alternative Transportation Corridor, including path alignments that connect behind Village Square and other alternatives that minimize the number of road/driveway crossings.
 - Case study: Stowe Recreation Path

From: [Alice Peal](#)
To: [JB](#)
Subject: Fwd: Central Vermont Housing Development Roundtable - Kickoff meeting - May 21st
Date: Wednesday, May 14, 2025 12:42:09 PM
Attachments: [image001.jpeg](#)
[image002.jpeg](#)

Packet

Begin forwarded message:

From: Eli Toohey <toohey@cvregion.com>
Subject: **Central Vermont Housing Development Roundtable - Kickoff meeting - May 21st**

CVRPC and CVEDC's **Central Vermont Housing Development Roundtable Kickoff meeting** is **ONE WEEK AWAY**, Wednesday, May 21st from 4-6pm at the Old Labor Hall in Barre. The agenda is attached. If you have not yet registered, please do so here;

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/central-vermont-housing-development-roundtable-kickoff-tickets-1348330445659>



[Central Vermont Housing Development Roundtable - Kickoff](#)

Welcome to the Central Vermont Housing Development Roundtable - Kickoff! Join us for an exciting in-person event at the Old Labor Hall National Historic Landmark. This is a great opportunity to connect with other housing developers in the area and learn about the latest trends in housing development.
www.eventbrite.com

Our Panelists will be;

[Will Eberle](#), Director of Weatherization and Climate Impact, Capstone

[Greg Montgomery](#), Architect, OSSO Studio

Jess Neubelt, Senior Developer, Evernorth



[Who We Are - Evernorth](#)

Who We Are. We are a group of more than 50 professionals working to serve communities in Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire. With offices in Portland, Maine and Burlington, Vermont, our staff has deep knowledge of local markets, close relationships with regional organizations — and a shared passion for affordable housing and social justice.
evernorthus.org

Joe Camaratta, Chair, Waterbury Housing Task Force

[Housing Task Force - Waterbury, VT](#)

Purpose. The purpose of the Waterbury Housing Task Force is to advance goals in the Waterbury Municipal Plan pertaining to housing, and to engage in other areas of work related to housing as agreed upon by the group.

www.waterburyvt.com

There will be refreshments and housing materials (feel free to bring any housing development materials from your organization!)

Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission and Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation are pleased to announce a quarterly meeting dedicated to **Housing Development** in

Central Vermont. We will be hosting a **Kickoff meeting on May 21st from 4-6 pm at the Old Labor Hall in Barre City.**

We are inviting anyone connected to housing development in Vermont including **planning commission members, developers & builders, natural resource managers, economic & community development planners, employers, housing nonprofits, homeowners, policymakers and community members!**

Subsequent meetings will focus on topics related to housing development in Central Vermont and will be held at various venues around our region. With the intention to support networking towards project development we are hoping that you will share the attached flyer with your networks and/or post to wherever it will be seen!

Please feel free to reach out with any question to me, Eli Toohey, toohey@cvregion.com or Melissa Bounty, mbounty@centralvermont.org

Looking forward to seeing all who can make it next week!,
Eli

From: [Alice Peal](#)
To: [JB](#)
Subject: Fwd: Central Vermont Housing Development Roundtable -Kickoff May 21
Date: Friday, May 2, 2025 10:03:46 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)
[image.png](#)

This can go in the packet for the PC Meeting

Good morning,

Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission and Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation are pleased to announce a quarterly meeting dedicated to **Housing Development in Central Vermont**. We will be hosting a **Kickoff meeting on May 21st from 4-6 pm at the Old Labor Hall in Barre City**.



We are inviting anyone connected to housing development in Vermont including **planning commission members, developers & builders, natural resource managers, energy efficiency folks, economic & community development planners, employers, housing nonprofits, homeowners, policymakers and community members!**

Subsequent meetings will focus on topics related to housing development in Central Vermont and will be held at various venues around our region. With the intention to support networking towards project development we are hoping that you will share the attached flyer with your networks and/or post to wherever it will be seen!

Please find the attached a flyer with a registration code to this FREE event.



Here is that code as well

Please feel free to reach out with any question to me, Eli Toohey, toohey@cvregion.com or Melissa Bounty, mbounty@centralvermont.org

Best,
Eli

Elaine (Eli) Toohey ([she/her](#))
Community Development Planner, [CVRPC](#)
toohey@cvregion.com
(802) 917-2740

There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about. - Margaret Wheatley



Central Vermont Housing Development

Roundtable and Workshopping

May 21, 2025

4:00 – 6:00pm

Old Labor Hall, 46 Granite Street, Barre VT 05641

Agenda

4:00-4:15	Introductions & Housekeeping	CVRPC & CVEDC
4:15-5:00	Central Vermont Housing Development Panel	Will Eberle, Director of Weatherization and Climate Impact, Capstone Greg Montgomery, Architect, OSSO Studio Jess Neubelt, Senior Developer, Evernorth Joe Camaratta, Chair, Waterbury Housing Task Force <i>CVEDC & CVRPC Moderating</i>
5:00-6:00	Workshopping	Small groups of participants
	Workshopping Rounds	
5:00-5:15	What are obstacles/challenges/what's slowing down housing development?	
5:15-5:30	What's working/enabling/supporting housing development?	
5:30-6:00	Share outs with whole group and What topic/s would you like to see content experts and workshopping around in the future?	



MAY 13 2025

Via First Class Mail and ePUC
May 6, 2025

Re: Petition of Green Mountain Power for a Certificate of Public Good, pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 248, authorizing upgrades to the Irasville #39 Substation located at 236 Carroll Road in the Towns of Waitsfield and Fayston, Vermont

45-Day Advance Notice Package

Dear Customers and Community Leaders,

This letter provides advance notice to let you know that Green Mountain Power (“GMP”) is preparing to file a petition with the Vermont Public Utility Commission (“Commission”) for approval to upgrade our Irasville #39 Substation at 236 Carroll Road in the towns of Waitsfield and Fayston, Vermont (the “Project”). The Project is needed to upgrade equipment, which will increase the reliability and safety of service for customers in the towns of Fayston, Waitsfield, and Warren.

In March 2024, we provided an initial advance notice for this Project. We are sending this second advance notice for this Project since our planned construction schedule has shifted. We now anticipate filing the petition with the Commission on or around June 20, 2025, and are providing the following Project overview and related information in this 45-day advance notice package in accordance with Commission Rule 5.402 and 30 V.S.A. § 248 (“Section 248”). The information below includes: 1) an overall description of the Project, 2) an explanation of the need for the Project, including an assessment of alternatives considered, 3) an overview of the impact of the Project, and 4) information on the Commission review process, including participation by municipal and regional planning commissions, as well as links to guidance on the Commission’s review process.

I. Project Overall Description:

The Project consists of upgrades to what is known as the Irasville #39 Substation on the site of the existing substation in Fayston and Waitsfield. The Project involves upgrades to existing 34.5 kV and 15 kV equipment. Improvements to the substation yard will include a new fence, security system, lights, animal fence, surface material, oil containment system, and ground grid. The equipment upgrades include, among other things, installation of four new 34.5 kV transmission breakers, a new 15/28 MVA 34.5 kV/12.47 kV transformer, three 15 kV

distribution breakers, larger circuit regulators, communication and relay control equipment, a battery bank, control building, and other standard equipment to upgrade the existing Irasville #39 Substation with updated substation equipment.

An aerial photograph of the Project site is attached here as Exhibit 1. An updated, detailed site plan for the Project construction is attached as Exhibit 2.

II. Project Need:

The upgrades to the Irasville #39 Substation replace equipment at the end of its useful life to improve substation reliability and safety for Fayston, Waitsfield, and Warren. The existing Irasville #39 Substation provides service to approximately 3,450 customers by serving three circuits (39G1, 39G2 and 39G3), at a voltage of 12.47 kV. The existing 7.5/10.5 MVA transformer is 57 years old and will be replaced with a 15/28 MVA unit. This larger unit will allow for improved backup capacity for the Madbush #38 Substation. The existing 15 kV circuit reclosers will be replaced with circuit breakers to address asset management. The two existing transmission motor operated load break switches will be upgraded to 34.5kV circuit breakers, which will improve reliability by sectionalizing an approximately 30-mile transmission line between Middlesex and Montpelier.

The current circuit regulators have limited capacity to backup other area substations (referred to as feeder backup) during an outage. The Irasville #39 Substation has circuit ties with the Madbush #38 Substation. In addition to replacing the existing transformer, the nine 328-amp regulators will be changed to 546-amp circuit regulators to enhance feeder backup capability for customers and help reduce outage times. The increased capacity of the regulators will also provide additional capability for distributed energy resource interconnections and increased electrification. These upgrades will provide greater operating flexibility and improve reliability for customers fed from the Irasville #39 Substation.

In connection with planning this Project, GMP considered the following alternatives: 1) placement of a 10/14 MVA transformer with 3 circuits, 2) placement of a 7.5/10.5 MVA transformer with 3 circuits, and 3) adding a second 7.5/10.5 MVA transformer with the existing transformer. These alternatives were not selected because the chosen Project, which uses a new 15/28 MVA transformer with three circuits and nine 546-amp regulators, optimizes system reliability, asset management, and improved feeder backup capabilities for the Madbush #38 Substation while also providing the least cost solution. The Project upgrades are not driven by capacity such that energy reductions could defer their need, therefore, the Project cannot be entirely or partially deferred by a reduction in load levels or the installation of distribution generation.

III. Project Impact:

GMP plans to rebuild the Irasville #39 Substation on its existing site and expand the substation to the north and the east. The existing substation will increase from 3,748 square feet to 12,101 square feet. Increasing the size of the substation yard will facilitate access to all equipment in the substation and improve clearance to energized equipment, which improves

safety for GMP employees. Additionally, an access road will be constructed to access the transmission poles to the north of the substation.

GMP has engaged VHB Inc. to inventory and assess natural resource features in the Project area in consultation with the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, and to address options for properly avoiding or mitigating any potential impacts. Northeast Archaeological Resource Center of Farmington, ME has completed a final assessment of the site and has concluded that the Project will not have an adverse effect on significant archaeological sites. GMP has also engaged VHB Inc. to ensure that any sound emanating from the Project is within accepted standards.

Materials will be transported to the construction site by truck over Route 100 and Carroll Road in Waitsfield. Any traffic impacts will be minor and limited almost entirely to the period of Project construction.

The Project consists of upgrades to an existing substation and the addition of similar appearing equipment, as well as an increase in the substation's size. Existing wood and steel structures will be removed and replaced with new steel structures. The existing wooden structures are taller than the new steel structures to be installed as part of this Project. T.J. Boyle Associates ("T.J. Boyle") conducted a preliminary review of aesthetic impacts. T.J. Boyle has not proposed additional landscape mitigation plantings given the plan to retain certain existing screening after construction and due to space constraints at the site. GMP has hired T.J. Boyle to perform a more detailed aesthetic assessment, which will be provided with GMP's petition filed with the Commission and will further examine local and regional planning documents for criteria that address scenic resources and open space.

IV. Information Regarding the Project Review Process:

As noted above, GMP has enclosed an aerial photo and site plan with this letter, showing the location and proposed design of the Project's elements. The information contained in this package is intended to provide a general understanding of the Project and could change based on further analysis and the requirements of applicable permits.

Before beginning work on the Project, GMP must obtain a Certificate of Public Good ("CPG") from the Commission under 30 V.S.A. Section 248. Before issuing a CPG, the Commission must find, among other things, that the Project will not unduly interfere with the orderly development of the region with due consideration having been given to the recommendations of the municipal and regional planning commissions, the recommendations of the municipal legislative bodies, and the land conservation measures contained in the plan of any affected municipality.

Section 248(f) of Title 30 provides information regarding participation of municipal and regional planning commissions in Section 248 proceedings. Per 30 V.S.A. § 248(f)(1)(A), each municipal and regional planning commission may convene a public hearing on the proposed petition. Pursuant to Section 248(f)(1)(C), each planning commission may submit recommendations to the petitioner within 40 days of the petitioner's submittal to the planning commissions, which is June 16, 2025, for this Project. The petitioner's application to the

Commission must address any written comments provided to the petitioner in response to the 45-day advance submission that are related to the Section 248(b) criteria and any oral comments related to those criteria made at any public hearing conducted pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 248(f)(1)(A). Section 248(f)(1)(D) provides that once the petition is filed with the Commission, each planning commission may make recommendations to the Commission.

For additional information regarding the Commission's review process, please reference the Commission's document labeled, "Public Participation and Intervention in Proceedings Before the Public Utility Commission," which can be found on the Commission's website at: <https://puc.vermont.gov/document/public-participation-and-intervention-proceedings-public-utility-commission>. Specific information about Section 248 cases can be found on the Commission website at: <https://puc.vermont.gov/document/section-248-procedures>.

If you have questions about the Project or feedback, please reach out and I will be happy to help. My email address is kamran.hassan@greenmountainpower.com or you may reach me by phone at 802-353-9950.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K.H.', followed by a horizontal line.

Kamran Hassan
Leader of Engineering

Enclosures: Exhibits 1 and 2

cc: Service List per Certificate of Service

PROJECT SITE

Las Vegas Substation

17

IRASVILLE

Vermont Rte 100

[illegible]

EXHIBIT 2

**ISSUED FOR PERMITTING
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION**

GREEN MOUNTAIN POWER

IRASVILLE SUBSTATION REBUILD

180 Adams St., Colchester, VT 05445
DATE: 11/11/10
SCALE: 1"=40'
DRAWN BY: [Signature]
CHECKED BY: [Signature]
DATE: 11/11/10
PROJECT NO: 10-0244

LEGEND

- EXISTING CONTOURS
- NEW CONTOUR LINES
- EXISTING OVERHEAD LINES
- NEW OVERHEAD LINES
- NEW UNDERGROUND DISTRIBUTION (ETWAYS)
- NEW UNDERGROUND TRANSMISSION (ETWAYS)
- EXISTING OVERHEAD LINES
- NEW OVERHEAD LINES
- EXISTING UNDERGROUND DISTRIBUTION (ETWAYS)
- NEW UNDERGROUND DISTRIBUTION (ETWAYS)
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- EXISTING POLE TO BE REMOVED

REV	DATE	BY	CHK	DESCRIPTION
				Green Mountain Power 113 Acorn Ln., Colchester VT 05440
				IRASVILLE SUBSTATION REBUILD



**GREEN MOUNTAIN
POWER**
Power to Inspire

SCALE: 1"=50'	DATE: 12/20/01	APPROVED BY:
DRAWN BY: SCS	CHECKED BY:	DATE:
DRAWING NUMBER:		REV:

SITE PLAN

FILE: 130820010101

**STATE OF VERMONT
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

Case No. 25-____-AN

Petition of Green Mountain Power for a Certificate of Public Good, pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 248, authorizing upgrades to the Irasville #39 Substation located at 236 Carroll Road in the Towns of Waitsfield and Fayston, Vermont	
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE FOR ADVANCE SUBMISSION

I, Debra L. Bouffard, do hereby certify that on May 6, 2025, pursuant to Vermont Public Utility Commission Rule 5.402, I caused a copy of Green Mountain Power's ("GMP") 45-Day Advance Notice Submission for the above-referenced project to be served on the following by the noted delivery method.

Via First Class Mail (town officials and regional planning commission):

Brian Shupe, Chair
Waitsfield Selectboard
Waitsfield Town Office
4144 Main Street
Waitsfield, VT 05673
bshupe@gmavt.net

Paul Quinlan, Chair
Town of Fayston Planning Commission
Town of Fayston
866 North Fayston Rd.
Fayston, VT 05660
pcquinlan@gmail.com

Johnathan Ursprung, Chair
Waitsfield Planning Commission
Waitsfield Town Office
4144 Main Street
Waitsfield, VT 05673
ursprung@gmail.com

Christian Meyer, Executive Director
Central Vermont Regional Planning
Commission
29 Main Street, Suite 4
Montpelier, Vermont 05602
meyer@cvregion.com

Town of Fayston Selectboard Chair
c/o Madison Vasseur, Selectboard Asst.
Town of Fayston
866 North Fayston Rd.
Fayston, VT 05660
FaystonSB@madriver.com

Via First Class Mail (landowners):

We 3 Beams, LLC
112 Henry's Way
Fayston, VT 05673

Aurthur Wesley Lowe, III, Suzanne Lowe &
Ann Eardensohn (Life Estate)
292 Carroll Road
Fayston, VT 05673

Jo Anne Mackenzie & Emily Masseur
P.O. Box 41
Adamant, VT 05640

Jay Gauthier
69 Mad Ellen Road
Fayston, VT 05673

FHS Holdings, LLC
P.O. Box 1125
Manchester Center, VT 05255

Lawson's Holdings, LLC
P.O. Box 89
Waitsfield, VT 05673

Via ePUC:

Vermont Public Utility Commission
Peoples United Bank Building, 4th Floor
112 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2701

Vermont Department of Public Service
112 State Street, 3rd Floor.
Montpelier, VT 05620-2601
DPS-PA@vermont.gov

Vermont Agency of Natural Resources
One National Life Drive, Davis 2
Montpelier, VT 05620-3905
anr.notice@vermont.gov

Vermont Natural Resources Board
10 Baldwin Street
Montpelier, Vermont 05633-3201
nrb.comments@vermont.gov

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation
One National Life Drive – Floor 6
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501
accd.projectreview@vermont.gov

Vermont Agency of Ag., Food & Markets
116 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2901
AGR.Notice@vermont.gov

Dated at Burlington, Vermont this 6th day of May, 2025.

GREEN MOUNTAIN POWER

By: /s/ Debra L. Bouffard
Debra L. Bouffard, Esq.
SHEEHEY FURLONG & BEHM P.C.
30 Main Street, 6th Floor, P.O. Box 66
Burlington, VT 05402
(802) 864-9891
dbouffard@sheeheyvt.com

Waitsfield Community Wastewater Project

Update 5.16.25

To: Waitsfield Selectboard
From: Joshua Schwartz, MRV Planning District
CC: Waitsfield Community Wastewater Project Team Members
York Haverkamp, Waitsfield Town Admin.
JB Weir, Waitsfield Planning & Zoning Admin.
Bob Cook, Waitsfield Planning Commissioner
Chach Curtis, Waitsfield Selectboard Member
Project Engineer
Jon Ashley, DuBois & King
Waitsfield Planning Commission
Date: May 16, 2025
Re: Waitsfield Community Wastewater Project Update

I'm providing this update on the Waitsfield Community Wastewater Project (WCWP), a task I'm carrying out in my role as Project Coordination Team Lead (as articulated in the *Waitsfield Wastewater Project Structure & Timeline | 2024-25*, approved by the Selectboard at its meeting of 7.8.24). This update aims to ensure the Waitsfield Selectboard and Waitsfield Community Wastewater Project Team Members are abreast of project status and developments.

The project is in the final design phase, working through various design elements, property owner discussions, permitting, funding, and more.

- Design
 - The WCWP project engineer, Jon Ashley of DuBois & King (D&K), and the Waitsfield Community Wastewater Project Team (WCWPT) meet bi-weekly on various design elements, including system design plans, pump station elements, technical specifications, property owner discussions, permitting, etc.
Highlights:
 - Munn Site Wastewater Loading Test
 - As a requirement of the VT DEC Indirect Discharge Rules (IDR) Permitting process, this loading test took place between Sept. and December 2024. It evaluated the capacity of the Munn site to attenuate wastewater without adversely affecting the water quality of the receiving water, the Mad River. The in situ in-ground loading test results demonstrated compliance with VT DEC permitting criteria for the project's proposed and approved hydraulic capacity (95,040 gpd).
 - DuBois & King, Inc. (D&K) submitted a report to the VT DEC, Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division, documenting its in situ in-ground evaluation of the proposed decentralized community wastewater Munn Site disposal system. Initial VT DEC feedback was received on 1.24, which will be addressed as part of the project's Indirect Discharge Permit submittal in conjunction with 90% engineering design drawings (estimated December 2025).
 - 60% Engineering Design Drawings
 - D&K completed draft 60% design drawings on 5.15, inclusive of profiles, elevations, completed alignments, layouts, hydraulic profiles, and standard details.
 - The D60 plans have been submitted for review to the VT DEC Water Investment Division (WID) and the VTrans Permitting Services Unit. Review is anticipated to take 30 days.
 - SBR Manufacturer Pre-Selection
 - Through previous planning steps, the Sequencing Batch Reactor (SBR) technology has been selected as the preferred treatment process. Per D&K's recommendation, the

project is incorporating an "SBR Manufacturer Pre-Selection" process, which is intended to select a specific SBR manufacturer for this project early in the design phase, from among multiple SBR vendors, each with their own approach to equipment/tank sizing/electrical requirements, etc.

- The Pre-Selection approach is intended to eliminate some of the "uncertainty" associated with various manufacturers equipment configurations, and enable the design to proceed with a focus on a specific SBR system which was competitively selected. It's anticipated that this approach will reduce the potential for confusion and re-design during the construction phase. D&K has used this approach successfully on past wastewater projects in Vermont. This approach, associated documents, and timing were reviewed and approved by the project's various funding programs (State SRF, USDA RD, NBRC, & VCDP).
- An initial SBR Manufacturer Pre-Selection bid process took place in March-April, yielding zero qualified responses. An amended bid process will take place in late May-early June.
- MRV Active Transportation Corridor
 - Coordinating with the VT-100 Active Transportation Corridor Scoping Study engineering consultants, VHP, for opportunities for colocation with the project's force main between Lareau Bridge and the Munn site. Details were explored at a meeting on 5.1 with engineers and reps from both projects, of which a next step is D&K identifying the additional steps and costs to accommodate such colocation.
 - The draft VT-100 Active Transportation Corridor Scoping Study identifies the first segment for construction to be Irasville to Kingsbury Rd. Project partners are exploring the possibility of a VTrans 2025 Bicycle & Pedestrian Grant application for design & construction of this segment, due 7.11.
- Irasville Village Master Plan
 - The Waitsfield Planning Commission's current Irasville Village Master Planning project, funded through a VT Municipal Planning Grant, will ultimately create preferred development scenarios. These scenarios have wastewater allocation implications, which are being considered in the WCWP design process.
- Permitting
 - Historic Preservation Review
 - As part of the State Environmental Review Procedure for projects funded and affiliated with State Revolving Fund funds administered by WID, a review of the potential impacts to Historic Resources within the project area is required. This review is carried out by the Vermont Department of Historic Preservation (VDHP). This is required as part of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.
 - Based on cultural resources review and fieldwork conducted by D&K between September and December 2024, two documents have been completed and are under review by VDHP:
 - Phase 1 Site Identification Survey Scope-of-Work (Crown Consulting Archaeology, 11/6/24)
 - Historic Resources Inventory Report (February 2025, authored by Polly Seddon Allen)
 - A meeting with VDHP is scheduled for 5.19.
 - VDHP input on the SOW will dictate subsequent field work. Completion of this field work, plus VDHP concurrence on its results as well as the Historic Resources Inventory Report, are necessary components to proceed with project designs as well as the project's various environmental approvals required by the project's funding entities (VT DEC, USDA RD, VCDP, & NBRC).
 - VTrans Right of Way
 - On 4.7, the WCWP project engineer, Jon Ashley, spent a day in the field with Nathan Covey of VTrans Permitting Services Unit as part of the project's Right of Way (ROW) review. Mr. Covey provided input on various project elements and design alternatives to address site considerations. Feedback is incorporated in the recently completed 60% Engineering Design Drawings.
- Timeline

-

This is redistributed/trickle-down funds from another VT municipality's project that isn't proceeding.

- VCDP
 - The Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) administers U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. VCDP provides CDBG grant funds to municipalities throughout Vermont for housing, economic development, and other community development projects to benefit primarily low-to-moderate-income persons.
 - Waitsfield submitted a FY2024 VCDP application on 4.10 for \$1,000,000 in construction funding, which is currently under review. A decision is anticipated to be rendered at the 6.8 VT Community Development Board Meeting, which will be attended by York Haverkamp & JB Weir.
- NBRC Catalyst Program
 - The Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) is a Federal-State partnership that invests in community and economic development projects in economically distressed counties across Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York. The Catalyst Program stimulates economic growth and inspires partnerships that improve rural economic vitality across NBRC's four-state region. It supports a broad range of economic development initiatives to modernize and expand the region's basic infrastructure and revitalize communities to support and attract the region's workforce.
 - On 4.18, Waitsfield submitted a \$1,000,000 construction funding request in the spring round of the 2025 Catalyst Program Grant. Notification of awards is 6.27.
- USDA RD
 - Waitsfield's application to the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development (USDA RD) was initially submitted in April 2024. Since that time, its Environmental Review resulted in a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and is under review by the national office. A grant and loan package are anticipated by early June. Staff are in constant contact with USDA RD staff.

Near-Term Activities

- VDHP review meeting (5.19)
- D60 review & feedback
- Finalize USDA RD funding
- VT Community Development Board Meeting & funding notice (6.8)
- NBRC Catalyst funding notice (6.27)
- Easement Drafting

Attachments

- FY2024 VCDP Application | Waitsfield Infrastructure Project Narrative Responses

The Waitsfield Infrastructure Project addresses critical environmental and health concerns by retiring 111 aging and failing in-ground private wastewater systems that are environmentally risky and lot-constrained. This initiative reduces environmental hazards, improves wastewater management, and ensures safer living conditions for residents. By resolving these septic system issues, banks will be more likely to finance properties without septic encumbrances, directly supporting buyers with limited income and further expanding economic growth. This effort will raise per capita income, lower poverty in the region, and enhance property values, which in turn expands the Town's Grand List.

In addition to addressing health and environmental concerns, the Project creates new housing capacity and economic activity opportunities. New housing development will alleviate the MRV's 0% rental vacancy rate, serving workers who currently commute long distances for employment in Waitsfield. More housing means more workers, ensuring businesses have sufficient employees to operate and expand. The Project also supports business development within the villages by creating opportunities for growth of existing businesses and repurposing existing building stock. This will lead to job creation and retention for those currently limited by septic system constraints.

Since the mid-20th century, the economy of the broader Mad River Valley (MRV) community has relied heavily on skiing and snow sports. However, the community is actively transitioning toward more sustainable and resilient practices. To ease this transition, active transportation infrastructure is being implemented in Irasville/Waitsfield Village, alongside a Municipal Planning Grant-funded master planning project for Irasville. The Waitsfield Infrastructure Project plays a critical role in these efforts by addressing environmental risks and supporting economic growth.

The Waitsfield Infrastructure Project has received overwhelming public support. Broad community engagement was integral during its Feasibility and Planning stages, including monthly written project updates, a dedicated webpage on the municipal website, regular updates at public meetings, and multiple well-attended public meetings. Leading up to the Project's \$15 million municipal bond vote on 6/11/24, outreach efforts included contacting all property owners in Irasville & Waitsfield Village, sending mailers to all town taxpayers, and creating an informational video. The bond vote passed by a margin of 3:1, demonstrating strong community backing.

Finally, while skiing and snow sports have historically been central to the MRV economy, these activities are vulnerable to changing conditions and extreme weather events. The Waitsfield Infrastructure Project provides a foundation for transitioning away from snow-dependent activities toward more sustainable economic practices. This shift reinforces smart growth principles while ensuring long-term resilience for the MRV community.

The need for a municipal wastewater system in Waitsfield, Vermont, has been determined through decades of planning studies, community assessments, and engineering evaluations. Waitsfield, home to Vermont's largest unsewered village, has long sought to achieve its vision of compact development surrounded by farmland and forest, along with well-planned residential areas. However, the lack of centralized wastewater infrastructure has hindered these goals, creating challenges for public health, environmental protection, housing development, and economic growth. Below is a comprehensive explanation of how this need was identified and supported by relevant data and studies.

Historical Challenges with Wastewater Infrastructure

Waitsfield relies entirely on private septic systems for wastewater disposal. Many of these systems are aging—over 111 properties have leachfields older than 40 years or located in floodplains, river corridors, or drinking water well isolation shields. These conditions pose risks to public health and water quality while limiting the ability to replace failing systems due to spatial constraints.

A 2011 study highlighted that nearly 50% of properties in Waitsfield Village and 25% in Irasville cannot replace their septic systems with fully compliant ones. This lack of infrastructure has resulted in fragmented development patterns and limited capacity to accommodate growth, as noted in the 2023 Waitsfield Town Plan.

Housing Needs

The 2020 Mad River Valley Housing Demand & Market Analysis identified a critical unmet housing demand for 365 households across the region, including 61 households specifically in Waitsfield (40 low-income and 21 moderate-income). The report emphasized that addressing this housing shortage requires adequate wastewater infrastructure to enable infill development in designated growth areas like Irasville and Waitsfield Village.

Economic Development Constraints

Businesses in Irasville and Waitsfield Village face limitations due to inadequate wastewater capacity. The absence of centralized infrastructure deters new investments and prevents existing businesses from expanding. Property owners reliant on individual septic systems face financial risks tied to the unknown feasibility of replacement systems based on soil quality.

The proposed wastewater project would eliminate these barriers by simplifying development processes and reducing costs for property owners and investors.

Environmental Concerns

Aging septic systems threaten water quality in the Mad River—a critical natural and recreational resource for the region. Removing leachfields from flood-prone areas is essential to protect both the environment and public health. The project aligns with regional goals for flood resilience by relocating wastewater treatment facilities away from vulnerable areas.

Alignment with Local and Regional Plans

The need for wastewater infrastructure has been consistently emphasized in local and regional planning documents:

2023 Waitsfield Town Plan

The plan identifies wastewater management improvements as a top-priority action for public health, environmental protection, and development opportunities.

Specifically, it calls for the design and construction of a Community Wastewater Collection and Treatment System to serve Irasville and Waitsfield Village—areas central to the town’s growth strategy.

Benefits highlighted include:

Enhanced public health by addressing failing wastewater systems.

Improved water quality in the Mad River.

Support for infill development opportunities in designated growth areas.

The plan also integrates wastewater considerations into broader planning efforts, encouraging developers to use wetland analyses for mitigation planning and identifying water connections as essential for enabling infill development.

Central Vermont Regional Plan (2024)

The plan emphasizes wastewater infrastructure as critical for protecting public health, maximizing public investment, and reinforcing desired patterns of growth.

Mad River Valley Housing Study (2017)

The study's #1 recommendation is to increase wastewater capacity in areas prioritized for housing development, particularly Irasville.

Mad River Valley Economic Study (2014)

Identified municipal wastewater infrastructure as a key strategy for addressing economic needs.

West Central Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) (2023)

States that wastewater treatment capacity is essential for infill development, supporting small businesses, and attracting industrial users. The CEDS specifically prioritizes investment in Waitsfield's water and wastewater systems.

Proposed Project Scope

The Waitsfield Community Wastewater Project aims to:

Replace aging septic systems for up to 111 properties.

Provide treatment capacity of up to 89,000 gallons per day at the town-owned Munn Site.

Enable future growth by accommodating up to 70 new dwelling units.

Reduce environmental risks by relocating leachfields away from flood-prone areas.

Funding Commitments

The estimated \$15 million project cost will be funded through state and federal grants, loans, and affordable user rates. Secured funding includes:

\$2.5 million in ARPA funds.

\$1 million from Vermont's Community Development Program.

A bond vote passed overwhelmingly in June 2024 (415–140), reflecting strong community support.

Conclusion

The need for the Waitsfield Community Wastewater Project is clear and urgent. By addressing critical challenges related to public health risks, environmental protection, housing shortages, economic constraints, and flood resilience, this project represents a transformative investment in Waitsfield's future. It aligns with local priorities outlined in the 2023 Town Plan while advancing regional goals for sustainable growth and community development.

The top priority in the HUD Consolidated Plan for Vermont (2020–2024) is addressing housing and community development needs, with a particular focus on increasing the supply and quality of affordable housing, reducing homelessness, creating jobs, and strengthening communities. These priorities align closely with the objectives of the Waitsfield Infrastructure Project described in the query. Below are key points that highlight the alignment:

Top Priorities in the HUD Consolidated Plan

Affordable Housing:

The plan emphasizes increasing the supply and quality of affordable housing, including constructing or rehabilitating 700 rental units and developing 510 homeowner units.

The Waitsfield Infrastructure Project aligns with this goal by enabling new housing development and addressing critical wastewater infrastructure to support infill development in growth areas like Irasville and Waitsfield Village.

Community Infrastructure:

The plan includes improving public facilities and infrastructure for over 21,450 individuals.

The Waitsfield project directly supports this by replacing failing private wastewater systems with centralized infrastructure, addressing environmental risks, and improving public health.

Economic Development:

The plan aims to create or retain 150 jobs and assist 10 businesses.

Similarly, the Waitsfield project supports business growth by removing septic system constraints, enabling property investments, and fostering economic activity within village centers.

Homelessness Prevention:

Reducing homelessness through rental assistance and rapid rehousing programs is a major priority.

While not directly focused on homelessness, the Waitsfield project indirectly supports housing stability by creating new housing capacity for workers commuting long distances².

Environmental Protection:

The plan highlights flood resilience and environmental sustainability as critical goals.

The Waitsfield project addresses these concerns by relocating wastewater systems away from flood-prone areas, protecting water quality in the Mad River.

Alignment with Waitsfield Infrastructure Project

The Waitsfield Infrastructure Project aligns with Vermont’s strategic priorities by addressing public health risks, enabling housing development, supporting economic growth, and promoting environmental sustainability. Its focus on retiring aging septic systems directly supports the Consolidated Plan’s goals of enhancing infrastructure and fostering smart growth principles.

In summary, the top priority in the link provided is improving housing affordability and community infrastructure while supporting economic development—objectives strongly reflected in the Waitsfield Infrastructure Project’s scope and impact.

The Waitsfield Infrastructure Project aligns closely with the goals outlined in Vermont’s HUD Consolidated Plan (2020–2024) through targeted strategies addressing housing, infrastructure, economic growth, and environmental resilience. Below is a detailed breakdown of this alignment:

1. Affordable Housing Development

Consolidated Plan Goal: Increase the supply and quality of affordable housing.

Project Strategies:

Retire 111 aging septic systems that constrain housing development due to lot limitations, enabling infill construction in designated growth areas like Irasville and Waitsfield Village.

Create capacity for 70 new dwelling units, directly addressing the Mad River Valley’s unmet demand for 365 households.

Support low- and moderate-income buyers by removing septic-related financing barriers, ensuring affordability for 40 low-income and 21 moderate-income households in Waitsfield.

2. Community Infrastructure Improvement

Consolidated Plan Goal: Enhance public facilities and infrastructure to serve over 21,450 individuals.

Project Strategies:

Replace failing in-ground septic systems with a centralized 89,000-gallon-per-day wastewater treatment facility at the Munn Site, eliminating environmental and health risks.

Relocate leachfields from floodplains and drinking water well isolation zones, mitigating contamination risks to the Mad River.

Simplify permitting and reduce costs for property owners by eliminating the need for individual septic system replacements.

3. Economic Development

Consolidated Plan Goal: Create or retain 150 jobs and assist 10 businesses.

Project Strategies:

Enable business expansion in village centers by providing reliable wastewater capacity, supporting job creation and retention.

Attract new investments through improved infrastructure, fostering repurposing of existing buildings and growth of local enterprises.

Address the region's 0% rental vacancy rate by creating housing for workers, ensuring businesses have a stable labor force.

4. Environmental Sustainability

Consolidated Plan Goal: Promote flood resilience and environmental protection.

Project Strategies:

Remove septic systems from flood-prone areas, aligning with regional flood resilience goals and protecting the Mad River's water quality.

Integrate smart growth principles by concentrating development in village centers, preserving surrounding farmland and forests.

Support Vermont's transition away from snow-dependent economies by diversifying economic opportunities through sustainable infrastructure.

5. Community Engagement

Consolidated Plan Goal: Strengthen communities through inclusive planning.

Project Strategies:

Conduct broad outreach, including public meetings, mailers, and an informational video, leading to overwhelming voter approval (3:1 margin) of the \$15 million municipal bond.

Align with the 2023 Waitsfield Town Plan and Central Vermont Regional Plan, which prioritize wastewater solutions for health, equity, and growth.

Conclusion

The Waitsfield Infrastructure Project employs a multi-pronged approach to meet the Consolidated Plan's goals, leveraging infrastructure upgrades, housing development, economic incentives, and environmental safeguards. By addressing systemic barriers tied to wastewater management, the project advances equitable growth, public health, and long-term resilience in the Mad River Valley.

How the Project Meets Consolidated Plan Priorities

1. Housing Development

Priority in the Consolidated Plan: Increase the supply and quality of affordable housing.

Project Contribution:

The project addresses Vermont's critical housing shortage by enabling infill development in Irasville and Waitsfield Village, creating capacity for up to 70 new dwelling units. This directly supports the unmet demand for 365 households identified in the Mad River Valley Housing Demand & Market Analysis.

By retiring 111 aging private septic systems, the project removes barriers to housing construction, especially for low- and moderate-income residents who face financing challenges due to septic encumbrances.

The creation of new housing will alleviate Waitsfield's 0% rental vacancy rate, ensuring affordable options for workers commuting long distances.

2. Economic Development

Priority in the Consolidated Plan: Create and retain quality jobs and expand economic opportunities.

Project Contribution:

The improved wastewater infrastructure facilitates business expansion within village centers, creating opportunities for job growth and retention.

By enabling new housing, the project ensures businesses have access to a stable workforce, addressing labor shortages caused by limited housing availability.

The infrastructure upgrade attracts investments by reducing development costs and risks for property owners, fostering economic activity in designated growth areas.

3. Environmental Protection

Priority in the Consolidated Plan: Strengthen communities and improve quality of life through sustainable practices.

Project Contribution:

The project relocates wastewater systems from flood-prone areas, protecting public health and water quality in the Mad River while enhancing flood resilience—a key environmental priority in Vermont's regional plans.

It supports smart growth principles, concentrating development within village centers while preserving surrounding farmland and forests.

4. Community Strengthening

Priority in the Consolidated Plan: Strengthen communities through inclusive planning and engagement.

Project Contribution:

The project has garnered overwhelming public support through extensive community outreach, including public meetings, mailers, and informational videos, culminating in a successful municipal bond vote (passed by a 3:1 margin).

It aligns with local and regional plans like the 2023 Waitsfield Town Plan, emphasizing wastewater improvements as essential for public health, economic growth, and housing development.

Strategies Employed to Meet Consolidated Plan Goals

Infrastructure Investment:

Replace aging septic systems with centralized wastewater treatment capacity of up to 89,000 gallons per day, ensuring long-term reliability.

Relocate leachfields away from environmentally sensitive areas to mitigate contamination risks.

Housing Expansion:

Enable infill development by removing spatial constraints tied to failing septic systems.

Support affordable housing initiatives by reducing financing barriers for low-income buyers.

Economic Growth Facilitation:

Attract business investments by simplifying permitting processes and lowering infrastructure-related costs.

Create opportunities for job retention and expansion within village centers.

Environmental Sustainability:

Align with flood resilience goals by relocating wastewater systems from vulnerable areas.

Promote smart growth principles that balance development with environmental conservation.

Community Engagement:

Conduct broad outreach efforts to ensure community buy-in, including regular updates at public meetings and targeted communication campaigns.

Conclusion

The Waitsfield Infrastructure Project meets multiple priorities of Vermont's HUD Consolidated Plan by addressing critical housing needs, fostering economic development, improving environmental sustainability, and strengthening community resilience through inclusive planning efforts. Its comprehensive strategies ensure alignment with state goals while advancing transformative outcomes for Waitsfield and the broader Mad River Valley region.

The project addresses Vermont's critical housing shortage by enabling infill development in Irasville and Waitsfield Village, creating capacity for up to 70 new dwelling units. By retiring 111 aging private septic systems, the project mitigates environmental and health risks while improving wastewater

management. Additionally, it removes barriers to housing construction by addressing septic-related financing challenges, particularly for low- and moderate-income residents, ensuring greater access to affordable housing options.

The Waitsfield Infrastructure Project directly supports the highest priorities of Vermont’s HUD Consolidated Plan—housing development and economic growth—while also addressing critical environmental and community needs. By replacing aging septic systems with a centralized wastewater treatment facility, the project enables the creation of new housing, supports business expansion, and fosters sustainable development in Irasville and Waitsfield Village. Below is a detailed explanation of how the project aligns with the Consolidated Plan priorities and the strategies employed to achieve them.