

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 18, 2025

Members Present: Beth Cook, Bob Cook, Emma Hanson, AnnMarie Harmon, Becca Newhall, Alice Peal, Jonathan Ursprung

Staff Present: JB Weir, Zoning Administrator

Others Present: Alex Belenz (SE Group)

II. Regular Business

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 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

No members of the public were present.

4. Draft Village Master Plan – Public Comment

Alex explained that recent changes made to the plan had not been substantive, but were generally made to provide more clarity. He pointed out the edits which had been incorporated, based upon PC input, to the language regarding the new homes intended to be built in Irasville, including no prescriptive amount provided other than the total of 70 for the wastewater service area (which consists of Irasville Village beginning at Fiddler's Green through Waitsfield Village to the elementary school). He also reviewed the changes made on page 16 regarding a new general timeline, emphasizing that there are anticipated dates for the availability of wastewater system capacity. Some of the structure of the Plan was changed to include other information on this new timeline page, and all were in agreement that these changes are beneficial.

There was some discussion of what is meant by 'low functioning' wetlands, and agreed that it should be emphasized in the Plan that lower functioning wetlands continue to be candidates for some level of restoration. Alex indicated that he would work with Tucker of SE Group to revisit the terminology.

JB reported that he had received feedback from Jeff Brauer of the Skatium, asking if it was possible to include some of their potential development plans in the draft Master Plan. It was also noted that Emma's house can be depicted as recent infill, and that comments had been received from several others. All comments will be compiled and suggested changes outlined by SE Group after the comment period closes. It was outlined that the Steering Committee will meet during the day of December 2, with the PC holding a regularly scheduled meeting that evening.

Alex outlined the content included in the Plan providing justification/clarity regarding infrastructure development as it relates to the Plan, and the associated mapping. It was also agreed that other aspects of planned local development, such as the Active Transportation Corridor, could be included in this section.

There was some discussion of future work to be taken on by the PC after the Master Plan is finalized.

5. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of November 4, 2025 were amended and approved.

It was agreed to add to the work plan a review of potential zoning changes based upon the discussion held with Ryan and Madhurri at the November 4 meeting.

6. CVRPC Update

Alice spoke of the presentation regarding the Flood Safety Act, which she had sent a recording of to PC members. She outlined that the PC could host a presentation of this information, as well as potentially having Ned Swanberg join a meeting to speak of National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) changes and new River Corridor rules which are in development.

Alice reported that the floodplain study report has been drafted, and that Brian Voigt has noted that the project with the most potential for the least cost is the work at the Fairgrounds area. If this project meets phosphorus reduction requirements, it might be funded through this grant program.

Alice also pointed out that the Route 100/17 intersection study has not yet been funded; she is not sure at this point if it will be due to diminished funding availability.

7. Wastewater Planning Project Update

JB noted that information was included in the meeting packet, and that the design change which moves the pipe installation to the Slow Road (and avoid needing to dig near the cemetery) is being worked through. He noted that it may be necessary to engage somebody to take on public coordination efforts for items such as easements and potential changes to plumbing configurations, as it has been realized that this work is quite time consuming. Emma pointed out that it would be prudent to explore the installation of geothermal infrastructure at the same time as the wastewater line.

8. CVRPC 10.27 Presentation Recap

There was some discussion of the interaction between the CVRPC Future Land Use Map and the Act 250 Tier System, and it was agreed that some clarification is needed regarding requesting Tier 1B status, the Road Rule, and what Tier designations would be best for Waitsfield. JB explained that the current village and neighborhood designations will be absorbed into the new community designation structure.

It was suggested that Brian Voit from the Central Vermont Planning Commission could come to a future PC meeting to discuss how the Town could apply for a Tier 1B designation.

9. Other Business

Municipal Day Recap - JB spoke of the sessions he attended regarding emergency flood response strategies and the implementation of the new Tiered Act 250 review levels.

MRVPD Executive Committee – Jonathan reported that a number of applications had been received for the Planner position, and that interviews are planned for December. He also pointed out that Joshua Schwartz's time available for Wastewater Project work would be reduced.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary