

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 6, 2026

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

Members Absent: Alice Peal

Staff Present: JB Weir, Zoning Administrator

Others Present: None

II. Regular Business

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 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 time to speak.

4. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of December 16, 2025 were amended and approved.

5. Eric Friedman (Mad River Valley Chamber of Commerce (CC))

Eric was not able to attend the meeting, and this item was postponed.

6. Future of Irasville – Community Housing Infrastructure Program (CHIP)

Jonathan explained that the basic concept of CHIP is to provide a small scale version of tax increment financing to be used for development or redevelopment projects which are specifically focused on housing projects or mixed-used projects which include a housing component. He explained that loans are provided for related infrastructure development, with future tax revenue resulting from the development being used for loan payments. Three types of sponsors are able to provide the loans – municipalities, developers, or banks. Full logistics are yet to be finalized. AnnMarie noted that there is also an allowance for a portion of local education taxes raised being applied to approved projects, with an affordability factor included to provide for a larger portion of those to remain with the town.

Jonathan suggested the formation of a subcommittee to learn more about the Program, what the qualifications are, and other details. It was agreed that some of those who were on the Master Plan committee may be interested in participating, and that other local business owners, particularly those whose properties might be suitable for development, would be appropriate members. Local bank employees might also be interested in participating.

Jonathan noted that clarification is needed regarding whether funds raised are only to be used to pay off debt incurred for infrastructure prior to the completion of development, or if they may also be used for further improvements.

JB indicated that several webinars are scheduled on this topic, and suggested that PC members attend the one being held by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns in February.

7. Wastewater Planning Project Update

JB reported that upcoming work includes a public outreach campaign and meeting with landowners to assess plumbing configurations, vegetation removal needs, and related items in order to bring the 90% design to completion. He will also be working to draft and finalize easements as necessary, and the engineering team will be completing plans to reroute the conveyance pipe along the Slow Road in order to avoid the cemetery. He indicated that over seventy of the priority parcels identified have agreed to join onto the system.

JB is also working on the Local Options Tax (LOT) subcommittee; that group is also addressing public outreach needs. He indicated that the fourth contract amendment with DuBois & King for their work on the wastewater project has been approved by the Selectboard.

8. PC Budget 2026

Jonathan noted that, while nothing is currently on the horizon for grant funding which will require a match, it is beneficial to have some funds available for that purpose. There was some discussion regarding the potential for holding community engagement events related to several topics that the PC will be addressing, and that funds will be needed for those. AnnMarie pointed out that the request to the Selectboard has typically been for around \$3K, and it was confirmed that funds do not carry over at the end of each fiscal year.

There was further discussion of general planning for the future, and that the PC and the MRVPD will likely be more focused on this type of visioning. It was agreed that some flexibility in related budgeting would be beneficial.

The PC discussed an amount for request and \$10,000 seemed appropriate.

9. Other Business

Short-Term Rentals (STR) Subcommittee – This group has scheduled its first meeting, and will have some information to share at the next PC meeting. Jonathan advised them to engage with Eric Freidman regarding business community input on this topic.

Jonathan informed the PC that the Mad River Valley Planning District has hired a new community planner to assist Joshua Schwartz.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary