



WAITSFIELD PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA

March 17, 2026 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.gov

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL
2. REVISIONS TO AGENDA, IF ANY (5 +/- min)
3. PUBLIC FORUM (10 +/- min)
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES –FEBRUARY 3 (10 +/- min)
5. ANNUAL REORGANIZATION (10 +/- min)
6. PC VACANCY (5 +/- min)
7. SHORT-TERM RENTALS (30 +/- min) Emma, Beth & Becca
8. POST-MASTER PLAN/CHIP (25 +/- min) JB
9. WASTEWATER PLANNING PROJECT UPDATE (10 +/- min) JB/Bob
10. OTHER BUSINESS (15+/-min)
 - a. Town Plan Update
 - b. Wilder Farm
11. ADJOURNMENT

**Waitsfield Planning and Zoning Administrators Report
Planning Commission March 17, 2026 meeting**

5. Annual Reorganization

The first meeting of the Planning Commission after Town Meeting Day includes annual reorganization. Members must elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair.

Members must also re-affirm (or change) the location, days and times of regularly scheduled meetings. In addition, both the newspaper publication(s) of record as well as public notice posting locations must be confirmed.

The PZA has also included in the packet the 2016 PC Rules of Procedure. Since it has been nine years since that draft, the PZA recommends that members take a fresh look at the document to see if any updates should be made.

6. PC Vacancy

The three-year commissioner seat vacated by Alice Peal remains vacant. An updated advertisement is included in the packet. Members should review for errors or omissions. The PZA will post the advertisement in the Valley Reporter and on Front Porch Forum.

7. Short-Term Rentals

The Short-Term Rental (STR) subcommittee continues to meet to draft a framework of data collection, registration and regulation of STRs ahead of the PC making a recommendation to the Selectboard this spring.

The PC utilized the Warren STR Ordinance in drafting a set of standards for Waitsfield. The PZA has included in the packet the subcommittee's first draft of a Waitsfield ordinance regulating STRs. Some questions remain, including how to best define a "bedroom" for purposes of the ordinance. In speaking with the Warren Zoning Administrator, clarity around how best to define a *bedroom* has been a stumbling block there.

Also included in the packet is email correspondence from Joshua Schwartz of the Planning District. Vermont League of Cities and Towns has offered a model STR ordinance for Towns considering such regulation. *At this time, the PZA cannot login to the website to find the model ordinance due to the Town's recent move to a .gov account. The PZA will forward along the model ordinance ahead of Tuesday's meeting.*

8. Post Master Plan / CHIP

With the permission of the Town, SE Group has offered the Irasville master plan into award consideration for the Vermont Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (see [here](#)). The program submission form is included in the packet, and Alex Belenz will follow up when he there is news to share!

In the aftermath of the Plan finalization, the PZA along with the Town Administrator has actively been working through potential projects that would be a good fit for the program. The PZA and York Haverkamp met with the owner of the former TD Bank property two weeks back to discuss the potential of the CHIP program to facilitate housing development on the parcel across from the former TD Bank. The landowner will be submitting a draft proposal for review. Several other parcels could be a good potential fit for the CHIP program, including the Mad River Green Shops, Ed Read's property across from the school and the Skatium.

The PZA recommends that the PC use this meeting to discuss what a committee devoted to effectuating the master plan should set out to do. What are the goals? And who should be involved, both as committee members as well as active partners for the program. The PZA and Town Administrator strongly believe that one or two Selectboard members be brought into whatever committee forms, thereby streamlining a partnership that is ultimately led by the Selectboard.

VLCT has created a webpage specific to the CHIP program which can be found [here](#). VLCT has formed a three-year workforce development initiative supports municipalities in understanding and using CHIP – a financing tool that allows communities to invest in critical infrastructure, such as water, wastewater, roads, and stormwater systems, to enable new housing.

The time is now. Both the interest form *and* the application portal are now live. The PZA has again included the final program guidelines.

Of note, the PZA believes that the CHIP program can be utilized to repay loans on the municipal wastewater system so long as the *but-for* analysis is met with regard to resultant housing development. The PZA has reached out to the Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) for affirmation.

9. Wastewater Project Update

The PZA and Bob Cook have much to update the PC on since we last met. The PZA has completed about 65% of the site visit work for final design and will begin preparing easements in April. Follow-up site visits at all 70 properties are required in the spring.

The project is currently at 85% design, with 90% design set to be completed by the end of March. At this point, we are two months behind on the planned bid period for the project. It is now looking like late spring or early summer for the project to go out to bid.

More will be covered at the meeting.

10. Other Business

Regarding the Town Plan update to accord to the State Planning Goals on childcare, the PZA will draft language for the update for the April 7 meeting.

Included in the packet are emails in support of the owners of the Wilder Farm Inn and their proposed request to change the Bylaws. Specifically, the landowners request a broadened scope of the adaptive reuse of historic farmsteads.

The Wilder Farm Inn landowners submitted a letter to the PC in the fall, which is included in the packet. The landowner requests updating the Town Plan to “support a slightly broader scope of uses for adaptive re-uses of farmsteads, and that this be accompanied by a modest amendment to the Waitsfield Zoning Bylaws in Section 4.03 related to the appropriate re-use of these farmstead structures. We believe a slight broadening of the allowed uses could further support the town’s goals of rural vitality, diversity, and economic sustainability.”

Suggested Town Plan Language:

“To support this zoning change, we are hoping the committee might consider the following addition to the Waitsfield Town Plan under the Land Use section:

‘Encourage the adaptive reuse of historic farmsteads and barns for purposes that support community well-being and low-impact economic activity, including retreats and accessory housing, provided such uses preserve the architectural character and rural context of the original structure.’”

The owners purport that this language aligns with the Town Plan’s emphasis on preserving rural character while promoting innovative land use strategies.

Proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendment:

The proposal also asks the PC “to consider expanding the list of uses under Adaptive Re-Use of Farmsteads to include:

- Retreats (e.g., wellness, educational, or artist retreats with accommodations) – This is already an allowed adaptive re-use of Historic Barns
- Accessory Housing (e.g., small-scale residential units for seasonal or year-round occupancy) – This is already an allowed adaptive re-use of commercial lodging.

The proposal also seeks that “for these uses, the special requirements acreage minimum of 8 acres should be reduced to 3 acres. This way, acreage not needed for this use can be separated and continued for other agriculture-residential uses.”

There will be no real substantive discussion of these amendment requests until the April 7th meeting.

The PZA notes Section 1.05 of the Zoning Bylaws concerning proposed amendments to the Bylaws. Section 1.05 (B) states:

“Proposed amendments to this bylaw shall be submitted to the Waitsfield Planning Commission for consideration in accordance with amendment procedures established under the Act [§4441]. Such amendments, if supported by a petition signed by not less than 5% of the voters, shall be reviewed by the Planning Commission only to correct technical deficiencies. When considering any amendment to this bylaw, the Planning Commission shall prepare a written report on the proposal in accordance with the Act [§4441I], for submission to the Waitsfield Selectboard and voters.”

Upcoming trainings/webinars:

Introducing CHIP – Vermont's \$2B Housing and Infrastructure Program

Discover how your community can unlock new opportunities for housing and infrastructure development. Join us for the kickoff session of our Vermont Community Housing and Infrastructure Program (CHIP) webinar series. CHIP is the largest investment in municipal infrastructure in the state’s history. This session will provide a clear overview of CHIP, including:

How the program works and what makes it different from traditional funding tools,
Eligibility requirements and key guardrails to ensure responsible implementation, and
The timeline and expectations for program launch.

Whether you're a town manager, selectboard member, lister, assessor, treasurer, or local or regional planning or development staff, this session will help you understand how CHIP can be a game-changer for communities of all sizes. Following the presentation, you'll have the chance to ask questions and learn from peers across Vermont.

Presenters:

Bonnie Waninger, Project & Funding Specialist, VLCT

Samantha Sheehan, Municipal Policy and Advocacy Specialist, VLCT

Josh Hanford, Director, Intergovernmental Relations, VLCT

Jessica Hartleben, Executive Director, Vermont Economic Progress Council (invited)

Building Housing, Building Futures: VLCT's CHIP Webinar Series

The Vermont Community Housing Infrastructure Program (CHIP) aims to enhance housing development by allowing municipalities to finance infrastructure improvements using future tax revenue. This webinar series helps local government officials and staff learn about different aspects of CHIP and managing its requirements. Each topic-oriented event begins with a presentation or panel discussion then transitions to Q&A. Bring your questions, share your challenges, and learn from other communities.

Date: Thursday, February 19, 2026

Time: 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM EST

Registration Deadline: Thursday, February 19, 2026

Register [here](#).

Regional Mapping of Future Land Use

Since the passage of Act 181, significant changes are taking place with respect to future land use. Vermont's Eleven Regional Planning Commissions are leading a public process to update Regional Future Land Use Maps in each of the Regional Plans. These maps inform Act 250 jurisdiction for development review and align local, regional, and state planning goals. Join us for this informative session about how town maps are being compiled into a future land use map for each region. You'll hear from Rutland Regional Planning Commission Executive Director Devon Neary about their mapping and planning efforts and what this means for the future.

Date & Times:

Session 2: Thursday, April 30th, 2026, 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM. Register [here](#).

Presenters:

Devon Neary, Executive Director, Rutland Regional Planning Commission

Mountain Lions in VT?

Mountain Lions are an amazing cat species that once called this landscape home. Discussions have recently started around the idea of reintroducing this top predator. In this informative session you'll hear directly from Department Biologists about mountain lion biology and natural history as well as the implications for the region's land use and transportation infrastructure, conflict prevention and coexistence considerations, and other critical questions that will need to be answered if the species were to be reintroduced.

Date & Times:

Session 1: Thursday, March 26th 2026, 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Register [here](#).

Session 2: Tuesday, May 19th 2026, 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Register [here](#).

Presenters:

Brehan Furfey, Furbearer Biologist, VT Fish & Wildlife Department

Jens Hilke, Conservation Planner, VT Fish & Wildlife Department

Rosalind Renfrew, Wildlife Diversity Program Manager, VT Fish & Wildlife Department

Vermont's Geologic History And Its Implications For Climate Resilience

The long story of Vermont's geologic history is laid down in our bedrock: from the ~1300-million-year-old metamorphic rocks coring the Green Mountains to ~120-million-year-old igneous rocks related to the collapse of an ancient volcano. During this deep time, multiple oceans have opened during spreading events and closed during mountain building events (orogenies). But this story is still being acted out today in the natural communities, biodiversity, and groundwater and surface water chemistry that result from our bedrock and the climate resilience we can plan for into the future. Hear from geologist Jon Kim about our geologic history and see how this concept is integrated into the Vermont Conservation Design as fundamental for climate resilience.

Date & Times:

Session 2: Thu 4/9/2026 1:00 PM - 2:00 pm. Register [here](#).

Presenters:

Jon Kim, VT Geological Survey

Jens Hilke, Conservation Planner, VT Fish & Wildlife Department

Investing In Municipal Infrastructure as a Tool to Reduce Sprawl

Maintaining our historic settlement pattern of compact villages surrounded by rural landscapes doesn't happen by accident. In fact, sprawl is a common growth pattern in Vermont associated with our rural brand. To address this challenge, we need to invest in places where we want development so that we can avoid sprawl across our forests and farms. Many village centers haven't invested in town water and wastewater systems making it more difficult to increase density there. Hear from Vermont Natural Resources Council Sustainable Communities Director, Kati Gallagher to learn more about these issues.

Date & Times:

Session 1: Mon 3/16/2026 12:00 PM - 1:00 pm. Register [here](#).

Session 2: Mon 5/4/2026 10:00 AM - 11:00 am. Register [here](#).

Presenters:

Kati Gallagher, Sustainable Communities Director, Vermont Natural Resources Council

Respectfully submitted,

J.B. Weir

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 3, 2026

Draft

Members Present: Beth Cook, Bob Cook, AnnMarie Harmon, Becca Newhall, Alice Peal
Members Absent: Emma Hanson, Jonathan Ursprung
Staff Present: JB Weir, Zoning Administrator
Others Present: None

II. Regular Business

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm by AnnMarie Harmon. 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 January 20, 2026 were amended and approved.

5. CVRPC Update

Alice reported on the following:

- The Regional Plan update is still a primary focus; current work is focused on the Infrastructure and Utilities Chapter, and work is still needed on a separate Energy Chapter and disaster-related Resilience Planning. The narratives of each chapter will need review, as work to date has primarily focused on the aspirations, goals, policies, and strategies sections.
- The Plan and the new Land Use Map are both due to the Land Use Review Board in May.
- The slide deck from a recent FEMA mapping presentation will be shared with the PC when available. Alice noted that there are changes being put in place to the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) criteria, that there will be a portal to access updated maps, and that there will be changes to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). She advised that regional floodplain managers will have further information as it becomes available.
- The floodplain reconnection project will be completing a more in-depth study on the Fairgrounds parcel, as that area was determined to be the most beneficial to have reconnected. The Conservation Commission will be the point group for this work.
- Alice will no longer be serving on the PC, but will continue as Waitsfield's CVRPC representative. She will be working on River Corridor bylaws, the Regional Plan, and a task force addressing Code of Conduct standards.

PC members expressed their appreciation for Alice's seven years of work as part of the Commission.

6. Short Term Rental (STR) Discussion

Beth reported that the committee has been discussing how to adapt the Warren Ordinance to Waitsfield's needs, and that there is agreement by committee members that registrations and a fire

safety certificate of occupancy should be required. Emma is preparing a draft, which should be ready for review by the PC in March. Eric Friedman has been contacted regarding input from the loose group of operators, property managers, and other STR-related Chamber members, and the committee will also reach out to neighbors of STRs for feedback. An email summarizing a conversation with Camilla Behn (Warren Selectboard) will be forwarded to PC members.

Becca noted that a one-night rental of a room qualifies as creating a public building, which would indicate that a registration would be required.

7. Annual Planning and Zoning Report

JB had drafted the Report; PC members had no major edits to incorporate before including the Report as part of the Waitsfield Town Report.

8. Town Plan Update

JB reviewed the pertinent information he had included in the meeting packet, and indicated that he would draft related daycare-focused language for review at the next PC meeting, including outlining the support provided by the Town for local daycare providers.

9. Wastewater Planning Project Update

JB reported that Jon Ashley of DuBois & King had reached the 80% design threshold, with a 90% design anticipated in the coming weeks. Site visits to evaluate plumbing connections are continuing; JB will include somebody with engineering expertise on the more complex site visits. Robin Morris will be helping to draft the Wastewater Ordinance. The plan is to have the project out for bid in April.

JB also noted that there may be an economic impact analysis undertaken, for use in seeking further funding. He noted that conversations with the Department of Environmental Conservation are ongoing, and that the Town's attorney is working on easement language for the individual wastewater connections, for each of which there will be a permanent easement as well as a user agreement in place.

10. Other Business

JB encouraged PC members to attend the Selectboard's designated infrastructure summit on February 17, and also offered a reminder of the Community and Housing Infrastructure Program (CHIP) presentation being provided by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns on February 19.

CHIP Program/Committee Update – It was confirmed that there will be a meeting to discuss formation of this committee during the week of February 23.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the PC will be held on March 17, 2026.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary

Waitsfield Planning Commission

Rules of Procedure and Conflict of Interest Policy

Section I: Authority.

The Planning Commission of the Town of Waitsfield hereby adopts the following rules of procedure (hereinafter referred to as these Rules) in accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 4323(b).

Section II: Policy.

These Rules are adopted to ensure consistent and fair treatment of members, interested persons, and participants, orderly and efficient public meetings, and compliance with state and federal law. These Rules shall also ensure that no Commission member will gain a direct personal or financial advantage from his or her work for the Commission, so that the public trust in municipal government will be preserved.

Section III: Definitions.

- A. “Commission member” means a regular or alternate member of the Waitsfield Planning Commission.
 - B. “Commission” means the Waitsfield Planning Commission.
 - C. “Conflict of interest” means any one of the following:
 - 1. A direct personal interest of a Commission member, his or her spouse, household member, child, stepchild, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, aunt or uncle, brother or sister in law, business associate, employer or employee, in the outcome of a cause, proceeding, or any other matter pending before the Waitsfield Planning Commission.
 - 2. A direct financial interest of a Commission member, his or her spouse, household member, child, stepchild, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, aunt or uncle, brother or sister in law, business associate, employer or employee, in the outcome of a cause, proceeding, or any other matter pending before the Waitsfield Planning Commission.
- “Conflict of Interest” does not arise in the case of votes or decisions on matters in which the public officer has a personal or pecuniary interest in the outcome no greater than that of other persons generally affected by the decision, such as adopting a bylaw or setting a tax rate.
- D. “Executive session” means a session of a public body from which the public is excluded, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313. Such private session may only be held for one of the reasons permitted by the statute, and no binding action may be taken in executive session.

- E. "Official act or action" means any legislative or administrative act performed by any Commission member.
- F. "Public deliberations" means the weighing, examining, and discussing, in a public proceeding, the reasons for and against an act or decision, but expressly excludes the taking of evidence and the arguments of parties.
- G. "Recuse" means to remove oneself from a particular vote because of a conflict of interest.

Section IV: Members; Officers, and Duties.

- A. The Waitsfield Planning Commission shall consist of seven regular members. After Town Meeting but prior to May 1, or at other times throughout the year as needed, the Waitsfield Planning Commission shall hold an organizational meeting and elect by majority vote, a Chair and Vice Chair.
- B. Chair: The Chair shall preside at all meetings, hearings, and deliberative sessions, decide all points of order or procedure, and appoint members to any subcommittee of the Commission. The Chair may administer oaths and may request the attendance of witnesses and the production of material germane to any issue under consideration.
- C. Vice Chair: The Vice Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair whenever the Chair is absent, or at the Chair's request.
- D. It shall be the duty of all members to review the minutes and other official records of the Waitsfield Planning Commission meetings and actions, and correct and ratify these when appropriate and necessary.
- E. Signature: The Chairperson's signature shall be the official signature of the Commission and shall appear on all applicable documents pertaining to actions of the Commission which were made at meetings of the Commission when the Chair was present and presiding. The Vice Chairperson's signature shall appear on all documents pertaining to actions of the Commission which were made when the Chair was not present or when the Chair was not presiding.
- F. Vacancies: The Waitsfield Selectboard shall be notified immediately of any vacancy of the Commission. If the office of Chair becomes vacant, the Commission shall fill that office by election for the unexpired term at the next regular meeting of the Commission.
- G. Planning and Zoning Administrator: The Planning and Zoning Administrator shall be responsible for the orderly and efficient administrative processes concerning all aspects of the Commission's function and have the following duties:

1. Conduct official correspondence subject to these rules and at the direction of the Commission;
2. Issue the proper forms, compile all information, maps, and records for the Commission's review;
3. Send out all notices required by law and these rules of procedure;
4. Inform persons who come before the Commission of these rules of procedure and the laws or bylaws which pertain to that person's appearance before the Commission;
5. Prepare minutes or cause minutes to be prepared of all meetings of the Commission and make them available to the public in accordance with 1 V.S.A. §312; and
6. Maintain copies of the minutes and records of examination and other official actions of the Commission separate and apart from those filed with the Town Clerk.

Section V: Regular and Special Meetings.

- A. Regular meetings shall be held in the Town Offices at 7:00 p.m. on the first and third Tuesdays of the month, or as warranted. The Planning and Zoning Administrator shall post meeting agendas or cancel meetings at the request of the Chair in accordance with 1 V.S.A. §§310-314.
- B. Special or emergency meetings may be called by the Chair in accordance with 1 V.S.A. §§310-314.
- C. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the plenary Commission.
- D. Members may participate electronically in accordance with 1 V.S.A. §§312.
- E. All meetings shall be open to the public unless the Commission has entered an executive session. The Commission may only hold an executive session pursuant to the reasons permitted by 1 V.S.A. §313, and only after a majority vote to enter executive session. Decisions shall be made on the record.
- F. There shall be an agenda for each meeting, which may include time allotted for each item or group of items to be considered. The Chair shall determine the content of the agenda after consultation with staff.

- G. All business shall be conducted in the same order as it appears on the agenda, except that by majority vote, the Chair may alter the order of items to be considered and/or the time allotted.
- H. The Chair shall rule on all questions of order or procedure and shall enforce these rules pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 312(h).
- I. At each meeting, there shall be a ten minute period of time reserved for public comment near the beginning of the meeting. The Chair may extend or reduce this period of time as necessary. Speakers may participate at other times throughout a meeting but only when recognized by the Chair. The Commission shall apply consistent time limits to all recognized to speak.
- J. Notice for hearings on the adoption, amendment, or repeal of the bylaw and other regulatory tools shall be pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 4444, as amended. Public hearings shall be publicly noticed in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §§ 4464(a)(1-2), as amended.

Section VI: Decisions.

The Planning Commission shall make decisions in public session. Commission members absent for parts of the public hearing shall listen to audiotapes of the meetings and review exhibits and other information submitted in order to participate in the decision. The following rules shall apply to voting on decisions:

- A. Motions shall be made in the affirmative. This does not imply that the person making or seconding the motion supports that motion.
- B. The Chair has the same voting rights as other members and can make motions.
- C. No second shall be required for a motion to have the floor.
- D. All members present are expected to vote unless they have recused themselves.

Section VII: Conflicts of Interest.

Participation, disclosure of conflicts, and recusal shall be governed by the following procedures:

- A. **Participation.** A Commission member shall not participate in any official action where he or she has a conflict of interest in the matter under consideration, except if the conflict is disclosed and a verbal statement is made by the member pursuant to subsection (B) of this section. A Commission member shall not, personally or through any member of his or her

household, business associate, employer or employee, represent, appear for, or negotiate in a private capacity on behalf of any person or organization in any proceeding pending before the Waitsfield Planning Commission.

- B. Disclosure.** At all hearings, the Chair shall request that Commission members disclose all actual and potential conflicts of interest. When recognized by the Chair, any person may request disclosure of potential conflicts of interest.

Nonetheless, after disclosing an actual or potential conflict, if a member who believes that he or she is able to act fairly, objectively, and in the public interest despite the actual or potential conflict, that member shall make a statement describing the matter under consideration by the Commission, the nature of the potential conflict of interest pertaining to the matter, and the reason(s) why the member believes he or she is able to act in the matter fairly, objectively, and in the public interest despite the actual or potential conflict of interest.

This statement shall be filed as part of the minutes of the proceeding pertaining to the matter under consideration.

- C. Recusal.** A Commission member shall recuse him or herself from any matter in which he or she has an actual conflict of interest, pursuant to the following:

1. The applicant or any interested person may request that a member recuse him or herself due to a conflict of interest. Such request shall not constitute a requirement that the member recuse him or herself.
2. A Commission member who has recused him or herself from a proceeding shall not sit with the Commission, deliberate with the Commission, or participate in that proceeding as a Commission member.
3. If a previously unknown conflict is discovered, the Planning Commission may take evidence pertaining to the conflict, and if appropriate, adjourn to a short executive session to address the conflict.
4. The Commission may adjourn the proceedings to a time certain if, after a recusal, it may not be possible to take action through the concurrence of a majority of the Commission. The Commission may then resume the proceeding with sufficient members present.

Section VIII: Progressive Consequences for Failure to Follow the Conflict of Interest Procedures.

In cases where the conflict of interest procedures in Section IX have not been followed, the Commission may take progressive action to discipline an offending Commission member. In the discipline of a member, the Commission shall follow these steps in order:

- A. The Chair shall meet informally, in private, with the Commission member to discuss possible conflict of interest violation.
- B. The Commission may meet to discuss the conduct of the Commission member. Executive session may be used for such discussion. 1 V.S.A. § 313(4). The Commission member may request that this meeting occur in public. If appropriate, the Commission may admonish the offending Commission member in private.
- C. If the Commission decides that further action is warranted, the Commission may admonish the offending Commission member at an open meeting and reflect this action in the minutes of the meeting. The Commission member shall be given the opportunity to respond to the admonishment.
- D. Upon majority vote, the Commission may request that the offending Commission member resign from the Planning Commission. A member is not required to resign, but may be removed by a unanimous vote of the legislative body pursuant to Section XI.

Section IX: Removal.

Upon majority vote, the Commission may request that the legislative body remove a Commission member from the Waitsfield Planning Commission. Commission members may be removed for cause by the legislative body upon written charges and after public hearing. 24 V.S.A. § 4460(c). Planning Commissioners may be removed at any time by unanimous vote of the legislative body. 24 V.S.A. § 4323(a).

Section X: Amendments.

These rules may be amended at any regular or special meeting by a majority vote, provided that each Planning Commission member has been presented a written copy of the proposed amendment at least 24 hours before the meeting at which the vote is taken. Only those amendments which are presented to the members prior to the meeting may be amended at that meeting.

Adopted by the Waitsfield Planning Commission on the 6th day of December, 2016.



TOWN OF WAITSFIELD

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD VACANCY PLANNING COMMISSION

Are you interested in helping to shape the future growth and development of Waitsfield? The Waitsfield Selectboard is seeking individuals interested in filling the seat of an unexpired three-year term on the Planning Commission through March 2029. Please submit a letter of interest to the Waitsfield Selectboard, 4144 Main Street, Waitsfield VT 05673 or by e-mail to york.haverkamp@waitsfieldvt.gov. For more information, contact Town Administrator York Haverkamp or Planning & Zoning Administrator J.B. Weir at 496-2218 or visit <https://www.waitsfieldvt.gov/boards-meetings/planning-commission>.

J.B. Weir
Planning & Zoning Administrator

4144 Main Street, Waitsfield, VT 05673 • P: (802) 496-2218 • F: (802) 496-9284 • W: www.waitsfieldvt.us

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TOWN OF WAITSFIELD SHORT-TERM RENTAL (STR) ORDINANCE

September 17, 2025

- § 1. Authority
- § 2. Purpose
- § 3. Definitions
- § 4 Permit application requirements
- § 5. General Requirements
- § 6. License Processing
- § 7. Violations
- § 8. Enforcement and Fines
- § 9. Expiration
- § 10. Suspension or Revocation of License
- § 11. Other Laws
- § 12. Severability
- § 13. Effective Date

§ 1. Authority:

This Ordinance is adopted by the Selectboard of the Town of Waitsfield (“Selectboard”) under authority of 24 V.S.A. § 2291(15) and (29), and 24 V.S.A. Chapter 59.

§ 2. Purpose:

The Town of Waitsfield (“Town”) values a sense of community that is derived from being a good neighbor, respecting the surrounding environment and demonstrating regard for health and safety. The purpose of this Ordinance is to promote the public health, safety, and welfare of the Town and to provide the Town with tools to effectively mitigate secondary impacts that may arise from Short Term Rental (“STR”) operations including, but not limited to, adverse impacts to the availability of long-term housing, neighborhood cohesion, and visitor safety. This Ordinance regulates STRs in furtherance of these purposes by:

1. Requiring disclosure and licensing of STRs to support the responsible operation of STRs and to provide data on their activity in the Town of Waitsfield; and
2. Carrying out the objectives of the Town Plan in a manner that balances both the shared and individual rights of Town property owners, residents, and transient visitors.

§ 3 Definitions:

For purposes of this Ordinance, the following words and phrases will apply:

1. "Short-Term Rental (STR)" means a furnished house, condominium, or other dwelling room or self-contained dwelling unit rented to the transient, traveling, or vacationing public for a period of fewer than 30 consecutive days.
2. "Property Owner" means the individual(s) or entity/entities that hold legal title to a building, structure, or land or a part thereof where the STR is located.
3. "STR Administrator" means the zoning administrator (administrative officer) or other person or persons designated by the Selectboard to administer and enforce compliance with this Ordinance and to represent the Town in any associated proceedings, legal or otherwise.

§ 4. Permit application requirements:

An application for a STR License must include the following to be deemed complete and processed:

1. A certificate demonstrating that the property has passed a Department of Public Safety fire safety inspection conducted by a state-certified inspector and at time of renewal.
2. The address of the STR, the STR owner name(s), address(es) telephone number(s) and email address(es). If the Owner is a corporation, LLC, partnership, trust, association, or company, the name of the majority or controlling member or member/agent authorized to act on behalf of the entity is required on all applications. Where applicable, the owner's agent or property manager contact information will be required.
3. The number of sleeping rooms within the short-term rental, as defined in the standards located in Section 5.2.
4. The maximum occupancy of the STR and the number of off-street parking spots available.
5. The owner of a STR must post within the unit a telephone number for the person responsible for the unit and the contact information for the Department of Health and the Department of Public Safety's Division of Fire Safety.
6. Payment of all applicable STR fees as established by the Town Selectboard.

Commented [1]: What is Warren doing insofar as defining "bedroom?" More info and PC input needed

§ 5. General Requirements:

1. Licensing & Approvals
 - a. A STR license must be renewed bi-annually by the 31st of October.
 - b. A STR license is NOT transferable.
 - c. No STR license will be approved unless the applicant has submitted all required documents to the STR Administrator.
2. Standards

All STRs must meet the following standards:

 - a. The property must have a green and white high-visibility house number visible from the street or road that it abuts.
 - b. Trash shall be stored in a secure place from animals.
 - c. A Knox-Box (i.e., for emergency keys) is required for all short-term rental properties in which an alarm system is active., The Knox-Box must be registered with the Waitsfield Fire Department. [To order the Knox-Box, see this form: <https://www.knoxbox.com/Products> (click buy in upper right hand corner, location VT Dept is Waitsfield Fire)

§ 6. License Processing:

1. The STR Administrator must either approve or deny a complete license application within 30 days. Any denial will be in writing and provide the reasoning and cite any applicable section of the Ordinance as the basis of the denial.
2. Short-term rental permits issued pursuant to this section must include the following:
 - a. The name and telephone number for the person responsible for the unit;
 - b. The maximum occupancy and parking limitations for the short-term rental unit;
 - c. A statement that no outdoor fires are allowed, except as permitted by local and state law;
 - d. A statement that the short-term rental permit may be revoked for violations.

§ 7. Violations:

1. A violation of this ordinance shall be a civil matter which may be enforced in the Vermont Judicial Bureau or in the Washington County Superior Court, at the election of the STR Administrator.
2. Violations enforced in the Judicial Bureau will be in accordance with the provisions of 24 V.S.A. §§ 1974a and 1977 et seq. For purposes of enforcement in the Judicial Bureau, an STR Administrator will have authority to issue tickets and represent the Town at any hearing.
3. Violations enforced in the Superior Court will be in accordance with the Vermont Rules of Civil Procedure. The Town may pursue all appropriate injunctive relief.

§ 8 Enforcement & Fines:

1. Enforcement
 - a. Inspection: May be carried out for accuracy of bedroom counts, ensuring posting requirements are met, and investigating complaints.
 - b. Notice: If the STR Administrator determines there is a violation of this Ordinance, the STR Administrator must first issue a 14-day Notice to Remedy.
2. Fines:
 - a. If the violation has not been substantially cured within 14 days a fine shall be applied. Each day a violation exists after the date set for remedy shall be subject to a separate fine until the violation is cured.
 - b. Repeated violations of the same provision(s) of this Ordinance shall not be given time to remedy the violation before additional fines accrue.
 - c. A subsequent violation that is identical to, and that occurs within six months of a previous violation shall be considered a higher offense (i.e., second, or third offense). Any subsequent identical violation that occurs after twelve months of a previous identical violation shall be considered a new first offense.
 - d. The STR Administrator is authorized to recover a waiver fee in lieu of a civil penalty, for any person who declines to contest a municipal complaint and pays the waiver fee in the following amounts for each violation:

First violation \$200

Second violation \$400

Third violation \$600

Commented [2]: Is the first sentence missing something?

Commented [3R2]: Yes...I took a stab at fixing it.

Fourth and Subsequent Violations \$1000

- e. An Enforcement Officer is authorized to recover civil penalties for violations of this Ordinance in the following amounts for each violation:

First violation \$500

Second violation \$1000

Third violation \$1500

Fourth and Subsequent Violations \$2000

§ 9. Expiration:

- 1. This ordinance will expire in two years after its initial adoption to allow for a period of data gathering and analysis. Upon expiration of this ordinance, the Selectboard will revisit the issue of STRs and may adopt a new ordinance to replace this one.

§ 10. Suspension or Revocation of License:

- 1. In addition to the penalties available for enforcement of a violation(s), the license may also be subject to suspension, revocation, or non-renewal per the terms of this ordinance. Determination of these additional penalties will be made, in writing to the licensee, by the STR Administrator.
- 2. If a licensee commits three (3) violations within 12 months, their license will be revoked.
- 3. A licensee who has had their License revoked may not re-apply for a period of one (1) year from the time their revoked License was due to expire.

§ 11. Other Laws:

- 1. This Ordinance is in addition to all other ordinances of the Town of Waitsfield and all applicable laws of the State of Vermont. All ordinances or parts of ordinances, resolutions, regulations, or other documents inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

§ 12. Severability:

- 1. If any section of this Ordinance is held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such finding will not invalidate any other part of this Ordinance.

§ 13. Effective Date:

- 1. This Ordinance will become effective 60 days after its adoption by the Selectboard. If a petition is filed under 24 V.S.A. § 1973, that statute will govern the taking effect of this Ordinance.

Adopted this 17th day of September, 2025.

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Short-Term Rentals in the Mad River Valley Platform Evaluation Memo

2.26.24

In October 2023, the Warren Planning Commission requested MRVPD assistance in exploring options for gaining a more complete understanding of STRs within their community. In response, MRVPD staff explored, interviewed, analyzed, and is now communicating options for undertaking such an effort. Below are the findings.

While Warren served as the impetus to undertake this work at this time, the findings apply to all three MRVPD towns. Should the Waitsfield Planning Commission or Selectboard have specific questions regarding any of the platforms evaluated within this memo, MRVPD staff are available & willing to discuss the software solutions in more detail. Our goal is to ensure that each town has the opportunity to enhance its understanding of the MRV short-term rental market, provided there's an interest or a recognized need for such information.

Context

The purpose of this document is to provide a brief background regarding the Mad River Valley (MRV) short-term rental market, past efforts made to understand it, and ultimately, to offer approaches to collecting additional unbiased data that enhances community understanding of short-term rental impacts in the MRV.

As noted in the Mad River Valley Planning District's (MRVPD) 2021 whitepaper, *Short-Term Rentals in the Mad River Valley*¹, MRV community members and municipal leaders work continuously to achieve a balance between being a welcoming year-round destination for visitors while simultaneously maintaining a high quality of life for full-time residents. Short-term rentals (STRs) highlight where this balance can become markedly more challenging. Although the MRV has a long history of renting houses as seasonal units—especially to support the area's ski industry—the advent of internet platforms like Airbnb and VRBO has brought attention to social, economic, and public health externalities that should be taken into account when analyzing the impact and considering municipal intervention in the operation of STRs.

¹ Mad River Valley Planning District. (2021). *Short-Term Rentals in the Mad River Valley*. https://mrvpd.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/MRV-STR-White-Paper_9.28.21.pdf

The 2021 whitepaper organized the variety of STR-related concerns that have been voiced in the community as follows: Health & Safety, Year-Round Housing, & Community Externalities.

1. Health & Safety
 - a. Lack of tracking and ability to enforce health & safety regulations poses risks for renters and neighbors (e.g. compliance with VT Fire & Building Safety Code and VT Rental Housing Health Code).
2. Year-Round Housing
 - a. Conversion of residential units can further stress an already tight housing market by reducing availability and increasing costs of rental and ownership options. Lack of affordable housing strains the local employment base, school enrollment, and impacts community vitality.
3. Community Externalities
 - a. Potential impacts on neighborhoods with a high density of STRs (especially those that can accommodate large numbers of guests) include visible trash, increased traffic & parking demands, and excess noise.
 - b. A decline in long-term neighbors impacts neighborhood character and value, as well as social community investment.

Given the variety of potential community concerns and possible action steps associated with STRs, MRVPD launched the following three-town approach to analyzing STRs in 2022:

1. Understand the Issue
 - a. Inventory Community Perception & Issues
 - b. Gather Accurate & Unbiased Data
 - c. Establish Larger Strategic Objectives
2. Explore Options
3. Communicate Research & Policy Options



1(a) kicked off with the *Mad River Valley Short-Term Rental Survey*² (MRV STR Survey), serving as the first step in an information-gathering effort to better understand the impact of STRs on community members. A total of 388 responses were received across the three pathways of

² Mad River Valley Planning District. (2022). *Mad River Valley Short-Term Rental Survey*. <https://cdn.townweb.com/mrvpd.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/2022-MRV-STR-Survey-Final-Results.pdf>

respondent types: community members (262), STR owners/hosts (118), and business owners (8). The survey was conducted by MRVPD between August 29 - October 5, 2022.

The MRV STR Survey captured a variety of insights, including the benefits community members associate with STRs, STR owner/host offering types, and goods and services businesses provide to STR owners. The top challenges community members attributed to STRs in the MRV were Year-Round Housing (Long-term renter displacement) and Community Externalities (Impacts to neighborhood character, Disrespectful guests, Increased noise, and Trash concerns).

Having made substantial progress with step 1(a) of the three-town approach, MRVPD recently evaluated three platforms that offer data collection and analysis tools to better understand the MRV's STR market, transitioning us into step 1(b) Gather Accurate & Unbiased Data. What follows is an analysis and comparison of each platform.

Data Gaps

Answers are being sought to address the following gaps in the community's understanding of STRs:

1. How many STR units are located in the Mad River Valley / each town?
 - a. Number that are owner-occupied?
 - b. Number that are whole-home units?
2. Where are they located?
 - a. Are they in locations w/ in proximity to services (e.g., villages, resort areas, etc.)?
3. Does unit listing occupancy/use match permitting approvals?
4. How many days/year is the unit rented?
5. What was the prior state of the unit before being offered as an STR?
6. To what extent do STRs impact long-term housing availability?

These questions were developed to better understand the community concerns identified in the 2021 STR Whitepaper & 2022 MRV STR Survey relating to health & safety, year-round housing availability, and community externalities.

Evaluations

MRVPD explored STR data collection, analysis, and rental activity monitoring software products from three vendors: [GovOS](#), [Deckard Technologies](#), & [Granicus](#). On the whole, each vendor offers a relatively similar approach to STR address identification and monitoring: scan numerous STR platforms for listings, identify each listing and extract information, verify listings and remove duplications, and match listings with owner and address. Some product offerings go beyond the existing task of gathering accurate and unbiased data, including services such as

compliance monitoring, permitting & registration, and the provision of a 24/7 complaint hotline. While these services may be of interest in the future, MRVPD's evaluation was primarily focused on address identification and monitoring. In addition to the summaries and analysis below, all proposals are included in the Appendix.

GovOS, Short-Term Rental Solution:

MRVPD staff met with GovOS on four occasions (10/3, 10/17, 11/21, & 12/8) to discuss product functionality and pricing. The monitoring and compliance platform provided by GovOS, while offering a comprehensive product and broad functionality, offers products that go beyond the MRV's current goal of data collection. With GovOS, data collection and compliance enforcement are sold as a single product. At this time, drafting compliance is of less concern to the MRV than data collection. This could be a beneficial tool if compliance enforcement were to be explored in the future, but it wouldn't be necessary initially. GovOS facilitates communication with STR owners, records screenshots of active & historical property listings, enables the establishment of a rental registry, provides off-site building inspections, communicates compliance, operates a 24/7 complaint hotline, and features an interactive dashboard for analyzing STR metrics and data. The suite of services provided by GovOS comes as a package and cannot be purchased à la carte. As such, it's likely that, at least initially, some services may remain unused.

GovOS clarified that they are unable to provide any historical data regarding STR activity in the Mad River Valley; the data would begin on the date we began using their services. Put simply, without a historical record of short-term rental activity preceding the present day, it would be difficult to understand any long-term effects that STRs have had on long-term housing in the MRV.

Deckard Technologies, Rentalscape:

MRVPD staff participated in a product demonstration with Deckard Technologies (Deckard) on 11/20. Deckard's Rentalscape provides functionality comparable to GovOS, with an emphasis on more raw data vs an organized dashboard. Deckard has the added benefit of an à la carte product structure, ensuring the purchase of only what is needed. Deckard provides Address Identification, Monitoring & Reporting as a single product, with the option to elect the following additional products: Outreach Campaigns, a Registration Portal, a Tax Payment Portal, and a 24/7 Complaint Hotline & Online Forum.

The base tier (Identification, Monitoring, & Reporting) includes the following functionality:

1. Monitoring of 10,000 STR hosting platforms daily.
2. Address Identification.

3. Custom reporting, an interactive listings map, as well as property and listing characteristics such as number of bedrooms, maximum occupancy, rental frequency, rental type, revenue details, and more.
4. A dedicated Account Manager.
 - a. To assist with training and ensure that Town staff follow best management practices.
5. Unlimited seats on the Rentalscape user account.

Deckard has also confirmed that it possesses STR data for the municipalities of Waitsfield, Warren, and Fayston dating back to 2019. This is a significant distinction between Deckard and GovOS.

Granicus, Host Compliance:

MRVPD staff participated in a product demonstration with Granicus on 11/30. Staff previously discussed Granicus's offerings in 2022. Granicus offers the same services as GovOS and Deckard, and similar to Deckard, Granicus allows customers to purchase products and services à la carte. Comparing Deckard's Rentalscape and Granicus' Host Compliance, it appears that Granicus offers more in-depth reporting capabilities as well as greater professional support from Granicus staff. For example, Granicus offers Staff Planners as a service to assist towns in creating and enforcing ordinances that match each municipality's unique circumstances and needs regarding STR regulation, should compliance become necessary. This additional administrative support from Granicus could prove valuable if compliance enforcement becomes a consideration for MRV municipalities.

The quote provided by Granicus includes the following functionality at its base level:

- 1) Ongoing monitoring of 60+ STR websites, including major platforms such as Airbnb, VRBO, HomeAway, Booking.com, FlipKey, & Expedia.
 - a. Monitoring occurs every 3 – 5 days at alternating times of day.
- 2) Deduplication of listings into unique rental units.
- 3) Screenshot activity of every listing.
- 4) An Activity Dashboard & Map to monitor trends.
 - a. Each STR unit identified includes over 150 data points to help better understand the local STR market. Data points include: occupancy characteristics, revenue, cleaning fees, date first listed, minimum stay, unit type, rental frequency, and much more.

One noteworthy difference between Deckard and Granicus is that Deckard provides daily data updates, whereas Granicus updates STR data for its customers every three to five days (at alternating times of day). This lower frequency of data collection is unlikely to severely impact the quality of the data provided, but was worth noting for our platform comparison. Granicus

does offer daily monitoring as an additional service, but it is not included in its most basic product offering.

Perhaps the most notable difference between these platforms is that Granicus has confirmed the possession of STR data for MRV municipalities dating back to 2015. Access to this level of historical data would be key to understanding one of the main questions driving this research: to what extent do short-term rentals impact long-term housing in the MRV? Granicus offers four additional years of historical data in comparison to Deckard, which could provide a deeper understanding of the when and where of STR creation.

Side-by-Side Comparison Charts

This section of this memo consists of several charts providing a side-by-side comparison of each product’s functionality and assesses their ability to answer the MRVPD’s key STR data gaps.

Key		
✓	x	✓
Included in quote	Not Included	Offered as an Additional Service

Chart 1. Functionality Offered by Individual Service Providers

Services	Service Providers		
	GovOS	Granicus	Deckard
Address ID	✓	✓	✓
Deduplication of Listings	✓	✓	✓
Three-tiered Property Verification Process	✓	✓	✓
Historical Data	x	✓ (2015 – Present)	✓ (2019 – Present)
Online Dashboard	✓	✓	✓
Screenshot Activity	✓	✓	✓
Administrative Assistance	✓	✓	✓
Notes Section for each Listing	✓	✓	✓
Communications w/ Owners or Operators	✓	✓	✓
Host Revenue Information & Tax Collection	✓	✓	✓
Compliance Enforcement	✓	✓	✓
Daily Monitoring	✓	✓	✓

Chart 2. Ability to Answer Key Questions / Data Gaps by Individual Service Providers

Question	Granicus		GovOS		Deckard	
	Answers	Doesn't Answer	Answers	Doesn't Answer	Answers	Doesn't Answer
How many STRs are in the Valley / individual towns?	✓		✓		✓	
Where are they located?	✓		✓		✓	
Are they in locations near services (e.g., villages, resort areas, etc.)?	✓		✓		✓	
How many are owner-occupied?	✓		✓		✓	
How many whole-home units?	✓		✓		✓	
Does unit listing occupancy/use match permit approvals?	✓		✓		✓	
How many days/year is the unit rented?	✓		✓		✓	
What was the prior state of the unit before being offered as an STR?	✓			X	✓	
To what extent do STRs impact long-term housing availability and price?	✓			X	✓	

Chart 3. Annual Pricing by Provider & Town

	Annual Pricing								
	GovOS			Granicus			Deckard		
	Fayston	Waitsfield	Warren	Fayston	Waitsfield	Warren	Fayston	Waitsfield	Warren
Individual Price	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$24,000	\$6,903	\$6,903	\$14,020	\$4,700	\$3,000	\$14,000
Group Discount				\$4,832	\$4,832	\$9,814			

Charts 4 - 7. Cost per STR Unit Analysis by Service Provider

This analysis was developed to create a more apple-to-apples comparison of the platforms on a cost per unit basis. Estimated # STR Units = the mean number of units provided by the three companies. Cost Per STR = Platform Cost / Estimated STR Units.

Chart 4.

	GovOS Price Per Unit		
	Fayston	Waitsfield	Warren
Platform Cost	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$24,000
Estimated # STR Units	155	75	451
Cost Per STR	\$129	\$267	\$53

Chart 5.

	Deckard Price Per Unit		
	Fayston	Waitsfield	Warren
Platform Cost	\$4,700	\$3,000	\$14,000
Estimated # STR Units	155	75	451
Cost Per STR	\$30	\$40	\$31

Chart 6.

	Granicus Price Per Unit (Individual Price)		
	Fayston	Waitsfield	Warren
Platform Cost	\$6,903	\$6,903	\$14,020
Estimated # STR Units	155	75	451
Cost Per STR	\$45	\$92	\$31

Chart 7.

	Granicus Price Per Unit (Group Discount)		
	Fayston	Waitsfield	Warren
Platform Cost	\$4,832	\$4,832	\$9,814
Estimated # STR Units	155	75	451
Cost Per STR	\$31	\$64	\$22

Platform Recommendation

Recommending a platform greatly depends on each town's primary goal with respect to understanding the activity and impact of STRs. While certain community-wide goals have been previously identified, each town must consider its role in understanding the overall Mad River Valley short-term rental market, as well as what platform would suit those goals best.

In terms of understanding the health & safety concerns identified in the Mad River Valley Planning District's (MRVPD) 2021 whitepaper, *Short-Term Rentals in the Mad River Valley*, all vendors offer a solution to address this topic. The following paragraphs explain each vendor's ability to address the other two concerns identified in this whitepaper: community externalities and year-round housing.

Staff found that GovOS would be an ideal choice for a municipality that is ready to begin STR monitoring *and* compliance, but is considerably more expensive than Granicus and Deckard. GovOS explained that initially, compliance could be as simple as an outreach campaign to STR owners/managers to create an STR registry. This would provide the opportunity to facilitate STR

registration, communicate with property owners, and allow time to understand the STR data and trends before evaluating whether additional compliance is needed. If municipalities plan to require a registration fee, much of the platform acquisition cost could be offset, but certain services (e.g., tax collection and compliance) included in the quote provided by GovOS would remain unused initially. The main benefit we found with the GovOS proposal is that it includes communication (e.g., initial outreach & 24/7 complaint hotline), registration, and payment collection on behalf of the municipality. The communication with STR owner/operators offered by GovOS makes it slightly more capable in terms of understanding the current community externalities of STRs in the MRV through its complaint hotline and tracking system. The main limitation that we found with GovOS is its lack of historical STR data for MRV towns. The absence of historical data makes the prospect of understanding any long-term impacts resulting from STRs in the MRV unlikely.

From a cost perspective, Deckard & Granicus offers the most competitive pricing as well as all desired product functionality. That said, it is worth noting that if the towns intend on charging a registration fee to help cover costs associated with the purchase of an STR monitoring platform, the pricing of Granicus and Deckard does not reflect any assistance for outreach to STR owners or the collection of corresponding registration fees. This process could prove to be a time and resource constraint for the towns (and MRVPD if it participates in the municipality's endeavor), so it is important to understand each town's intent when selecting a service provider. Deckard and Granicus offer outreach and registration as an optional service, which would incur additional costs.

If the primary goal of MRV towns is to understand how STRs have impacted long-term housing and housing affordability, Granicus's historical data going back to 2015 provides the greatest opportunity to answer this question. While Granicus's individual is priced more similarly to Deckard, they offer a 30% discount if Warren, Waitsfield, and Fayston all elect to engage in address identification collectively. This would make it more affordable than Deckard in some cases. Considering the greater historical data held by Granicus, the optional 30% discount, and the professional administrative support available for potential future compliance drafting, MRVPD believes that Granicus would be best suited to help understand the impact of STRs on housing availability & affordability.

No matter the platform, any STR effort will require local resources. MRVPD is committed to supporting its towns and is happy to explore opportunities to assist in their future STR efforts. That role could include data analysis, communication, coordination, etc.

In summary, all STR vendors offer similar products with some important nuances. GovOS bundles address identification & compliance into a single product, resulting in a cost substantially higher than the other vendors. While GovOS is unable to provide historical STR data for MRV towns, it could provide real-time insight into the community externalities of STRs through its facilitation of a complaint hotline. Deckard is the most affordable option, offers insights pertaining to all data gaps, and has confirmed possession of STR data dating back to 2019 in the MRV. Granicus is similarly priced to Deckard, addresses all data gaps identified by

MRVPD, and possesses an additional four years of historical STR data. While all vendors would provide similar products, these differences should be considered when making a decision.

MRVPD appreciates the opportunity to undertake the above STR platform evaluation on behalf of its three towns. We are happy to continue this dialogue and are available to attend a future Planning Commission meeting to discuss further. Please don't hesitate to reach out.

Sam Robinson, Community Planner
802-496-7179
sam@mrvpd.org

Joshua Schwartz, Executive Director
802-496-71716
joshua@mrvpd.org

Re: Short-Term Rental Regulations Overview and Model Ordinance | Vermont League of Cities and Towns

From Joshua Schwartz <mrvpd@madriver.com>
Date Thu 3/12/2026 11:21 AM
To Becca Newhall <becca.newhall@gmail.com>
Cc JB Weir <jb.weir@waitsfieldvt.gov>; Jonathan Ursprung <ursprung@gmail.com>; emmahhanson <emmahhanson@gmail.com>; Beth Cook <beth@madrivervalleylaw.com>; Franni Hoag <franni@mrvpd.org>

 2 attachments (1 MB)

Short-Term Rental Regulations Overview and Model Ordinance Vermont League of Cities and Towns.pdf; MRVPD STR Platform Evaluation Memo_Waitsfield_2.26.24.pdf;

Hi Becca. Thanks so much for your insightful response. As I mentioned in my original message, access to the page requires a VLCT member login. I know the Town of Waitsfield is a VLCT member, but I'm unsure how the town manages account access.

For now, I've saved the page as a PDF and attached it to this message.

Thanks for sharing VLCT's STR presentation from November. The data source they used (AirDNA via [Housingdata.org](https://housingdata.org)) is the same as the one MRVPD uses for its STR analysis, which is included in the [MRVPD Data Report](#) (page 39 of the 2025 Report). A quick note: the percentage figure (15%) of the total housing stock is...a bit misleading. AirDNA collects whole-home STRs by zip code, not by municipal boundaries. So, the "Waitsfield" number of STRs presented (167) is actually all of 05673, which includes Waitsfield as well as approximately 90% of Fayston's land area. VLCT divided the total housing stock of Waitsfield by the 05673 STR number (167) to arrive at 15%. However, they should have divided the total housing stock of 05673 (Waitsfield plus the housing units within that 90% of Fayston's land area). Therefore, I estimate that the percentage of total housing stock attributed to STRs in Waitsfield is likely a good amount lower than what VLCT's slide deck shows. Oh, data!

I am aware that the City of Burlington has established a 9% gross receipts tax on STRs. This is part of their larger and long-standing gross receipts tax structure, which also includes 2.5% on admissions, alcoholic beverages, amusements, and meals, as well as 4% on hotels/motels. I believe Rutland City has a 1% gross receipts tax on rooms, meals, and entertainment. While these are interesting, I find the role of such taxing structures to be secondary to the primary questions and understandings of STR's impact on its community.

At the risk of overloading you all, I've pasted below a handful of STR resources from our office (email originally shared with Jonathan, JB, etc. back in September). Apologies if this info is duplicative.

Sincerely,
Josh

Begin forwarded message:

From: Joshua Schwartz <mrvpd@madriver.com>
Subject: 9/18 Discussion Follow-Up | STR Resources
Date: September 29, 2025 at 3:17:26 PM EDT
To: Jonathan Ursprung <ursprung@gmail.com>
Cc: JB Weir <pza@madriver.com>, Dave Babbott-Klein <david.babbott.klein@gmail.com>, Sam Robinson <sam@mrvpd.org>

Hi Jonathan. I'm quickly following up on our brief discussion after the 9/18 MRVPD Steering Committee meeting regarding MRVPD's efforts in understanding Short-Term Rentals (STR) in the MRV. For the sake of inclusion, I've cc'd JB, Dave, & Sam on this message.

Below are a handful of resources that may prove helpful as the Waitsfield PC begins to explore this policy area. Sam (and his predecessors) and I have gleaned a fair amount of insight on this topic over the years. We are happy to discuss any/all of this further, but we thought it would make the most sense to first lay out the work that has been completed to date, along with a handful of other resources.

- [Short-Term Rentals in the MRV, MRVPD White Paper](#)
 - MRVPD's 2021 document providing an overview of short-term rentals in the MRV and laying out a framework for better understanding and balancing their potential impacts.
- [2022 MRV STR Survey Final Results](#)
 - The 2022 Mad River Valley Short-Term Rental Survey (MRV STR Survey) was developed to provide the MRV community with a deeper understanding of the impacts of short-term rentals (STRs) on its housing stock, economy, people, and community. MRVPD conducted the survey between August 29 - October 5, 2022.
- [Total Active STRs by Month in the MRV, 2018 - 2024](#)
 - Pg. 39 of MRVPD's 2024 Data Report, graphing active whole-home STR's between January 2018 and the middle of 2024. Sam has access to "Waitsfield-only" data.
- [AirDNA](#)
 - AirDNA is the leading provider of data and analytics for the STR industry. They have some good free data, but the majority is behind a pay-wall.
- [HousingData STR graphs](#)
 - Sourced by AirDNA's listing aggregation efforts, this VHFA housing data site provides entire home STR listings by town between Jan. 2018 and June 2025. Do note that these are actually by zipcode, not town, resulting in Waitsfield's listings to include a good portion of Fayston.
- **Short-Term Rentals in the MRV Platform Evaluation Memo, 2.26.24** (attached)
 - A MRVPD memo summarizing MRVPD's exploration and analysis of platforms that offer data collection and analysis tools to better understand the MRV's STR market. This was in support of the Town of Warren's STR effort. It also summarizes the 2021 white paper (above) and provides context for the effort that was underway. A copy of the Platform Evaluation Memorandum was sent to the Waitsfield PC & SB in February 2024.
- [Vermont Municipal Short-Term Rental Policy Retreat | 11/8 | Lake Morey Resort](#)
 - VLCT is hosting a special education session on STR's focused on selectboard members, municipal managers, municipal lawyers and planning commissioners. This session is designed to provide municipalities that are considering regulating short-term rentals, or those that have recently implemented regulations, a deeper understanding of the law that surrounds short-term rental regulation. Participants will learn from towns that have already implemented registries or regulations, VLCT lawyers who have created online tools to help you understand what towns can do, and short-term rental experts who understand the market and impact short-term rentals have on the state.

I hope this info proves useful. It should serve as a pretty good starting point. We have spent a good amount of time over the past decade or so attempting to understand the role of STRs in the MRV. We are happy to support wherever we can. Don't hesitate to reach out!

Sincerely,
Josh



MAD RIVER VALLEY PLANNING DISTRICT

Joshua Schwartz, Executive Director
Mad River Valley Planning District
PO Box 471 | Waitsfield, VT 05673
p. 802.496.7173 | joshua@mrvpd.org
mrvpd.org

On Mar 11, 2026, at 1:48 PM, Becca Newhall <becca.newhall@gmail.com> wrote:

Josh, I appreciate your passing this along. However, I can't seem to figure out how to get around the log in.

Found this ...

<https://www.vlct.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Events/STR/945-am-with-numbers.pdf>

- Interesting that Waitfield had 15% of its housing stock listed last September (which is more than we anticipated)

Another document I saw noted that Burlington is charging a 9% tax on gross income ... not something we are discussing; but I'm finding the different approaches interesting, and will be curious to see how they impact STR down the road.

- Becca

Becca Newhall
240-687-6235

On Wed, Mar 11, 2026 at 1:00 PM JB Weir <jb.weir@waitsfieldvt.gov> wrote:

Thanks, Josh. Cc'ing our STR team.

Best,

J.B Weir

Planning & Zoning Administrator
E911 Coordinator
(802) 496-2218 ext. 4
Hours: M-F 9:00 – 4:30

From: Joshua Schwartz <mrvpd@madriver.com>

Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2026 12:19 PM

To: JB Weir <jb.weir@waitsfieldvt.gov>; Jonathan Ursprung <ursprung@gmail.com>

Subject: Short-Term Rental Regulations Overview and Model Ordinance | Vermont League of Cities and Towns

Hi JB & Jonathan. I was just made aware that VLCT put together some great info and a model ordinance for STRs last fall. At first glance, it looks pretty darn good. Want to make sure y'all, and the PC, are aware of it. Note, it does require a VLCT member login to view the page.

<https://www.vlct.org/resource/short-term-rental-regulations-overview-and-model-ordinance>

Sincerely,
Josh



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PLANNING DISTRICT

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mrvpd.org

VTASLA 2026 AWARDS PROGRAM ENTRY FORM

ENTRANT INFORMATION

Entrant must have had primary involvement in the entry and will serve as the main contact and receive and disseminate award related correspondence to project contributors.

Name Adam Portz

Company SE Group

Address 1 Mill Street, Suite 201 Burlington, VT 05401

Phone 802.777.7658 Fax _____ E-Mail aportz@segroup.com

PROJECT INFORMATION

Name Irasville Village Master Plan

Entry Category (please check one):

Landscape Architectural Design Landscape Planning and Analysis Landscape Architectural Communication

Location (if applicable) Irasville, VT

Other Project Participants (as you would like them listed in credits) _____

Brief description of the project (2-3 sentences – may be used in announcements/press releases, etc.)

The Irasville Village Master Plan provides a long-term vision for transforming Irasville into a compact, walkable village center for the Mad River Valley. Through site analysis, community engagement, and conceptual design, the plan organizes future development, public spaces, and circulation to support housing, local businesses, and safe pedestrian connections. The resulting framework guides future investment while reinforcing the area's landscape character and community identity.

CLIENT INFORMATION

Name (as you would like them listed in credits) Town of Waitsfield VT

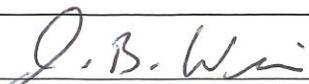
Address 4144 Main Street, Waitsfield, VT 05673

Phone (802) 496-2218 x 4 Fax _____

AGREEMENT

I certify that as an entrant, I had primary involvement in the project entered. I have read the information regarding the Vermont Chapter Awards Program and agree to the terms of the entry. I understand that submission material of winning entries will become the property of VTASLA. I, as entrant, and the project owner have no objection to the submission, judging and publication of this material.

Entrant Signature _____ Date 2/18/2026

Authorized Signature/Owner  Date 2/20/26

Send completed application to: Beau Doucette, bdoucette@segroup.com

Send Check to: VTASLA C/O Michael Buscher, ASLA, 301 College Street, Burlington, VT 05401

Provide additional information on attached sheet if needed.

Community and Housing Infrastructure (CHIP) Guidelines (Updated 11/17)

I. Purpose

II. Program Description

III. Key Definitions

IV. Eligibility Criteria

V. Application and Approval Process

VI. Financing and Debt Requirements

VII. Use of Tax Increment

VIII. Reporting and Compliance

IX. Amendments

X. Contact Information

I. Purpose

The Community and Housing Infrastructure Program (CHIP) is established under 24 V.S.A. Chapter 53, Subchapter 7 to “encourage the development of new primary residences for households of low and moderate income across both rural and urban areas of all Vermont counties that would not be created but for the infrastructure improvements funded by the Program.”

Pursuant to Act 69 (2025), the purpose of this document is to provide guidance on the processes and requirements related to the formation, development, and implementation of CHIP sites within Vermont.

II. Program Description

The Community Housing Infrastructure Program utilizes tax increment financing for infrastructure improvements that support the development of new housing, with the preferential consideration of affordable and moderate-income primary housing. It is a targeted use of the tool, allowing municipalities to retain a portion of the property tax revenue resulting from increased values within a defined Housing Development Site. These funds may be used to repay the debt incurred for, or otherwise pay for, eligible infrastructure improvements. CHIP is designed to complement local and state planning priorities and foster coordinated public-private partnerships. Projects must meet statutory criteria and be approved by the Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) before municipal debt is incurred or a municipality is obligated to reimburse eligible infrastructure costs.

III. Key Definitions

Additional definitions can be found in the enacting legislation.

- **Affordable Housing:** See [24 V.S.A. Chapter 117 § 4303](#).
 - Owner-occupied housing for which the total annual cost of ownership, including principal, interest, taxes, insurance, and condominium association fees, does not exceed 30 percent of the gross annual income of a household at 120 percent of the highest of the following:
 1. the county median income, as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development;
 2. the standard metropolitan statistical area median income if the municipality is located in such an area, as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; or
 3. the statewide median income, as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
 - Rental housing for which the total annual cost of renting, including rent, utilities, and condominium association fees, does not exceed 30 percent of the gross annual income of a household at 80 percent of the highest of the following:
 1. the county median income, as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development;
 2. the standard metropolitan statistical area median income if the municipality is located in such an area, as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; or
 3. the statewide median income, as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- **Housing Development:** The construction, rehabilitation, or renovation of any building on an approved Housing Development Site. In connection with an approved Housing Development that is not an Affordable Housing Development or Moderate-Income Housing Development. A municipality may retain up to 75% of the education tax increment and must retain at least 85% of new municipal tax increment.
- **Affordable Housing Development:** A housing development where at least 15% of the units are designated as affordable housing with a recorded covenant or deed restriction ensuring affordability until the Final Repayment Date. Units must be used as the tenant's

or owner's primary residence during such time. An application serving an affordable housing development does not have to meet the "but-for" test. The municipality may retain up to 85% education tax increment and must retain at least 85% of the new municipal tax increment.

- **Moderate-Income Housing Development:** A housing development in which at least 25% of the units are for households earning 150% or less of area median income (AMI) and also subject to affordability restrictions until the Final Repayment Date. Units must be used as the tenant's or owner's primary residence during such time. A municipality with an application serving a moderate-income housing development may retain up to 85% of the education tax increment and must retain at least 85% of the new municipal tax increment.
- **Final Repayment Date:** In the event of municipal financing of CHIP debt, the date on which the municipal debt is fully repaid, or in the event of non-municipal financing of CHIP debt, the date on which the municipality's obligation to reimburse eligible infrastructure costs ends.
- **Housing Infrastructure Project:** A set of infrastructure improvements that support a specific CHIP housing development. These improvements must be directly tied to enabling the housing development. These improvements may or may not be located on the Housing Development Site.
- **Housing Development Site:** The whole parcel or parcels where the housing development will occur. If the development is to occur over multiple parcels, the parcels must be contiguous (i.e., a parcel may be separated by a road). Only parcels where the housing development is to occur can be included in the Housing Development Site, unless contiguous parcels are under common ownership and share a School Property Account Number (SPAN), in which case they must also be included. Housing Development Sites must be formally designated by the municipality (24 V.S.A. § 1908) and approved by VEPC. Housing Development Site boundaries define the area within which the original taxable value is established, and tax increment is generated. Once established, the boundaries of the Housing Development Site shall not change.
- **Improvements:** The installation, construction, or reconstruction of infrastructure that will serve a public good and fulfill the purpose of the program; and the funding of debt service interest payments, or other financing, for a period of up to four years, beginning on the date on which the debt or other financing is first incurred. Improvements do not need to be within the Housing Development Site, but the applicant must demonstrate that the proposed improvements enable the proposed housing development.

- **Related Costs:** Expenses incurred and paid by a municipality or sponsor that are directly related to the creation, implementation, and administration of the Housing Infrastructure Project, including reimbursement of sums previously advanced for those purposes.
- **Sponsor:** The person or entity undertaking to finance the Housing Infrastructure Project. This may be the municipality, a developer, or an independent agency that meets State lending standards.
- **Developer:** The person or entity responsible for undertaking to construct the housing development. Developers must enter into a binding Housing Infrastructure Agreement with the municipality.
- **Original Taxable Value (OTV):** The assessed value of taxable real property within the Housing Development Site on April 1 of the year the site is approved by VEPC.
- **Tax Increment:** The difference in property tax revenue generated by the increase in assessed value over the OTV. A portion of the increment may be retained by the municipality to service debt on eligible infrastructure costs, pay for eligible related costs, reimburse a non-municipal sponsor or developer for eligible costs of the Housing Infrastructure Project, and/or pay for eligible direct costs associated with the eligible infrastructure project. Municipalities whose infrastructure projects will result in an affordable or moderate-income housing development are eligible to retain up to 85% of the education tax increment. Municipalities whose infrastructure projects will result in any other type of housing development are eligible to retain up to 75% of the education tax increment. All projects must retain at least 85% of the municipal tax increment.
- **Public Good:** The public good will be considered met for improvements that directly support the housing development and are:
 - publicly owned and publicly accessible; or
 - privately owned and publicly accessible; or
 - privately owned and privately accessible improvements may be eligible so long as they can demonstrate a community benefit from the CHIP-supported infrastructure project. The municipality shall articulate with evidence how the community needs or desires the planned improvements and that they are mutually beneficial for the municipality and developer. (i.e., private septic systems for a development in a community that does not have a municipal wastewater system, and/or the cost of connecting the development to an existing system would be cost-prohibitive for the developer and town.

- 60% Floor Area:** 60% of the indoor floor area must qualify as housing. The housing must primarily serve residential uses. Floor area to be considered housing includes all housing units dedicated to primary residences, shared spaces that are accessible to residents or exist solely to serve residential units, including but not limited to hallways, elevators, stairwells, common rooms, or mechanical and utility spaces directly serving residential units. Space that does not count toward the 60% includes, but is not limited to: commercial space, or space operated by the municipality or another entity for uses not directly serving residential units. For further clarification for the purpose of calculating the eligible floor area, refer to the current [International Building Code](#) as adopted by the Vermont Department of Fire Safety.
- Primary Residence:** A homestead is the principal dwelling and parcel of land surrounding the dwelling, owned and occupied by the resident as the person's [domicile](#) as defined by the Vermont Department of Taxes. Or, if the unit is a rental unit, the lease agreement stipulates that the tenant occupies the unit as their primary residence. Both owner-occupied and rental units must remain a primary residence until the Final Repayment Date
- Housing Infrastructure Agreement:** A legally binding agreement among the municipality, sponsor (if other than the municipality), and developer that includes terms related to infrastructure financing, affordability, unit production, timelines, and performance assurances.

Housing Type	State Tax Retained	Municipal Tax Retained	Uni
Affordable: Rental (Total annual cost ≤ 30% of gross income)	Up to 85%	85% to 100%	At l
Affordable: Owner-Occupied (Total annual cost ≤ 30% of gross income)	Up to 85%	85% to 100%	At l
Moderate-Income	Up to 85%	85% to 100%	At l
Market Rate	Up to 75%	85% to 100%	N/A

** All housing must be for primary residents. See Section 1, Purpose; and Section V(3), Housing Infrastructure Agreement.*

IV. Eligibility Criteria

Applicants:

Eligible applicants are Vermont municipalities (cities, towns, or incorporated villages) that seek to create a Housing Infrastructure Project.

Projects:

Eligible projects include infrastructure improvements that serve a public good and directly support the development of an eligible housing development. Eligible Housing Development projects must result in new or rehabilitated housing developments where at least 60% of the floor area of the projected housing development is dedicated to primary housing residences, or the projected housing development meaningfully addresses the purpose of the program. If the projected housing development does not meet the criteria for an affordable housing development, the project must meet the but-for test.

Improvements:

- Eligible infrastructure improvements may include, but are not limited to, the following: Utilities, such as power distribution and transmission lines and conduit, telecommunications lines and conduit, telecommunications towers, digital infrastructure, and power or telecommunications equipment; drinking water, wastewater, and storm water, infrastructure including: water sources; green and gray stormwater practices; distribution/collection and conveyance piping and pump stations; and treatment systems, facilities, and regulatory required pertinent equipment.
- Thermal energy networks, waste heat recovery, and community-scale geothermal.
- Transportation improvements such as publicly accessible roads, streets, bridges, parking lots, facilities, garages, and structures, multimodal facilities, public transit stop equipment and amenities, street and sidewalk lighting, roundabouts, crosswalks and/or other pedestrian crossing treatments, traffic calming features, sidewalks, streetscapes, way-finding signs and kiosks; traffic signals, medians, turn lanes, and property acquired or used for right of way such as hiking and biking trails, pathways to facilitate multimodal transportation, bicycle and pedestrian lanes, paths, and bridges, street furnishings.
- Site preparation for development or redevelopment including acquisition, demolition, environmental remediation of contaminated property, and mitigation of a flood-prone area.
- Soft costs such as consulting, design, architects, engineering, accounting, legal, project management, associated application fees, or other professional services directly related to the implementation and construction of eligible site improvements.

Eligible Related Costs:

Related costs are costs incurred by the municipality, sponsor, and/or developer associated with the creation, implementation, and administration of the CHIP site. Eligible related costs include, but are not limited to the following:

- Cost of plans, studies, or reports that are specific to preparing a CHIP Plan, a Finance Plan, an application to VEPC, or a subsequent amendment required to maintain the CHIP site.
- Costs of providing public notification about, and obtaining public approval for, a CHIP Plan, a Finance Plan, and CHIP debt, CHIP application, or CHIP amendment.
- Costs such as consulting, design, architects, engineering, accounting, legal, project management, or other professional services incurred during preparation or implementation of a CHIP Plan, Finance Plan, application or amendment, and administration of the program, including administrative fees paid by the municipality.
- Application fees charged by VEPC for third-party analysis of CHIP Plans, CHIP Financing Plans, or CHIP amendments.
- The CHIP-related costs of the independent annual municipal audit
- Municipal employee and staff costs directly related to the administration and implementation of the CHIP Site. These costs may only be paid with the municipal tax increment.

Costs that are not eligible related costs, or improvements are:

- Annual municipal operating costs.
- Public transportation operating costs.
- Annual maintenance or repair costs.
- Purchase of vehicles.
- Interior furnishings.
- Operating equipment or apparatus that is not part of the infrastructure improvement itself.
- Other expenditures for non-capital assets with the exception of debt service interest payments, as outlined under eligible improvement costs.

V. Application and Approval Process

1. Pre-Application Coordination

Municipalities must complete a CHIP Interest Form and submit it to VEPC staff for review prior to submitting a full application to VEPC.

2. Housing Development Plan and Housing Development Site

The municipality must create a Housing Development Plan and a Housing Development Site:

- Develop a Housing Development Plan that includes:
 - A description of the proposed Housing Infrastructure Project.
 - The proposed housing development, including the anticipated floor area dedicated to housing.
 - If less than 60%, a narrative about how the projected housing development meaningfully addresses the purpose of the CHIP program.
 - The proposed housing development site.
 - Identification of a sponsor.
 - A tax increment financing plan, including;
 - a statement of costs and sources of revenue;
 - estimates of assessed values within the housing development site;
- - - the portion of those assessed values to be applied to the Housing Infrastructure Project;
 - the resulting tax increments in each year of the financial plan and the lifetime education property tax increment retention;
 - the amount of bonded indebtedness or other financing to be incurred;
 - estimates of necessary principal, interest, costs of improvements, and related costs and in the event of municipal financing the amount anticipated to be approved by voters;
 - other sources of financing and anticipated revenues; and
 - the duration of the financial plan.

- A pro forma projection of expected costs of the proposed Housing Infrastructure Project.
- A projection of the tax increment to be generated by the proposed housing development.
- A development schedule that includes a list, cost estimate, and a schedule for the proposed Housing Infrastructure Project and proposed housing development.
- A determination by the legislative body of the municipality that the proposed housing development furthers the purpose of the program.
- Develop a Housing Development Site by identifying its boundaries and the properties within it, titled “Proposed Housing Development Site [municipal name], Vermont”
- The municipal legislative body must hold one or more public hearings, after public notice, on the proposed Housing Infrastructure Project, including the plans developed above.
 - Public Hearing: Unless a municipal charter requires greater notice, the municipal legislative body shall hold a public informational hearing on the question by posting notice at least 15 days in advance of the hearing in at least two public places within the municipality and in the town clerk's office and on the town’s website. If the municipality does not have two public places to post their warning, they may post their warnings in adjacent communities.
- Adopt the plan by action of the municipal legislative body and record it with the municipal clerk and lister or assessor.

3. Housing Infrastructure Agreement

Create a Housing Infrastructure Agreement between the municipality, the developer, and, if applicable, a third-party sponsor. The agreement must:

- Identify the sponsor for the project.
- Identify the developer and housing development.
- Obligate the tax increments retained for financing and related costs for the infrastructure project.
- Provide that any housing unit within the housing development be offered exclusively as a primary residence until the Final Repayment Date. This condition shall be satisfied by providing a landlord certificate or homestead declaration every two years.

- Provide for performance assurances to reasonably secure the obligations of all parties under the housing infrastructure agreement.
- Include the expected outcomes, including the percentage of floor area dedicated to housing, the number of housing units, the number of affordable housing units, and the expected overall housing development value.
- Detailed description of the infrastructure improvement(s), the types of costs and amount of cost of the improvement that may be financed with CHIP debt, and that the developer must provide documentary evidence to substantiate that the costs are eligible to be financed with CHIP debt and the infrastructure improvement was constructed as agreed upon.
- A provision that expressly defines the obligations of the municipality and sponsor and/or developer in the event that the tax increment generated by the housing development project falls short of the financing of the CHIP debt.
- A municipality shall provide notice of the terms of the housing infrastructure agreement for the municipality's Housing Infrastructure Project to the legal voters of the municipality and shall provide the same information as set forth in statute as follows:
 - 24 V.S.A § 1910a(e): A municipal legislative body shall provide information to the public prior to the public vote required under subsection (b) of this section. This information shall include the amount and types of debt and related costs to be incurred, including principal, interest, and fees; terms of the debt; the housing infrastructure project to be financed; the housing development projected to occur because of the housing infrastructure project; and notice to the voters that if the tax increment received by the municipality from any property tax source is insufficient to pay the principal and interest on the debt in any year, the municipality shall remain liable for the full payment of the principal and interest for the term of the indebtedness. If interfund loans within the municipality are used, the information must also include documentation of the terms and conditions of the loan.
 - In the case of non-municipal debt being used to financing for the eligible improvements, the municipality still must provide notice of the terms of the housing infrastructure agreement, including the types of financing and related costs to be incurred, including principal, interest, and fees; terms of the debt; the Housing Infrastructure Project to be financed; and the housing development projected to occur because of the Housing Infrastructure Project.

4. VEPC Review & Approval

The municipality will submit its municipally approved Housing Development Plan, Housing Development Site, and Housing Infrastructure Agreement to VEPC for review. VEPC will determine whether the municipality has:

- Properly created a Housing Infrastructure Project and Housing Development Site.
- Executed an acceptable housing infrastructure agreement for the Housing Infrastructure Project with a developer and, if the municipality is not financing the Housing Infrastructure Project itself, a sponsor.
- Approved or pledged to use at least 85% of incremental municipal tax revenues for the Housing Infrastructure Project.

Additional VEPC Application Determinations:

- **Affordability:** VEPC will determine whether the proposed housing development meets the criteria of “affordable housing development” or “moderate-income housing development” and set the maximum education tax increment at 85% if either criterion is met or up to 75% if neither criterion is met. VEPC has the discretion to set the increment retention lower than these maximums, depending on the application circumstances. VEPC will utilize the Vermont Housing Finance Agency’s most recent [home purchase price and rental affordability thresholds chart](#) based on United States Department of Housing and Urban Development median income estimates to determine if the affordability threshold is met for affordable and moderate-income housing developments.
- **But-For Test:** VEPC will review each application other than those for which the housing development is an affordable housing development to determine whether the infrastructure improvements proposed to serve the Housing Development Site and the proposed housing development would not have occurred as proposed in the application or would have occurred in a significantly different and less desirable manner than as proposed in the application but for the proposed utilization of the incremental tax revenues.
 - A non-exhaustive list of factors VEPC may consider around the question of what is a “significantly different and less desirable manner” may include, but is not limited to: a housing development occurring significantly later than it could occur with CHIP financing, a housing development that would include fewer units without CHIP financing, a housing development that is significantly less affordable than could occur with CHIP financing.

- Floor Area: VEPC will determine whether the housing development will have at least 60 percent of the floor area dedicated to housing, or if it meaningfully addresses the purpose of the program.
- Economist Review: VEPC will determine the financial viability of the housing development plan based on an assessment prepared by a consultant with the requisite technical expertise. At a minimum, the following will be incorporated into the consultant's assessment:
 - Tax increment financing plan;
 - pro forma projection of expected costs of the Housing Infrastructure Project;
 - projection of the tax increment to be generated by the housing development; and
 - the development schedule for the Housing Infrastructure Project and housing development.
- Site Visits: Upon a determination by VEPC staff that a municipality has submitted a complete application, VEPC staff will schedule a site visit of the proposed Housing Development Site.
- VEPC Approval: The application shall be submitted to VEPC and approved or denied in writing by VEPC within 90 days of the site visit. The reason for denial will be provided to the municipality, and if resolvable, the municipality may file a new application for VEPC's consideration.
- Post-VEPC Approval: Municipality instructs lister/assessor to certify OTV.

VI. Financing and Debt Requirements

In the event of municipal financing, the first issuance of debt must be incurred within five years of CHIP site creation (April 1 in the year the application was approved by VEPC). VEPC may issue an extension up to three years (for a total of eight years). In the event of non-municipal financing, notice to proceed under a construction contract for eligible infrastructure must be given within five years of site creation, subject to extension by VEPC up to three years (for a total of eight years). Upon the first incurrence of debt or notice to proceed under a construction contract, VEPC and the Department of Taxes will be notified by the municipality.

Municipal voters must approve each instance of municipal borrowing in a warned vote. This information shall include:

- the amount and types of debt and related costs to be incurred, including principal, interest, and fees;
- terms of the debt;
- the Housing Infrastructure Project to be financed;
- the housing development projected to occur because of the Housing Infrastructure Project; and
- notice to the voters that if the tax increment received by the municipality from any property tax source is insufficient to pay the principal and interest on the debt in any year, the municipality shall remain liable for the full payment of the principal and interest for the term of the indebtedness.
- If interfund loans within the municipality are used, the information must also include documentation of the terms and conditions of the loan.

Allowed instruments include bonds, loans, interfund loans (interest-free), and bond anticipation notes. Bond anticipation notes or other forms of temporary financing may not be used as a first incurrence of debt.

The CHIP Housing Development Site shall continue until the Final Repayment Date. Or, if no debt is incurred in the event of municipal financing or no construction contract is let in the event of non-municipal financing, the debt incursion period ends.

VII. Use of Tax Increment

Municipal and education increments may only be used to pay for:

- CHIP debt service;
- related costs;
- direct payment of the cost of a Housing Infrastructure Project, as long as the payment was included in the CHIP financing plan and subject to the same vote provisions as public debt; and
- a municipality may provide tax increment to a sponsor upon receipt of an invoice for payment of the debt financing. The sponsor shall confirm to the municipality once the tax increment has been applied to the debt financing.

Increment Retention period: A municipality may retain tax increment for 20 years beginning the first fiscal year in which debt is incurred in the event of municipal financing, and beginning the first fiscal year in which the construction contract is let in the event of non-municipal financing.

- Example: If a town votes in March 2027 (FY27) and incurs that debt in July 2027 (FY28), retention begins in FY28 (using GL27) and is retained through FY47 (GL46),

Increment amount:

- Municipalities within which infrastructure projects will result in an affordable or moderate-income housing development are eligible to retain up to 85% of the education tax increment;
- Municipalities within which infrastructure projects will result in any other type of housing development are eligible to retain up to 75% of the education tax increment;
- All projects must retain at least 85% of the municipal tax increment, and VEPC may approve retention of up to 100% on the municipal tax increment;

Adjustment of percentage: During the 10th year following creation of the site, the municipality will submit an updated financing plan to VEPC. VEPC will determine, based on the debt actually incurred and the increment actually generated, whether the percentage being retained is appropriate or if it can be lowered while still allowing the municipality to service remaining debt.

Excess increment:

- Excess increment in any tax year may be
 1. used to prepay debt;
 2. placed in the municipality's CHIP fund and used for future financing payments; or
 3. used for defeasance of the financing.
- Excess increment remaining upon the Final Repayment Date must be returned to taxing authorities in the appropriate proportions.

VIII. Reporting and Compliance

A municipality must:

- Develop a system to identify, collect, and maintain all data and information to fulfill annual reporting requirements.
- Implement procedures to: verify the sponsor used financing for eligible infrastructure project costs, ensure the infrastructure improvement was constructed as agreed upon by the sponsor, and to validate total cost of the infrastructure project.

- A municipality shall collect documentary evidence from the developer and/or sponsor as part of their procedure above.
- Notify VEPC and the Department of Taxes of any CHIP debt, public votes, or votes by the municipal legislative body immediately. They will need to provide copies of public notices, agendas, minutes, the vote tally, and a copy of the information provided to the public.
 - A municipality must hold a public vote if the CHIP infrastructure project(s) will be financed through a municipal bond. If the CHIP infrastructure project(s) are financed by the sponsor in another fashion, only approval from the municipal legislative body at a properly warned hearing is required. The municipality must provide copies of the warning, minutes, and vote of municipal legislative body.
- Conduct annual financial audits and provide results to VEPC.
 - Verify the developer's use of debt proceeds was for eligible costs and for the infrastructure that the developer committed to construct according to the Housing Infrastructure Agreement.
 - Validate the amount of education and municipal tax retained.
- Submit annual reports on or before February 15 to VEPC and the Department of Taxes on a form prescribed by VEPC. These will include, but are not limited to:
 - annual and total municipal and education property tax increments generated;
 - expenditures for financing and related costs;
 - current balance;
 - expenditures for infrastructure improvements;
 - scope and value of projected and actual improvements and developments in the Housing Development Site, including the number of housing units created;
 - sale prices for initial offerings of any housing units;
 - rental prices for initial offerings of any rental housing units;
 - number and types of housing units for which a permit is being pursued under 10 V.S.A. chapter 151 (State land use and development plans) and, for each applicable housing development, the current stage of the permitting process;
 - projected and actual incremental revenue amounts;

- allocation of incremental revenue, including the amount allocated to related costs;
 - projected and actual financing;
 - amount of public funds flowing to private ownership or usage; and
 - biennial verification of affordability covenants and primary residence occupancy.
- VEPC may request supplemental reports or perform audits at any time.

IX. Amendments

Once approved, the CHIP Housing Development Plan, CHIP Finance Plan, and Housing Infrastructure Agreement serve as the foundational documents for each CHIP Site's implementation, providing the intentions of the municipality, sponsor, and developer regarding CHIP debt and financing, improvements, and development/redevelopment. These plans were presented at a public hearing, voted on by the municipal legislative body, and approved by VEPC.

Any significant changes require VEPC's review and approval before proceeding. To apply for a Substantial Change Request (or amendment), the municipality must submit a narrative explaining the desired change and rationale, as well as a revised CHIP Housing Development Plan, CHIP Finance Plan, and Housing Infrastructure Agreement. These revised documents must be approved by the municipal legislative body at a properly warned hearing.

A non-exhaustive list of changes that would require VEPC review include, but are not limited to:

- An increase in the CHIP-funded portion of a project of 20% or more.
- Adding, removing, or substituting a public infrastructure project in the CHIP Housing Development Plan or Finance Plan.
- An increase in the VEPC-approved CHIP debt ceiling.
- An extension of the 5-Year requirement to incur first CHIP debt.
- A change in the number or distribution of affordable or moderate-income units that would reduce the units below the threshold allowing for the increased increment retention percentage (85% versus 75%).
- A change in the percentage of floor area dedicated to housing that would reduce the percentage below the 60% threshold.

- If the town and developer make material modifications to their development agreement that impacts the infrastructure improvements and/or anticipated increment generated by the private development.
- If the developer is not able to meet the requirements set out in the Development Agreement and/or the anticipated timeline for the infrastructure or private development is significantly delayed (two or more years).
- Changes in the sources of funding for the CHIP-funded portion of a project.
- Any bond structured to generate bond premium proceeds which will be used to pay for improvements or for debt service (principal and interest), not previously submitted as part of an approved CHIP Finance Plan.
- Any Payments In Lieu of Taxes (PILOTS) or other negotiated payments not previously submitted as part of an approved CHIP Finance Plan.

Any of the above changes and others that the VEPC determines to be a substantial change made without VEPC approval need to be reviewed through the issue-resolution process outlined in 24 V.S.A. § 1910f (b).

Any changes to a VEPC-approved CHIP project not meeting the substantial change thresholds shall be reported to the VEPC staff immediately. VEPC staff will review the proposed change and may determine that a substantial change request is required.

X. Contact Information

Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC)

Email: accd.chip@vermont.gov

Email: accd.vepc@vermont.gov

October 30, 2025

Jonathan Ursprung, Chair
Waitsfield Planning Commission
4144 Main Street
Waitsfield, VT 05673

Re: Proposal to Broaden Adaptive Re-Use of Farmsteads Provision

Dear Planning Commission Members,

We write to respectfully suggest the revised Town Plan support a slightly broader scope of uses for adaptive re-uses of farmsteads, and that this be accompanied by a modest amendment to the Waitsfield Zoning Bylaws in Section 4.03 related to the appropriate re-use of these farmstead structures. The current provision has been instrumental in preserving the architectural and cultural heritage of Waitsfield's agricultural landscape while adapting to other appropriate uses for property along Route 100 as our town's needs shift. We believe a slight broadening of the allowed uses could further support the town's goals of rural vitality, diversity, and economic sustainability.

Suggested Town Plan Language:

To support this zoning change, we are hoping the committee might consider the following addition to the Waitsfield Town Plan under the Land Use section:

“Encourage the adaptive reuse of historic farmsteads and barns for purposes that support community well-being and low-impact economic activity, including retreats and accessory housing, provided such uses preserve the architectural character and rural context of the original structure.”

This language aligns with the Town Plan's emphasis on preserving rural character while promoting innovative land use strategies.

Proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendment:

We are also inviting the committee to consider expanding the list of uses under Adaptive Re-Use of Farmsteads to include:

- **Retreats** (e.g., wellness, educational, or artist retreats with accommodations) – This is already an allowed adaptive re-use of Historic Barns
- **Accessory Housing** (e.g., small-scale residential units for seasonal or year-round occupancy) – This is already an allowed adaptive re-use of commercial lodging

In addition, we suggest that for these uses, the special requirements acreage minimum of 8 acres should be reduced to 3 acres. This way, acreage not needed for this use can be separated and continued for other agriculture-residential uses.

Finally, as with the “office” allowed use, we ask you to consider removing the \$5,000 gross income from agricultural products as a specific requirement for retreats and accessory housing.

These very modest changes would maintain the integrity of these structures and the special scenic landscape of the Mad River Byway while allowing for a small set of additional uses like those already allowed for the adaptive reuse of other structures along Route 100, which are compatible with the rural character and responsive to community needs.

We appreciate the Planning Commission’s thoughtful stewardship of Waitsfield’s land use policies and hope this proposal can be considered in upcoming discussions. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further or provide additional supporting materials.

Warm regards,

DocuSigned by:

35AC58A55DAB4E8...
Ryan Diehl

Signed by:

CE2350CD2C95454
Madhurii Barefoot

RE: Proposal to Broaden Adaptive Re-Use of Farmsteads Provision

From JB Weir <jb.weir@waitsfieldvt.gov>

Date Tue 2/24/2026 11:06 AM

To Evan Foxx <evan.a.foxx@gmail.com>; ursprung@gmail.com <ursprung@gmail.com>

Cc ryan@downstreatmententerprises.com <ryan@downstreatmententerprises.com>

Received. Thanks, Evan.

Best,

J.B Weir

Planning & Zoning Administrator

E911 Coordinator

(802) 496-2218 ext. 4

Hours: M-F 9:00 – 4:30

From: Evan Foxx <evan.a.foxx@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, February 23, 2026 4:44 PM

To: ursprung@gmail.com

Cc: JB Weir <jb.weir@waitsfieldvt.gov>; ryan@downstreatmententerprises.com

Subject: Proposal to Broaden Adaptive Re-Use of Farmsteads Provision

Dear Chair,

I am a local Waitsfield resident and friend of Ryan Diehl. I write to offer my support for his proposal to broaden adaptive re-uses of farmsteads and to amend Waitsfield Zoning Bylaw Section 4.03. I believe this amendment is needed to allow our local businesses to prosper while also maintaining the important goal of preserving the historic and architectural character of Town structures.

I myself am a small business owner and partner with the law firm, Cooley, Cooley & Foxx, Inc., located in Burlington. As an attorney, I have assisted other small businesses navigate local zoning rules and regulations. I appreciate the need for these zoning rules and regulations and the importance of preserving historic structures. At the same time, these regulations can prove challenging for small business owners, particularly in the current economy where financial margins are very thin. I believe Ryan's proposal strikes the right balance and for that reason, I offer my support.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Evan Foxx

On behalf of Ryan

From Adam Longworth <aglongworth@gmail.com>

Date Sun 2/22/2026 8:17 PM

To JB Weir <jb.weir@waitsfieldvt.gov>

Hi JB. I know I spoke with you on friday, but still wanted to send this along. I do believe that zoning is a great thing to have, and I also understand changing zoning to facilitate a real estate transaction is a very slippery slope. Then everyone will want a zoning change.

But as a business owner, and someone who loves the MRV, I think change is also good. It seems like our B&B's are getting less popular, and Air B&B is crushing them.

True north has been around for a long time, and they seem to have a good reputation. Its not just some random person looking to do something different.

Anyway I hope this makes sense. I support you guys possibly making a change for a business that has established themselves here.

I understand it is still a slippery slope.

I also know it's a state issue, but the building that Joe Grant owns that has the physical therapy could make great employee housing. It seems unfortunate we cant somehow get around a small wastewater issue.

Just another thought.

Anyway good to see you on friday, and lets connect about getting you into the building basement you need

Cheers

Adam

upcoming proposed zoning bylaw discussion before the commission

From Luke Iannuzzi <iannuzzi.luke@gmail.com>

Date Fri 2/20/2026 9:42 AM

To ursprung@gmail.com <ursprung@gmail.com>; York Haverkamp <York.haverkamp@waitsfieldvt.gov>; JB Weir <jb.weir@waitsfieldvt.gov>

Dear Planning Commission Members:

We are writing not only as landowners and business owners in or near Waitsfield but also the former owners of The Wilder Farm Inn, to support the request to revise the Town Plan and the Town Zoning Bylaws to be more flexible in the conditional uses of Adaptive Reuse of Farmsteads in the Agricultural-Residential Zone. From a resident and business owners perspective, we cannot see how these zoning adjustments can markedly change the "rural character" of the scenic byway of Rt 100. Having moved here in 2004, we recall the zoning battle over Small Dog having a retail shop. We read and listened to discussions about how that was going to cause a traffic situation so heinous you would have thought there would be multi-car pile ups every day and traffic snarls slowing everyone's progress through the RT 100 corridor. Looking back on just that one situation and the amount of handringing and cries about "rural character" changing and retail shops popping up all along Rt 100 seems quite laughable in the light of 2026. How many more cars pull into that driveway now that it is a daycare? And also crazy, the increased traffic hasn't caused traffic or accidents!

There needs to be flexibility in certain aspects of zoning that help those who own these historic buildings so they can make a living while preserving the structures. After reading through the proposed changes what struck us most is, how do you justify **not** granting these changes? What deleterious effects do you see happening if you do make these changes? Will all we love and cherish here in the MRV start sliding down the slippery slope of successful businesses, higher property values and housing development? Obviously I am saying this with tongue firmly planted in cheek but generally there is a feeling that the zoning board isn't the biggest ally of our small businesses. What we need are smart guardrails in our collective zoning not dated and arbitrary parameters that stall business growth on farmsteads that have long ago ceased to be agricultural in their use.

The ask here seems rather small and opens up another way for those owning farmstead properties to have a chance at being well positioned with multiple options to ensure the future of these historic buildings. And isn't that what it's really about? Preserve the farmsteads' appearance but let the owners have a chance at being successful.

We support:

- Amending the Town Plan's Land Use section to encourage the adaptive reuse of farmsteads for purposes that support community well-being and low-impact
- Removing the 8 acre special requirement. This will better align adaptive reuse of Farmsteads and of Historic Barns.
- Expanding allowed uses within Adaptive Reuse of Farmsteads in the By-Laws to include other uses such as retreats and accessory housing and uses like th

Because these future uses would continue to be conditional uses subject to DRB approval, proposals would continue to be carefully considered and the landscape protected.

For your consideration.

Luke Iannuzzi

[Luke Iannuzzi Pottery](#)

Linda Iannuzzi

5711 E. Warren Rd

Warren VT, 05674

802.839.9650

[@lukeiannuzzipottery](#)

Dear Planning Commission Members:

I am writing as a land owner and business owner in or near Waitsfield to support the request to revise the Town Plan and the Town Zoning Bylaws to be more flexible in the conditional uses of Adaptive Reuse of Farmsteads in the Agricultural-Residential Zone.

Currently, adaptive re-use of farmsteads are not really re-uses – they are all directly tied to ongoing agricultural use – accessory agriculture use, farm café, on-farm composting, or value-added production. The 8-acre requirement and the minimum requirement for gross sales of agricultural products are significant constraints of adaptive re-use of these parcels. The potential uses and special requirements are much narrower and less flexible than those allowed adaptive reuse of historic barns. This lack of flexibility inhibits creativity in re-using farmstead structures that are no longer used for agriculture; it holds back the local economy and limits growth of the tax base.

Just as the Town Plan and zoning by-laws recognize that we can preserve the character of this Zoning District by maintaining historic barns, even as the use inside changes, we believe the scenic by-way can be preserved and the landscape protected, while being more flexible about the uses inside the other structures that make up farmsteads – the dwellings, farms structures, and accessory structures.

We support:

- Amending the Town Plan's Land Use section to encourage the adaptive reuse of farmsteads for purposes that support community well-being and low-impact economic activity, including uses as retreats, camps, and accessory housing, provided such uses preserve the architectural character and rural context of the original structure.
- Removing the 8 acre special requirement. This will better align adaptive reuse of Farmsteads and of Historic Barns.
- Expanding allowed uses within Adaptive Reuse of Farmsteads in the By-Laws to include other uses such as retreats and accessory housing and uses like those already allowed in Historic Barns.

Because these future uses would continue to be conditional uses subject to DRB approval, proposals would continue to be carefully considered and the landscape protected.

Regards.

Pamela Day
Blockhouse Studio
5031 Main St, Waitsfield

Blockhousevt@gmail.com
802.355.8041



MAD RIVER VALLEY

VERMONT

Mad River Valley Chamber of Commerce

P.O. Box 173 | 40 Bridge Street | Waitsfield, VT 05673
(802) 496-3460 | eric@madrivervalley.com

February 9, 2026

Dear Chair Ursprung and Members of the Planning Commission,

On behalf of the Mad River Valley Chamber of Commerce, we write in support of the Planning Commission's continued, thoughtful consideration of zoning policies related to the adaptive re-use of farmsteads. We appreciate that zoning is a deliberate, carefully constructed process and not something that should be changed on a whim. At the same time, we recognize the importance of ensuring that our land use regulations remain responsive to the realities facing our community today.

Local businesses are operating in an increasingly complex and uncertain landscape. Rising costs, workforce challenges, and evolving visitor and resident needs require flexibility and creativity. From the Chamber's perspective, modest, well-considered adjustments to zoning can help support enterprises that are aligned with Waitsfield's rural character while strengthening the local economy.

As a community, the Mad River Valley has long valued stewardship, innovation, and a strong sense of place. Embracing novel business models — particularly those that make use of existing structures and preserve our agricultural and scenic heritage — allows us to do more with what we already have. Adaptive re-use can support low-impact economic activity, provide new opportunities for local entrepreneurs, and help create housing and employment options that enable workers to afford living here.

We believe that carefully broadening allowable uses for farmstead re-use, while maintaining appropriate safeguards, is consistent with the goals of the Town Plan and the values of the community. Such an approach balances preservation with practicality,

supports economic resilience, and reinforces the Mad River Valley as a place where people can both work and live.

We commend the Planning Commission for its stewardship of Waitsfield's land use policies and for engaging in this nuanced conversation. The Chamber appreciates the opportunity to share the perspective of the local business community and would welcome continued dialogue or the chance to provide additional input as discussions move forward.

Thank you for your time, care, and commitment to the long-term vitality of Waitsfield.

Sincerely,

Eric Friedman
Executive Director

Dear Planning Commission Members:

We are writing as land owners and business owners in or near Waitsfield to support the request to revise the Town Plan and the Town Zoning Bylaws to be more flexible in the conditional uses of Adaptive Reuse of Farmsteads in the Agricultural-Residential Zone.

Currently, adaptive re-use of farmsteads are not really re-uses – they are all directly tied to ongoing agricultural use – accessory agriculture use, farm café, on-farm composting, or value-added production. The 8-acre requirement and the minimum requirement for gross sales of agricultural products are significant constraints of adaptive re-use of these parcels. The potential uses and special requirements are much narrower and less flexible than those allowed adaptive reuse of historic barns. This lack of flexibility inhibits creativity in re-using farmstead structures that are no longer used for agriculture; it holds back the local economy and limits growth of the tax base.

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- Expanding allowed uses within Adaptive Reuse of Farmsteads in the By-Laws to include other uses such as retreats and accessory housing and uses like those already allowed in Historic Barns.

Because these future uses would continue to be conditional uses subject to DRB approval, proposals would continue to be carefully considered and the landscape protected.

Regards.

Eric Valentine  _____

Date 2/11/26

Grace Potter  _____

Date 2/11/26