



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

RRPC BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2024, 7:00 PM

MEETING DETAILS

Virtual: [Teams Meeting](#), ID: 224 634 587 902, Pass: dBEdSy | Call: 1-802-440-1368, ID: 641 278 173#
In-Person: 16 Evelyn Street, Second Floor, Rutland, VT 05701

MEETING ATTENDANCE

(x = in person) (v = virtual)

TOWN	NAME	
Benson	Cheryl Murray	V
Brandon	Jack Schneider	X
Castleton	Liz Mackay (alt)	X
Chittenden		
Clarendon	Brownson Spencer	
Danby	Andrea Stoddard (alt)	X
Fair Haven	Jason Coupal	V
Hubbardton	Robert Gibbs	V
Ira	Bob Kirbach	V
Killington	Will Austin	
Mendon	Larry Courcelle	X
Middletown Springs	Steven Harrington	
Mount Holly	Jessica Metcalfe	V
Mount Tabor		
Pawlet	John Sabotka	V
Pittsford	Donna Wilson	
Poultney	Sarah Pelkey	X
Proctor	Richard Horner	

TOWN	NAME	
Rutland City	Michael Doenges	X
Rutland Town	David Rosenblum	X
Shrewsbury	Laura Black	X
Sudbury	Barbara Somson	
Tinmouth	Judy Gilmore	V
Wallingford	Erika Berner	X
Wells	Heather Thomas (alt)	V
West Haven	Rod Ethier	
West Rutland	Leona Minard	
ACI-Natural Resources	Hilary Solomon	
Ex-Officio- CEDRR	Lyle Jepson	
Ex-Officio- CEDRR	Cooper Babbit	
Ex-Officio- TAC		
Ex-Officio- RRWIB		

Guests: NA

Staff: Devon Neary, Karen Hill, Karimah Edwards (v)

MEETING MINUTES



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

1. CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

Meeting called to order by Chair Berner at 7:04 pm. Introductions were made.

2. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 19th AGENDA

Motion to approve the November 19th agenda by Courcelle. Second by Doenges.
Approved by voice vote.

3. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 22nd MINUTES

Motion to approve the October 22nd minutes by Rosenblum. Second by Black.
Approved by voice vote.

4. OPEN TO PUBLIC

None present.

5. SEPTEMBER 2024 FINANCIAL REPORT

Executive Director, Neary reviewed the September 2024 Financials. Report for informational purposes only.

6. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The RRPC has hired a new Senior Planner, Karimah Edwards, and she started on November 18th. Karimah will be taking over the DOL WORC6 grant as well as helping with town planning, public engagement, and the regional plan.

The RRPC submitted all audit materials and completed the virtual audit. The RRPC will expect audit results in time for the board meeting/holiday party on December 9th at 6:00pm.

Several new grant opportunities have been recently announced:

- a. Better Roads Grant Program – category B, C, and D applications due 12/27/24. Contact Ethan Pepin for assistance.
- b. Transportation Alternatives Program – planning and construction applications due 12/31/24. Contact Ethan Pepin for assistance.
- c. Municipal Highway & Stormwater Mitigation Program – transportation stormwater project applications due 12/31/24. Contact Ethan Pepin for assistance.
- d. Recreational Trails Program – pre-application due 12/6/24.
- e. Land and Water Conservation Fund – pre-application due 12/13/24.
- f. FEMA Swift Current Program – elevation and floodproofing project applications due mid-January 2025.
- g. Municipal Planning Grants – expecting announcement SOON!



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MERP awards have been announced. Congratulations to the towns of Benson, Brandon, Chittenden, Fair Haven, Middletown Springs, Mt. Tabor, Pawlet, Poultney (Town and Village), and West Haven. Jeremy will be working with your towns to ensure grant agreements are returned by 12/16/24.

Future Land Use Map Update - Starting in January 2025, the RRPC will begin updating its Regional Future Land Use Map as part of the 2026 Rutland Regional Plan and in alignment with Act 181. This process will involve collaborating with towns throughout the region to apply new standards and identify key areas for growth, ensuring the map supports future business and housing development. This map will also be needed to determine how to achieve the regional housing target as part of the HOME Act.

Executive Director, Neary thanked all the towns that completed the recent VAPDA survey. He reported that the excellent response reflected well on the district.

7. REGIONAL PLAN REPORT

Neary provided the regional plan report. The staff kicked off the second full draft of the plan early, on Monday, November 18th to provide more time around the holidays and to accommodate changes to the development process schedule. There are just two weeks left of the Phase 2 engagement and Neary encouraged Commissioners to continue to help spread the word about the public survey, which stands at 255 responses. The staff have completed their in-person engagement events.

8. REGIONAL PLAN PURPOSE, ELEMENTS, REQUIREMENTS, AND UPDATED TIMELINE

Neary provided a presentation on regional plan requirements in response to the October board policy review meeting. The presentation was made in response to last month's policy review meeting, where the Commissioners provided much feedback, but demonstrated a need for a refresher on the required elements. Neary started with the purpose of the regional plan, discussed the duties of the regional planning commission, the state planning goals, and the required elements of a regional plan. Neary stated that the presentation included rules that were in place when the plan was kicked-off but there have been some critical changes to the statute with the passing of Act 181, which added elements on equity, climate change, and future land use. Neary will be providing an follow-up presentation in January to discuss those changes. Lastly, Neary provided an updated timeline for drafting and review that was necessary to accommodate the new review period by the Land Use Review Board (LURB). The updated timeline will mean the Commissioners will have more opportunities to review the drafts in April, June, September, December, and February with an adoption date of April 21, 2026.

9. EXECUTIVE/FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT



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Executive Director, Neary provided the Executive Finance Committee report of November 12th. No action taken and for informational purposes only.

10. REGIONAL COMMITTEE REPORT

The committee reviewed two S.248 projects, one ACT 250 project, recent ACT 250 exemptions for housing, and the draft determination of significant regional impacts for the 2026 Regional Plan.

There was a recommendation to the full board signing the preferred site letter for Solarfest Solar. The request for an updated letter by Solarfest Solar based on updated requirements from the PUC. The RRPC had already voted to approve the project with no significant regional impact and conformance with the regional plan. This letter requests being designated a preferred site as well. The committee also reviewed, 24-3294-AN, 45-Day advance submission of Coughlin, Inc. for a 500kW solar array near Prior Lane in Rutland Town. There was a recommendation to send a letter to the developer that the project may not be in conformance with the Regional and Community Standards for Energy Facility Siting and Development Standard #13 for All Transmission and Generation Facilities of the 2018 Regional Plan. Motion by Courcelle to issue a letter for both projects as described above. Second by Doenges. Approved by voice vote.

The committee also reviewed 1R1030 - Pittsford Village Farm (PVF) interior renovations, addition, and site improvements located at 42 Elm Street in Pittsford, VT. The application was incomplete, and the committee had very few comments. No action taken, for informational purposes only. The committee may re-review once a complete application has been submitted. The committee also reviewed and discussed three recent jurisdictional opinions for housing in Rutland City and Brandon that did not fall under ACT 250 due to interim exemptions.

The committee also reviewed the draft determination of significant regional impact for the 2026 Regional Plan update. For the first provision, suggested better defining the area and looking at existing language around “orderly development”. There was interest in seeing more language around specific impacts such as to transportation networks and significant natural resources. For the second provision, the economic impacts should relate to affordable housing near employment centers. For the fifth provision, there should be more explicit language on what services will be impacted such as healthcare. Lastly, the committee discussed the balance between not too overreaching or specific but specific enough to ensure the Commission has a chance to weigh in.

11. TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT



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In October, Zoe Neaderland from VTRANS spoke to the committee, providing an e update of the State Rail Plan Vermont. The next TAC meeting will be a joint meeting with Addison Country Regional Planning Commission on November 20th.

12. REGIONAL PARTNERS

No report.

13. EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

No report.

14. COMMISSIONER ROUNDTABLE

The City of Rutland reports they have hired Ed Bove to be the new City Planner. The Town of Wallingford reports that their Zoning Regulations have finally been approved.

15. ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn by Doenges. Second by Rosenblum. Adjourned at 8:14 PM.

Respectively submitted by Karen Hill