



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

RRPC BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

May 20, 2025, 7:00 PM

MEETING DETAILS

Virtual: [Teams Meeting](#), ID: 224 634 587 902, Pass: dBEsY I Call: 1-8024401368, ID: 641278173#

In-Person: 16 Evelyn Street, Second Floor, Rutland, VT 05701

MEETING ATTENDANCE

(x = in person) (v = virtual)

TOWN	NAME	
Benson	Cheryl Murray	
Brandon	Jack Schneider	X
Castleton	Frank Johnson (alt)	X
Chittenden	Abigail Bradish	X
Clarendon	Brownson Spencer	
Danby	Andrea Stoddard	X
Fair Haven	Jason Coupal	X
	Bob Richards (alt)	X
Hubbardton	Robert Gibbs	X
Ira	Bob Kirbach	V
Killington	Will Austin	
Mendon	Larry Courcelle	X
Middletown Springs	Steven Harrington	
Mount Holly	Jessica Metcalfe	V
Mount Tabor		
Pawlet	Linda Lynton	V
Pittsford	Ann Reed (alt)	X
Poultney	Sarah Pelkey	X
Proctor	Richard Horner	X

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

Staff: Devon Neary, Karen Hill



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MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

Meeting called to order by Chair Berner at 7:02 PM. Introductions were made.

2. APPROVAL OF MAY 20th AGENDA

Motion to approve the May 20th agenda by Allaire Second by Coupal. Approved by voice vote.

3. APPROVAL OF MARCH 18th MINUTES

Motion to approve the April 15th minutes by Reed. Second by Coupal. Approved by voice vote.

4. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

None present.

5. MARCH 2025 FINANCIAL REPORT

Neary reviewed the March 2025 Financials. RRPC's cash flow projects have us on pace to finish the fiscal year in the black with reserves. Report for informational purposes only.

6. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- a. The RRPC held two municipal training courses for Act 181 on April 16th and 17th with nearly 100 participants from around the Region. For those who missed the training, you can find the presentation and recording on our regional plan webpage, rutlandrpc.org/plan2026
- b. The RRPC held its annual Open Meeting Law Training with the Vermont Secretary of State on Wednesday, May 7th, with nearly 30 participants.
- c. RRPC's energy planner, Jeremy Gildrien, has announced that he will be leaving the RRPC at the end of May. We thank Jeremy for his great work and we wish him well!
- d. The RRPC has hired a new planner and former intern, Sean Beatty. Sean will be doing a mix of planning work, such as town planning and zoning, brownfields, energy, and transportation.
- e. The RRPC is working with UVM's Leahy Institute on the Vermont Evaluation of Rural Technical Assistance (VERTA) on hosting two municipal focus groups in June (one in-person, one hybrid) to discuss technical assistance as it relates to community economic development. The RRPC will be asking up to 15 municipal officials (chosen randomly) from around the region to join the meeting to share their knowledge, experience, and perspective.



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- f. The VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Grants are now available and due July 11, 2025. For more information, please reach out to our transportation planner, Ethan Pepin, and visit: <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/local-projects/bike-ped>.
- g. The RRPC teamed up with CEDRR to help support an exciting new event called Bring Back the Trades Skills Expo at Castleton University on May 20th. The RRPC supported the event through our USDOL Workforce Development for Rural Communities. This was our recruiting event for the first student cohort. Twenty-three hundred (2300) students attended the event with 1,600 pre-registering. Participants came from around the Region and State of Vermont.
- h. The RRPC is bringing on three summer interns this year. Two will be working with Ethan to help update road erosion inventories (13 towns in 2025 and 14 towns in 2026) and one will be assisting with our regional plan engagement and reporting.
- i. Are you getting our monthly RRPC newsletters? They are a great way to learn about program updates, grant opportunities, and training/events. Sign up at rutlandrpc.org.

7. REGIONAL PLAN UPDATE

- a. Drafting Process
 - i. Staff completed work on Task 3 Rev 3 which was submitted on April 18th.
 - ii. Task 4 drafting will kick off in late June/early July.
- b. Review Process
 - i. Task Rev 3 review has been extended through the entire month of May by the steering committee. The Regional Plan Committee will review T3R3 with the full board in full plan layout June 1st.
 - ii. The Board of Commissioners will receive Task 3 Rev 3 in full plan layout prior to the June Board Meeting.
- c. Engagement Strategy
 - i. Staff kicked off Phase 3 Engagement, “Alignment” which will run in May/June and include pop-up tabling throughout the Region. The staff are working on events throughout the month of June to attend to raise awareness of the draft.
 - ii. The Regional Future Land Use Map Engagement with towns is underway. To date staff have met with 25 of the 27 towns. Meetings were productive and we have received great feedback. At the end of Task 3 Engagement we will have had over 200 Regional-Plan-specific, town meetings and/or events to collect data and feedback for the plan.



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Neary encouraged the Board to revisit the [Rutland Regional Plan 2026](#) website to review updates, visuals, chapter summaries and to access the Public Feedback Poll which all were encouraged to complete. Included on the site are also resource materials (recordings and documents) from all trainings and events that have taken place, a link to be added to the mailing list, and will soon host information regarding upcoming programming.

d. Plan Layout/Graphic Design

- i. Graphic Design Consultant continues work on the layout and graphic design. The draft plan will be presented in the full layout in June for public and board review.
- ii. Our contracted cartoonist completed a draft of the “Regional Plan Visualized” for Phase 3 engagement.

8. REGIONAL COMMITTEE REPORT

The committee reviewed three applications, the first 25-0518-PET, a discussion regarding the installation of additional hardware on a cell tower at 342 Ballard Farm Road in Wells, Vermont by Bell Atlantic Mobile Systems, LLC. The addition of equipment on this existing tower did not increase the height of the tower and had limited impact at the base of the tower. The committee members raised no concerns regarding the project. The town did not take the opportunity to comment. The comment period on this project closed on April 22nd, and the application has been approved so no action could be taken by the committee as it is outside the comment period.

25-0675-AN and 25-0754-AN were both 60-day advanced notices.

The first by Vertex Towers, LLC, a petition to erect a cellular tower at 1484 Route 4A West in Castleton, Vermont. The tower is intended to improve cellular coverage at the south-end of Lake Bomoseen and increase coverage in the hamlet of Hydeville. The committee had no concerns regarding the project, felt the tower was well sited, virtually eliminating visual impacts, and the company made a conscious effort to ensure their project conformed to Town and Regional plans. The committee members agreed that the project would have a significant positive regional impact, benefiting two towns (Castleton/Fair Haven) and conforms to the current Regional Plan.

Second, the addition of a 10-foot section to an existing tower located at 581 Stewart Road South in Mount Holly, Vermont, to accommodate the addition of equipment to broaden range. The town reviewed the petition and submitted a letter of support for the project with three caveats. The committee found no significant regional impacts as



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a tower currently exists on this site and the height addition is below height requirements for illuminated safety beacons.

Motion by Pelkey to send a letter stating significant regional impact and conformance with the regional plan for the Castleton project (25-0675-AN) and no significant regional impact and conformance with the regional plan for the Mount Holly project (25-0754-AN). Second by Allaire. Approved by voice vote.

9. EXECUTIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Neary provided the Executive Finance Committee Report which met on May 12 without a quorum and again, today, May 20, 2025, to discuss the Parental Leave Policy and forward a recommendation of adoption to the full board as drafted.

10. PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY

Discussion ensued around whether the policy should be broadened to allow employees to use Parental Leave before the birth of their child in cases of medical need. The committee agreed that more information was needed before policy adoption. Motion by Coupal to table the motion until the June meeting. Seconded by Allaire. Approved by voice vote.

11. EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

No report.

12. COMMISSIONER UPDATE

No report.

13. ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn by Pelkey. Second by Coupal. Adjourned at 7:42 PM.

Respectively submitted by Karen Hill