



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

RRPC BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2026, 7:00 PM

MEETING DETAILS

Virtual: [Teams Meeting](#), ID: 224 634 587 902, Pass: dBEdSy | 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	V
Brandon	Jack Schneider	V
Castleton	Liz Mackay	
Chittenden	Abigail Bradish	
Clarendon	Brownson Spencer	
Danby	Andrea Stoddard	V
Fair Haven	Jason Coupal	
Hubbardton	Robert Gibbs	X
Ira	Bob Kirbach	X
Killington	Will Austin	
Mendon	Larry Courcelle	V
Middletown Springs	Steven Harrington	
Mount Holly	Jessica Metcalfe	V
Mount Tabor		
Pawlet	Linda Lynton	
Pittsford	Donna Wilson	X
	Ann Reed (alt)	X
Poultney	Sarah Pelkey	V
Proctor	Richard Horner	

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

Staff: Devon Neary, Karen Hill

Guests: Klore Park/Sudbury (X), Gail Fallar/Tinmouth (V)



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MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

Meeting was called to order by Chair Black at 7:03 pm. Introductions were made.

2. PUBLIC HEARING

Chair Black opened the public hearing for the Sudbury Town Plan and the Tinmouth Town Plan and with Confirmation of Planning Processes at 7:04 PM. No public comments. The public hearing closed at 7:06 PM.

3. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 17th AGENDA

Motion to approve the February 17th agenda Gibbs. Second by Wilson. Approved by voice vote.

4. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 20th MINUTES

Motion to approve January 20th minutes by Gibbs. Second by Kirbach. Approved by voice vote.

5. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

No comments from guests.

6. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Staffing Update and Continuity of Operations

The Rutland Regional Planning Commission continues to interview candidates for three open planner positions: Land Use Planner, Natural Resources Planner, and Workforce and Economic Development Planner. At this time, no hires have been finalized. We respectfully ask that municipalities bear with us as we navigate this challenging transition period. Existing staff are working hard to ensure continuity of ongoing operations and essential services; however, towns should expect minor delays in some areas. Please know that the RRPC is doing its best to maintain service levels while prioritizing core responsibilities and supporting municipalities during this time.

B. Grant Opportunities for Municipalities

Several important grant opportunities remain open for municipalities, including: a. NBRC Catalyst Program for major economic and infrastructure projects:

<https://www.nbrc.gov/content/catalyst-program> b. NBRC Timber for Transit

Program supporting advanced wood materials in transportation infrastructure:

<https://www.nbrc.gov/content/timber-transit> c. Vermont Spark Fund for innovative

community-based projects: <https://www.vermontcf.org/nonprofits/grants/spark> d.

Communities Caring for Canopy tree planting and canopy expansion grants:



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<https://vtcommunityforestry.org/grants> e. AARP Livable Communities Community Challenge Grant supporting quick-action projects that improve livability for people of all ages: <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/community-challenge/info-2026/2026-challenge.html>

C. Community and Housing Infrastructure Program (CHIP)

The Community and Housing Infrastructure Program portal is now live, including pre-application and full application materials. CHIP is a statewide tax increment financing tool designed to help Vermont communities unlock housing opportunities by investing in critical public infrastructure such as water, sewer, roads, and stormwater systems that support new housing development. The program allows municipalities to leverage future property tax growth to finance infrastructure improvements without raising local property taxes. Municipalities interested in CHIP are encouraged to visit <https://accd.vermont.gov/economic-development/vepc/chip> and to contact the RRPC to discuss eligibility, readiness, and next steps.

D. Vermont Bond Bank – Housing Infrastructure Loan Program

The Community and Housing Infrastructure Program portal is now live, including pre-application and full application materials. CHIP is a statewide tax increment financing tool designed to help Vermont communities unlock housing opportunities by investing in critical public infrastructure such as water, sewer, roads, and stormwater systems that support new housing development. The program allows municipalities to leverage future property tax growth to finance infrastructure improvements without raising local property taxes. Municipalities interested in CHIP are encouraged to visit <https://accd.vermont.gov/economic-development/vepc/chip> and to contact the RRPC to discuss eligibility, readiness, and next steps.

E. Vermont Planning Manual Update

The updated Vermont Planning Manual is now live. The Manual is organized into three modules—Municipal Plan, State Designations, and Bylaw Reform—and was developed in accordance with Sec. 4304 of Title 24 of the Municipal and Regional Planning & Development Act. This resource is intended to inform and empower municipal officials and citizen planners by sharing best practices in planning and land use to promote vibrant, resilient communities. The Manual is available at <https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/town-future/municipal-planning-manual>.

F. VCRD Community Visit Program

The RRPC continues to encourage municipalities to participate in the Vermont Council on Rural Development Community Visit Program. Devon now serves on the VCRD Community Visit Advisory Committee, and the Rutland Region has one



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upcoming community visit scheduled in the Town of Brandon. The RRPC would welcome interest from additional towns. Over the past eight years, community visits in Poultney, Wallingford, and Mendon have led to several important projects that the RRPC has helped advance and implement. To learn more, visit <https://www.vtrural.org/community-visits/> or contact Devon directly to set up a conversation.

7. REGIONAL PLAN UPDATE

Neary reviewed the materials sent out on February 12th to warn for the first public hearing scheduled during the next RRPC Board of Commissioners meeting on March 17th. Towns received a memo with specific information relating to their town, the changes to the future land use map, breakdown of the categories, Tier 1B exemption resolutions, and more. The memo also includes a link to the Regional Plan website. All towns and the public can access the draft plan, draft map, and regional plan report on the website rutlandrpc.org/plan2026. Neary asked the Commissioners if all had been received and if they could help advertise the meeting with their towns. Neary also informed the Commission that there will be three supplemental meetings in Brandon (March 19), Wallingford (March 24), and Poultney (March 26) to allow for greater awareness and public participation. There were no questions from Commissioners.

8. EXECUTIVE / FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Black reported the Committee met on February 9th. There was not a quorum so no action was taken.

9. COMMUNITY COMMITTEE REPORT

The Community Committee reviewed both Sudbury and Tinmouth's Town Plan and Confirmation of Planning Process.

Motion by Gibbs to regionally approval the Sudbury Town Plan and Tinmouth Town Plan and Confirmation of Planning Process. Second by Wilson. Approved by voice vote.

10. COMMISSIONER ROUNDTABLE

Sarah Pelkey spoke as the new Ex Officio representative for CEDRR in her new role as Economic Development Director. In News, Pelkey reported that the State of Vermont is investing in the Downtown Rutland Hotel project with a low interest loan of 8 million dollars. This announcement came today during a meeting held in the City by State Treasurer Pieciak. Pelkey is stepping down from her role as Poultney Town Commissioner but will continue to serve on our board as the Ex Officio representative for CEDRR.



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11. ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn by Wilson. Second by Gibbs. Meeting adjourned at 7:37 PM.

A recording of this meeting can be found at:

www.rutlandrpc.org/board-and-committees-meeting-materials/.

Respectively submitted by Karen Hill