



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

RRPC BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2026, 7:00 PM

MEETING DETAILS

Virtual: [Teams Meeting](#), ID:224634587902, Pass: dBEdSy I Call: 1-8024401368, ID: 641278173#

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

MEETING ATTENDANCE

(x = in person) (v = virtual) (p = phone)

TOWN	NAME	
Benson	Cheryl Murray	V
Brandon	Jack Schneider	X
Castleton	Frank Johnson	
Chittenden	Abigail Bradish	V
Clarendon	Daniel Pinkowski	
Danby	Andrea Stoddard	V
Fair Haven	Bob Richards	
Hubbardton	Robert Gibbs	V
Ira	Bob Kirbach	V
Killington	Don Gaunt	V
Mendon	Larry Courcelle	X
Middletown Springs	Steven Harrington	
Mount Holly	Jessica Metcalfe	V
Mount Tabor		
Pawlet		
Pittsford	Ann Reed	X
Poultney	Paul Donaldson	
Proctor	Richard Horner	

TOWN	NAME	
Rutland City	David Allaire	X
Rutland Town	Jim Marsh	
Shrewsbury	Laura Black	X
Sudbury	Barbara Somson	
Tinmouth	Judy Gilmore	V
Wallingford	Erika Berner	
Wells	Francis Gilman	X
West Haven	Kerry Ellis	
West Rutland	Leona Minard	
AC I- Nat. Resources	Hilary Solomon	
Ex-Officio- CEDRR	Sarah Furman	V
Ex-Officio- CEDRR		
Ex-Officio- TAC		
Ex-Officio- RRWIB		

Staff: Karen Hill, Ethan Pepin, Devon Neary (V)



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MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

Meeting was called to order by Chair Black at 7:04 pm.

2. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 20th AGENDA

Motion to approve the October 20th agenda by Reed. Second by Schneider. Approved by voice vote.

3. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 15th MINUTES

Motion to approve September 15th minutes by Reed. Second by Schneider. Approved by voice vote.

4. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

No Public Present

5. FY27-to-Date FINANCIAL REPORT

Neary notified the Board that the FY26 audit deadline is October 21, 2026. We are on track to be able to add to the RRPC's fund balance once the audit is complete. Membership dues for FY27 will be mailed at the end of October. The Board was notified that they will be discussing FY28 dues at the November meeting. Report for informational purposes only.

6. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. Municipal Grant Opportunities – Fall 2026

Several grant opportunities are currently available or approaching application deadlines. The RRPC encourages municipalities to explore these programs and contact staff for assistance with project development and grant applications.

- Municipal Planning Grants (MPG) – Supports town plans, bylaws, capital improvement plans, and community planning studies. Applications due December 2, 2026.

<https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/municipal-planning-grant>

- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) – Supports sidewalks, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, trails, and transportation safety improvements. Applications due December 4, 2026.

<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/local-projects/transport-alt>

- Better Roads Program – Supports municipal road drainage, erosion control, culverts, and water quality improvements. Applications due October 30, 2026, for Categories B, C, and D. Category A applications are accepted on a rolling basis while funds remain available.



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<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/better-roads>

- Better Connections Program – Supports transportation and land use planning to strengthen downtowns and village centers. Applications due October 30, 2026; required preliminary steps may have already passed.

<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/projects-programs/better-connections>

- Recreational Trails Program (RTP) – \$7,500–\$50,000 for trail development and maintenance; 20% match. Pre-applications due November 20, 2026; full applications January 31, 2027.

<https://fpr.vermont.gov/recreational-trails-program>

- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) – \$25,000–\$1 million for parks and outdoor recreation facilities; 50% match. Pre-applications due November 20, 2026; full applications January 31, 2027.

<https://fpr.vermont.gov/land-and-water-conservation-fund>

- VOREC Community Grant Program – \$7,500–\$50,000 for outdoor recreation and local economic development; no match. Pre-applications due December 13, 2026; invited full applications February 17, 2027.

<https://fpr.vermont.gov/recreation/recreation-grants/vorec-community-grant-program>

- Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP/CDBG) – Supports housing, economic development, public facilities, accessibility, and planning. Pre-applications are being accepted; deadlines vary by grant category.

<https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/vcdp>

Municipalities are encouraged to contact the RRPC early to discuss project eligibility, funding opportunities, and application assistance.

b. VAPDA Annual Report Now Available

The Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies (VAPDA) Annual Report is now live! The report highlights the important work of Vermont's 11 Regional Planning Commissions, showcasing statewide and regional accomplishments in municipal planning, transportation, housing, economic development, natural resources, and community resilience. The interactive online report provides an overview of how RPCs support municipalities, advance statewide priorities, and strengthen Vermont communities. We encourage municipalities and regional partners to explore the report and learn more about the collective impact of regional planning across Vermont.

<https://vapda-report-vapda.hub.arcgis.com/>

c. Workforce in Motion Academy – Free Career Training Opportunities

The RRPC's Workforce in Motion (WIM) Academy continues to offer free career training opportunities for Rutland Region residents through our Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities (WORC) grant. Upcoming programs include Commercial Driver's



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License (CDL) training beginning November 14, Heat Pump Installation beginning October 28, and additional sessions in Construction, Weatherization, Phlebotomy, and Licensed Nursing Assistant (LNA) training throughout spring and summer 2027. These programs are delivered in partnership with Stafford Technical Center, ReSOURCE, and Vermont Adult Learning, providing hands-on training, industry-recognized credentials, and pathways to employment in high-demand fields. We encourage municipalities and community partners to help spread the word about these opportunities!

For more information, visit <https://workforceinmotion.org> or contact Fredi Hayes at fredi@rutlandrpc.org.

d. EPA Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Funding

The RRPC is preparing an application to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for an additional \$500,000 in Brownfields Assessment funding. With approximately \$25,000 remaining from our 2023 EPA award and no additional state funding currently available, securing new resources is critical to continuing this successful program. In addition, the RRPC plans to apply for a new \$1 million Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund (RLF), which would provide \$500,000 in direct cleanup grants and \$500,000 in loans to support remediation of contaminated properties following assessment. Applications for both programs are expected to open soon. These funding opportunities are essential to maintaining the RRPC's ability to support redevelopment, attract private investment, and return underutilized properties to productive use, particularly in our downtowns and village centers.

e. 2026 ANR Municipal Day – October 30

The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) will host its annual Municipal Day on Friday, October 30, at the National Life Campus in Montpelier. This year's theme, "Maps, Maps, Maps!", will focus on how mapping tools and spatial data can support municipal planning, land use decisions, and community engagement. The event will feature workshops, practical resources, and opportunities to connect with state agencies and municipal officials from across Vermont. The RRPC encourages Planning Commissioners, Conservation Commissioners, Selectboard members, and municipal staff to attend. Registration is \$40 per person and includes breakfast and lunch.

<https://anr.vermont.gov/special-topics/municipal-day>

f. Energy Action Network 2026 Annual Progress Report

Energy Action Network (EAN) has released its 2026 Annual Progress Report on Energy, Affordability, and Emissions in Vermont. This year's report focuses on energy affordability, examining Vermont's high household energy costs, exposure to volatile fossil fuel prices, and opportunities to reduce costs through more efficient heating and transportation technologies. The report also evaluates Vermont's progress toward statewide energy and climate goals. This is a valuable resource for municipalities



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implementing local energy plans, considering investments in municipal facilities, and advancing the goals of the 2026 Rutland Regional Plan and Enhanced Energy Plan.

<https://eanvt.org/2026-annual-report/>

g. Rutland County Priority Projects – Applications Open

The RRPC is partnering with Chamber & Economic Development of the Rutland Region (CEDRR) to develop the annual Rutland County Priority Projects list. This initiative identifies and prioritizes economic development projects across the Region to help inform State funding decisions and direct resources toward projects with the greatest potential economic impact. Applications are evaluated by a joint CEDRR and RRPC committee based on project readiness, regional need, funding commitments, job creation, and economic benefits. Municipalities, businesses, and organizations with economic development projects are encouraged to apply. Existing projects on the list will also have an opportunity to provide updates. Applications are due November 15, 2026, and should be submitted to Sarah Pelkey, CEDRR Director of Economic Development.

<https://www.rutlandvermont.com/rutland-county-priority-projects/>

h. Community Housing Infrastructure Program (CHIP) – Municipal Technical Assistance
The RRPC, in partnership with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) and Vermont's Regional Planning Commissions, is providing technical assistance to municipalities interested in utilizing the new Community Housing Infrastructure Program (CHIP). The program is designed to help municipalities finance infrastructure improvements necessary to support new housing development, including water, wastewater, transportation, and other public infrastructure. RPCs and VLCT are working together to help towns identify potential projects, evaluate infrastructure needs, and navigate the early stages of project development and financing. The RRPC is currently working with Brandon, Fair Haven, and Rutland Town on early pre-development activities for potential CHIP projects. Municipalities interested in exploring CHIP opportunities are encouraged to contact the RRPC.

<https://www.vlct.org/technical-assistance/chip-vt-building-local-capacity-housing-and-infrastructure>

i. Local Option Tax – New Municipal Resource

The RRPC has developed a new one-page resource highlighting the benefits of a 1% Local Option Tax (LOT) as a tool to generate municipal revenue, reduce reliance on property taxes, and support local priorities such as infrastructure, public safety, and capital investments. The resource explains how the tax works and highlights successful examples from Brandon and Rutland Town, which generated approximately \$311,000 and \$1.52 million, respectively, in FY25. Six municipalities in the Rutland Region currently have a Local Option Tax, and several additional towns are considering



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bringing the question to voters at the upcoming Town Meeting Day in March 2027. The RRPC is available to help municipalities evaluate this important funding opportunity and share resources to support local discussions.

<https://tax.vermont.gov/business/local-option-tax>

j. RRPC Connections Initiative – Wallingford Field Visit

The RRPC's FY26 Connections Initiative is designed to strengthen staff understanding of the unique communities we serve and build stronger connections between our regional planning work and local priorities. On September 25, RRPC staff visited Wallingford to explore the village's new sidewalks, distinctive architecture, historic sites, and downtown businesses, followed by a visit to White Rocks. The field visit highlighted the connections between community development, historic preservation, outdoor recreation, water quality, and local partnerships. These visits provide valuable firsthand experience that helps staff better understand municipal opportunities and challenges while strengthening our ability to support communities throughout the Rutland Region.

7. EXECUTIVE / FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Black reported that the Committee had met on October 13th to review the Financial and Executive Director's reports, Strategic Plan Initiative and review the agenda for the Board of Commissioners meeting on October 20th.

8. STRATEGIC PLANNING INITIATIVE

Neary reported that the leadership team had participated in a kickoff meeting with the facilitators two weeks earlier. Staff were gathering background resources to help the facilitators formulate next steps. The first step is anticipated to be developing updated mission, vision, and values statements, which would be refined during the planning process. Neary thanked the Executive Board and town representatives who had already volunteered to participate and noted that the Board would be notified when action was needed.

9. COMMISSIONER ROUNDTABLE

No discussion

10. ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 7:33 pm.

Respectively submitted by Karen Hill

A recording of this meeting can be found at:

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