



City of Barre, Vermont

September 14, 2023, 5:30 PM

Regular Meeting of the Barre City Planning Commission

## Venue Options: **Remote only meeting this month**

### **Zoom:**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89301594299?pwd=MXkyVmV6VnVhUC9Obk1GaVhNMFFKUT09>

Meeting ID: 893 0159 4299 Passcode: 815236

Phone: 1 (929) 205-6099 US (New York – Long distance rates will apply)

### **Agenda**

1. Call to order - 5:30 PM
2. Adjustments to the Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes
  - a. August 10, 2023
4. Public comment (for something not on the agenda)
5. Old Business
  - a. Status of RFP's: responses due by 4:30 pm on Sep. 14, 2023
  - b. ADU public reading at Council on Aug. 29, 2023: Discussion
  - c. North Main to Summer Street Plan: review and possible site visit
6. New Business
  - a. Chair Resignation
  - b. Election of Officers – election of replacement Chair
  - c. Neighborhood Development Area Designation Discussion
7. Confirm date of next meeting – October 12, 2023
8. Staff updates – as needed
9. Roundtable
10. Adjourn

# Barre City Planning Commission

## August 10, 2023 Meeting Minutes

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Present: Michael Hellein (Chair), Joe Reil (Secretary), Rosemary Averill, Caitlin Corkin, Raylene Meunier, David Sichel, Becky Wigg

Absent: None

Staff: Janet Shatney (Director of Planning, Permitting & Assessing)

Visitors: None

### 1. Call to Order.

Called to order at 5:30pm.

### 2. Adjustments to the Agenda.

None.

### 3. Approval of Minutes.

- i. May 25, 2023 view draft minutes.

**Sichel moves to approve; Averill seconds; unanimous in favor.**

### 4. Public comment (for something not on the agenda).

None.

### 5. New Business

- i. Election of officers.

There was a suggestion to keep the two existing officers and Hellein nominated Wigg for Vice Chair.

**Sichel moves to close nominations; Averill seconds; unanimous in favor.**

**Corkins moves to accept nominations; Sichel seconds; unanimous in favor.**

Officers are now: Michael Hellein (Chair), Becky Wigg (Vice Chair), Joe Reil (Secretary)

- ii. Creation of an RFP subcommittee for two awarded grants.

There was discussion about the purpose of the subcommittee, to review RFP applications and interview applicants, to then bring findings back to the entire Planning Commission.

There were some concerns about the timing of the interviews, ensuring they fit within work schedules.

Averill, Reil, and Wigg volunteered to form the RFP subcommittee.

**Sichel moves to appoint volunteers; Corkin seconds; unanimous in favor.**

- iii. Notice of ADU interim zoning changes on upcoming council agenda.

Shatney informed the Planning Commission that the previously discussed ADU zoning changes will be presented before City Council on August 29, suggests that members of the Commission attend the meeting, if possible, to address any questions or comments. Hellein and Reil indicated they will be present for that meeting.

- iv. Status update on planning-related aspects of flood.

Shatney gives background of flood and summarizes some of the damage.

Some discussion around what zoning issues could be discussed to help resolve these issues, lot sizes and zoning designations could be looked at to help. Question about any short-term items we could look at while the larger discussions are taking place?

Discussion around what to do about drainage for future flooding situations. No suggestions at this time, but something that should be thought about.

- v. Review of current North Main Street plan.

Hellein notes that this is not intended to be a full review in substantial detail yet, just a high level look for now, considering that one of the RFPs could impact this plan.

Question and discussion about what the plan was originally intended to achieve and what has been done so far, Sichel indicates not much has been achieved with it yet. Consultants indicated parking was not a problem, so plan's focus on parking was misplaced.

Discussion around taking better advantage of dense residential areas near Summer St. and connecting it to Main St. Sichel mentions that many of the parking areas that are present are privately owned vs. publicly, which adds some challenges.

There was a suggestion for setting up site visits to review the area directly before cold weather fully sets in.

Question and discussion about how to engage with private land owners who own property that may be impacted by the discussion and what if any outreach is needed to make them aware of the plan being discussed. Sichel indicates the original plan did reach out and there were well-attended workshops resulting.

6. Confirm Date of Next Meeting.

- i. September 14, 2023

7. Staff Updates.

No updates.

8. Round Table.

Corkins introduces herself, asked other members of the Planning Commission for a brief introduction.

9. Adjourn

6:36pm; **Wigg moves to adjourn; Hellein seconds; unanimous in favor.**

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council  
Held August 29, 2023**

The Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order in person and via video platform by Acting Mayor Michael Boutin (Ward II Councilor) at 6:00 PM at Barre City Hall, Barre, Vermont. In attendance in person or virtually were: From Ward I, Councilors Emel Cambel and Thom Lauzon; from Ward II, Councilor Teddy Waszazak; and from Ward III, Councilors Michael Deering and Samn Stockwell. City staff members present were City Manager Nicolas Storrellicastro, Planning Director Janet Shatney, Human Resources Director Rikk Taft, Fire Chief Keith Cushman, and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

**Absent:** Mayor Jake Hemmerick.

**Others Present:** NONE

**Adjustments to the Agenda:**

- Moved approval of merging CVCOA and RSPV voter approved requests from new agenda to consent agenda.
- Added to consent agenda: approval of Wheelock House purchase & sales agreement extension, and authorization for Manager to sign.
- Added to consent agenda: Approval of contract with geotechnical firm Sanborn, Head & Associates.
- Added to consent agenda: Ratify acceptance of Bylaw Modernization Grant, applied for in October 2022.

**Visitors and Communications**

Former Mayor Lucas Herring addressed the Council on behalf of the Barre Lions Club. Mr. Herring said the club has been serving central Vermont since 1938. They recently distributed food, water, clothing, and household goods to those impacted by the flooding, and made a donation of \$10,000 to the Barre Community Relief Fund. The statewide Vermont Lions Charities has made a commitment for a donation of \$5,000 for the fund. Those in attendance thanked the Barre Lions Club, Vermont Lions Charities, and Former Mayor Herring for their strong support of the community.

Pike Street resident Alexander Raeburn asked Council to discuss possible buyouts at the next meeting. Manager Storrellicastro said Mr. Raeburn's property on Pike Street has been red-tagged, as it is in danger from an imminent landslide behind the property. The Manager said the City is engaging geotechnical firm Sanborn, Head & Associates to review landslide locations on City land, and offer determinations as to the stability of the land and potential for repairs. Once certain data points are established, buyout applicability will be discussed. The Manager said it is estimated the work will take approximately four weeks, and updates will be included in future flood recovery reports given at Council meetings.

**Approval of Consent Agenda:**

Councilor Stockwell noted the minutes from the August 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting indicated she was present when she wasn't here. The minutes will be corrected.

Council approved the following consent agenda items on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

- A. Approval of Minutes as corrected:
  - i. Special meeting of August 22, 2023.
- B. City Warrants as presented:

1. Approval of Week 2023-35, dated August 30, 2023:
  - i. Accounts Payable: \$371,415.31
  - ii. Payroll (gross): \$137,780.61
- C. 2023 Clerk's Office Licenses & Permits: NONE
- D. Designate the Manager as voting delegate at the 2023 VLCT Town Fair
- E. Authorize the purchase of replacement rescue tools and air bags for the Fire Department
- F. Accept the resignation of committee/board volunteers:
  - i. Pete Fournier, Development Review Board, At-Large
  - ii. Jeffrey Tuper-Giles, Development Review Board, Ward I
  - iii. Ellen Sivret, Cemeteries Committee
  - iv. Michael Hellein, Transportation & Public Works Committee
  - v. Mark Martin, Transportation & Public Works Committee
- G. Approve merging CV Council on Aging and RSVP voter-approved funding requests (moved from new business)
- H. Approval of Wheelock House purchase & sales agreement extension, and authorize Manager to sign (added under adjustments)
- I. Approval of contract with geotechnical firm Sanborn, Head & Associates (added under adjustments)
- J. Ratify Manager's acceptance of Bylaw Modernization Grant, signed in February 2023 (added under adjustments)

#### **City Clerk & Treasurer Report –**

City Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes reported on the following:

- First quarter property tax installments are due by October 2, 2023.
- Water/sewer bills are going in the mail the end of the week, and will be due by October 2, 2023.

#### **Liquor Control Board/Cannabis Control Board – NONE**

#### **City Manager's Report –**

Manager Storellicastro said his report is covered in the flood recovery update later on the agenda.

#### **New Business –**

#### **A) First Reading and Public Hearing Warned 6:15PM: Accessory Dwelling Unit Zoning Revision.**

The first reading and public hearing opened at 6:19 PM. Planning Director Janet Shatney reviewed her memo and the proposed revisions being proposed by the Planning Commission. Commissioner Michael Hellein said the changes will remove common barriers to the development of accessory dwelling units (ADU's).

Councilor Lauzon said he has concerns about the proposed revision that would exempt ADU's from the minimum parking requirements for residential uses. There was discussion on distributing housing resources to people who don't have cars, accommodating parking needs for people living in ADU's, and leaving it up to the property owner to accommodate resident parking needs.

Councilor Waszazak made the motion to approve the revisions to the accessory dwelling unit section of the Unified Development Ordinance, and move them to a second reading and public hearing at the next Council meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Stockwell.

There was additional discussion on existing zoning language that allows applicants to seek parking waivers, parking needs based on the number of bedrooms in an ADU, and impacts on neighborhoods.

Ms. Shatney said the owner of an ADU must live on the property, and an ADU doesn't require development review board approval unless a parking exemption is being requested. She said if a property sells and the property is no longer owner-occupied, it would become a multi-unit property and need to meet the requirements as such.

Commissioner Joe Reil said the proposed revision doesn't eliminate the need for parking; just the need for additional parking associated with the ADU.

Commissioner Becky Wigg said all ADU owners would go through a change of use if the owner no longer lives at the property.

Councilor Lauzon offered a friendly amendment to leave the parking-related language as it is currently written, which allows for an exemption request to be go before the DRB, seconded by Councilor Deering. Original mover Councilor Waszazak did not accept the friendly amendment.

Councilor Lauzon offered his amendment be made to the original motion, seconded by Councilor Deering. **Motion did not carry with Councilors Lauzon, Deering, and Boutin voting in favor, and Councilors Cambel, Waszazak, and Stockwell voting against.**

Council voted on the original motion. **Motion did not carry with Councilors Cambel, Waszazak, and Stockwell voting in favor, and Councilors Lauzon, Deering, and Boutin voting against.**

Ms. Shatney said the proposed language will go back to the Planning Commission for additional consideration.

#### **B) Flood Recovery Updates.**

Manager Storlicastro gave a PowerPoint presentation on flood recovery efforts including:

- Public assistance damage assessment
- Street closures
- Debris collection ended. 3,875 tons of private debris were removed
- Landslides
- Residential damage – 363 structures containing 517 units sustained some level of damage
- Volunteer activities. Close to launching the resource hub
- Community forum scheduled for Wednesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30 PM at Barre Opera House. Moderated by VT Council on Rural Development
- Flood impact on City budget. Staff will bring analysis to Council next month

Manager Storlicastro said the traffic study of the intersection at Hill/Ayers/S. Main Streets is being conducted over the next two days as schools reopen. The information gathered will inform changes to be made to the traffic signal at that location.

Water flushing ended yesterday, and lines should be clearing of discolored water.

#### **C) Approve merging CV Council on Aging and RSVP voter-approved funding requests.**

Moved to consent agenda.

**Upcoming Business – NONE**

**Round Table –**

Councilor Deering said 114 local kids have been participating in football practice over the past two weeks. Their first home games are this Saturday at Bond Field.

Councilor Lauzon said there was a University of New Hampshire survey featured in VT Digger with data on the number of Vermonters affected by the flooding. He said 13% of Vermonters were affected, however, the number of people who have filed a claim with FEMA is much lower. He encouraged people to file before the September 12<sup>th</sup> deadline.

**Executive Session –** Councilor Lauzon made the motion to find that premature general public knowledge of collective bargaining issues to be discussed would clearly place the City of Barre at a substantial disadvantage should the discussions be public. The motion was seconded by Councilor Stockwell.

**Motion carried.**

Council went into executive session at 7:45 PM to discuss collective bargaining under the provisions of 1 VSA § 313 on motion of Councilor Stockwell, seconded by Councilor Lauzon. Manager Storrellicastro was invited into the executive session. **Motion carried.**

Council came out of executive session at 7:50 PM on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried.**

There was no action taken.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

The open portions of the meeting were recorded on the video platform.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk

## **REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

**Tuesday, September 12, 2023 6:00pm**

**Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88982525535?pwd=VzIXOU5taIdoYkgYSUdTelldqSUVGQT09>

**Meeting ID: 889 8252 5535    Passcode: 675736**

**One tap mobile    929-205-6099**

1. Call to Order – 6:00 p.m.
2. Adjustments to the Agenda
3. Visitors and Communications
4. Consent Agenda
  - A. Approval of Minutes Regular City Council Meeting of Tuesday August 29, 2023
  - B. City Warrants:
    - i. Ratification of the Warrants from week of September 6, 2023
    - ii. Approval of City Warrants from Week of September 13, 2023
  - C. Clerk’s Office Licenses and Permits
  - D. Ratify the August 29, 2023 approval of a contract with Sanborn Head to provide geotechnical services related to flood recovery
  - E. Approve amendments to the City of Barre Procurement Policy
  - F. Errors & Omissions – 207 Washington Street
  - G. Accept the resignation of committee/commission volunteers
    - i. Michael Hellein: Planning Commission, Development Review Board, CVRPC TA and CVRPC alternate
5. City Clerk & Treasurer Report
6. Liquor/Cannabis Control Boards
7. City Manager’s Report
8. New Business
  - A. Volunteer Appointments:
    - i. Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging Committee
  - B. Flood Recovery Updates (Manager)
  - C. Presentation by the Barre Up Long-Term Recovery Group and consideration of appointments to the steering committee (Gustin)
  - D. Rescind August 29, 2023 vote on Councilor Waszazak’s motion to approve the revisions to the accessory dwelling unit section of the Unified Development Ordinance, and move them to a second reading and public hearing at the next Council meeting (Mayor)**
  - E. Rescind the June 20, 2023 reappointment of Michael Hellein and Raylene Meunier to the Planning Commission (Cambel)**
9. Upcoming Business
10. Round Table
11. Executive Session – As Needed
12. Adjourn

The next meeting of the City Council is scheduled for Tuesday, September 19, 2023.

*The portion of this meeting starting at 7:00pm will be taped for re-broadcast on Channel 194 CVTV and will be re-broadcast on Wednesday at 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon CVTV Link for meetings online – [cvtv723.org/](https://cvtv723.org/)*

### **OTHER MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

#### **Monday, Sept. 11**

Police Advisory Committee, 6:00 PM, Alumni Hall

#### **Wednesday Sept 13**

Board of Civil Authority, 5:00 PM, Council Chambers Hybrid

Barre Up Community Flood Recovery Discussion & Forum, 5:30 PM Barre Opera House

#### **Thursday Sept. 14**

Planning Commission, 5:30 PM, Zoom Only

Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging Committee, 6:30 PM, Zoom Only

## Janet Shatney

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**From:** Michael Hellein <barre@helle.in>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 30, 2023 9:02 PM  
**To:** Jake Hemmerick  
**Cc:** Nicolas Storellicastro; Janet Shatney  
**Subject:** Resignation from boards and committees

Mayor and Councillors,

Following the Council meeting on Tuesday, it became clear to me that I am experiencing burnout, and it's impacting my ability to participate properly in citizen government. I need to step back before I can serve Barre in the way it requires and deserves. I am sorry to stop participating, especially since I was so recently reappointed to the Planning Commission, but I hope you will understand that my intent is to contribute to Barre in the best way I can over the long term. I submit my resignation from the Planning Commission, the Development Review Board, as representative to the CVRPC Transportation Advisory Committee and as alternate to the CVRPC Board of Commissioners.

Thank you for the trust you placed in me by allowing me the opportunity to serve.

Regards,

Michael Hellein

Rules of Procedure  
City of Barre  
Planning Commission  
May 16, 1997; September 26, 2019

**Article I. Establishment of Rules of Procedure**

- (a) Authority. The Planning Commission of the City of Barre shall be governed by the provisions of all applicable state statutes, the City Charter, and these Rules of Procedure, as adopted by the Planning Commission.
- (b) Adoption of these Rules. The Planning Commission Rules of Procedure shall be those adopted by the Commission in accordance with 24 VSA §4462. Upon adoption of the rules, a copy of these rules and all amendments shall be filed with the City Clerk as a public record and be made available to the public upon request.
- (c) Amendments. These rules may be amended at any regular meeting by an affirmative vote of a majority of the Commission provided that such amendment has been presented in writing to each member of the Commission at least 48 hours preceding the meeting at which the vote is taken.

**Article II. Officers and Duties**

- (a) Members. The Planning Commission of the City of Barre shall consist of seven (7) members appointed by the City Council for three-year terms in accordance with Title 24 VSA §4322-4323. The Planning Commission shall perform such planning functions and duties as may be required by the City Council, Charter, Ordinances, or applicable state laws.
- (b) Chairperson. The Commission shall elect a Chairperson from among its members by a majority vote annually in the month of May. The Chairperson shall perform the duties prescribed by state law, the City of Barre's Charter, and these rules.
- (c) Duties of the Chairperson. The Chairperson shall call the meeting together, preside over all meetings of the Commission, put all questions, maintain order, decide all questions of order and procedure, subject to these rules, and shall appoint any committees found necessary to carry out the business of the Commission, subject to the order of a majority of the members of the Commission.
- (d) Vice Chairperson. The Commission shall elect a Vice Chairperson from among its members by a majority vote annually in the month of May. The Vice Chairperson shall perform all of the duties of the Chairperson in the Chairperson's absence, or when the Chair is not presiding.
- (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 Chairperson was present and presiding. The Vice Chairperson's signature shall appear on all documents pertaining to actions of the Commission which were made with the Chairperson was not present or not presiding.

(f) Secretary. A Secretary, who may or may not be a member of the Commission, or the Department of Planning, Permitting & Assessing staff, shall be appointed by a majority of the Commission. The Secretary shall perform the following duties:

1. Keep the minutes of all Commission actions and proceedings, showing the vote of each member upon every question, or if absent, disqualified, or failing to vote, shall so indicate; and shall include in the minutes the names and addresses of all witnesses, and a summary of the facts on which the decision is based and the decision rendered.
2. Preserve and keep the records of the Commission's examinations and other official actions.
3. Cause to be filed all minutes and records of examination and other official actions with the City Clerk & Treasurer as a public record.

(g) Vacancies. The Secretary shall give immediate notice of any vacancy of the Commission to the municipal legislative body. Any vacancy among the officers of the Commission shall be filled by election, for the unexpired term, at the regular meeting of the Commission. If the office of Chairperson becomes vacant, the Commission shall fill that office by election for the unexpired term at the next regular meeting of the Commission.

(h) Attendance. Less than 75% attendance in any fiscal year or two unexplained absences by a Commissioner in a row is grounds for recommendation of dismissal to the City Council.

(i) Vacancies. Vacancies shall be filled by the City Council upon the expiration of such term or an unexpired portion of any term.

(j) Removal. Upon majority vote, the Commission may request that the City Council remove a Commissioner from the Planning Commission. Planning Commissioners may be removed at any time by unanimous vote of the legislative body per 24 VSA §4323(h).

### **Article III. Meetings and Hearings**

(a) Regular Meetings. Regular meetings of the Planning Commission shall be held on the second and fourth Thursday in each calendar month, unless there is no business to transact, in which case the meeting may be canceled.

(b) Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Commission may be called by the Chairperson or by a majority of the members of the Commission, provided that at least 24 hours written notice of the time, place, and business of such meeting shall be given to each member of the Commission. Action items requiring public hearing notice shall conform to the notice requirements in 24 VSA §4447 and will not be scheduled for a special meeting.

- (c) Site Visits. The Commission may convene at a site if the Commission feels a site visit will aid in their understanding of a proposed project, activity, or study. Members may visit a site individually or as a Commission. If a quorum of the Commission is present, it is an open meeting and its date and time must be announced and/or posted in accordance with state law.
- (d) Recess of Meeting or Hearing. The Commission may recess a meeting or hearing if all business cannot be disposed of on the day set. No further public notice shall be necessary provided that the date, time and place of the recessed meeting or hearing shall be announced prior to the adjournment.
- (e) Open Meetings. All meetings of the Commission and any subcommittees shall be open to the public, and held in a location that is handicapped accessible. No longer a quasi-judicial body, the Commission cannot enter into deliberative sessions which are not open to the public to discuss the issues. The Commission and any subcommittees can enter into executive sessions only in accordance with the Open Meeting Law.

#### **Article IV. Conflict of Interest**

All members of the Planning Commission shall abide by the City of Barre's Conflict of Interest Policy adopted by the Barre City Council on October 13, 2009, together with any subsequent amendments. No disqualified member shall preside at a hearing or be counted by the Commission in establishing the required quorum. The applicant or any interested party may petition the Commission to disqualify any member because of a conflict of interest. If the Chairperson is disqualified, the Vice Chairperson shall preside. In the event the Vice Chairperson is unable to preside, a majority of the remaining Commission shall appoint an Acting Vice Chairperson for the proceeding.

#### **Article V. Conduct of Public Hearings**

- (a) Public hearings shall be conducted in accordance with the applicable rules as set forth in 24 VSA §4384, 24 VSA §4403, and other rules as are applicable.
- (b) Record of Proceedings. Proceedings at public hearings shall be recorded either electronically or by the Secretary.
- (c) Recess of public hearing. The Commission may recess a public hearing if all the matters pertaining to it cannot be disposed of on the day set. No further public notice shall be necessary provide that the date, time, and place of the recessed hearing shall be announced before adjournment.

#### **Article VI. Voting**

- (a) Quorum. For the conduct of a meeting or hearing, and the taking of any action, a quorum of the Commission must be present, consisting of a majority of the Planning Commission.

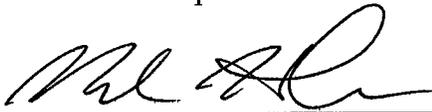
(b) Majority Vote Required. Decisions on any matter before the Commission, except the amendment or adoption of procedural rules, shall require the concurrence of a majority of the members of the entire Commission, regardless of vacancies or disqualifications.

(c) Motions in the affirmative. All motions made for any decision shall be made in the affirmative. This does not imply that the person making or seconding the motion support that motion. A failure to obtain four (4) affirmative votes shall be considered a denial. An abstention equals a negative vote.

(d) Tie Vote. A tie vote shall constitute no action of the Planning Commission.

(e) Conflict of Interest. No Commission member shall participate in any hearing or vote on any matter in which he or she has a personal or direct or indirect financial interest in the matter under consideration.

These rules of procedure were adopted by the Planning Commission.



Chairperson Michael Hellein

9/30/19

Date

## Program Overview

This designation program increases housing options by reducing the time and cost of state permitting in areas within easy walking distance of commercial centers — whether converting a wing of a house into an apartment or developing an entirely new neighborhood.

Municipalities or developers may use this designation to encourage the creation of new homes in development-ready locations near shops and services and to reduce pressure to develop on farm and forest land. Municipalities with an existing designated downtown or village center, with adopted plans and regulations that support housing and compact development can qualify for neighborhood development area designation.

## Municipalities with NDA Designation

- Berlin
- Brattleboro
- Burlington
- Essex Junction
- Hinesburg
- Manchester
- Middlebury
- Putney
- Randolph
- South Burlington
- Westford
- Winooski

## By the Numbers

 **12**  
designated NDA's

 **7**  
months average  
time saved in state  
permitting

 **\$50,000**  
average saved in  
state permit fees

## Burlington - Designation Lowers Housing Costs

Burlington's housing action plan recognizes the contribution of the neighborhood development area designation in lowering the cost of building well-designed, mixed-income housing, compatible with Burlington's existing character.

An early priority housing project was the Champlain Housing Trust's Bright Street Coop, a 42-unit mixed income, infill housing project on 1.35 acres of land in Burlington's Old North End. Located within Burlington's designated neighborhood development area, the project qualified for the Act 250 Priority Housing Project exemption - saving over \$50,000 in associated costs and an estimated three months of permitting time (out of an approximately \$6.5 million budget).

Additionally, the project saved another \$3,000 in wastewater connection fees and reduced the risk of added costs from a permit appeal. Burlington's neighborhood development area designation continues to help the region address its acute housing shortage by lowering the cost of building new mixed-income development in and around the designated downtown.



For more information, please contact:  
Jacob Hemmerick: [jacob.hemmerick@vermont.gov](mailto:jacob.hemmerick@vermont.gov) | 802.828.5249 or  
Amy Tomasso: [amy.tomasso@vermont.gov](mailto:amy.tomasso@vermont.gov) | 802.636.7560

# Designated Neighborhood Development Areas

## Benefits for Housing Developers

### State Permitting

- Qualified mixed income housing projects are exempt from review.
- Act 250 projects not qualifying for the exemption receive a 50% discount on application fees
- Act 250 off-site mitigation fees are reduced for projects impacting primary agricultural soils in NDA's associated with a designated downtown, and that are subject to Act 250 review.
- If subject to Act 250, projects within an NDA (and other designated areas) are within an "existing settlement" and not required to provide additional analysis under Act 250 Criterion 9(L) that addresses scattered development.
- Agency of Natural Resources fees for wastewater review are capped at \$50 for projects that have received sewer allocation from an approved municipal system
- Pilot Downtown and Village Center Tax Credits

### Tax Benefits

- Exemption from the land gains tax for housing units that are sold.

### Municipal Regulation

- Local conditional use decisions that determine the "character of the area" criteria is met, cannot be appealed to the Environmental Court if the project is within an NDA.

## Benefits for Municipalities

Priority consideration for various grants and incentives supporting projects within an NDA including:

- Municipal Planning Grants (ACCD)
- Better Places Grants (ACCD)
- Vermont Community Development Program (CDBG) Grants (ACCD)
- Better Connections (VTrans/ACCD)
- Brownfield Revitalization (ANR/ACCD)
- State affordable housing funds
- Training and technical assistance from ACCD
- Municipal Wastewater Funding (ANR)

## Program Benefits

State designation of neighborhood development areas (NDAs) provides incentives for housing developers and municipalities to help increase the creation of new homes within walking distance of shops, jobs, services, and schools. Once designated the following benefits will be available within an NDA.

[NDA Application Guide](#) 



For more information, please contact:  
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802.828.5249