

**TOWN OF WESTFORD PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES FOR JULY 21, 2025, MEETING
APPROVED ON SEPTEMBER 22, 2025**

Commissioners Present: Max Tyler, George Lamphere, Ian Gehlbach, Will Dunkley, Mo Reilly

Commissioners Absent: None.

Also Present: Harmony Cism (Planning Coordinator, Zoning Administrator), Maria Barden (Minute Clerk), Lori Johnson

The meeting began at: 6:30pm

M. Tyler discusses the Rules of Procedure.

Amendments to Agenda

None.

Citizens to be Heard-Items not on agenda

None.

Minutes of June 16th Meeting-Review and approval

G. Lamphere makes a motion to approve the June 16th minutes as presented,

M. Reilly seconds the motion; Motion approved 5-0.

Land Use & Development Regulations Update

WRO (Water Resource Overlay) buffers:

- DRB is requesting the Planning Commission reconsider the 100-foot buffer.
- The Planning Commission has questions for the DRB about the list they provided.

Campground standards:

- **H. Cism** reached out to Allison Lowry (Westford's district wastewater representative) about the camp fact sheet they provide and how it is difficult to understand. The Planning Commission has been given a new updated fact sheet for clarity.
H. Cism has not heard back from them after requesting clarity on the 12 nights a year and whether that constitutes a campground regardless of how many sites you have.
- The Planning Commission discusses bringing questions to the DRB regarding their thoughts on campsites and where in the regulations for regular home sites they find it hard to figure out if it should apply to a campsite.

Invitation to attend 8/11/25 DRB meeting:

- The Planning Commission has been invited to attend the DRB meeting on August 8th, **M. Tyler** plans to attend this meeting. The meeting is primarily to discuss campgrounds; **M. Tyler** would like to ask them about the other items on the list they've provided to the Planning Commission. **M. Tyler** thinks until after this meeting with the DRB they should put a hold on discussion for these specific matters.

H. Cism will make sure the DRB has an updated camp fact sheet in their packets for the August 8th meeting. She will send the Planning Commission an agenda for the DRB meeting when it is finalized.

W. Dunkley will reach out to a contact he has who designs septic systems to see if he has any insight on the matter of campsites and WW.

Public Outreach

Recap of PC Chair meeting with CCRPC:

- **M. Tyler** discusses his meeting with Darren Schibler and Kate McCarthy from CCRPC. He's provided notes from Darren in the Planning Commission's packet. CCRPC would like to assist Westford in any way they can but doesn't have Westford on their radar screen for this year aside from the traffic studies and the one intersection.
M. Tyler would like to be on their radar for next year to help with public outreach, help with applying for grant money, and to help with municipal planning (one phase might be 1705).
- **D. Schibler** noted places the Planning Commission should investigate for help with funding, CCRPC would also like to help with training.
- The Planning Commission discusses what public outreach looks like to them and discusses outreach and engagement for the town. They discuss outlets they can use for outreach such as the Town website, FPF, and the Town newsletter.
- The Planning Commission discusses whether it would be beneficial to answer the questions: why do we have a Town Plan and why do we have a Planning Commission? Would it be beneficial to have this discussion before updating the Town Plan? They feel this should be brought to the Selectboard to work on together.

M. Tyler will follow up with CCRPC.

The Planning Commission will split up the research regarding different funding options and find out more about each one.

1705 Update

M. Reilly says the Selectboard approved the assessment at the last Selectboard meeting.

H. Cism says there were people doing wetland delineation last week so they should be getting that soon as well.

There was a discussion about the need for a new Town Office, the office is running out of vault space for records which statutorily the Town is required to have.

Pedestrian Connection from Westford School to Village Center

- Taylor Newton at CCRPC said there are studies that they have on this subject that the Planning Commission can review.
- **M. Tyler** says **P. Haller** was in favor of looking into this again.
- **H. Cism** provided a map in the packet with the property owners whose property the easement would have to go through.
- The Planning commission discusses whether having a pathway like this would give more weight to keeping the school building in the community, they discuss the potential of having a walkway through part of the road rather than an easement on

someone's property, Brookside road does have a larger right of way than most of the roads in Town. The Planning Commission feel it could add a lot of value to the Town.

M. Tyler will review the documents Taylor Newton mentioned that are at CCRPC.

H. Cism notes that there are also documents here that they can look at from when it was previously presented.

Public Comment

None.

Correspondence

- Correspondence from P. Haller regarding 1705.
- Email from B. Peck regarding inclusion.
- ACT 250 for Rover's North.
- Information from H. Delisle about a Tree Planting Grant.

The Planning Commission discusses who this grant applies to and if there is anything further, they need to do.

H. Cism will add this to FPF along with the RFP link and talk to C. Hamdy about adding it to the Newsletter.

- Open meeting law changes.

H. Cism says we're already doing it all.

- UVM Intern correspondence.

The Planning Commission discuss potentially reaching out to see if an intern could help with outreach or mapping.

Think about what we need to do to be ready for an intern in January and reach out to the SB to see what they think.

Work Plan Review & Prioritization

- Next meeting is August 18th, 2025
- DRB meeting August 11, 2025
- M. Tyler will follow up with CCRPC about the essentials of town planning.
- M. Reilly and I. Gehlbach will investigate the grants.
- H. Cism will share the grant information about trees on FPF and possibly the newsletter.
- W. Dunkley will be meeting with Dan Strobridge, Saturday at 10am.

M. Tyler moved to adjourn the meeting, G. Lamphere seconds; motion passed 5-0.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:08pm