

**TOWN OF WESTFORD
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES FOR JULY 20, 2026
APPROVED ON AUGUST 17, 2026**

Commissioners Present: Max Tyler, Will Dunkley, Art Woolf, Ben Bornstein

Commissioners Absent: Kirsten Tyler

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

The meeting began at 6:32pm

Amendments to the Agenda

None.

Citizens to be heard – Items not on the agenda

None.

Approval of Minutes – June 15th, 2026

M. Tyler motioned to approve the June 15th minutes as presented.

B. Bornstein seconded, motion passed 3-0.

A. Woolf was not present at the last meeting, so he did not vote and K. Tyler was not present while the approval of the minutes was discussed.

Continued Discussion – Updates to Land Use and Development Regulations

a. Campgrounds:

H. Cism says the only new piece is the density in number 3 and under “undeveloped campgrounds” it had said the DRB could waive any of the things under 308A:4 she changed that because they are unable to waive things that fall under wastewater which is a state requirement.

The Planning Commission discussed a few other suggested edits.

M. Tyler would like to add a reference to 323, something along the lines of “and needs to comply”. **H. Cism** will add this to the newest version.

The Planning Commission discussed RVs and campers. Should they add regulations for those types of vehicles in case this is something that comes up in the future?

L. Johnson asks about people who have family who come to visit and set up tents outside or bring a camper and park it in their driveway for guests to stay at. She wonders if it should be specified so you can differentiate between family/personal use and commercial campgrounds.

M. Tyler says it does specify “commercial use” and furthermore it states it must be four or more campsites for it to be considered a campground, so someone pulling a camper into a driveway or popping up a couple tents for family members wouldn’t be considered a campground per the Town’s regulations.

L. Johnson wonders if the sentence should be moved around or referenced to make that a little clearer.

The Planning Commission will consider this.

W. Dunkley wonders if we should add something about “camper vans, trucks” into the regulations somewhere.

M. Tyler doesn’t think they should get too specific about vehicles because there will always be a grey area.

b. WRO Buffers:

There was some correspondence/feedback regarding the WROs.

H. Cism goes over her discussion with D. Schibler (CCRPC) regarding the WRO.

Based on what D. Schibler said, the town cannot reduce the buffer unless the maps within the Town Plan are amended first.

M. Tyler proposes this topic gets tabled until they discuss changes to the Town Plan. The Planning Commission all agree to table the discussion until they move forward with changes to the Town Plan.

M. Letorney discusses a brief history of the WRO and why the State is so strict when it comes to WRO’s. Vermont is getting wetter and facing more intense storms and he feels we need the absorption. Any delineation that the town does will expire in 5 years, he’s not sure how this would play into the applicant’s relationship with the town. Hinesburg and Burlington are both 100ft buffers as are a lot of other towns, it is taken very seriously in Vermont. He feels the town will want to stay qualified for the money that relates to FEMA. He says you don’t need the extra engineering or ecologists if you stay with the 100ft buffer which makes it easier on the applicants. He would strongly advise the Commissioners to read the ANR handbook and the ANR northern Champlain direct drainage tactical basin plan.

c. Diagram Formatting:

H. Cism made up a list of the figures and diagrams to add to the table of contents to make it a little easier. **B. Bornstein** wonders if we can add page numbers rather than just section numbers. **M. Tyler** wonders if there should be a third column that shows where these diagrams are referenced in each section? **H. Cism** says this will be difficult because they are referenced in multiple sections.

B. Bornstein was willing to help H. Cism with this task. **M. Tyler** doesn’t want to create more work, if it seems to be too much, it was just an idea he was throwing out.

c. Interim Bylaw: R5 Scoring System:

Expires October 10th. This was created because several applicants were having a hard time meeting the 27-point system, they were always right around it, so it was lowered to 25 points by the Planning Commission for a period. It doesn’t seem to currently be an issue, but it has been in the past. **B. Bornstein** wonders if it lapses, maybe we just hold off on changing anything since nothing is coming up currently. This is going to expire, **M. Tyler** wonders if one option could be to renew it as an interim-by-law as is for another two years or so?

H. Cism wasn’t sure and will investigate.

M. Tyler asks if they want to update it, let it expire, or modify it and pass it by the expiration date? How important is it if it expires?

e. Regulation Update Timeline:

H. Cism drafted a timeline of the latest possible dates that they can warn all the hearings for the revisions and tracking of the land use and development regulations they've been working on. If the Planning Commission meets every two weeks, they might be able to meet the deadlines.

L. Johnson hopes the Planning Commission won't rush their decisions and will take into consideration what other people have said and have brought up.

Discussion – Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

a. Recap of 7/16 Meeting:

There was a meeting this last Thursday with **T. O'Connor** (Town Admin), **P. Haller** (Selectboard Chair), **M. Tyler**, **H. Cism**, **B. Bornstein** and members of CCRPC. They discussed using CCRPC for assistance with certain projects, now that we're in a new fiscal year; They decided to meet and discuss what the town is looking for.

- 1705 will be headed by Anne Nelson Stoner (CCRPC) with assistance from Maya Balassa (CCRPC). CCRPC will come to the town with a contract and goals/outline for 1705. The Selectboard will be asking the Planning Commission to take the lead in coordinating with CCRPC on this project.
- The second project is assistance with grant writing which will be headed up by Maya Balassa (CCRPC). The Planning Commission hopes to apply for a municipal assistance planning grant with assistance from CCRPC. **M. Tyler** believes this will be focused on engagement for updating the Town Plan. The Town Plan expires in Feb of 2029.
- Eliana Fox (CCRPC) will be heading the project for the pedestrian pathway. **H. Cism** had volunteered to be the point of contact for this project.

B. Bornstein says that there are a lot of services CCRPC will provide while working on these projects, mapping, etc. It will provide the town with a lot more background on what else we will need as we go through regulations, updates to the Town Plan and look for community engagement.

b. Project Teams Identification:

B. Bornstein and K. Tyler will be co-point persons for the 1705 project.

M. Tyler will work with CCRPC on the grant writing project.

W. Dunkley and H. Cism will help with the Brookside Pathway.

A. Woolf will work with whoever needs help at the time.

Correspondence

- a. Mark Letorney correspondence on wetlands.
- b. Seth Jensen correspondence on wetlands.
- c. Kirsten Tyler correspondence on wetlands.
- d. UVM internships are available through the City Planner of Winooski has interns who are interested in helping.
- e. Environmental leadership trainings. (online and free)
- f. July 4th resident feedback on 1705 property usage.

Work Plan Review

- a. B. Bornstein and H. Cism working on changes to regulations.

- b. Next meeting 8/3/26. (W. Dunkley can't attend; he will give his feedback to H. Cism before that meeting).

Anticipated Executive Session

M. Tyler motioned to enter executive session for the reappointing, employing or evaluating of a public officer or employee and would like to invite H. Cism to that discussion.

A. Woolf seconded, motion passed 4-0.

The Planning Commission entered executive session at 8:09pm.

B. Bornstein moved to exit executive session. W. Dunkley seconded, motion carried 4-0.

The Planning Commission exited executive session at 9:03pm.

M. Tyler motioned that the Planning Commission send to the Selectboard a suggested interviewing process for the Town Planner position and recommend members from the Planning Commission, Ben Bornstein and Max Tyler, to be the representatives of an interviewing committee and that the committee work on formulating a list of interview questions to ask potential Town Planner candidates. A. Woolf seconded, motion carried 4-0.

A. Woolf moved to adjourn the meeting. B. Bornstein seconded, motion carried 4-0.

The meeting adjourned at 9:06pm.