

**TOWN OF WESTFORD
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 5TH, 2026
APPROVED ON OCTOBER 19, 2026**

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

Commissioners Absent: None.

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

The meeting began at 6:30pm

Public Hearing for Amendments to Westford Land Use & Development Regulations

M. Tyler reads the notice of the public hearing, which discussed the purposes for amending the Westford Land Use & Development Regulations and what sections they are looking to amend.

M. Tyler read the Rules of Procedure for the Planning Commission's public hearing.

No commissioners declared a conflict of interest.

No commissioners had comments or concerns about the current amendments they are discussing.

B. Peck feels extremely disappointed that it's only herself and Lori Johnson present from the public. She appreciates all the work the board is doing and wishes that more community members were present for these discussions.

A. Woolf Moved to close the hearing, **M. Tyler** seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

M. Tyler motioned that the Planning Commission advances the amendments to the Land Use and Development Regulations as outlined in the notice of the public hearing, and reviewed at previous Planning Commission meetings, to the Selectboard for their consideration. **A. Woolf** seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Amendments to the Agenda

None.

Citizens to be heard – Items not on the agenda

None.

Approval of Minutes – September 21st, 2026

M. Tyler motioned to approve the September 21st minutes as amended. **W. Dunkley** seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

B. Bornstein chose to abstain since he was not at the last meeting.

Updates

- a. Town Planner Search - **H. Cism** says T. O'Connor has been talking with the Town of Fairfax to hopefully share a town planner so that person can be full-time rather than part-time. Last week the Fairfax Town Manager, Zoning Admin and Planning Commission Chair met to discuss this, but the Town of Westford has not yet received an

update. **H. Cism** believes Fairfax is wanting to move forward with this, but we haven't received an official update since their meeting.

b. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Projects –

- i. **1705 Property Engagement:** **H. Cism** met with Maya and Anne Nelson (CCRPC) earlier today, they went over the 1705 Property Existing Conditions document. CCRPC is incorporating the Planning Commission and Selectboard's comments into the document and map. They want the Planning Commission to consider which types of engagement activities should be prioritized. **B. Bornstein** says they went into considerable detail at their meeting with CCRPC, he thinks they have a good idea of what the Planning Commission is asking for.

K. Tyler says they were told by CCRPC that there is not enough time or resources to do all the engagement activities so they would like the board to choose what they would like to prioritize. **M. Tyler** would like to look at them offline; **K. Tyler** can collect the ideas on which activity each commissioner feels can be dropped and which should be prioritized from them, and they can discuss at the next meeting with Maya and Anne Nelson.

There was an email from H. Cism on the status of the WW permit. We have a design from Krebs & Lansing, but it hasn't been submitted to the state yet. They also received an email from T. O'Connor and VLCT about the implications of river access for the town's insurance package.

B. Bornstein says in terms of the delineation on the 1705 property (the wetlands and WW area), he's wondering if the town has been able to move forward with a demarcation, so people have an idea on what areas are off limits. **H. Cism** says this was discussed briefly at the meeting this morning, they're planning to have Melanie (CCRPC) add in the wetland buffer and the general area of the brownfields location to the map. Someone will be staking it out but there is no date for it yet. **B.**

Bornstein would be happy to reach out to Anne Nelson Stoner.

K. Tyler says there are two planned activities to bring the public on a tour around the property, she thinks it would be good for **B. Bornstein** to call someone and ask them to flag these features, but isn't sure who should be contacted. **M. Tyler** thinks we should talk to the GIS person from CCRPC to find out the best way to move forward.

- ii. **Brookside Road Path Study** – **W. Dunkley** says CCRPC issued Hoyle Tanner the Notice to Proceed, this allows them to get started. The Planning Commission learned from CCRPC that since it is related to "complete streets and safety" it can be 100% funded from CCRPC. **H. Cism** sent out a letter to residents/landowners along the affected area of Brookside Rd., posted it to FPF, and posted it to the newsletter.

H. Cism also responded to a couple of residents who had already reached out with concerns/comments.

- iii. **Grant Writing Assistance** - Municipal Planning Grant application has opened. **H. Cism** and **M. Tyler** are meeting with Maya Balassa about this tomorrow. She will have a first draft for them to discuss, and she plans to come to the Planning Commission meeting on October 19th.

Correspondence

- a. Documents from the Town of Milton relative to updates to their regulations.
- b. Email thread discussing housing and affordability.
- c. Information sharing regarding the hypotheticals about what it would take for an enterprise like Boyden Valley Winery/wedding venue to be in Westford.
- d. DRB hearing on the 28th - W. Dunkley asked about the outcome of that hearing; H. Cism answered that it was informally approved, and the formal Notice of Decision is still being drafted for the DRB's review.

Work Plan Review

- a. The next Planning Commission meeting will be on October 19th, 2026 - Maya Balassa from CCRPC will be present.
- b. The Commissioners will get their thoughts to K. Tyler regarding which ideas they like and dislike for community engagement activities by next Monday.
- c. H. Cism will send the *Westford Land Use & Development Regulations* amendments to the Selectboard for their consideration. The Selectboard will have 120 days to hold their own public hearing. They can provide amendments if they choose and once the document gets approved by the Selectboard it will go into effect 21 days after the approval.
- d. B. Bornstein will put in a phone call to CCRPC for the flagging of the physical boundaries of the brownfields and wetlands on the 1705 property.
- e. H. Cism will investigate who did our wetland delineation previously and reach out to them.
- f. M. Tyler reminds the commissioners that budget season is coming up so if anyone is aware of items that could be an expenditure for them next year to please bring that with them to the meeting on October 19th. The 12th of November is when the Planning Commission is scheduled to meet with the Selectboard for their budget presentation.
- g. H. Cism will investigate past Planning Commission budget requests and bring the information back to the board.
- h. M. Tyler says he will entertain agenda items that the commissioners feel important to discuss. For example, he would like to discuss other land use and development regulations at upcoming meetings.
- i. W. Dunkley and A. Woolf will work together for the FPF update.

*M. Tyler motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:23pm. B. Bornstein seconded.
Motion carried 5-0.*

The meeting adjourned at 7:23pm.