



City of Barre, Vermont

May 25, 2023, 5:30 PM

Regular Meeting of the
Planning Commission

Venue Options: **Hybrid (both in-person and virtual)**

Zoom <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86145589233?pwd=WlhINVmZaUMwbzdld1pEZlpkY0N5QT09>

Meeting ID: 861 4558 9233 Passcode: 165821

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
 1. April 13, 2023 [view draft minutes](#)
4. Public comment (for something not on the agenda)
5. New business
 1. Open Public Hearing for draft revisions of the Unified Development Ordinance for Accessory Dwelling Units Section 3202
 - i. Opening Remarks by the Planning Commission
 - ii. Presentation of the draft revisions to Section 3202
 - iii. Questions and answers, any testimony
 - iv. Decision to close or recess public hearing
 - v. Decision to vote to forward draft revisions of Section 3202 to the City Council for consideration of a first reading
 2. Close Public Hearing when no further comments or actions needed
6. Confirm date of next meeting
 1. June 8, 2023
7. Staff updates
8. Roundtable
9. Adjourn

Planning Commission meetings are open to the public.

For questions about accessibility or to request accommodation, please call (802) 477-1465.

Barre City Planning Commission

April 13, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Present: Michael Hellein (Chair), Amanda Gustin (Vice Chair), Joe Reil (Secretary), Rosemary Averill, Raylene Meunier, David Sichel, Becky Wigg

Absent: None

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

Visitors: Peter Anthony, Vermont State Representative for Barre City

1. Call to Order.

5:30 pm.

2. Adjustments to the Agenda.

None.

3. Approval of Minutes.

- i. February 9, 2023 view draft minutes

Sichel moves to approve, Reil seconds, unanimous in favor.

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

None.

5. New Business

- i. Update on current grants and RFPs

Both of the grants requested previously were awarded, at the level we requested.

The Bylaw Modernization, for \$27.5, to update zoning on housing. Shatney has the RFP ready for review, hoping to send soon.

The Municipal Planning Grant, for \$18K to update our North Main to Summer Street Plan. This RFP is in progress.

Further discussion around several other grants:

Bernie Sanders' earmark money, which the City has been granted, for a pipeline on Route 302.

A grant being requested by the Travel Advisory Committee that Bill Ahern submitted (Walkable/Bikable Routes to School Project).

CVRPC got funding for a project to do a traffic calming study on Berlin Street, between Route 62 and Main Street.

VTrans has released another possible grant, Bike and Pedestrian Grant Application, with an informal meeting coming up on May 3.

There was some additional discussion around how the current legislative project to adjust zoning Statewide could shape the Commissions work on the Bylaw Modernization Grant, and how our consultant will likely be on top of this. Peter Anthony indicated it's too early to know what the effects may be.

ii. Consider change to demolition conditions

Hellein notes that there is nothing to draft a motion on at this time for these items, these are just up for discussion to look at situations that have come up and consider possible changes.

Could we make demolition conditional across the city which would mean that requests would go to Development Review Board (DRB) for consideration?

There was discussion around what effects there may be if we set the same standards across the city. Considerations including whether the City should have a say in allowing demolitions. Some concerns are that just because a building is not demolished does not mean it will be rehabilitated, and, if this decision is put before the DRB, what standards will be provided to them to aid in that decision, will they be consistent City-wide or will there possibly be different guidelines for buildings in- and outside of the Design Review Overlay? Further questions/discussions around how the Vacant Building Ordinance might apply, how are other comparable communities in Vermont handling this, and whether this could be included in the Bylaw Modernization project.

iii. Consider parking lot as a primary use in zoning districts

Discussion around definition of primary use and what the advantages of this are and how this relates to parking lots. In downtown locations, parking lots must be an accessory use to a primary structure. Changing the standards could allow the City more control over when and how parking lots are added.

iv. Consider change to city-required parking minimums

Discussion around restrictions on minimum required number of parking spaces and considering removing them complete, though this may be impacted by legislative action. Suggestion that the stated goal of reducing congestion is misplaced and concerns around issues with year-round parking, as winter parking could impact this, as well as how other communities handle parking, were discussed. Possible

advantages to this change are that it would allow more freedom for development and there is a plan to review/adjust winter parking bans by the Parking Committee. Suggestion that this is an item that could come up in relation to the work on the Bylaw Modernization Grant.

6. Confirm Date of Next Meeting.

- i. May 11, 2023

7. Staff Updates.

- i. Shatney reports the hiring of a new Permit Administrator; discusses various DRB items, the Elks Club wants to install a patio, passed, DMS machine wanted to install a new flagpole, denied, Granite Museum at Depot Square subdivided and building is being sold to a Dentist, St. Monica is appealing demolition of their building on West Street. Discussion around other City business.

8. Round Table.

Shatney brings up that most current Planning Commission members' terms are expiring in June and discusses how to re-apply if desired.

9. Adjourn

6:50 pm, **Gustin moves, Averill seconds, unanimous in favor.**

- (1) Non-residential space will not be located above residential space;
- (2) Walls and/or floors that separate residential and non-residential portions of the building will be sound-proofed;
- (3) Private entrance(s) to the dwelling units will be separated from the public and service entrance(s) to the non-residential portions of the building;
- (4) Impact of service and waste collection areas (noise, light, odors, etc.) on building residents will be minimized; and
- (5) Common open space, as required above, will be separated and screened from areas of the property accessible to the general public and from service areas.

3202 Accessory Dwelling

3202.A An accessory dwelling unit (ADU) must:

- (1) Be located within or ~~associated with an owner-occupied, single-family dwelling~~ appurtenant to a single-family dwelling on an owner-occupied lot;
- (2) Be clearly subordinate to the primary dwelling;
- ~~(3) Share a driveway with the primary dwelling;~~
- (4) Have provisions for independent living, including sleeping, food preparation and sanitation in accordance with [Section 3012](#);
- ~~(5)~~ Not exceed 900 square feet or 30% of the habitable floor area of the primary dwelling (prior to the creation of the ADU), whichever is greater;
- ~~(6) Not have more than 2 bedrooms;~~
- ~~(7)~~ Shall be exempt from the ~~Meet the~~ minimum parking requirements for residential uses of [Section 3104](#);
- ~~(8)~~ Meet the applicable dimensional standards of the zoning district; and
- ~~(9)~~ Meet the water supply and wastewater disposal standards of [Section 3024](#).

3202.B A lot must not have more than one accessory dwelling unit.

3202.C The landowner must reside on the property, but may live in either the primary or accessory dwelling unit.

3202.D An accessory dwelling unit will be considered an accessory use of residential property and will not require site plan approval.

3202.E An accessory dwelling unit will not be included in the calculation of residential density.

Staff Report for week ending May 19, 2023:

- The City hired Michelle La Barge-Burke as our Permit Administrator on March 15; some of you may recognize her from working at the Barre Opera House. She has jumped in with excitement and is learning every day as I help her to understand zoning, ordinances and such.
- Permitting, as usual is very busy this spring and early summer. There have been several permits for decks, garages, and accessory dwelling units in the city.
- We have a new Fire Marshal in Code Enforcement. The former Fire Marshal retired in early March, and our long-time electrical inspector resigned in April, and Captain Nicholas Copping was promoted to Fire Marshal, and has been getting his arms around the work, the minimum housing inspections, vacant buildings, time of sale inspections and all the complaints that have come in under his jurisdiction. We are advertising for an electrical inspector who would also assist with the other types of inspections performed out of that office.
- Michelle and I are going to be getting out the FY24 Rental Registry Invoicing the week of May 26, but no later than June 2. With the workload, holiday weekend coming up, and a new Fire Marshal, we are working diligently to get back on track.
- Turning Point and Downstreet Housing grants are still in the final stages, as both entities are awaiting results and reports from the Environmental Assessments, a required piece to be completed prior to the Agency of Commerce/Community Development issuing the final grants. Both hope to start working as soon as the grants are issued.
- I completed the first full quarter report for the ARPA funding, which included reporting who has come to the city so far for ARPA funds with set commitments; the City Council is still working to finalize the listing of those community innovation funds projects for the future.
- Since the April 13th meeting, the Development Review Board had a scheduled hearing on May 4 for the Meltdown Restaurant to request construction of a roof structure over the existing patio, and build a new patio further down on the lawn, expanding their outside dining. Unfortunately, there was not a quorum of DRB members to open the hearing, therefore, the applicant could not be heard that evening.
- Scheduled for the June 1 DRB hearing is the Meltdown's request again, a request for a small on-site parking lot for an apartment building at the corner of Summer Street and Bugbee Avenue that only has off-street parking; and a proposed bar for a conditional use at 224 N. Main Street, the former site of the other half of the old Aubuchon's area. Since the advertising of the DRB agenda, the Meltdown has rescinded their application in front of the DRB.
- I am attending Environmental Court on Thursday for the appeal by St. Monica's that the DRB denied their request to take down 6 West Street for a playground area.
- As the interim assessor, I have has asked for an extension to filing the Abstract ("draft" grand list) so that we can continue to get the homesteads and subsidized housing into our system, sent to us late (all VT communities) due to the attempted change in state software that did not

occur. It will mean that once I get through grievances and finalize the Grand List, turning it over to the City Clerk for tax bill generation will be the same time as last year.

- The Forests, Parks & Recreation folks have issued the final \$10,000 to the City on the Pool Grant, now I am hoping to get closure paperwork soon so that it can be put away.
- I have been working with Vermont Emergency Management to get the Hazard Mitigation projects the former City Manager was in charge of. FEMA is still holding out for more information, and getting the information, permits, engineering information has been challenging. I hope to wrap up their latest request on Monday for more information so that they can consider an amendment (after-the-fact) to our budget so that we could see most, if not all of the funds reimbursed we actually spent on the Granite Street Project alone.
- The Vermont Granite Museum was successful with their subdivision of the Pinsley Depot from the parking lot leased to the City; they were able to obtain a retainer for the purchase of the Depot for the dentist on Washington Street to move his practice there; the hurdle now are the Floodplain regulations and to see if the State Floodplain Manager will look at the dental chairs not as permanent equipment (they would have to elevate the first floor by 2.5 feet to meet the requirements) or they are going to back out of the purchase.
- I have taken Friday, May 26th off for a long, holiday weekend.