

Barre City Planning Commission

May 14, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Present: David Sichel (Chair), Wendy Ducey (Vice Chair), Joe Reil (Secretary), Cat Allen, Rosemary Averill.

Absent: Raylene Meunier

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

Visitors: David Delcore, Times Argus Reporter.

1. Call to Order.

5:30pm.

2. Adjustments to the Agenda.

None.

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

None.

4. Approval of Minutes.

a. March 12, 2026 Regular Meeting.

Averill moved to approve, Sichel seconded, unanimous in favor.

5. Old Business.

a. Commission Membership Update.

Corkins resigned from the Planning Commission. Reil, Meunier, and Averill are not seeking re-appointment. As of July 1, the membership will be David Sichel, Wendy Ducey, and Kat Allen. Shatney asked that if anyone knew of potential members to encourage them to apply.

There was a brief Round Table of introductions and discussion about the Planning Commission's size from 7 members to 5.

b. Municipal Ethics Training Reminder and Certifications.

Reminder about the periodic requirement for the State of Vermont Municipal Ethics Certification.

6. New Business.

- a. New Commissioner Cat Allen welcome.
- b. Rules of Procedure Edits Discussion.

Revised Rules of Procedure for the Planning Commission that were included in the packet. There was no discussion.

Allen moved to approve, Ducey seconded, unanimous in favor.

- c. Alcohol and Tobacco Retail Establishments Locations Discussion

Allen presented a proposal (included in the packet) about introducing new land use categories and location buffers for sensitive use areas for businesses dealing in specific regulated substances. The impetus was concern about an excessive number of businesses dealing in these substances, limiting diversity in the downtown retail environment, potentially hindering engagement and growth in our downtown, this being inconsistent with the goals in the City Plan, as well as discussing the data behind these ideas.

There was follow-up discussion about how these changes would impact or be impacted by surrounding communities and questions about how the density of these businesses in Barre City compares with other communities (we are on the high side) and how the area as a whole may not have a higher density.

There were also some concerns expressed about limiting the creation of new businesses and wanting to be conservative with changes. This was addressed with discussion about the sources of the data and how this proposal is not significantly different than what's been done in other communities, e.g., Brattleboro.

There was a suggestion to include the text of Brattleboro's ordinance in the next meeting packet for review and context.

Averill moved to table discussion to the next meeting, Ducey seconded, Averill, Ducey, and Sichel voted in favor, Allen and Reil voted against, this will be up for discussion during the next meeting.

- d. S.278 regarding Cannabis Consumption events Discussion.

Act 278 is currently being discussed in the State Legislature, looking to create pilot program for two years for cannabis consumption events. Annually, there would be 10 permits for private events, 10 for public events. There is no language in the bill that ties the location to a retail establishment. Allen suggested that Barre should prepare for this possibility and craft an ordinance with guidelines and to define which zones these events could be held in.

There was discussion around whether this is something the Planning Commission could or should address.

Allen moved to table discussion to the next meeting and to include an invitation to Chief Vail to offer his insight, Reil seconded, unanimous in favor, this will be up for discussion during the next meeting.

7. Confirm Date of Next Meeting.

June 11, 2026.

8. Executive Session.

None.

9. Staff Updates.

Details are in the packet.

Additionally, Shatney also discussed Corporate Cup, Barre City's team was named "Team Cara" in honor of Cara Rea, who is experiencing an illness. Shatney also mentioned that Barre City Manager, Nicolas Storellicastro, gave notice of leaving his position.

There was a question from Sichel about Construction Work on Quarry Hill. Shatney indicated that the intent is for new construction, but the current permit is only for clearing the land.

10. Round Table.

Ducey had a question about the work on the upcoming Municipal Plan. Shatney indicated that the RFP will be going out soon and will have an update in June. Allen asked why an RFP was necessary and Shatney answered that the amount of work needed is sufficient to require one.

Allen mentioned that there is a Bill, S.198, currently in the House, about restrictions/barrier for entry updates on vape products and wholesale licenses, as well as there being notes from the Tobacco Strategic Plan available, and suggested that these might be worth reviewing, related to the other discussions.

11. Adjourn.

7:12 pm, **Ducey moved to adjourn, Reil seconded, unanimous in favor.**