

**Approved Minutes
Vermont Downtown Board
11/28/2022**

**Calvin Coolidge Conference Room, 6th Floor, National Life Bldg., Montpelier
& Via MS Teams Virtual Meeting**

Members Present (12):

- Josh Hanford (*Chair*), designated by the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development
- Michele Boomhower, designated by the Secretary of Transportation
- Billy Coster, designated by the Secretary of Natural Resources
- Michael Desrochers, designated by the Commissioner of Public Safety
- Laura Trieschmann, State Historic Preservation Officer
- Jaime Lee, appointed by the Governor, representing the Vermont Natural Resources Council and the Preservation Trust of Vermont.
- David Allaire, designated by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns
- Michael McDonough, appointed by the governor, representing local government
- Bruce Cheeseman, appointed by the Governor, representing local government
- Chip Sawyer, designated by the Vermont Planners Association
- Greg Boulbol, designated by the Chair of the Natural Resources Board
- Ed Bove, alternate designated by the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies
- Cathy Davis, appointed by the Governor, representing the Vermont Association of Chamber Executives

Attending Community Planning and Revitalization (CP+R) Team Members (6): Chris Cochran, Richard Amore, Jacob Hemmerick, Amy Tomasso, and Jenni Lavoie.

Guests (10): Stephen Pilcher; Stan Wilbur; Andy Snelling; Katie Raycroft-Meyer; Marilyn Cargill; Sydney Steinle; Emily Heymann; Matt Boulanger; Jay Kullman, and Brandon Canevari.

Michele Boomhower brought the meeting to order at 1:03pm via MS Teams virtual conference call.

Additions or Deletions to Board Agenda

There were no additions or deletions to the board agenda.

1. Public Comment Period

Josh Hanford opened the meeting to public comment: there were no comments.

2. Consent Agenda Items:

- September 26, 2022, Draft Meeting Minutes
- Guilford Center Designation Renewal

Dave Allaire made a motion to approve the consent agenda items, and Michael McDonough seconded. Ayes: Cathy Davis, Charlie Baker, Chip Sawyer, Dave Allaire, Jaime Lee, Laura Trieschmann, Michael Desrochers, Michael McDonough, Michele Boomhower, Sabina Haskell, and Josh Hanford. The motion carried.

3. Village Center Designations – 4

Town of Monkton – Monkton Ridge Village

The proposed boundary runs along Monkton Road and States Prison Hollow Road and includes the new town hall, the Russell Memorial Library, historic town hall and library, Friends of Methodist Church, Alderman's Chocolate Shop (former general store), former creamery, fire station, post office, commercial businesses, and single-family and multifamily residences. The town worked with staff to define the boundary that meets statutory definition and submitted a map that meets the program's requirements.

Stephen Pilcher shared with board members that the town is actively working on village revitalization, as well as a recreation trail and town forest. The town is hopeful that village center designation benefits and incentives will aid the town as they strive to improve housing options.

Sabina Haskell made a motion to approve village center designation for Monkton village, and Dave Allaire seconded. Ayes: Billy Coster, Cathy Davis, Charlie Baker, Chip Sawyer, Dave Allaire, Jaime Lee, Laura Trieschmann, Michael Desrochers, Michael McDonough, Michele Boomhower, Sabina Haskell, and Josh Hanford. The motion carried.

Town of Plymouth – Plymouth Union Village

The proposed boundary runs along VT Route 100 and includes the Plymouth Community Center, Historical Society, town offices, fire station, town garage, former country store, Salt Ash Inn, Good Commons Retreat Center, commercial businesses, and single-family and multifamily residences. The town worked with staff to define the boundary that meets statutory definition and submitted a map that meets the program's requirements.

Jay Kullman provided a brief review of challenges Plymouth Union has faced since 2008-2009 when during the recession the village lost both the general store and ski store, 2011 brought Tropical Storm Irene which caused significant damage to the town, shortly afterwards the town lost the local school to consolidation. Efforts are underway to revitalize the village with an update to zoning regulations, and an active effort to rehabilitate buildings and improve housing opportunities with ARPA funds that the town has designated for these projects.

Michele Boomhower made a motion to approve village center designation for Plymouth Union village, and Dave Allaire seconded. Ayes: Billy Coster, Cathy Davis, Charlie Baker, Chip Sawyer, Dave Allaire, Jaime Lee, Laura Trieschmann, Michael Desrochers, Michael McDonough, Michele Boomhower, Sabina Haskell, and Josh Hanford. The motion carried.

Town of Plymouth – Tyson Village

The proposed boundary runs along VT Route 100, Dublin Road, and Kingdom Road and includes the library, Tyson Church, walking path, Echo Lake Inn, the Inn at Waters Edge, commercial businesses, and single-family and multifamily residences. The town worked with staff to define the boundary that meets statutory definition and submitted a map that meets the program's requirements.

Jay Kullman shared that the town is also using ARPA funds to rehabilitate buildings, improve housing options, and support local businesses in Tyson village. ARPA funds were used to renovate an important bridge in town, the picture of this bridge was shared with board members.

Jaime Lee made a motion to approve village center designation for Tyson village, and Chip Sawyer seconded. Ayes: Billy Coster, Cathy Davis, Charlie Baker, Chip Sawyer, Dave Allaire, Jaime Lee, Laura Trieschmann, Michael Desrochers, Michael McDonough, Michele Boomhower, Sabina Haskell, and Josh Hanford. The motion carried.

Town of Townshend – West Townshend Village

The proposed boundary runs along VT Route 30 and includes the West Townshend Country Store, post office, West River Community Project initiatives, Calvary Chapel Church, home-

based businesses, commercial businesses, and single-family and multifamily residences. The town worked with staff to define the boundary that meets statutory definition and submitted a map that meets the program's requirements.

Brandon Canevari advised that the town had received a request for West Townshend to be designated as a village center, from a group looking to apply for the Better Places program, which village center designation is an eligibility requirement. The town supported the designation request as other buildings and businesses in the village would also benefit from designation.

Laura Trieschmann made a motion to approve village center designation for West Townshend village, and Michael Desrochers seconded. Ayes: Billy Coster, Cathy Davis, Charlie Baker, Chip Sawyer, Dave Allaire, Jaime Lee, Laura Trieschmann, Michael Desrochers, Michael McDonough, Michele Boomhower, Sabina Haskell, and Josh Hanford. The motion carried.

4. Growth Center, 5-year Review – 1

The Town comes before the Board for its third, five-year review of its growth center pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §2793c.(e) to request that the Board determine that the designation continues to meet the standards for designation in effect at the time it was originally. The submission is complete, and notice was issued in accordance with Board policy.

Emily Heymann, and Matt Boulanger reported to board members that the growth center is the hub of commercial and new residential development activity in Williston and focus of much of the town's planning program. In the past five years, housing projects have been completed, as well as additional commercial enterprises. Just outside the growth center the State is creating a park and ride facility, new public safety facility, and exit 12 improvements. With new Form-Based Code and Official Map becoming effective, the next and final 5 years of the growth center program will help Williston achieve its longstanding goal to create a vibrant, mixed use downtown area.

Board members commended the work that the town is doing, adding that it's benefitting not just the town, but Chittenden County, and the larger Northwest region of the state. Other board members commented on how uniquely situated Williston's growth center is, and that due to the town channeling their energies in this area, it is bearing fruit and is terrific to see. The board asked additional questions about percentages of growth metrics not currently met by the town, and what the board prior position on those were. Staff reported that the town has five more years to meet all requirements of the 20-year program.

Charlie Baker made a motion that Williston's Growth Center continues to meet the standards for designation in effect at the time it was originally designated, and Chip Sawyer seconded. Ayes: Billy Coster, Cathy Davis, Charlie Baker, Chip Sawyer, Dave Allaire, Jaime Lee, Laura Trieschmann, Michael Desrochers, Michael McDonough, Michele Boomhower, Sabina Haskell, and Josh Hanford. The motion carried.

5. Old Business / New Business

Chris Cochran advised that the December 2022 meeting is canceled, and the January 2023 meeting will be in-person due to a full agenda. He also reported that legislative changes are still moving forward in regard to changes allowing the board more time to review applications and to be paid per diem and mileage to attend meetings as other boards.

6. Adjourn

Charlie Baker made a motion to adjourn, and Michele Boomhower seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The Downtown Board meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Jenni Lavoie