

Norwich Planning Commission
Special meeting – April 28th, 2026, 6:30pm

To be Held in person in the Tracy Hall Multipurpose Room and via Zoom

Zoom Information:

Topic: Planning Commission Regular Meeting

Time: April 28th, 2026, 6:30 PM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81943198529>

Meeting ID: 819 4319 8529

888 475 4499 US Toll-free

AGENDA

1. Open Meeting; determine quorum
2. Approve Agenda
3. Public comment on items not on agenda
4. Village Master Plan – Steering Committee
5. Adjourn

Enclosures:

Norwich Village Planning Project Summary 2026 - 031926

Norwich Village Master Plan - Workplan Outline 040826

MG comments Norwich Village Master Plan Summary

MG comments Norwich Village Master Plan Work Plan Outline

2026 MPG Work Plan & Budget

Jean Richardson CV - January2026

2026 Norwich Village Master Plan – Workplan Outline

DRAFT

Define project and create consultant RFP [April – June]

Activities:

Steering committee formation and education

Village historical context

Planning Areas within a Town Plan

Pre-existing conditions of planning elements - physical, regulatory, human & prior planning studies

Frame questions important to village planning

- Village area boundaries
- Bike/Ped/trail
- How much new housing, what kind and where?
- Economic development – how much, what kind and where?
- Village public activities now and preferences for future
- What is the infrastructure necessary to support the plan?
- What does resilience look like in the future?

Events: 3 - 4 steering committee meetings April 27 through mid-June

Output:

- Statement of Work for all phases, including specific RFP for consultant
- Definition of necessary background information
- Create framing questions and capture steering committee's initial thoughts
- Plan for informal public discussion during summer

Hire consultant – collect background [July & August]

Activities

Steering committee members engage informally with residents

~ 2 steering committee meetings over summer for updates on community conversations and consultant search

Output – Consultants hired & contract approved by Selectboard

Public engagement on all topics [September – November]

Activities:

Collect background data – traffic, housing, soils, infrastructure, sidewalks

Collect example village plans from other Vermont towns

Townwide directed conversation with publicity push - possible town wide survey

Events:

3 – 4 steering committee meetings including consultant
Two charrettes with maximum public participation

Output:

Articulated town's vision, priorities and needs to be incorporated into the draft plan
List of open questions and topics for possible follow-up

Draft, edit and approve village plan [January & February '27]

Create plan drafts for review by steering committee and Planning Commission
Public review, hearings and Selectboard approval

Create detailed list of follow up activities

Norwich Village Master Plan 2026

Norwich will undertake a robust, inclusive planning process to develop a new Village Master Plan. The project will be led by the Norwich Planning Commission and conducted through the formation of a steering committee. A professional planning consultant will be hired to facilitate public engagement, analyze existing conditions, build scenarios and draft the plan for review. The process will include:

- Designing rich community engagements to gather input from residents, businesses, and stakeholders.
- Conduct workshops targeting a wide range of interests to ensure broad participation.
- Data collection and mapping of current land use, infrastructure, housing, and environmental assets.
- Review of best practices and model plans from similar Vermont towns.
- Iterative plan development with multiple opportunities for public feedback.

Project Deliverables

- A comprehensive Norwich Village Master Plan, including actionable strategies for growth, housing, infrastructure, community building, resilience, and historic preservation.
- Public engagement summary documenting outreach efforts and community input.
- GIS-based maps illustrating current conditions and future scenarios.
- Recommendations for zoning updates and capital improvements.
- Identification of funding sources and implementation steps for priority projects.

Intended Long-Term Outcomes

The Village Master Plan will serve as a roadmap for Norwich's sustainable growth and resilience over the next decade. This village plan will become an integral part of the full town plan re-write to be completed in 2028. Long-term outcomes include:

- Improved coordination of development and infrastructure investments.
- Expanded affordable housing options.
- Safer streets and multimodal transportation networks.
- Preservation of Norwich's historic village, rural character and natural resources.
- Increased community engagement and capacity for future planning efforts.
- Eligibility for state and federal funding to implement plan recommendations.

Project Location

The town of Norwich with a specific focus on the historic village center, surrounding village area and along the Route 5 corridor.

Project Management

The Norwich Village Master Plan project will be managed by a steering committee formed by the Norwich Planning Commission. The steering committee will include members with a broad set of perspectives and interests, including historic preservation, families and children, affordable housing, town government, economic development, and a regional view. The steering committee will design public outreach to ensure all opinions are included in this community planning exercise. Decisions regarding the planning process and deliverables will be made by the Planning Commission, with recommendations forwarded to the Selectboard for final approval.

The Planning Commission will champion the project, manage public engagement, and distribute information broadly once approved by the Selectboard. This management structure is designed to ensure effective oversight, broad community involvement, and successful completion of the Norwich Village Master Plan.

Public Outreach

Public participation is vital to the success of the Norwich Village Master Plan. Our goal is to inform and involve as many Norwich residents as possible throughout the planning process. In addition to traditional outreach methods—such as community surveys, press releases, articles in local newspapers and newsletters, updates on the Town website and social media—the Planning Commission will hold open meetings monthly, with dedicated Village Plan sessions for public input.

Define project and create consultant RFP [April – June]

Activities:

Steering committee formation and education

Village historical context

Planning Areas within a Town Plan

Pre-existing conditions of planning elements - physical, regulatory, human & planning

Frame questions important to village planning and in responding to them, please

identify whether there are cost implications that need to be understood and quantified:

- Define the optimal boundaries of the Village area boundaries
- Bike/Ped/trails Outline the current status of pedestrian and bicycling paths and trails in the Village and identify changes that would enhance the Village experience.
- What recreational opportunities are available in the Village and identify any changes that would enhance the Village experience? Current and future recreational opportunities in town
- What kinds of goods, services and organizations do we want in the village?
- Housing, what kind and where? Describe the current housing in the village and identify any changes that would enhance the village (e.g. the recently proposed change to permit ADUs in the village).
- Economic development – how much, what kind and where? (Covered in the question regarding what kind of goods, services and organizations do we want in the village?)
- What public activities are available in the Village public activities now and what are the preferences for the future. Are there additional public activities that would enhance the Village experience.
- What is the infrastructure necessary to support the plan? What are the cost implications (both one time and on-going) of the potential changes?
- What is the current status of traffic in the Village at peak travel areas? How will the potential changes impact the traffic in the Village?
- What does resilience look like in the future? (I don't understand this question – what are we asking about?)

Events: 3 - 4 steering committee meetings May through mid-June

Output:

- Statement of Work for all phases, including specific RFP for consultant
- Definition of necessary background information
- Create framing questions and capture steering committee's initial thoughts

- Plan for informal public discussion during summer

Hire consultant – collect background [July & August]

Activities

Steering committee members engage informally with residents [\(I suggest that this needs to be better defined. What is “informal engagement?” – do they meet with town committees? Talk with people at the Transfer Station or Dan & Whit’s? This seems a bit too unstructured.](#)

~ 2 steering committee meetings over summer for updates on community conversations and consultant search

Output – Consultants hired & contract approved by Selectboard

Public engagement on all topics [September – November]

Activities:

Collect background data – traffic, housing, soils, infrastructure, sidewalks

Collect example village plans from other Vermont towns

Townwide directed conversation with publicity push - possible town wide survey [A survey of all residents seems warranted.](#)

Events:

3 – 4 steering committee meetings including consultant

Two charrettes with maximum public participation

Output:

Articulated town’s vision, priorities and needs to be incorporated into the draft plan [Include estimated cost \(one-time and on-going\) of the changes suggested in the draft plan.](#)

List of open questions and topics for possible follow-up

Draft, edit and approve village plan [January & February ‘27]

Create plan drafts for review by steering committee and Planning Commission

Public review, hearings and Selectboard approval

Create detailed list of follow up activities

Norwich Village Master Plan 2026

Norwich will undertake a robust, inclusive planning process to [understand what residents value in the current Village and how they would like to see the Village evolve](#). ~~The deliverable will be develop~~ a new Village Master Plan. The project will be led by the Norwich Planning Commission and conducted through the formation of a steering committee. A professional planning consultant will be hired to facilitate public engagement, analyze existing conditions, build scenarios and draft the plan for review. The process will include:

- Designing rich community engagements to gather input from residents, businesses, and stakeholders.
- Conduct workshops targeting a wide range of interests to ensure broad participation.
- [Data collection and mapping of current land use, infrastructure, housing, and environmental assets.](#)
- [Robust cost estimates to understand the financial implications \(both one-time and on-going\) to proposed changes.](#)
- Review of best practices and model plans from similar Vermont towns.
- Iterative plan development with multiple opportunities for public feedback.

Project Deliverables

- A comprehensive Norwich Village Master Plan [outlining the feedback on how the Village might evolve to better serve the needs and ambitions of the community](#). ~~The plan may include input on the needs for , including actionable strategies for growth in~~ housing, infrastructure, community [land and spaces, services, building](#), resilience, and historic preservation.
- Public engagement summary documenting outreach efforts and community input.
- GIS-based maps illustrating current conditions and future scenarios.
- Recommendations for zoning updates and capital improvements, [including robust estimates of one-time and on-going costs](#).
- Identification of funding sources and implementation steps for priority projects. [\(Is it the role of this group to set the “priority projects”?\)](#)

Intended Long-Term Outcomes

The Village Master Plan will serve as a roadmap for Norwich’s ~~sustainable growth and evolution~~ [resilience](#) over the next decade. This village plan will become an integral part of the full town plan re-write to be completed in 2028. ~~Long-term outcomes include:~~ [Why are we including outcomes when the conversations have not occurred.](#)

- ~~Improved coordination of development and infrastructure investments.~~
- ~~Expanded affordable housing options.~~

- ~~Safer streets and multimodal transportation networks.~~
- ~~Preservation of Norwich’s historic village, rural character and natural resources.~~
- ~~Increased community engagement and capacity for future planning efforts.~~
- ~~Eligibility for state and federal funding to implement plan recommendations.~~

Project Location

The town of Norwich with a specific focus on the historic village center, surrounding village area and the newly designated transition area along the Route 5 corridor.

Project Management

The Norwich Village Master Plan project will be managed by a steering committee formed by the Norwich Planning Commission. The steering committee will include members with a broad set of perspectives and interests, including historic preservation, families and children, affordable housing, [conservation](#), town government, economic development, and a regional view. The steering committee will design public outreach to ensure all opinions are [included-invited to participate](#) in this community planning exercise. Decisions regarding the planning process and deliverables will be made by the Planning Commission, with recommendations forwarded to the Selectboard for final approval.

The Planning Commission will [champion-oversee](#) the project, manage public engagement, and distribute information broadly once approved by the Selectboard. This management structure is designed to ensure effective oversight, broad community involvement, and successful completion of the Norwich Village Master Plan.

Public Outreach

Public participation is vital to the success of the Norwich Village Master Plan. Our goal is to inform and involve as many Norwich residents as possible throughout the planning process. In addition to traditional outreach methods—such as community surveys, press releases, articles in local newspapers and newsletters, updates on the Town website and social media—the Planning Commission will hold open meetings monthly, with dedicated Village Plan sessions for public input.

Narrative Resume, January 2026

Jean Richardson

710 Old Hollow Road, North Ferrisburgh, Vermont 05473, USA
jeanrichardson43@comcast.net PH: 802-425-3733 (H/Office); 802-238-0730 (mobile and text).

Jean Richardson is Professor Emerita of Natural Resources - Environmental Studies, and Environmental Law - University of Vermont; Consultant/Independent Contractor in matters relating to interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches to sustainable rural development, environment, agriculture, ecology, land use planning and zoning; served as adjunct faculty at the Vermont Law School, Environmental Law Center, teaching ecology and ecosystem analysis to Lawyers; ISO trained Auditor/Assessor; IOIA trained Organic Inspector and Auditor; Grass fed trained Auditor/Inspector; National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) 2012-2017 and Chair NOSB 2014-2016. Member of the first Joint Public Advisory Board (JPAC) in the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) in NAFTA 1994-2000 (Presidential Appointment).

Education/Training: Dr. Richardson received her B.Sc. (1965) with First Class Honors from the Faculties of Science, University of Newcastle, England; her M.S. (1967) and Ph.D. (1970) in Biogeography University of Wisconsin, Madison. Post-doctoral Law Clerkship in Vermont (1978-1982); Advanced studies in strategic negotiation, Harvard University, John F. Kennedy School of Government; Advanced Organic certification training through the International Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA); ISO/IEC 17065 training, American National Standards Institute (ANSI) April 2017.

Professional History: Dr. Richardson grew up in rural Northumberland, England, on the Scottish Border. She was the first woman in Britain to do the weather forecast live on evening television. Following her B.Sc. degree Jean received a Fulbright Scholarship to the United States for graduate work. Her M.S. research involved pollen analysis of Horicon Marsh, Wisconsin, and her Ph.D. was on plant domestication, specifically the Pecan, (*Carya illinoensis*) in North America. Jean has extensive international research and consulting experience over three decades in Western and Eastern Europe, Russia, China, West Africa, Australia, New Zealand, where she lived for six years, the South Pacific, South, Central and North America.

During the period 1971-76 Jean and her husband and two daughters resided in New Zealand, working on species and habitat preservation for the New Zealand Wildlife Service. The family returned to Vermont in 1976, establishing an ecologically based farm in Fairfield Vermont to experiment with sustainable management practices. In 1978 Jean joined the Faculty of the University of Vermont, retiring in 2001 to pursue her consulting work.

Environmental/Ecological/Agricultural Research includes: Conducted the plant identification and habitat research for J.A.D. Flack - Monograph: *Bird Populations of the Aspen Forests of North America*. Conducted plant identification and habitat research for J.A.D Flack research to save the endangered New Zealand Black Robin. Provided technical advice to the Government of Buryatia, former USSR, on ecological preservation of the Lake Baikal watershed in order to assure protection of rare and endangered species and preserve ecological habitat connectors. Researched and published monograph on *Dioxin Sources, Air Transport and Contamination of Dairy Feed Crops and Milk*, in which data were collected on both Wisconsin and Vermont Farms, assessed in a national context, and regional policy recommendations were developed based on the scientific findings, submitted to the EPA. Several Technical Reports on substances allowed in organic food and agriculture, for the National Organic Program, USDA, including proposal to amend the use of parasiticides, resulting in a Rule change.

Grants: Dr Richardson is the recipient of numerous grants awarded over the decades including a major rural development grant in 1990 through the WK Kellogg Foundation "Environmental Partnerships in Communities". One component of this work included funding grass based livestock production. Other grants relate to community land use planning, historic preservation, forest stewardship, long distance transportation of dioxin.

Recent Consulting: Technical Assessor/Auditor for the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Peer Review of the National Organic Program, 2016 - 2025 including ISO/IEC 17011; Annual

technical audit of Vermont Organic Farmers (VOF) Certification organization 2019, 2021 – 2023, 2025; Internal Auditor for MOFGA, 2024 and 2025; Material Review/Technical Reports for the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI); Organic inspector of farm and processing businesses for several Accredited Certifying Agencies (2000-2020); Inspector of Grass Fed certified organic dairy farms (2015-2020). Land Use planning consulting.

Negotiation/Assessment: In the late 1990's Jean helped negotiate regional Forest Certification Standards and establish the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) in the USA and Canada. Provided consulting advice and led negotiations for: the Vermont State Legislature; The Council of State Governments; the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and several universities, over a period of three decades.

Gubernatorial and Presidential Appointments include: the Vermont District 9 Environmental (Act 250) Commission, Chair (2011-2019); State of Vermont Environmental Appeal Board (Act 250) (1993-94 & 2001-2006); the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women (1978-1981). In 1994 Dr. Richardson was appointed by President Clinton as one of five US citizens to represent the United States on the NAFTA Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) working with five Canadians, and five Mexicans to provide formal advice to their governments on a range of environmental issues. At the international level she was appointed by the government of Buryatia in Siberia to the Scientific Board for the protection of Lake Baikal.

National Organic Standards Board (NOSB): Dr Richardson was appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to the NOSB in January 2012 to serve a 5 year term. In May 2014 she was elected Chair. She served on numerous subcommittees – Certification/Accreditation, Livestock, Handling, Policy, Working Group on Livestock Vaccines, and Working Group on Inerts.

Books: Book on sustainable rural community development is *Partnerships in Communities; Reweaving the Fabric of Rural America*, Island Press, Washington (2000).
A History of the Village of North Ferrisburgh, Vermont, 1762-2019, Ferrisburgh Historical Society and available on Town Website.

Organizations: Richardson was a founding Director of the Institute of Sustainable Communities, (ISC) a non-profit which provides countries in the former Soviet Block with training in environmental and ecological approaches and sample templates of environmental policies and laws; founding Director of Environmental Partnerships in Communities (EPIC), a comprehensive sustainable rural community development project funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation; President of the New England Environmental Policy Center (NEEPC) an independent research and policy NGO. Director of EPIC for ten years and then helped establish the Environmental and Agricultural Mediation Center in Vermont and New Hampshire.

Jean also served as: Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors of the Vermont Natural Resources Council; Board of Directors of the Northwest Medical Center in Franklin County, Vermont; Board of Directors of the National Wildlife Federation (NWF); Editorial Board of the Island Press non-profit publishing company in Washington DC; Advisory Board of Seventh Generation Company.

Awards include: Fulbright Scholarship; Kellogg National Leadership Fellowship; The Donlon Professor of Environmental Science, State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry at Syracuse; Elected Fellow to the Vermont Academy of Arts and Sciences; Environmental Merit Award from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Personal: Jean lives in an 1830's house on the banks of Lewis Creek in Addison County Vermont where she manages 30 acres of mixed deciduous forest and Class 2 Wetlands as well as perennial gardens and orchard. She produces a wide array of fruits and vegetables in a bird and butterfly friendly habitat with as many native plant species as possible; has a flock of heritage breed layer hens; makes organic maple syrup in spring, and by late April her gardens are covered in daffodils. Jean serves as a Justice of the Peace; She is former Chair of Addison County Environmental District Commission; present Chair of the Board of Civil Authority; Clerk on the Planning Commission in Ferrisburgh, Vermont.

January 2026

Work Plan and Budget

| Task Name | Description of Task | Paid Personnel | If Other, please specify | Hours | Hourly Rate | Personnel Cost | Material Description | Material Cost | Total Cost |
|---|---|----------------|--------------------------|-------|-------------|----------------|---|---------------|------------|
| Organizational Meetings | Nominally 4-6 Meetings between Steering Committee & Consultant over the course of the project (kick-off, organizational, strategy) | Consultant | Steering Committee/Staff | 50 | \$110.00 | \$5,500 | | | \$5,500 |
| Growth, Housing & Infrastructure charette | Assembly of materials | Consultant | Steering Committee/Staff | 32 | \$80.00 | \$2,560 | | | \$2,560 |
| Growth, Housing & Infrastructure charette | Meeting time and travel | Consultant | Steering Committee/Staff | 8 | \$90.00 | \$720 | | | \$720 |
| Growth, Housing & Infrastructure charette | Data analysis and chapter drafting | Consultant | Steering Committee/Staff | 32 | \$110.00 | \$3,520 | | | \$3,520 |
| Historic Preservation, Resilience & Community Building charette | Assembly of materials | Consultant | | 32 | \$90.00 | \$2,880 | | | \$2,880 |
| Historic Preservation, Resilience & Community Building charette | Meeting time and travel | Consultant | | 8 | \$80.00 | \$640 | | | \$640 |
| Historic Preservation, Resilience & Community Building charette | Data analysis and chapter drafting | Consultant | | 32 | \$110.00 | \$3,520 | | | \$3,520 |
| Village Master Plan Draft Review | Review of entire draft plan for clarity, readability to ensure that a broad swathe of the population can read and understand the document without prior planning knowledge. | Consultant | | 40 | \$90.00 | \$3,600 | 3 | | \$3,600 |
| Communications | Materials | Consultant | Steering Committee/Staff | | | \$0 | Postcard Mailing (1,350@0.62), Communications | \$837 | \$837 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|------------|--------------------------|----------|---|---------|---------|----------|
| Marketing | Materials | Consultant | Steering Committee/Staff | | Presentation Materials Posters, Renditions, GIS | \$5,000 | \$5,837 | \$28,777 |
| | | | | \$22,940 | | | | |

After entering the amount of STATE GRANT FUNDS being requested, click **SAVE** - all other fields will automatically calculate based on the information entered into the table above.

Total Project Cost: \$28,777

State Grant Funds (Grant Amount Requested): \$20,899.00 *

Total Match Funds: \$7,878.00

Minimum Required Cash Match Funds: \$2,878
(10% of Total Project Cost)

Additional Cash Match Funds: \$5,000
(Optional)

The required 10% match is based off the Total Project Cost.

BUDGET DOCUMENTATION

Describe source(s) of match funds: *

Contribution of municipal staff or volunteer's time cannot be offered as a match. Other contributions, while not required, may be documented here as well.

The Norwich Planning Department has set aside funds for match contributions, and planning services such as consultant & material fees in its annual budget.
Explain how you developed a realistic work plan and budget. *

I met with TRORC staff to brainstorm and qualify the spend for this project.

Upload or email supporting documents that show the work plan and budget is based on realistic information. Please provide a letter or other documentation from a consultant with cost estimates for tasks, including hourly rate.

Upload Budget Documents
 Norwich Village Master Plan MPG budget.pdf

Emailed to DHCD

ACCOUNTING

Responses to the following questions are used for administrative purposes only and will not impact the competitiveness of your application.

Please remember that state funds cannot be awarded to municipalities who are (a) suspended or debarred by the Federal Government; (b) delinquent in submitting their subrecipient annual reports; and (c) delinquent in submitting their Single Audit Reports (if required).

What type of accounting system does your municipality use? *

Automated

Manual

Combination of both

Does your organization have an accounting system that will allow you to completely and accurately track the receipt and disbursements of funds related to the award? *

Yes