

TOWN OF NORWICH
PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

DRAFT Minutes

October 13th, 2026

Tracy Hall and Zoom

Members present: Jaan Laaspere (Chair), Mary Gorman, Bob Pape, Vince Crow

Members absent: Jeff Goodrich, Miller Nuttle, Christian Spalding (Vice-Chair)

Staff: Steven True, Director, Planning & Zoning

Minute Taker: Steven True

Others Present: Amy Stringer

1. **Meeting opened at 6:30 PM. A quorum was present.**
2. **Approve Agenda:** Vince Crow moved to approve the agenda. Gorman seconds. **MOTION** carries (4-0)
3. **Public Comment and Correspondence:** There was no public comment. Steven True presented an email from Yanmei Lin on behalf of a Vermont Law School research team requesting a listening session about land-use policy and community preparedness for flooding and drought. True will follow up with the team and develop a more specific proposal.
4. **Chair's Report:**
 - a. Route 5 Bike/Pedestrian Scoping Study: The state approved the scoping study. True will handle related paperwork and coordination, and the work will be considered alongside the Village Master Plan.
 - b. Municipal Planning Grant: True reported that the 2027 grant application is due December 2 and may provide approximately \$25,000 for Town Plan or bylaw work. He will obtain model applications from Two Rivers and aim to bring application materials to the November meeting.
5. **Capital Planning:** Members discussed developing a five-year capital plan to identify infrastructure needs and help prioritize projects and spending. Discussion included coordination with the Selectboard and Finance Committee. Members supported Chair Laaspere's proposal to send the Selectboard a memo outlining the Planning Commission's role and requesting participation and Finance Committee assistance. Laaspere will prepare the memo and report back.
6. **Affordable Housing Subcommittee Memo on Missing Middle Housing:** Members discussed the memo as a starting point for further consideration, not a final Planning Commission recommendation. Discussion addressed the scope of potential zoning changes and possible effects on neighborhoods, population, traffic, and infrastructure. No

formal action was taken.

7. **Village Master Plan Update:** Laaspere reported on the steering committee's work with consultant DuBois & King. Key themes include housing and infrastructure, trails and bicycle/pedestrian safety, and the historic village center. The steering committee is developing a public participation plan that includes online project information, stakeholder outreach, a town-wide mailing, and public working sessions. Dates for the public sessions were not yet confirmed.
8. **2028 Town Plan Structure:** Members discussed Montpelier's Town Plan as a possible model for a more concise and action-oriented plan. The Commission will continue reviewing how Montpelier organizes priorities and implementation strategies before considering how to adapt the approach for Norwich.
9. **Minutes from August 11th**
 - a. Pape moved, Crow seconds to approve the minutes. No discussion. **MOTION** carries (4-0).
10. **Adjourn**
 - a. **MOTION** is made by Gorman, seconded by Pape to adjourn. No discussion. **MOTION** carries (4-0). Meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM.

Next Meeting: November 10th at 6:30 PM
