



The City of Rutland, Vermont

Planning Commission

Meeting Minutes

*Tuesday, May 12, 2026 – City Hall, 1st Floor Conference Room
52 Washington Street, Rutland, VT 05701*

Attendance: Rebekah Stephens (Chair), Aaron Hildebrand, Susan Starr-Adams, Jared Blake, Morgan Via, Michael Allen (online), John Ruggiero, Luke Alexander (Staff), Mayor Tom Donahue, and Ed Bove (Staff)

- 1. Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM.
- 2. Additions/Deletions to Agenda** – One change to agenda: add representative from Planning Commission to City of Rutland Architectural Review Committee, after approval of minutes.
- 3. Minutes** – Motion by Starr-Adams to approve minutes of April 8, 2026, with change to Attendance (remove duplicative, and incorrectly-spelled, Peter Franzoni). Second by Blake. Approved by voice vote.
- 4. Architectural Review Committee** – Motion Hildebrand for Susan Starr-Adams to replace Aaron Hildebrand on Architectural Review Committee as representative from the Rutland City Planning Commission starting in June. Second by Stephens. Approved by voice vote.
- 5. Public Comment** – John Ruggiero will make comments during Land Development Regulations agenda item.
- 6. Rutland City Action Plan** – Bove provided an overview of Planning Commission projects and timeline. The Rutland City Municipal Plan update, Land Development Regulations update, and Rutland City Act 250 Tier 1A application were discussed.

The goal is to set a public hearing for the LDR update at the June Planning Commission meeting for July 8th. A Community and Economic Development Committee of the Board of Aldermen could occur on July 13th.

The Act 250 Tier 1A application can be submitted to the Land Use Review Board (LURB) when the Rutland Regional Plan and Future Land Use Map is approved by the (LURB). The RRPC plans to adopt the plan on May 19th, and submit to the LURB immediately after. The LURB has 60 days to hold a public hearing (which will be in Rutland) on the Regional Plan and then 15 days to approve. Once the Rutland Regional Plan is approved by the LURB the City of Rutland

can submit the Tier 1A application. The review process for the Tier 1A application could take one to two months.

The pros and cons of returning back to a 5-member Planning Commission, from the current 7-member board was discussed. The Rutland City Planning Commission had operated as a 5-member board until 2023.

- 7. Land Development Regulations** – Bove discussed the Rutland City Land Development Regulations update components. The work is being driven by the Act 250 Tier 1A application, BOA interest in including Signage in the LDR (from the Building Code), simplifying the regulations for applicants and P&Z Staff, and addressing current development topics, such as ground-floor, street-facing residential uses in the Downtown area.

Edits to language in the Sign regulations were discussed, including the need to have these regulations included in the LDR (from the Building Code) for the Tier 1A application. For the purposes of this update, the content and standards of the sign regulations will remain the same.

The Zoning Map was discussed, including the consolidation of the eight Gateway Business Districts into one Gateway Business district. There are a handful of properties that are proposed to have their zoning district changed. The letter from Planning and Zoning Department staff which will be sent to these property owners was reviewed. Standards of the MR-2 and POP (being renamed to Healthcare) Districts were reviewed.

The topic of ground floor, street-facing residential uses in the Downtown Business (DB) District was discussed. This type of use is currently allowed in the DB District. A permit for 62 Merchants Row, converting a commercial use into a residential use, is being appealed to the DRB and a part of the discussion.

John Ruggiero expressed desire to keep the LDR as fluid as possible and to not add more restrictions to the DB District standards, noting that currently there is very little demand for retail uses, while the demand for residential is high. He stated that there is a lot of commercial vacancy and downtown building owners are just trying to survive. Adding more restrictions to the bylaws will not make things more vibrant. There was discussion on building owners keeping units vacant and what triggers review by the Architectural Review Committee. This topic will be discussed further at future Planning Commission meetings.

- 8. Adjourn** – Meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM. Next meeting of the Rutland City Planning Commission will take place on Wednesday, June 10, 2026.