

## **Mendon Planning Commission Minutes (DRAFT)**

### **May 5, 2025**

**Present:** Justin Lindholm, Sarah Buxton and Teri Corsones were present in person. Fred Bagley and Dick Howe were present via the GoToMeeting platform. Zoning Administrator Gregg Smith was also present in person. The draft April 7, 2025 minutes were approved with a correction to the year of the Mendon Town Plan as referenced in the RRPC materials and with a correction to the dates of the additional MPC meetings dedicated to the zoning regulation update work in May, June and July.

**Sachdev Update:** Neither Anil Sachdev nor his attorney Frank Urso were present to provide updated information regarding the Econolodge property.

At the November 13, 2024 MPC meeting Mr. Sachdev had indicated that he had an extension until December 9, 2024 to resolve the safety deficiencies identified in the Agency of Natural Resources sanitation letter detailed in prior minutes. He was to report on the status of the deficiencies at the December 2 MPC meeting. He did not attend the December 2 MPC meeting and the matter was continued until the January 6 MPC meeting. Given Mr. Sachdev's absence at the January 6 MPC meeting, the matter was continued again until the February 3 MPC meeting. Given his absence at the February 3 MPC meeting, the matter was continued again until the March 11 MPC meeting. Given his absence at the March 11 MPC meeting, the matter was continued again until the April 7 MPC meeting. Given his absence at the April 7 MPC meeting, the matter was continued again until the May 5 MPC meeting. Given his absence at the May 5 MPC meeting, the matter will be continued again until the June 2 MPC meeting.

**Zoning Regulations Update:** Rutland Regional Planning Commission consultant Logan Solomon attended the meeting in person to provide an update on the work he has done on the Mendon Zoning Regulations. Logan presented a "Suggested Mendon Zoning Map" with an explanatory heading that provides: "Consolidation Only RRPC Suggested Map for Mendon Planning Commission Consideration". Logan explained that the purpose of the suggested map revision was to consolidate current zoning districts with near-identical provisions in order to simplify and

clarify the districts. Following is a summary of the proposed consolidated districts and the proposed boundaries for each in the revised suggested map:

Village District – same boundary as the current Village District

Commercial District – same boundary as the current Commercial District

Residential 1 District – same boundary as the current Residential 1 District plus the current Robinwood Residential District

Residential 2 District – same boundary as the current Residential 2 District plus the current Residential 3 District

Rural District – same boundary as the current Rural District plus the current Wheelerville District

Protected Land District – same boundary as the current East District, the current Conservation I District, the current Conservation II District, the current City Forest District, and the current Ski Area District.

Should a decision be made to consolidate different districts that have different minimum lot sizes (such as the Residential 2 District that has a minimum lot size of 2 acres and the Residential 3 District that has a minimum lot size of 3 acres), a decision would need to be made as to which minimum lot size to choose for any such new consolidated districts. Members would seek public input for that policy decision in the course of the review process.

Logan explained that an advantage of the latest revised mapping approach is that no current zoning district boundaries are being changed; current districts with their current boundaries are proposed to be consolidated without changing district boundary lines. Logan was asked if he could provide a separate map showing just the government lands, as well as the latest suggested map with a ridgeline overlay so those maps could also be reviewed. Logan said that he could provide both.

Members had questions regarding specific language regarding several areas in the Working Draft that Logan provided at the April 7 MPC meeting. The areas include references to solar arrays, permitted uses, primitive camps and short-term rentals.

Regarding solar arrays, members discussed the distinction between solar arrays connected to the grid and not connected to the grid, and solar arrays on rooftops versus on the ground. The possibility of a section dedicated to solar arrays was

discussed. A separate section would make clear what the different circumstances are as well as reference the state statutes involved.

Regarding permitted uses, members asked if there could be a way to consider applications for a use that is very similar to but not identical to a permitted use. Logan cited proposed section 301(b) in the Working Draft. Section 310(b) provides that if a use is not a prohibited use in section 301(a) and if is “similar in impact” to a use that is either expressly allowed as a permitted or conditional use in the district in which the use is proposed that the Zoning Board of Adjustment could potentially review the application as one for a conditional use. Members asked that if such a similar use was a permitted use that a site plan review process apply and that if such a similar use was a conditional use then the conditional use process apply. Logan will re-draft that section for further discussion and input.

Regarding primitive camps, new draft section 618 proposes to exempt primitive camps from the zoning regulations. The definition of a primitive camp in the proposed section is: “A building that is for residential use and is occupied for no more than 60 days in any calendar year and occupied for no more than 3 consecutive weeks”. Members determined that more discussion and public input would be helpful.

Regarding short-term rentals, new draft section 619 sets forth a variety of provisions “informed by Act 10 of 2018; Killington Zoning; and Rutland Town Short-Term Rental Ordinance”. The section includes a definitional section, a registration section, occupancy provisions, management provisions, parking, noise and sanitation provisions and owner obligations. Members noted that this is another section that public input will be welcome and helpful.

Logan is not able to attend the next zoning regulation update meeting on May 19 but asked if members could review and provide feedback about Articles I – III at that meeting.

**Act 181:** Greg Smith provided a brief overview of the Act 181 topic. All regional planning commissions, including the Rutland Regional Planning Commission, are updating their regional maps. In its review, the RRPC would like to expand the area designated as Mendon’s Designated Village Center. It made a presentation on the topic to the Mendon Selectboard at their April 30 meeting. Materials that were provided include a handout entitled “Act 181 – Location-Based Act 250 Tiers” and a handout entitled “RRPC Launches Phase 3 of Public Engagement for 2-26 Regional Plan”. Feedback regarding the Designated Village Center is requested by

May 22. The deadline for municipalities to decide whether to pursue “Tier 1 Act 250 exemptions” is June 30, 2025. Members will discuss both topics in more detail at the May 19 meeting.

**Public Comment:** There were no public comments when public comments were solicited at the end of the meeting.

The next regular meeting of the Mendon Planning Commission is scheduled for Monday, June 2, 2025 at 5:15 p.m. at the Mendon Town Office. The next meeting of the Mendon Planning Commission dedicated to the zoning review work is scheduled for Monday, May 19, 2025 at 5:15 pm at the Mendon Town Office.

Respectfully submitted,

Teri Corsones