

**RESOLUTION FOR ANNUAL APPOINTMENT OF A REPRESENTATIVE TO THE  
NEKCV GOVERNING BOARD**

WHEREAS, the town of Hardwick is a current member of the NEKCV COMMUNICATIONS UNION DISTRICT (The "District", or "NEKCV") under the provisions of 30 V.S.A. Chapter 82 and

WHEREAS, as provided in Section 3059 of said chapter, the legislative body or each member town shall appoint annually on or before the last Monday in April a representative and one or more alternates to the Governing Board of the District for one-year terms, and

WHEREAS, as provided in Section 3060 of said chapter, the Governing Board of the District shall hold its organizational meeting annually on the second Thursday in May following the appointments contemplated in Section 3059,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

(1) The Selectboard of the Town of Hardwick hereby appoints the following representative and one or more alternates to the Governing Board of NEKCV for terms of one year each:

Representative: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Adopted at a regular meeting of the Selectboard of the Town of Hardwick duly held on the 5th day of March, 2026.

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Selectboard Chair Date

Chair Email address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Town Clerk

## 2026-2027 Select Board Meeting Schedule

Approved by the Select Board March 5, 2026

**\*To hold any other meetings as deemed necessary by the Select Board**

Month	Dates	Start times
March 2026	5 and 19	6 P.M.
April 2026	2 and 16	6 P.M.
May 2026	7 and 21	6 P.M.
June 2026	4 and 18	6 P.M.
July 2026	16	6 P.M.
August 2026	6 and 20	6 P.M.
September 2026	3 and 17	6 P.M.
October 2026	1 and 15	6 P.M.
November 2026	5 and 19	6 P.M.
December 2026	3 and 17	6 P.M.
January 2027	7 and 21	6 P.M.
February 2027	4 and 18	6 P.M.

To: Hardwick Select Board  
From: Hardwick Zoning Administrator  
Re: Overview of Proposed Hardwick Unified Development Bylaws update

Date: January 15, 2026

This memo provides a brief overview of the proposed Hardwick Unified Development Bylaws Update transmitted by the Hardwick Planning Commission for Select Board review. Detailed background materials, including the River Corridor information flyer and the slide presentation from the Planning Commission public hearing, are included separately in the packet.

The proposed update represents the Planning Commission's comprehensive effort to modernize the Hardwick Unified Development Bylaws and to align local regulations with the Town's adopted Municipal Plan, recent state legislation, and conditions identified through flood recovery, housing needs, and infrastructure planning. The intent is to improve the clarity and usability of the bylaws while better supporting village-scale development, housing options, and risk reduction in flood- and erosion-prone areas.

For your information, this update focuses on the following priorities.

First, it creates a new zoning district for the East Hardwick village in the form of a Village Center district. East Hardwick was previously grouped within the same district as downtown Hardwick, despite having different historic settlement patterns, infrastructure, and community needs. A listening session was held with East Hardwick residents in December 2024, followed by approximately six months of work to develop a district that reflects local input and responds to those distinct conditions.

Second, it adds a River Corridor Overlay. This overlay is intended to substantially increase the Town's state match for future flood repairs and infrastructure improvements, reduce long-term erosion and flood risk, and better position the Town for anticipated statewide river corridor regulations. The Town is actively working with the State to improve and refine the associated mapping.

Third, it removes the section of the zoning bylaws that allows the Town of Hardwick to review Act 250 permits. This authority is no longer viable following the passage of Act 181 and is being removed to reflect current state law and regulatory practice.

Finally, it updates housing terminology by changing the term "Single Family Dwelling," and related terms, to "Single Unit Dwelling" to align the bylaws with the State's HOME Act and current housing policy standards.

Public outreach and engagement were central components of the Planning Commission's process. Letters were mailed directly to each property owner potentially affected by the proposed River Corridor Overlay, providing advance notice, background information, and details regarding the public hearing. The Planning Commission held a duly warned public hearing on December 9, 2025, at 6:30 p.m., which was well attended and included substantial public participation. The attached slide

presentation summarizes the structure of the update and highlights key changes discussed at that hearing, while the river corridor flyer reflects the public-facing information provided to affected property owners.

In addition, a listening session was held in December 2024 with property owners and residents in East Hardwick regarding the proposed Village Center district. That session was also well attended and informed subsequent revisions to district boundaries, permitted uses, and development standards. Prior to the December 2025 public hearing, letters were sent to property owners in East Hardwick who would be impacted by the proposed zoning changes to ensure continued notice and opportunity for input.

At this stage, the Planning Commission is requesting that the Select Board initiate the statutory adoption process, including scheduling and warning a Select Board public hearing. Members of the Planning Commission and Town staff are available to attend Select Board meetings, answer questions, or provide additional context on specific provisions as needed.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Leahy, Hardwick Zoning and Floodplain Administrator

# UNDERSTANDING FLOODPLAINS, FLOODWAYS, AND RIVER CORRIDORS

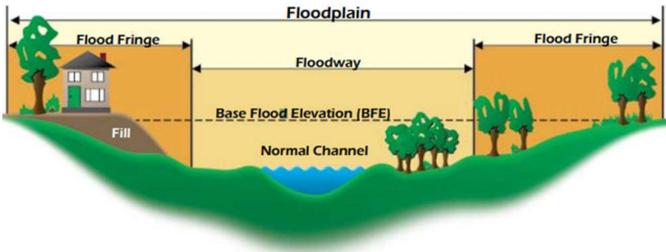
## Floodway

The floodway is the part of the floodplain where **water moves the fastest and deepest** during a flood; it is the most vulnerable area during a flood.

The floodway may not have been drawn on a map for all rivers, but **this zone must remain open** to safely carry floodwater.

Building in a floodway is **regulated and not recommended** because any blockage could raise water levels and worsen flooding elsewhere.

Think of it as the **"conveyor belt" of the floodplain**, critical for moving water downstream.



## Floodplain

A floodplain is a **flat area of land** next to a river or stream. **These areas:**

- Slow, absorb, and store excess water during storms and snowmelt
- Help reduce downstream flooding
- Support wetlands, wildlife, and natural habitats

FEMA has not mapped all floodplains and in some cases mapped floodplains are not based on a detailed study. **So it is important to keep in mind that areas outside of the FEMA-regulated floodplain may have the same flood risk.**

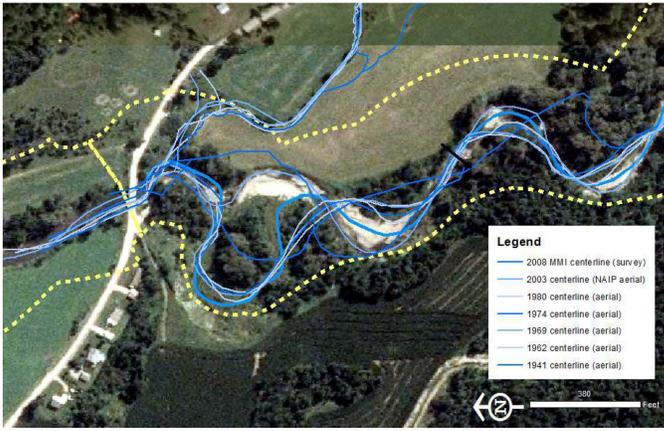
## River Corridor

While floodplains and floodways show where water inundates land, the river corridor shows where the river itself may move or erode the landscape over time.

Rivers are dynamic, they **shift, meander, and carve new channels**, especially during major storms.

A river corridor **includes the river channel and the surrounding land** where this natural movement is likely to occur.

Protecting river corridors helps **reduce long-term flood risk** by giving rivers space to move and adapt.



Meandering channels in a river corridor



This work is made possible through support from TRORC and DEC.



Town of Hardwick, VT

1 inch = 538 Feet



www.cai-tech.com

January 24, 2025



Data shown on this map is provided for planning and informational purposes only. The municipality and CAI Technologies are not responsible for any use for other purposes or misuse or misrepresentation of this map.

To: Hardwick Select Board  
From: Hardwick Planning Commission  
Re: Zoning Bylaw Update – Transmittal and Recommendation  
Date: January 15, 2026 for the January 22, 2026 Select Board meeting

The Hardwick Planning Commission respectfully transmits the proposed Hardwick Unified Development Bylaws update to the Select Board for its consideration and next steps in the adoption process.

The Planning Commission developed this update to modernize the Town's zoning regulations, implement policies of the Municipal Plan, respond to recent legislative changes, and address lessons learned through flood recovery, housing needs, and infrastructure constraints. The proposed bylaws are intended to provide clearer standards, improved usability, and better alignment between land use regulation and the Town's long-term planning goals.

Throughout the drafting process, the Commission focused on several core objectives: improving clarity and predictability for applicants and residents; supporting appropriate housing and economic development in designated areas; strengthening flood resilience and risk reduction; and maintaining the character and function of Hardwick's villages, neighborhoods, and historic settlement patterns. The Commission also sought to ensure that new flexibility is paired with standards that protect public safety, neighborhood context, and community assets.

The Planning Commission held a duly warned public hearing on the proposed Zoning Bylaw Update on December 9, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. The hearing materials and recording are available here:

<https://hctv.us/public-hearing-on-east-hardwick-zoning-bylaws-december-9-2025/>

Following the public hearing and subsequent deliberation, the Planning Commission voted at its January 13, 2026 meeting to forward the proposed bylaws to the Select Board.

The Planning Commission recommends that the Select Board proceed with the adoption process as outlined in statute, including holding a public hearing and considering any final amendments deemed necessary. Members of the Planning Commission and Town staff are available to answer questions, provide background on specific provisions, or assist the Select Board during its review.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued support of this important work.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Leahy  
For the Hardwick Planning Commission  
Town of Hardwick

**Town of Hardwick, Vermont**  
**Memorandum**

**To:** David Upson, Town Manager

**From:** Kristen Leahy, Zoning & Floodplain Administrator / Resilience & Adaptation Coordinator

**Date:** February 24, 2026

**Re:** Consultant Selection Recommendation – Environmental Assessment Services (CDBG-DR Floodplain Restoration Project)

**Purpose**

The purpose of this memorandum is to document the Town’s evaluation process and recommend the selection of a consultant to provide Environmental Assessment (EA) services for the CDBG-DR Floodplain Restoration Project in Hardwick, Vermont.

**Procurement Process**

The Town issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Environmental Assessment services in support of the CDBG-DR implementation grant. The RFP sought qualified firms with demonstrated experience in HUD Part 58 compliance, Vermont regulatory coordination, and complex floodplain, wetlands, and historic resource review.

The Town received seven (7) proposals by the submission deadline.

All proposals were reviewed using a standardized scoring rubric evaluation:

- Relevant HUD Environmental Assessment experience
- Understanding of the project and Vermont regulatory context
- Technical approach and methodology
- Qualifications of key personnel
- Schedule and capacity
- Cost and overall value

Additional consideration was given to regulatory risk, wetlands readiness, communication practices, and the ability to manage emerging compliance requirements.

**Updated Regulatory Context**

Following proposal submission, the State of Vermont advised the Town that the project will require review for potential historic and/or archaeological resources under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

This additional requirement increases the regulatory complexity of the project and heightens the importance of selecting a consultant with demonstrated experience in:

- Coordinating with SHPO and consulting parties
- Managing archaeological and cultural resource assessments
- Integrating Section 106 review into HUD Part 58 clearance timelines
- Responding efficiently to agency comments and findings

This requirement was therefore incorporated into the final qualitative evaluation.

### **Evaluation Summary**

Each proposal was independently reviewed and scored based on the adopted rubric. Scores were supplemented by qualitative assessment of:

- Wetlands delineation capacity
- Section 106 and cultural resource experience
- Vermont agency coordination
- Communication and clarification practices
- Implementation readiness

Weight was given the ability to manage both wetlands delineation and historic/archeological review without significant schedule disruption.

The highest-ranked firms demonstrated:

- Strong HUD Part 58 clearance experience
- In-depth knowledge of Vermont permitting and review processes
- Integrated wetlands and cultural resource expertise
- Clear and realistic implementation schedules
- Proactive communication and coordination practices

A summary ranking was developed based on total scores and risk-adjusted evaluation.

### **Recommendation**

Based on the scoring results and qualitative review, I recommend that the Town enter contract negotiations with:

#### **VHB**

VHB is recommended as the preferred consultant for the following reasons:

1. Technical Qualifications  
VHB demonstrated strong, well-documented experience completing HUD Environmental Assessments and securing environmental clearance for comparable projects.

2. Vermont Regulatory and Section 106 Expertise  
The firm showed excellent understanding of DEC, SHPO, and interagency coordination processes, and demonstrated experience managing historic and archaeological reviews under Section 106.
3. Integrated Wetlands and Cultural Resources Capacity  
VHB has in-house wetlands and environmental specialists and established cultural resource coordination capacity, allowing them to address both the State's wetlands delineation requirement and the newly identified historic/archeological review without major subcontracting delays.
4. Proactive Communication  
VHB engaged in early clarification and coordination during the proposal process, reducing the risk of future scope disputes and schedule impacts.
5. Risk Management  
Their integrated technical, regulatory, wetlands, and cultural resource capacity presents the lowest overall risk to timely and defensible environmental clearance.

### **Alternate Firms**

The following firms were also highly qualified and are suitable alternatives if contract negotiations with VHB are unsuccessful:

- Clark Group
- Stone Environmental

Both firms demonstrated strong technical capacity. However, each would require additional coordination or contract amendments to address wetlands and/or archaeological review requirements.

### **Conclusion**

Selection of VHB represents the best overall value and lowest regulatory and implementation risk for the Town, particularly considering:

- The State's wetlands delineation requirement, and
- The newly identified need for historic and archaeological review.

Their combination of HUD expertise, Vermont regulatory fluency, in-house wetlands capacity, Section 106 coordination experience, and proactive communication provide the strongest assurance of timely and compliant project delivery.

I recommend proceeding with contract negotiations with VHB for Environmental Assessment services for the CDBG-DR Floodplain Restoration Project.

## Appendix A

### Consultant Evaluation Summary – Regulatory Capacity and Risk Assessment

CDBG-DR Floodplain Restoration Project  
Town of Hardwick, Vermont

This appendix summarizes comparative evaluation results for firms that submitted proposals for Environmental Assessment (EA) services. It supplements the numerical scoring rubric by documenting regulatory capacity, coordination readiness, and implementation risk, including wetlands and historic/archaeological review requirements.

#### Summary Comparison Table

(Including Wetlands, Section 106, and Communication Capacity)

Rank	Firm	Total Score	Wetlands Readiness	Section 106 / Historic Capacity	HUD Part 58 Depth	Upfront Communication	Overall Risk
1	VHB	95	In-house	In-house / established partners	Strong	Proactive	Very Low
2	Clark Group	97	Add-on / coordinated	Strong internal + partners	Very Strong	Assumption-based	Low–Medium
3	Stone Environmental	96	In-house	Partner-based	Strong	Assumption-based	Low–Medium
4	Cloudburst	90	None	Outsourced	Exceptional (HUD)	Structured / remote	Medium
5	DuBois & King	86	Limited / outsourced	Moderate internal	Moderate	Minimal	Medium
6	SRW	76	Desktop-heavy	Minimal	Strong (process)	None	High
7	Salter Wetlands Associates	48	Field-capable	Subcontract only	Weak	Limited	Very High

#### Regulatory Context Considerations

During the evaluation process, the Town received confirmation from the State of Vermont that the project will require:

- A formal wetlands delineation, and
- Review for potential historic and/or archaeological resources under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

These requirements significantly increase the importance of selecting a consultant with integrated environmental, cultural resource, and HUD compliance capacity.

## **Evaluation Observations**

### **1. Wetlands Capacity**

Firms with in-house wetlands staff (VHB, Stone) or established integrated teams present lower schedule and coordination risk.

Firms requiring separate subcontracts or later scope amendments present higher implementation risk.

### **2. Section 106 / Cultural Resource Capacity**

VHB demonstrated established capacity and experience coordinating historic and archaeological reviews.

Clark Group and Stone Environmental demonstrated strong experience but would likely require subcontractor coordination.

Other firms showed limited or process-only capacity.

### **3. HUD Part 58 Compliance**

VHB, Clark Group, Stone Environmental, and Cloudburst demonstrated strong familiarity with HUD clearance procedures.

Salter Wetlands and SRW demonstrated limited experience managing Responsible Entity clearance in Vermont.

### **4. Communication and Coordination Practices**

VHB was the only top-tier firm that engaged in early clarification and coordination during the proposal process.

Other highly ranked firms relied primarily on internal assumptions without requesting clarification, increasing potential for later scope adjustments.

## **5. Overall Risk Assessment**

Risk was evaluated based on:

- Regulatory complexity
- Need for field studies
- Agency coordination requirements
- Communication practices
- Likelihood of contract amendments

VHB presented the lowest combined technical, regulatory, and management risk.

### **Conclusion**

Based on both quantitative scoring and qualitative risk assessment, VHB demonstrated the strongest overall capacity to manage the following with the lowest anticipated administrative and schedule burden to the Town:

- HUD Part 58 clearance
- Wetlands delineation
- Section 106 coordination
- Vermont regulatory engagement
- Multi-agency review timelines

This appendix supports the staff recommendation to proceed with contract negotiations with VHB.