

**PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
HARDWICK UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT BYLAW CHANGES
5:00 P.M. MARCH 19, 2026
MEMORIAL BUILDING
20 CHURCH ST. 3RD FLOOR AND VIA ZOOM**

Select Board

Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, Chair
Shari Cornish, Vice Chair
Tim Ricciardello- *absent*
Larry Fliegelman
Derek Richardson

Others Present

David Upson, Town Manager
Amanda Fecteau, Payroll Administrator
Kristen Leahy, Floodplain Administrator

OthersPresent

Dave Gross
Cheryl Michaels
Gary Michaels
Gail O' Brien
David O'Brien

Special Meeting

5:01 P.M. Select Board Chair, Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, called the Public Hearing to order.

5:01 P.M. Item #1 Select Board Chair to give reason for the hearing

Ceilidh mentioned that the purpose of this hearing is to identify the changes to the Town's Unified Development Bylaws and hear from the public about concerns and recommendations.

5:02 P.M. Item #2 Zoning and Floodplain Administrator, Kristen Leahy, to present the proposed changes to the Town's Unified Development Bylaws (hereinafter referred to as bylaws)

Kristen presented a short PowerPoint on the proposed changes (see attached).

She explained that the 2024 changes brought the zoning bylaws into compliance with the Home Act and FEMA regulations ahead of the updated flood maps. The 2025 proposed changes would continue to meet the State's housing requirements and work with the River Corridor rules.

Kristen also discussed the Village Center Zoning District in East Hardwick. Cheryl Michaels asked about the changes to the purpose of the zoning district, and Kristen said that no changes were made to the purpose. She offered to verify that no aspects were inadvertently changed. Cheryl expressed concerns about the proposed 35-foot height limit and setback requirements. She noted that these changes could encourage additional development, including the possibility of two houses on a single lot. While she welcomes new residents, she emphasized that she would prefer setbacks to increase.

On slide eight, changes to the downtown Hardwick Lamoille River Corridor Overlay were discussed. The bedrock near the Pedestrian Bridge has been noted and the downtown section has been changed from a three-channel width to a two-channel width. Gary Michaels asked for clarification, and Kristen explained that the designation depends on river flow. In this area, the granite walls help maintain the

river's width through downtown.

On slide ten, Ceilidh asked whether the infill mapping would be created in both Hardwick and East Hardwick. Kristen responded that she would need to investigate that further.

5:20 P.M. Communication/Questions from the Audience

David O'Brien asked what "infill mapping" means and how the river corridor affects FEMA regulations. Kristen explained that properties already mapped in the FEMA floodplain are held to a higher standard. The new river corridor overlay would primarily affect properties that are not in the mapped floodplain.

Gary Michaels asked whether the river corridor is defined by a specific event. Kristen responded that the State of Vermont focuses more on channel width than a single event. Gary then asked about how the perimeter is determined. David Gross explained that it is largely based on elevation and erosion risk. For example, a property located at the top of a potential landslide area could be impacted.

Cheryl Michaels stated that East Hardwick is a rural village that should be preserved for its historical character. While she supports garages with apartments, she does not support additional large-scale development. She would prefer zoning that supports existing structures rather than encouraging new development. She also expressed concern that increased development would lead to more traffic. David Gross followed up on Cheryl's concerns regarding the 35-foot height limit, explaining that the Planning Commission is aiming to maintain consistency with what has historically existed. He added that if the Town later determines the requirement should be changed, the Select Board could amend the zoning bylaws. Larry confirmed that the 35-foot height limit is consistent with other zoning districts in town.

Ceilidh asked about water and sewer requirements for new developments. David Gross, who also serves on East Hardwick Fire District #1, explained that East Hardwick is currently reviewing recommendations for its water system and exploring sewer options for the village. Kristen added that applicants are provided with the East Hardwick Fire District contact information as part of the permitting process.

No Select Board Reports, New Business, Old Business -

5:33 P.M. Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, Select Board Chair, adjourned the meeting.

Minutes taken by: _____
Amanda Fecteau, Payroll Administrator

Minutes approved by: _____
Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, Select Board Chair