

Hardwick Planning Commission
November 11, 2025
Hybrid – In-Person and Zoom options
Meeting held virtually due to inclement weather
Minutes

HPC Members Present: Dave Gross, Chair; Kole; Bud Stevens; Larry Fliegelman; Michael Haveson; Jim Lewis; and Gillian D’Acierno (Alternate)

HPC Members Absent: Ken Davis (Gillian D’Acierno assumes his seat)

Also Present: Kristen Leahy, Hardwick Zoning Administrator

Chair Dave Gross opened the meeting at 6:32 pm. Bud Stevens moved to approve the agenda. Jim Lewis seconded. All members were in favor. Larry Fliegelman moved to approve the draft October 7, 2025 minutes as written. Kole seconded. All members were in favor.

Updates from the Community Development Coordinator – *provided by HPC & Staff*

Transportation Alternatives – The Concepts Presentation for the Mill Street and Main Street Scoping Study was held on November 5 at 6:30. Three concepts were developed for the community’s consideration, and the chosen option will be developed with cost estimates. Items within each concept can be combined or subtracted to generate the final selection. Over 50 people participated in the information gathering at the two meetings. A final proposal will be submitted to the community in January 2026. This proposal will be developed as phased approach that will consider funding sources and reasonable time frames for town staff.

East Hardwick Better Connections – East Hardwick Neighborhood Organization held their annual meeting on Saturday, October 25, 2025. Members were invited to prioritize next steps for the project. The EHNO board will review and submit the recommendations. Early information indicates that reconfiguration of the intersections and the Main Street approach are primary concerns which should be addressed as soon as possible.

New Zoning Bylaw Changes:

The public hearing for the Zoning Bylaw update will occur on December 9, 2025 at 6:30 pm on the 3rd floor of the Memorial Building. There will be a Zoom option and HCTV will be filming the hearing. Letters were sent directly to the East Hardwick residents and the River Corridor residents who may be impacted by the changes.

Motion: N/A

2027 Municipal Plan Update:

The Municipal Plan update is due in November of 2027. After discussion, the following process items will be reviewed:

1. Assurance that the zoning bylaws and the municipal plan correlate. The Hardwick Unified Development Bylaws need to be rooted in the Municipal Plan

2. Communication with the public and future investors/developers/buyers. An interactive map (story map) on the website with various components (like housing or schools) and links to associated zoning bylaws was suggested. Money would need to be obtained for this approach.
3. A possible new chapter or language on Wellness and Food Security.
4. Updating of the Plan Implementation – including which tasks are accomplished or no longer viable.

The Commission has 18 months to collect data and update the current information. The members reviewed the draft (very draft) version of a community survey. Recommended changes will be made and the new draft will be sent out to the commission members by email for their review. The final draft will be created at the January 2026 meeting.

Bud Stevens expressed interest in Housing, Kole expressed interest in Economic Development, Jim Lewis expressed interest in Flood Resilience (Emergency Resilience?), and Dave Gross expressed interest in Water Resources and Energy and Infrastructure. As Dave, Jim and Ken are the only current members with experience of the update process, it was decided that chapter liaisons would not be selected until the Commission has a chance to review Municipal Plan chapters and observe the level of time necessary for the proposed work.

Kristen will bring the following chapters to the January 2026 meeting: Historic, Scenic & Archeological Resources; Land Resources; and Natural Areas and Wildlife. If possible, updates will be made (and tracked/visible) in each of these three chapters.

There will be a file on the Planning Commission page that has the Municipal Plan and all associated documents, including the community survey and each chapter as a separate entity. The file will be in the Agendas and Minutes for the HPC. [Planning Commission \(HPC\) – Hardwick, Vermont](#)

A chart of the levels of update needed was generated by the Zoning Administrator and provided to the members.

| Chapter | Goal(s) | Policies | Actions / Recommendations | Update Priorities (2025–27) |
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| 1. Land Use & Development | Maintain village-centered development, rural working lands outside. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage clustering. • Flood Hazard District protections. • Higher density near centers. • Mixed-use encouraged. • Fit scale/context. • Discourage costly service extensions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain character when subdividing/building. | High – Update to reflect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New East Hardwick Village Center zoning district. • River Corridor Overlay adoption. |
| 2. Historic, | Identify, protect, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development in historic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Historical | High – Add: |

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| Scenic & Archeological Resources | and preserve historic, scenic, archaeological features. | districts must fit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Towers/large structures carefully sited. • Protect views and vegetation. | Society. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain Village Center Designations. • Explore tax stabilization for façades. • Budget for historic structures. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Granite Street Historic District Flood Resilience Project. • CLG (Certified Local Government) process exploration. Designated Downtown/Tier 1A and the Steps. |
| 3. Housing | Provide safe, affordable, diverse housing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multifamily in villages. • Affordable housing = efficient design, close to jobs. • Support aging in place. | <i>(No specific actions in 2019).</i> | High – Update with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025 Bylaw housing reforms. • Senior housing & special needs gaps. • Flood-safe housing standards. |
| 4. Economic Development | Resilient economy based on ag, small business, and light industry. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable extraction. • Support recreation/tourism. • Allow small home enterprises. • Encourage value-added industries. • Promote “buy local.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate Downtown Designation. • Funding for new industrial park. • Identify ag/value-added expansion sites. • Improve downtown & East Hardwick village centers. | High – Reflect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yellow Barn Business Accelerator. • Downtown & East Hardwick Village Center Designations. • Better Connections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood-related economic recovery. |
| 5. Land Resources | Protect farmland, forest, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extraction allowed w/ protections. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support conservation | Medium – Add Act 171 forest |

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| | sand/gravel. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No building on >25% slopes. • Avoid fragmentation. • Minimize loss of ag soils. | easements & development rights. | <p>block/connectivity updates and resilience linkages.</p> <p>Integrate Act 181</p> <p>Integrate Natural Resources Inventory</p> |
| 6. Natural Areas & Wildlife | Maintain wildlife diversity and abundance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect critical habitat. • Avoid fragmenting core areas. • Protect rare species with buffers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission support for landowners. • Conduct Natural Resources Inventory. | Medium – Update with Biofinder 2025 data and climate adaptation priorities. And Natural Resources Inventory |
| 7. Water Resources | Preserve/improve surface & groundwater. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buffers: 50’ Class 2 wetlands, 25’ Class 3. • Erosion control required. • Impervious surfaces <10%. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education on invasives. • Wetland inventory. • Study Renaud Rd. Source Protection. | High – Reflect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PFAS & groundwater issues. • Updated stormwater regulations. • Drought/water shortage planning. |
| 8. Flood Resilience | Build a flood-resilient community. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid development in hazard/river corridors. • Protect floodplains & upland forests. • Promote preparedness. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update LEOP & HMP. • Meet VTrans standards. • Update culvert/bridge inventory. • Replace undersized culverts. • Relocate/fireproof Fire Station & HED garage. | Critical – Must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023–2024 flood damage, FEMA buyouts, NRCS EWP projects. • Act 121 Flood Safety Act requirements. • Fire Station relocation |

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| | | | | feasibility. |
| 9. Public & Private Facilities & Services | Maintain essential services. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue water/sewer upgrades. • Support hydrants & mutual aid. • ERAF & hazard mitigation compliance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and invest in facilities/services. | High – Update with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Station relocation project. • w/Garage & Rescue Squad • Wastewater Treatment Facility vulnerabilities. • Neighbor to Neighbor Supply Center & volunteer system & NEKO/Civic Standard MOUs. And Jeudevine Library |
| 10. Education | Ensure quality education for all ages. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support OSSU/Hazen Union. • Encourage adult/technical education. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor governance/facilities | Low–Medium – Minor updates; include OSSU role in resilience education. May grow depending on State Movement of young ones to Greensboro |
| 11. Transportation | Provide safe, efficient, multi-modal system. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain highways. • Support transit, rail, walking/biking. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with VTrans. | Medium – Add: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LVRT connections. • Pedestrian safety in East Hardwick and downtown. |
| 12. Energy | Encourage efficiency & | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote renewable siting, efficiency in | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support weatherization, EV | High – Update for: |

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| | renewable energy. | heating/electricity/transport . | infrastructure, work with RPC. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act 250 energy standards. • Renewable siting conflicts. • Climate resilience co-benefits. |
| 13. Regional Compatibility | Align with regional and state planning goals. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate consistency. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with NVDA during review. | |
| 14. Appendix A – Implementation Tools | Tools for implementing plan. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoning, subdivision, capital budget, conservation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply state/federal programs. | Medium – Update with new state programs: CRDMF, Act 181 Tier 1A/1B |

Updates from Commission Members:

Gillian D’Acierno reported that the Caledonia County Natural Resources Conservation District will be having their Annual Community Dinner on November 12, 2025 at the Lyndon Outing Club. Dinner is from Hardwick’s Village Restaurant. All are welcome to attend. (Gillian serves on the CCNRCD board.)

Motion: N/A.

Updates from the Zoning Administrator:

Hardwick will be participating in the High Water Mark Sign project with the USACE and the State of Vermont. More information will be available in January 2026.

The River Flood Modeling Grant will be presented by SLR at two sessions on December 3, 2025. One session is at 1 – 2:30 pm and will have a zoom option. The second session is at 5-6:30 pm and will be recorded by HCTV. Great chance to ask questions about the model and see what SLR has discovered.

Motion: To conclude the Hardwick Planning Commission Meeting.

Larry Fliegelman made the motion and Jim Lewis seconded. All members were in favor.

The meeting ended at 8:02 pm.

The next HPC meeting will be at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, December 9, 2025, on the 3rd Floor of the Memorial Building. This will be the Public Hearing for the Zoning Bylaw update. I anticipate that it will be well attended.

~ Respectfully submitted, Kristen Leahy, ZA