

Hardwick Planning Commission
March 10, 2026
Hybrid – In-Person and Zoom options –Minutes

HPC Members Present: Dave Gross, Chair; Larry Fliegelman; Jim Lewis; and Kole

HPC Members Absent: Bud Stevens; Gillian D’Acierno; Ken Davis; and Michael Haveson

Gillian D’Acierno has stepped off the Commission due to relocation.

Also Present: Kristen Leahy, Hardwick Zoning Administrator

Chair Dave Gross opened the meeting at 6:35 pm. Kole moved to approve the agenda. Jim Lewis seconded. All members were in favor. Larry Fliegelman moved to approve the draft February 10, 2026 minutes as written. Jim Lewis seconded. All members were in favor.

Updates from the Community Development Coordinator – Tracy Martin

None currently.

2027 Municipal Plan Update:

The survey is available electronically and on paper. Paper copies are at the Jeudevine Memorial Library and the Town Manager’s Office (currently). The survey will be open until June 5, 2026.

Preliminary Hardwick Municipal Plan Community Survey Results

(Summary presented by Kristen Leahy – March 10, 2026) (While the initial review at 39 responses was preliminary, the larger response set at 100+ responses has reinforced the same major themes rather than overturning them. The additional responses strengthen confidence in the early patterns rather than changing the overall picture – KL on 3/14/26)

Topic	Key Observations from Early Responses
Survey Status	39 responses have been received so far. Survey remains open through June 5, 2026. Both online and paper copies are available.
Respondent Background	Most respondents live in Hardwick year-round. Many report being connected to the community for more than 20 years.
Transportation & Daily Activity	Most respondents rely on driving. More than half report walking regularly and about one quarter report biking. Many visit downtown several times per week or daily.
Community Values	The most identified value was Hardwick’s strong sense of community. Other frequently selected values included local businesses and food economy, natural beauty and outdoor access, historic character, and walkability or trail

Topic	Key Observations from Early Responses
	connections.
Top Community Priorities (10-Year Outlook)	Affordable and diverse housing options near village centers were the most frequently selected priority. Flood resilience and infrastructure improvements were also identified as major concerns. Supporting small businesses, strengthening downtown, and improving walking and biking conditions were also common responses.
Housing	Strong support for expanding housing options. Frequently supported types included affordable homes, ADUs, apartments, and senior housing. No respondents indicated that Hardwick should stop building housing.
Downtown Vitality	Interest in attracting more businesses and restaurants, improving pedestrian safety and parking, and supporting housing near or above storefronts. Flood-safe infrastructure and public gathering spaces were also identified as important.
Emergency Preparedness & Resilience	Residents emphasized the importance of clear communication during storms and flooding, reliable evacuation routes, safe bridges, and accessible emergency support systems.
Food Access & Wellness	Grocery stores are the primary food source, though many also rely on out-of-town stores. Gardens, farms, and farmers markets were also mentioned. A local pharmacy was the most frequently identified wellness need.
Community Communication	Residents most commonly receive information through Front Porch Forum, the Hardwick Gazette, and word of mouth. Preferred future communication methods include Front Porch Forum and Town email updates.
Next Steps	Staff will continue collecting responses and organizing themes. The Planning Commission will use survey results to help guide priorities for the Municipal Plan update.

Outreach for Survey			
Location	Timing	HPC member?	Notes:
Town Meeting 40+ written responses received.	Early March	Yes – Kole, Larry, Jim	There will be a stack of paper copies available, a location for completed surveys, and a sign that says that HPC members are

			available for questions. Name TAGS?
Spring Fest	Memorial Day weekend	Yes, please!	Table?
Convenience Stores	Once the temps are warmer	Yes, please!	We have 4 locations to use.
Hazen Basketball games Season is over.	Winter months	Yes, please!	Not certain how this works.
Library	Unknown	N/A	Link in update from library – paper copies at building.
Public Works Department	Spring	N/A	
Fire Department/Fire Auxiliary	Spring	N/A	
Civic Standard	Spring	Yes, please!	Kole transmitted - March
High School classes	Spring	N/A	Sent by email – need to follow up
Rural Edge	Spring	N/A	Email request
Front Seat Coffee	Spring		
Downtown Partnership	Spring		Sent by email – need to follow up
Buffalo Mountain Coop	Spring	N/A	Email request – possible table outside in warmer weather
Senior Center	Spring	Yes, please!	
American Legion	Spring	Yes, please!	
East Hardwick N.O.	Spring	Dave Gross	Email sent
Granite Street Neighbors	Spring	N/A	Facebook – sent to Andrea (March)
Kiwanis	Spring	N/A	Audrey Grant
Village Restaurant	Spring	N/A	Lynn
Meals on Wheels?			
Schools***** (parents & students)			

There is 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](#)

Early Emerging Themes	Comments	Connecting theme	Notes:
Housing and Affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacant houses in East Hardwick. • Taxbase • Limited stock 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown Vitality/Local Economy 	
Flood Resilience and Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could be separated and connected. • Essential Services Complex • East Hardwick Sidewalks • Parking – EH & Downtown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown Vitality/Local Economy • Walkability • Transportation 	
Downtown Vitality and Local Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empty storefronts • Jobs • Affordable housing • Parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation • Walkability • Infrastructure • Community Health 	
Transportation and Walkability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity – especially with Transportation • EV charging • Parking/Side Walks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown Vitality • Local Economy • Community Health • Infrastructure • Housing 	
Natural Resources and Farmland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buffalo Mountain Town Forest • Easy Access to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Health 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Lamoille – especially in EH Tier 2 and Tier 3 – Act 181 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downtown Vitality 	
Community Health and Connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pharmacy, Pharmacy, Pharmacy Neighborhood and Communities Recreation Safe walking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downtown Vitality Local Economy Walkability Flood Resilience Infrastructure 	
Reliable Broadband and Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordability 		

Initial Goal Identification		
Theme	In 10 years - 2036	Notes:
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aging population may create new housing openings Climate refugees New neighborhoods near infrastructure Mobile homes/parks Time homes/communities Square footage reduction Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) Public spaces – connected to Cooper and Lamoille and LVRT and green spaces 	
Affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life will be less affordable Single Car families? Walkability encouraged Additional residents? Capital improvement planning at municipal level Health Care/Clinics Infrastructure needs and local taxation (ie. 	

	Water system in EH)	
Flood Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood Benching projects completed and in process • Wastewater Treatment Plant moved/floodproofed • Floodplains restored • Watershed Approach for Lamoille • New Essential Services Structure (built?) • River Corridors (?) 	
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HED Dams reviewed and addressed proactively • Pedestrian Bridge completed • River Parks throughout • LVRT connected • Water lines – East Hardwick and Downtown • Drainage/Stormwater updated • Streetscape Improvements (sidewalks, crosswalks, etc) • Bridges and Culverts updated or planned for • EH Community Septic planning • Essential Services Building • Wastewater Treatment Facility • Public Toilets in Downtown • Public EV chargers • Existing Infrastructure maintained and protected. 	
Downtown Vitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LVRT connects safely to the Downtown and East Hardwick Village. For bikes etc • EV Charging locations • No empty stores • Pedestrian walkways • River Park/Pedestrian Bridge – Downtown • Lighting • Public Toilets (Clean/Stocked/Maintained) 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seating • Attractive (Define?) • Nightlife – after hours commerce/Music/Food • Walking and biking 	
Local Economy	•	
Transportation	•	
Walkability	•	
Natural Resources	•	
Farmland	•	
Community Health	•	
Connection	•	
Reliable Broadband	•	
Utilities	•	

The Equity Committee will be asked to review the draft Municipal Plan to provide assistance on ensuring that the plan is written in a fair and equitable manner.

Updates from Commission Members:

Dave Gross requested feedback from the Hardwick Planning Commission on his letter that endorses Local Motion’s Safe Streets proposals in the Vermont Legislature. Letter approved. Kristen will forward by email to both legislative contacts.

Motion: None

Updates from the Zoning Administrator: N/A

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 8:05 pm.

The next HPC meeting will be at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, May 12, 2026 on the 3rd Floor of the Memorial Building. The April Meeting will not occur due to the ZA medical leave.

~ Respectfully submitted, Kristen Leahy, ZA