

TOWN OF STAMFORD, VERMONT
PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes — 6/22/2026

DRAFT — Pending Approval

Members Present: Lisa Gramlin, Chair, Pam Tworig, Marta Miller, Deb Burchard, Alden Finney

Members Absent: Natalie O’Neil and James Stimpson

Others Present: Debra Righi, and James Righi.

1. Call to Order and Hearing of Visitors

Meeting called to order by Lisa Gramlin at 6:02 and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. There were no comments from visitors.

2. Reading and Approval of Minutes

Corrections: Fix error in numbering, correct spelling of Nick Zaiac’s name. MOTION by Marta Miller to accept as corrected. SECONDED by Deb Burchard. All in Favor.

3. Community Engagement and Survey Response

Reminder that July 10th is the deadline for residents to submit the community survey that will help guide the Planning Commission in updating the Town Plan and The Zoning Bylaws.

The commission emphasized the need to increase community participation for the ongoing survey to gather meaningful data.

4. Bylaw Grant Opportunity and State Housing Targets

The commission discussed applying for a bylaw grant and the impact of state housing targets on town planning.

- **The grant application to help with updating the town’s bylaws opens September 1st**
 - The grant would provide BCRC support updating bylaws, which the Commission agreed was necessary

- **State Housing Targets under the Home Act** require the town to address growth barriers to building more homes in the upcoming Town Plan.
 - Barriers include environmental constraints and lack of town water and sewer systems
 - The commission recognized the need to justify inability to meet targets due to these and any other potential factors
 - They questioned enforcement mechanisms and incentives for actual housing development in the town

- **Economic and demographic realities shape housing feasibility** with local market constraints discussed
 - High building costs limit new construction despite demand
 - Lack of town water and sewer infrastructure reduces capacity for higher-density housing

- The state's vision for housing growth differs from local realities and infrastructure limitations

5. Wetlands Protection and Environmental Concerns

The group debated the impact of state changes to wetland buffer zones and local capacity for environmental enforcement.

- **State reduction of wetland buffers** raised concerns about increased flood risks and habitat loss
 - The Commission expressed frustration with state prioritizing housing over conservation
 - Concerns included increased flooding, loss of natural water absorption, and erosion problems
 - They highlighted the difficulty in enforcing buffer zones locally due to unclear wetland boundaries

6. Attendance Policy Revision

The commission reviewed and proposed updates to attendance rules to reflect current meeting frequency and maintain accountability.

- The updated policy will be rewritten to reflect changes proposed to current policy

7. Bylaw Definitions, Setbacks, and Zoning District Review

The Commission focused on clarifying definitions, setbacks for private roads and driveways, and reviewing zoning districts for alignment with town goals.

- Clear definitions for driveway, private road, and right of way were prioritized to reduce confusion
- Setback requirements for private roads and driveways discussed
- Zoning district boundaries and regulations require review before or in conjunction with bylaw updates
 - The group agreed to wait for survey results before making major zoning changes
 - Focus will remain on refining definitions, setbacks, and district boundaries with clear rationales
 - They plan to improve bylaw readability and include explanatory notes for public clarity

8. Next Meeting and Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn by Lisa Gramlin. SECONDED by Marta Miller. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. Meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for June 22, 2026 at 6pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Tworig, Secretary
Stamford Planning Commission