



July 15th, 2026

Members' Present: Richard Heilemann (Chair), Nick Parks (Vice-chair), Eric Dorsch, Donna Cauley, Anthony McLaurin

Others Present: Terry Findeisen (Zoning Administrator), Curan VanDerWielen (Village Manager)

Call to Order: 11:02 AM by Heilemann.

Approval of the Regular Meeting Agenda

Motion: To approve of the regular meeting agenda.

Motion made by McLaurin. Motion seconded by Dorsch

Motion approved unanimously.

Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve of the draft regular meeting minutes.

Motion made by Parks. Motion seconded by McLaurin

Motion approved unanimously.

Agenda Item No. 3. Derelict Building Ordinance

3.1 Review of Derelict Building Ordinance produced detailed edits to definitions, terminology, safety orders, enforcement provisions, and other draft language.

- a) **Fines and enforcement**- discussion of the proposed civil penalty of up to \$800 per violation per day, including who would determine the amount. The commission favored retaining \$800 as the maximum rather than adding a minimum. A confusing enforcement paragraph at the top of page 6 was slated for deletion. Inspections, complaints, and appeals also discussed.
- b) **Administrative officer role** - replacing "building inspector" throughout the ordinance with "administrative officer" and allowing qualified experts to assist when needed.
- c) **Ordinance adoption process** - legal review, trustee consideration, public notice and hearing requirements, and how commission members should provide draft feedback.
- d) **Existing properties** - how potentially derelict properties would be observed and addressed after the ordinance becomes effective.
- e) **Circulate the revised ordinance:** Dorsch and Findeisen complete an initial review, distribute the updated draft to commission members, and have members send individual comments back for compilation rather than conducting group email deliberations.

Agenda Item No. 4. Commission Member Terms

- 4.1 **Commission leadership:** Members whose terms had expired had already been reappointed. Heilemann, the current chair, asked to step aside because of his capital campaign leadership role with The Nature Conservancy Vermont.



Agenda Item No. 5. Chairmanship 2026-2027 Decision

- 5.1 **Leadership elections:** The commission approved Parks as the new chair. Cauley was selected by vote as vice chair.
- 5.2 **Continue recruiting commission members:** remain on the lookout for potential additional members while maintaining a balance of viewpoints and representation from different parts of the village.

Agenda Item No. 6. Future Priorities

- 6.1 **Return to other pending priorities:** continue work on the telecommunications ordinance and incorporate previously studied infrastructure projects into the broader village planning effort where appropriate.
- 6.2 **Completed project:** The commission's completed aircraft ordinance is awaiting trustee scheduling.

Agenda Item No. 7. Review of Hazard Mitigation Plan Proposal

- 7.1 **Hazard Mitigation plan underway.** The commission considers this a major near-term priority, funding has already been approved, and the next move is engagement with BCRC, including connecting staff and the new commission chair and beginning as scheduling permits.

Agenda Item No. 8. Review of Village Master Working Plan

- 8.1 **Define the historic-core/Main Street master-plan scope.** Prepare the grant scope and position the required trustee resolution for when applications open. Priorities included sidewalks, streetscape standards, intersections, lighting, waste receptacles, telecommunications equipment, solar and other emerging technologies, pedestrian/bicycle connections, and preservation of historic character.
 - a) Additional improvements: Restoring and/or extending sidewalks south toward Prospect, addressing Seminary and West Road sidewalks, improving pedestrian connections within the historic district, and considering amenities such as waste receptacles and a dog-water station.
- 8.2 **Detailed projects vs. a comprehensive village plan:** One viewpoint was on individual needs—sidewalks, intersections, bike connections, lighting, waste receptacles and other improvements. Another viewpoint stressed that the commission stop handling these as disconnected projects and instead take a strategic shift and develop a comprehensive plan for the historic village core, allowing improvements to be coordinated and sequenced.
- 8.3 **Historic preservation vs. new technology:** Some commission members supported telecommunications equipment, solar installations and future technologies be carefully controlled so they would not undermine the historic district's appearance. Another perspective cautioned against simply discouraging new technology; the goal should be to anticipate technological change and determine how to accommodate it appropriately within the historic setting.



- 8.4 Economic development and local institutions:** The commission regarded the hotel as an important stakeholder and favored substantial involvement in historic-core planning. Orvis prompted a somewhat different discussion: participants were interested in supporting the business but recognized that many of its challenges and strategic decisions were internal. A broader viewpoint favored village events and improvements that benefit the whole small-business community rather than individual businesses alone. However, ultimately supporting Orvis and other local businesses through events and improvements that strengthen the village center.
- 8.5 Village independence and cooperation with the town:** Discussion recalled past suggestions that the village might merge functions with the town, including arguments that consolidation could be achieved more collectively. The dominant perspective in this meeting favored preserving village control because of responsibility for the area's distinct historic character. At the same time, participants saw value in clarifying town-versus-village responsibilities and cooperating on shared planning issues.

Despite differences of opinions, the commission showed broad agreement on developing a coordinated plan for the historic village core, engaging the public and major stakeholders, and balancing preservation with practical modernization.

Other Business

- A. No other Business presented

Next Regular Planning Commission Meeting

- The next Regularly Scheduled meeting is August 19th, 2026

Motion: To adjourn.

Motion made by Parks. Motion seconded by Dorsh.

Motion approved unanimously.

Motion unanimously approved at 12:08 pm.

NOTE:

The preceding meeting minutes utilized the recorded Zoom meeting, Findeisen's notes and Zoom AI.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Findeisen,
Zoning Administrative Office