

Jamaica Planning Commission (JPC)
Draft Meeting Minutes - Regular Meeting
September 18, 2023
Jamaica Town Offices, 28 Town Office Road
Jamaica VT 05343

Commissioners present: Bryan Zieroff, Charlie Peck, Chris Robbins, John VanHoesen, Patrick McQuillan
Public present: Lexa Clark, Jessica Pollack

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. It was agreed to add discussion about application for a Municipal Planning Grant (MPG) for services to assist with development of the 2025 Town Plan Update.
2. The June 19, 2023 draft meeting minutes were approved as written, by unanimous vote of members present.
3. Bryan stated that he would take up agenda item 5 first, as there was a member of the public present with questions about that topic. He reported that the test pits and archeological review work for the proposed community septic system site has been completed. A hydrogeologist is currently preparing a model/mounding analysis based on soil conditions documented at the site. Our engineer is preparing conceptual layout plans, which will be completed upon receiving the hydrogeologic modeling data. After receiving the model and completing the preliminary system design, preparation of concept designs for full layout and the associated potential cost scenarios can begin. Upcoming tasks include conducting a public meeting to present the data compiled to date and preparing the State-required 90% design level report.
4. Jessica Pollack provided printouts of documents related to Vtrans recommendations for scope of work for FEMA disaster relief assistance with approximately 30 road repair projects necessitated by storm damage caused by the July 10 flooding event. She asked that JPC members review the listed projects and provide comments or suggestions on the Vtrans recommended scopes of work. Individual JPC members will review the documents and send any comments or suggestions to Jessica and Greg.
5. There was general discussion about flood damage repair and road maintenance issues. Jessica asked about implementation of the Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP), which establishes performance standards that towns must follow when repairing or maintaining town roads. It was suggested that the Selectboard may be able to get assistance with understanding and implementing the MRGP from Mark Pickering at Vtrans or Colin Bratton at WRC. No action was taken.
6. Chris reported that during the period from June 15th through August 16th Jamaica was represented by our alternate representative to DVFiber, Ann Connor.

DVFiber continues to build our network in the towns along route 9. As of August 16th, installing fiber in Readsboro has been completed and 29 customers connected. We expect the customer experience of this initial group will be a major factor in acquiring new subscribers. Installing fiber in Somerset and Halifax is on-going. We are significantly behind schedule largely because of delays in starting work on installing fiber. But we hope to get back on schedule during the remainder of this year. Chris will be updated on progress at our next Governing Board meeting.

Green Mountain Power (GMP) has proposed replacing a stretch to troubled power poles in Halifax with underground conduit in a trench running in the middle of a road. This a new approach to replacing utility poles. The Halifax selectboard is currently considering this approach. If it is approved, DVFiber will share the trench with a separate conduit. This is a potential solution to replacing poles in other difficult sections in our region and DVFiber will share trenches wherever possible.

7. The JPC has previously agreed that Jamaica should seek a state Municipal Planning Grant (MPG) to pay for technical assistance with producing a Planning Commission Hearing Draft of the 2025 Town Plan Update. Charlie reported that the application deadline for FY 24 MPG applications is November 1 of this year. Jamaica qualifies as a "rural town", and is thus authorized to designate the Regional Planning Commission (the Windham Regional Commission) as our "designated agent" in applying for and implementing a MPG. Jamaica has so designated the WRC in past Town Plan Update proceedings, and it was the consensus of members that this arrangement has worked out well during past plan updates. It was agreed by consensus to recommend this approach for the 2025 plan update. Charlie was designated to contact the WRC and begin discussion and acquire information about designating the WRC as Jamaica's agent for this MPG application.
8. There were no stated public concerns or comments. Lexa Clark's questions about the wastewater disposal study were addressed at the beginning of the meeting, under agenda item 3

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.