

Jamaica Planning Commission (JPC)
Draft Meeting Minutes - Regular Meeting
August 18, 2025
Jamaica Town Offices, 28 Town Office Road
Jamaica VT 05343

Commissioners present: Bryan Zieroff, Chris Robbins, Patrick McQuillan

Public present: Matthew Bachler, Tyler Wren, Rebecca Wren, David Ellis, Jack Baribajct, Robin Gibson, Glen Gibson, Michael DiSabato, Jesse DiSabato

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM
2. The communications committee was added to the agenda and the agenda was reordered to address the ACT 250 item before the other items.
3. The May 19, 2025 draft meeting minutes were approved as written by unanimous vote of members present.
4. 4769 Pikes Falls Road – ACT 250 review: Chris started the 4769 Pikes Falls Road – ACT 250 discussion by reporting on the ACT 250 commission hearing conducted in the Jamaica town office on August 13, 2025. He stated that the town's testimony was well received as was Mr. Wren's testimony. The commission questioned both sides and gave no indication of which way would rule.

Tyler Wren agreed that summary of the hearing was accurate and made the point that the town plan contained weak language such as "encourage" and "should" which is not mandatory. He also brought up the question raised by one of the commissioners as to whether bathers at Pikes Falls were using the surrounding woods to defecate which would weaken our concern for sanitation issues.

Rebecca Wren added that she observed a port-a-pottie outside the town hall which is inconsistent with our concern for having port-a-potties in residential areas.

Chris responded by stating that the town office is in a residential-commercial area not a residential one and the weak language Mr. Wren was referring to is in the letter the town sent to the District 3 coordinator but not in the testimony given. He then asked that with regard to the commissioner's question of use misuse of the woods for calls of nature, had Mr. Wren considered that given the town's experience with Hamilton Falls, he could expect trespass and unauthorized use of his port-a-potties unless extraordinary security measures were taken. A vigorous discussion by members of the public followed.

Chris also stated that the planning commission was considering alternatives to the plan for a dependent campsite that would prove advantageous to Mr. Wren and satisfy public concerns. These include town purchase of the property, retaining the path to the cemetery in its current

location thereby allowing construction of a conventional house on the property, and a third option still under development.

Bryan then asked the members of the public for their views.

David Ellis stated that he was the owner of the adjacent property and that he has had a positive experience with Mr. Wren and that they had jointly mapped out the wetland that lies on both properties. Mr. Ellis stated that he has no objections to building a single house on the subject property but he is very concerned with permanent siting port-a-potties on the subject property as they are out of place in a residential area. Mr. Ellis stated that he believed that the best option would be for the town to purchase the property. He also pointed out that the cemetery is still in use.

Jesse DiSabato stated that she would be in favor of the town buying the property. Ms. DiSabato emphasized that the road is dangerous at that location in that there is a blind curve by the property and that there are frequently little children in the street. Use of the property as a parking lot would alleviate the problem.

Michael DiSabaato supported buying the property emphasizing that cars on the road are a hazard. Mr. DiSabato stated that there can be as much as 60 to 70 cars parked along the road causing major congestion. He would support buying the property to use for parking to reduce traffic congestion.

Robin Gibson and Glen Gibson jointly stated that they had been neighbors since 1986. They too were concerned with safety issues caused by the blind curve and would like to see the property used to get vehicles off the road. They agreed that port-a-potties do not belong in the neighborhood and that based on their experience picking up trash left behind at Pikes Falls campsite trash would have to be picked up daily. They felt the town should buy the property to keep people safe.

Jack Baribajct stated that he agreed with what others had said and thought safety was most important issue. He supported buying the property.

Bryan concluded the discussion by pointing out that the planning commission was the technical staff for the selectboard in matters like this. The planning commission would recommend that the town buy the property to the selectboard, but it would be their decision. The challenge would be money so alternative funding would have to be sought.

5. Local Hazard Mitigation Plan: Bryan tabled this item as John had reported that the due date is flexible allowing us to address it later.
6. Jamaica Town Plan Update: Matt reported that he had made the changes that Chris had suggested and that an updated draft was now available on the Google drive. Chris presented an addition addressing campsites that in view of the current ACT 250 case would be appropriate to add. Matt agreed to add it to the Land Use chapter and add a policy reinforcing it. Following a

discussion of schedule, Patrick moved that the hearing. Date be set for September 25, 2025, Chris seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. It was agreed that the September meeting would be held on the same date. Matt reported that there is approximately \$1000 left in the grant which would cover his expenses through the hearing process. Matt stated that he would initiate the notification process with the town clerk.

7. Jamaica Communications Committee Update: Chris reported that as of July 31, 2024 DVFiber had 1134 subscribers and continued to add them at a rate of 50 per month. DVFiber is still waiting on notification of BEAD grant status.
8. Bryan stated that his action items would be to write a memo to the select board concerning the Pikes Falls ACT 250 case recommending that they put the item on their agenda for the next meeting and expressing the planning commission's support for buying the property. Additionally, he would report on the town plan update hearing schedule.
9. Public Concerns: n/a
10. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.