



Full Commission Meeting Minutes
September 29, 2026

Commissioners Present:

Sue Fillion	Brattleboro
Stanley Noga, Jr.	Brookline
Alan Block	Dover
Sarah Shippee	Dover
Matthew Hoffman	Dummerston
Suzanne Welch	Grafton
Eric Stevens	Grafton
Steve Lembke	Guilford
Gabby Ciuffreda, Chair	Guilford
Stephan Chait	Halifax
Peter Silverberg	Halifax
Andy Coyne	Jamaica
Robert Brooks	Jamaica
Emmett Dunbar	Londonderry
Gary Kleiman	Londonderry
Ann Golob	Newfane
Dan Toomey	Putney
Andrew Snelling	Townshend
Jim Pinkerton, Jr.	Vernon
Paul Spector	Wardsboro
Peter Barus	Whitingham
Ann Manwaring	Wilmington
Cathy Fales	Windham
Erik Moses	Winhall
Robert McBride	Citizen Interest Commissioner – Arts & Culture
Laura Sibilia	Citizen Interest Commissioner – Economic Development
Stephen Dotson	Citizen Interest Commissioner – Healthy Communities
Kathy Urffer	Citizen Interest Commissioner – Natural Resources
Lynn Barrett	Citizen Interest Commissioner – Tourism

There was a **quorum** with 18 towns present.

Staff Present: Chris Campany, Executive Director; Matt Bachler, Senior Planner, Liana Rice, Planner

Guest Participants: Lissa Kissel, Peter Richardson, Art Miller.

Call to Order: Chair Ciuffreda called the meeting to order at approximately 6:03 p.m. once quorum was present.

Amendments to agenda: None.

August 25, 2026 Minutes: On a motion by Commissioner Lembke, seconded by Commissioner Pinkerton, the minutes were approved with five abstentions.

Jamaica Town Plan Approval, Determination of Energy Planning Compliance & Planning Process Confirmation

Senior planner Matt Bachler provided a summary of the staff plan review process, and explained that the town was asking for plan approval, determination of energy planning compliance, and planning process confirmation. Commissioner Stevens asked if Commissioners were involved in the plan review and Chair Ciuffreda explained that the past process of creating a committee of commissioners to review plans became untenable as it was difficult to get volunteers to serve, so that moved to the Planning Coordination Committee, and with the decision to reduce the number of committees the review of the town plan, and related staff report, now goes to the Executive Board or Full Commission as a whole. Commissioner Pinkerton asked where the data underlying the town energy plan came from and Matt explained that it is derived from the state with further breakdown by the WRC. Commissioner Lembke asked that towns include their plan adoption date on the cover of their plans. On a motion by Commissioner Snelling, seconded by Commissioner Shippee, the plan was **approved** by a unanimous vote. On a motion by Commissioner Snelling, seconded by Commissioner Kleiman, the determination of energy planning compliance was **approved** with one abstention. On a motion by Commissioner Snelling, seconded by Commissioner Kleiman, the planning process was **confirmed** by a unanimous vote.

Proposed Regional Plan Update Amendments

Senior Planner Matt Bachler presented the process by which the regional plan has progressed, and highlighted all comments received to date including the nature of comments on the draft plan from the Land Use Review Board (LURB), and comments received during the two public hearings. He and Chris explained that the Executive Board found direction from the LURB to ostensibly remove all prescriptive language from the plan to constitute overreach beyond what the body is empowered to do by statute, but that staff recommended amending the plan per the LURB comments given how late in the process they were received and the looming statutory deadline by which regional commissions are to adopt an Act 181-compliant plan. The plan can always be amended in the future. Chris noted that it is up to Commissioners and the Project Review Committee to comment how they see fit on petitions that come to the WRC through Act 250 or Section 248, and that we have on record the LURB's comments and the Executive Board letter in response to those comments and that WRC disagreement with LURB authority. These could be referenced in comments to the District Environmental Commission and/or Public Utility Commission if the WRC wants to take a stronger position on those policies that had been more prescriptive but were modified based upon LURB comments. Commissioner Stevens commended staff on their ability to amend the draft in a relatively short amount of time after receiving LURB and public comments, and noted that he preferred the non-prescriptive language. Commissioner Welch asked what census data was used to establish housing tenure, and it was explained that the 2020 Census was used. She was concerned that did not sufficiently capture what transpired during the pandemic. Chair Ciuffreda suggested that could be captured in future iterations of the regional plan. Commissioner Fillion appreciated staff responsiveness to Housing Policy 12, which asks that developers of projects that would create 50 new jobs or more, consider housing availability and a contribution to workforce housing initiatives, but still felt it may run counter to encouraging economic development and housing. To that end she suggested the deletion of Housing Policy 12. Discussion seemed to indicate general support for this action. Chair Ciuffreda suggested entertainment of a motion to proceed to the public hearing on the second draft of the regional plan with the deletion

of housing policy 12. This motion was made by Commissioner Fillion, seconded by Commissioner Noga. This prompted discussion around leaving the policy in the plan because it is framed as a recommendation, not a requirement, and it was good to ask employers to give housing consideration. It was clarified that the vote would be to move forward with the updated plan draft with the deletion of policy 12. The **motion passed** by a vote of 15 to 11. Following the vote Chris asked if those who voted no were primarily voting against the striking of policy 12 or if they were primarily voting against moving the plan forward to public hearing. There seemed to be consensus that the disagreement was with the striking of policy 12 and not moving forward with the draft. Chris explained that he asked the question to get a sense as to whether or not there appeared to be support among commissioners for the draft because this would likely be what they would be asked to approve at the November 10th meeting. Chris commended the commissioners for their outstanding attendance at this meeting, as 60 percent of all town-appointed commissioners would be required to hold a vote in November on plan adoption. That would require the presence of 24 town-appointed commissioners and 24 were in attendance at this meeting.

Executive Director's Report: Chris reminded commissioners that the October meeting was primarily to serve as an opportunity for Commissioners to gather in person and better get to know one another and that dinner would be provided. The guest speaker will be Linda Dunlavy, Executive Director of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments. The meeting will be held at the Union Hall in Newfane from 5:30 to 7. No business will be conducted at this meeting. He also reminded commissioners that the vote on regional plan adoption is scheduled for their meeting on November 10th at 6 p.m. and that he anticipated plan adoption will be the only business item apart from approval of minutes from the September meeting. He explained that he was asked to testify before the Legislative County and Regional Governance Study Committee, and that he was pleased that the Vermont League of Cities and Towns Executive Director also testified and highlighted the important role RPCs play in support of towns and that the legislature and state agencies should enable them to be more responsive to town needs rather than those of the state. Chris noted that he was surprised when he began his tenure with the WRC how little control the Commission and the towns had in setting its own workplan agenda due to the nature of how the RPCs are funded through performance-based grants and contracts. He also explained that he was asked to serve on the LURBs Accessory On-Farm Business Stakeholder Group and that he is doing so without representing the WRC or RPCs as a group. He explained he came into planning from sustainable agriculture and agricultural economic development and that it was his position that farms need latitude to evolve their business to keep the farm as a farm, and to keep the farm business, and the farmers themselves, healthy.

Project Review Committee Report: Project summaries are available in the agendas and the committee's deliberations and actions are summarized in the minutes, both of which are found on the [WRC Committee page](#). Questions related to the Project Review Committee can be directed to Planner, Liana Rice.

Chair's Report: Chair Ciuffreda noted that the Executive Board had attempted to reach out to chronically absent commissioners to ask them to either re-engage or consider resigning because of the quorum issues their absence present. There was no response to this outreach so the Board followed up by notifying these commissioners' respective selectboards about the situation.

Public Comment: None.

Adjournment: On a motion by Commissioner Pinkerton, seconded by Commissioner Shippee, the meeting was adjourned by a unanimous vote at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Chris Campany

DRAFT