
Brownington Planning Commission
Wednesday, March 18, 2026
Town Clerk's Office
6:30 P.M.

Agenda

Attended by: Amey Dettmer, Bill Davis(chair), Pat Cooper, Larry Faust, Larry Thompson, Jane Greenwood, Kate Wolff,

Absent: Byron Burdick, Mark Hastings

1. 6:31 PM Call the meeting to order by Bill Davis
2. Additions to the agenda
3. Approve minutes of last meeting, motioned by Larry Thompson, seconded by Pat Cooper. Motion approved unanimously.
4. MERP project update:
 - a. We still have about 90,000 left of the grant money.
 - i. Cold climate Heat pump air handler system in the garage will cost \$70,000
 - ii. We may have about \$20,000 left, and we could possibly give it back as all the energy upgrades have been completed.
 - b. We are not going to be moving forward with the electric car chargers
5. MERP Mini grant - Energy Fair
 - a. At the energy we may want to have community input about how to address the issue of Brownington Community having no input into Barton Village Electric.
 - b. We need to go on the district website

- c. We will aim for May 30, 2026. June 6th as a back up. Bill will contact Jen Ulrich, the principal to confirm the date for school usage.
- d. Our April PC meeting will mostly be dedicated to organizing this event.

6. Solar update

- a. Solar Panels are complete
 - i. Bill worked with Green Mountain Solar today to get the App that he can pay attention to what panels are working, what are not working, and how much energy is being produced. It is making the meter turn backwards because its producing so much energy. The offset for the town building could be close to 100%.
 - ii. 4 times a year we can choose the percentage of an offset we want for the town clerk's office. The select board will make a decision on this.
 - iii. We don't know what happens with any excess energy that is not used by the garage/town offices.
 - iv. Green Mountain Solar said we don't need battery backup because we have a generator in the garage.
 - v. We want to ask Green Mountain Solar what their use estimate is so we can figure out what to do with the excess energy.
 - vi. We would like a representative from Green Mountain Solar to come answer some of our questions at the April meeting.

7. Act 181, Tier 3

S.325 would amend the current Act 181 to make the following changes:

- Extend road rule implementation to January 1, 2030.
- Extend Tier 3 implementation to January 1, 2030. The final Tier 3 Rule would be due June 30, 2028.
- Extend Act 250 exemptions for Priority Housing Projects to January 1, 2028. This would apply to proposed projects within Tier 1B eligible area regardless of whether Tier 1B exemption has been requested or approved.
- Extend Act 250 exemption for ADUs and commercial conversions up to 29 units of housing to January 1, 2030.

- Extend Act 250 exemption for all housing in and around existing designated areas (up to 75 units) and within one quarter (¼) mile (up to 50 units) until January 1, 2030.
- Direct the LURB in the Tier 3 rule and for the road rule to “determine which and under what circumstances criteria under 10 V.S.A. § 6086(a)(1)–(10) should be part of Tier 3 area review”. This means there could be less than a full Act 250 permit review: the LURB could, for example, exempt criteria related to school impact or archaeology.
- Eliminate the requirement for municipalities to enforce existing Act 250 permits in Tier 1A areas and create a process by which municipalities could create or amend a municipal permit with appropriate Act 250 permit conditions considered.
- Make several miscellaneous changes to sections of existing law that create and describe the Future Land Use areas that will be eligible for Tier 1A or Tier 1B. The changes are intended to provide more flexibility and to allow for new town centers or planned growth areas.
- This bill as passed by the Senate committee [largely reflects VLCT legislative priorities](#) related to Act 181 and land use planning, and VLCT will eagerly support its passage. Without S.325, the road rule will create sweeping new Act 250 jurisdiction statewide beginning this July.
- That said, the long extensions in the bill fall short of any substantive policy changes to improve upon Act 181 and do not include [Governor Scott's priority to repeal the road rule](#) entirely. As awareness of Act 181 and the [draft Tier 3 rule](#) has reached more and more rural communities across Vermont, confusion, outrage, and the call for further legislative intervention has intensified.
- The Senate first heard testimony on Act 181 mapping and rulemaking in early February, and the House still has not held a single hearing. This bill goes farther than most advocates anticipated or hoped for just a few short weeks ago, but it may not go far enough to earn the support of the governor or Vermont land and property owners who anticipate falling into the new jurisdictional areas.

8. Town land - Trail system?

- a. They have found gravel all over where we wanted a trail system. There is a shelf going down to the river, and we could still maybe have a small town trail.
- b. If we were to still develop a trail system on the left side, we would need to put a chain fence and a separate entrance to prevent people from entering the gravel pit.

- c. Next Steps: Jane, Byron, Bill, Pat, & Amey are interested in taking another walk on the land and re-envisioning a trail with our new considerations of the gravel pit expanding. Jane will work on getting this set up
- 9. The Commission and all town officials are invited to the East Side to organize celebration events for the 250th year of America.
- 10. Next meeting date: April 15th at 6:30 PM
- 11. Bill motions to Adjourn 7:40 PM and Jane seconded.