

Housing Committee - Meeting Minutes - September 1, 2026

City of Montpelier

September 1, 2026 at 6:00 PM

39 Main St, Montpelier, VT 05602 and Zoom

Meeting called to order at 6:00 PM by Chair Alyssa Schuren; the Chair declared a quorum present.

Members Present:

- Alex Halasz (Member) — Present
- Alyssa Schuren (Chair) — Present
- Dan Coppock (Member) — Present
- Dan Wheeler (Member) — Present
- Lauren Hierl (Vice Chair) — Present
- Sandra Vitzthum (Member) — Present
- Ben Linder (Member) — Present
- Sean Sheehan (Member) — Present
- Tim Heney (Member) — Present

Also present: Ben Doyle (City Council Member), Matt Jelacic (Community and Economic Development Specialist), Seamus Lombardo, Chris Therrian, Stephen Whitaker, Alan Goldman

Review of August 4th Minutes

Chair Alyssa Schuren noted that the AI function would be used to take notes and asked for any edits to the August 4th minutes. Hearing no edits, she requested a motion to approve the minutes.

Vote: Passed with unanimous consent

Public Comment

Stephen Whitaker raised concerns regarding tax increment financing calculations for Country Club Road, urging the committee to prioritize affordable housing over developer profits. He also highlighted the need to address brownfield remediation and prime agricultural soil protection concurrently under Act 250.

Ben Doyle responded that he had confidence in city staff and the ongoing process, noting that Act 250 applicability remained unclear without a formal project proposal.

Chris Therrien of Barre Street expressed concern that professional short-term rentals and out-of-state homeowners were depleting local housing stock. He proposed requiring operators to live on the property for at least eight months of the year or otherwise face an exorbitant municipal bed tax.

Dan Coppock and Matt Jelacic updated Chris on the city's short-term rental registry, explaining that it requires a local agent but does not cap the number of rentals.

Alan Goldman reminded the committee of a previous report by Mr. Jelacic indicating that short-term rentals did not pose a significant threat to the local housing supply.

Committee Updates

Dan Wheeler summarized his discussion with Zoning Administrator Meredith Crandall regarding opportunities to streamline the Development Review Board process, such as shortening the 45-day decision window by utilizing staff notes alongside minutes. Alex Halasz noted that the Conservation Commission is typically consulted prior to DRB review, though recent large cases had caused delays. The committee agreed that Dan W. should formalize his thoughts and coordinate with Ms. Halasz for a potential recommendation at a future meeting.

City Updates

Matt Jelacic reported that a jurisdictional opinion found no Act 250 permit was required for Alan Goldman's residential development across three tracts, which could provide over 400 units, though the exemptions expire January 1, 2028. He also provided updates on the Isabel Circle CHIP application, efforts to secure federal funding for Elm Street flood mitigation, winter shelter capacity, and a design grant for the Water Resource Recovery Facility.

Development Fees

Seamus Lombardo proposed a development fee holiday to incentivize housing construction, excluding certain exceptions like zoning appeals and non-residential properties. The committee debated the duration of the holiday, settling on a three-year period, while Lauren Hierl agreed to work with Seamus on financial modeling for the City Council.

Motion: Motion to recommend to the City Council a three-year moratorium on development fees based on Seamus' recommendations.

Vote: Motion passed with unanimous consent

Development Regulations Process

Sandra Vitzthum explained her review of the city's zoning ordinance aimed at eliminating duplication with state-level reviews and aligning regulations with Act 250 Tier 1A requirements. Tim Heney requested that the city update its 2025 Future Land Use Area map to accurately reflect developable growth areas to the Regional Planning Commission. The committee agreed to schedule a special one-hour meeting on September 15th to focus exclusively on these proposals.

Prioritization Document and Adjournment

Alyssa asked members to review the prioritization document she prepared and send her their rankings and areas of interest before the next regular meeting.

The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at approximately 7:31pm.