

M E E T I N G N O T I C E

BENNINGTON SELECT BOARD

Monday, November 14, 2022

Bennington Fire Facility

Multi-Purpose Room - 3rd Floor

130 River Street

Bennington, Vermont 05201

A G E N D A

6:00 PM

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Vision Statement
3. Consent Agenda 6:00 PM - 6:05 PM
 - A. Minutes of October 19, & October 24, 2022
 - B. Warrants
4. Public Comment 6:05 PM - 6:20 PM
5. Resolution 6:20 PM - 6:30 PM
6. Green Mountain Community Network 6:30 PM - 6:45 PM
7. Lake Paran Association 6:45 PM - 7:00 PM
 - Weed Problems
8. Municipal Planning Grant 7:00 PM - 7:15 PM
 - Town Plan Revisions
9. Implementing the Town Vision 7:15 PM - 7:30 PM
 - A. CPARB
 - B. IDEAL
10. Manager's Report 7:30 PM - 7:45 PM
11. Upcoming Agenda 7:45 PM - 7:50 PM
12. Other Business 7:50 PM - 8:00 PM
13. Executive Session
 - A. Personnel

We endeavor to host inclusive, accessible events that enable all individuals to engage and participate fully. To request an accommodation or for inquiries about accessibility, please contact Paul Dansereau, Facilities Director:
pdansereau@benningtonvt.org or call 802-447-9715.

**BENNINGTON SELECT BOARD SPECIAL MEETING
130 RIVER STREET
BENNINGTON, VERMONT 05201
OCTOBER 19, 2022
MINUTES**

SELECT BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeannie Jenkins-Chair; Jeanne Conner-Vice Chair; Bruce Lee-Clark; Jim Carroll; Gary Corey; and Tom Haley.

SELECT BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Sarah Perrin.

ALSO PRESENT: Dan Monks-Assistant Town Manager; Shannon Barsotti-Community Development Director; Jonah Spivak-Communications Coordinator; Jeff Goldstone-Goldstone Architecture; Zak Hale-Hale Resources, LLC; Ron Hachey; Donald Washum; Chloe Viner Collins; Laurie Mulhern; Judy Beckwith; Laura Boudreau; Kirk McVay; Sam Restino; Nancy White; Kayla Becker; Ned Perkins; Michael McDonough; Mike Bethel; John Ryan; Lilly West Williams; Cat Bryars and Madison Cramer-Shires Housing; Ilsa Svoboda-Meals on Wheels; Heather Starzynski-NeighborWorks; 70 citizens; Jim Therrien-Bennington Banner; CAT-TV; and Nancy H. Lively-Secretary.

At 5:30pm, Chair Jeannie Jenkins called the meeting to order and explained that the parties responsible for the work done on the redevelopment of BennHi will do their presentation first, those signed up to speak will make their comments/ask their questions, and then anyone not signed up to speak will then be called upon to make their comments/ask their questions. Each speaker will have 3 minutes to do so and the only topic to be discussed is the BennHi redevelopment. Ms. Conner will be the timekeeper. If there are additional questions, this will be continued at the Select Board Meeting on October 24, 2022.

1. PUBLIC PRESENTATION ON BENNHI REDEVELOPMENT

Dan Monks-Assistant Town Manager, Shannon Barsotti-Community Development Director, Jeff Goldstone-Goldstone Architecture, and Zak Hal-Hale Resources, LLC did the following presentation:

Dan Monks -

- Bennington was allocated \$3.9M from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) that came with certain parameters and, the Select Board was proactive in developing a list of projects that fit within those parameters and make an impact on our community.
- Indoor recreation and housing were on the top of the list and redeveloping BennHi would address both.

Shannon Barsotti -

- BennHi was built in 1913 and was the public high school from 1914-1967 and the Junior High from 1967-2004. Renovations were done in 1939, 1958, and 1974 but it has been vacant since 2004.
- It is on the National Register of Historic Places.
- The current owner bought it in early 2020, has done much clean-up, and put a new floor in the gymnasium. The Town worked with the YMCA and they were able to hold more classes during the pandemic, as well as, the Farmer's Market using it in the winter.
- The Town would be redeveloping 30,000 square feet of space for the community that would house the Senior Center, Meals on Wheels, and indoor recreation areas for youth and seniors.
- Both Main Street and Pleasant Street will benefit from the redevelopment as the old workshops on Pleasant Street will be utilized by community partners.

Dan Monks -

- This would be a public/private partnership where the Town would develop the community areas - Senior Center, Meals on Wheels, and gymnasium in 30,000 square feet - and Hale Resources would be responsible for finding the funding and constructing the 44 residential apartments in 70,000 square feet.
- We hired environmental consultants to look at the environmental issues and the building is clean of PCB's with only minor asbestos issues that we are dealing with. "No show stoppers."
- We had a structural analysis done and there are no structural issues with the building.
- We hired a mechanical engineer to look at the HVAC system as that is the most costly part of any old building renovation. For energy efficiency, we will be all electric and not use any fossil fuels.
- We also looked into other energy efficiencies, such as insulation, air sealing, windows, etc.
- We also looked into 'architectural programming', or meeting with all of the tenants of a building to understand their needs and then translating that to a design. We were able to meet all of their needs.
- We envision this as a Phase 1 (Senior Center, Meals on Wheels, and occupancy requirements) and Phase 2 (the gymnasium, locker rooms, changing rooms, and the Workshop space) project.
- Similar analyses are being done by Hale Resources on their 70,000 square feet of the building.

Jeff Goldstone -

- ✓ Goldstone Architecture will be working for the Town and Hale Resources independently from each other.
- ✓ He has been working with the building with the various owners for ~20 years.

- ✓ All of the Town's 30,000 square feet is on the first floor, and even though the building is structurally sound, the interior finishes are in poor shape and need to be redone, as does the plumbing and electrical.
- ✓ Some of the roof was replaced 15 years ago but much needs to be replaced. It does currently "keep the water out".
- ✓ There will be a common area staffed by the YMCA where people will be directed to go to the Senior Center, Meals on Wheels, the Workshops, or the YMCA.
- ✓ The Meals on Wheels commercial kitchen will have walk in coolers and seating will be in the auditorium when they're serving food but can be transformed back to an auditorium with the stage to accommodate evening events.
- ✓ The YMCA has the gym, exercise room, fitness room, locker rooms, changing rooms and showers.
- ✓ There are two public rest rooms plus a rest room in the Senior Center.
- ✓ There will be 67 parking spaces divided into three areas - the main parking lot, a back parking space open to Pleasant Street, and diagonal parking off of Pleasant Street behind the building - with access to both the community spaces on grade and the higher residential spaces with a ramp.
- ✓ There will also be a delivery truck zone.

Zak Hale -

- ❖ Our vision for this project is to build 17 professionally affordable housing units in one portion of the building and 27 market rate units in another portion which will include 14 units of affordable units for 5 years after the project is complete.
- ❖ We also have another 3,600 square feet that we plan on using for commercial space. We have spoken to Jackie Myers and Michelle Prouty concerning a daycare and also spoken to the Tutorial Center.
- ❖ 56% of the housing in Bennington are single family homes and only 5% are structures with 20-49 units in them.
- ❖ 75% of the housing in Bennington was built before 1990, and from 2010-2019, housing only increased by 1% - from 6,650 tenants to 6,723- while seasonal housing increased by 310%.
- ❖ Since COVID, there has been an increase in the need for housing across all income levels, an increase in short term rentals, an increase in building costs, and an increase in people that want to move to Vermont.
- ❖ This project will not only add housing units, but will revitalize the area (Pleasant Street has the highest crime rate in the community) and remove a "blight" on Main Street.
- ❖ Our history with BennHi is that we managed it for 10 years, cleaned it out after it was abandoned by the school, with 2018 being our last attempt to bring it back to life.
- ❖ With the Town as the "anchor tenant" and leveraging the ARPA funds, banks and investors are more open to funding the project.
- ❖ We will be maintaining the building's historical designation which limits some changes.

❖ How the units will be organized throughout the building was pointed out on the map.

Shannon Barsotti -

- Funding sources are ARPA, tax credits (for Town and Hale Resources), Designated Downton credits, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) (for Hale Resources), Green Mountain Power Efficiency Vermont rebates (for Town and Hale Resources), HVAC tax credits, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Vermont Community Foundation, AARP grants, State Building Community grants, and others.

Dan Monks -

- All this information - and more - is on the Town's website that will be regularly updated.
- We will ask the Select Board -
 - 1. To authorize us to continue our efforts to make this project a reality by authorizing the use of the ARPA funds for the project "with the proviso that no construction funds will be spent until all the funding sources are secured". This commitment will help both the Town and Hale Resources to leverage other funding.
 - 2. Allow us to formalize our agreement with Hale Resources, LLC by putting together a Development Agreement where it is very clear what Hale Resources does, what the Town does, and who is responsible for what. This will also help with our TIF Funding so we know how much the assessed value will be and how much tax revenue will be generated to pay for the bond without any impact on the tax payers.
 - 3. Allow us to evaluate cost savings and seek additional funding.
- If all this happens, we will be back before the public in 90-120 days.

2. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH DEVELOPER, ARCHITECTS, AND TOWN STAFF

Board questions/comments answered by the Presenters:

Mr. Carroll: Is the roof strong enough for solar panels? *Mr. Goldstone: We believe so and have talked about the possibility.*

Public questions/comments answered by the Presenters:

Ron Hachey-Council on Aging: The Council on Aging is interested in relocating to the BennHi and noted the importance of face-to-face interactions with the seniors that would be in the same building. The Town's positive attitude on this project is an important resource.

Chloe Viner Collins-Homeless Shelter: Supports any affordable housing. The Shelter is turning away 9 people a days and 2-3 families a week. Everyone should ask themselves "Why is a gym more important than an Emergency Shelter?"

148 Donald Washum: Are there specifications to how the federal funding is spent and who
149 determines that? Even with all of the information that we just got, there is still a lot more to
150 expose. *Mr. Monks: Most federal and state funding comes with specific criteria on how they are*
151 *to be used. The ARPA funding, however, has very few, and yes, there is more to come.*

152 Kayla Becker-YMCA: The YMCA has been running programming at BennHi for a year and a half,
153 and the more people that are in the building, the safer it will feel.

154 Laurie Mulhern: What agencies were contacted for occupancy? Where is the ARPA application?
155 Who provided the estimates? What is the breakdown of the funding sources and what tax
156 credits are anticipated? Are all of these documents available hard copy to those that would like
157 them? How is the public/private relationship work for grounds keeping, building maintenance,
158 etc.? Where is the community needs assessment? *Mr. Monks: Anyone can send questions to*
159 *info@benningtonvt.org to be answered if the answers are not already on the website. ARPA*
160 *funding came directly to the communities based on population and we only had to formally*
161 *accept the funds - we did not apply for it. The Select Board had several public meetings to come*
162 *up with the several projects to allocate the funds to, i.e., Willow Park, Skate Park, infrastructure*
163 *projects, BennHi, etc. Most of the money has been allocated but not yet expended. On the*
164 *website, go to BennHi attachments and the estimates were done by ECIS, a large firm from*
165 *Colchester, VT. We hired a mechanical engineer that recommended how to heat, ventilate, and*
166 *cool the space. The Historic Preservation federal and state tax credits are ~30% of the project*
167 *and composite tax credits are ~28% of the project. Both Mr. Hale and Ms. Barsotti are working*
168 *on these and others. The Town will be happy to print out the documents online for those that*
169 *would like to see them. All of the responsibilities of both the public and private partner will be*
170 *defined in the Development Agreement. Ms. Barsotti: For the Workshops we have talked to the*
171 *Vermont Arts Exchange, the Council on Aging, the Bennington Area Makers, and the UVM*
172 *Extension. Mr. Hale: Referenced the Community Needs Study done for the Energizer building -*
173 *different building, same needs.*

174 Laura Boudreau-SVSU: The SVSU supports more space where children can be active and
175 community space for clubs and activities. We employ 750 people with 75-100 new employees
176 hired each year. Many of these new hires are relocating and looking for homes to purchase or
177 to rent. The lack of housing has caused some of those that accepted positions to withdraw
178 because they couldn't find a place to live. We look forward to additional units being built.

179 Kirk McVay-655 Main Street: Is concerned about enough parking spaces for the redevelopment
180 so his parking spaces are not used like they were when the junior high was there. *Mr. Monks:*
181 *There are 67 parking spaces and we anticipate using the Town owned greenspace between*
182 *Stewart's for overflow parking. We know parking is an issue and we will address it before we*
183 *proceed with the project.*

184 Ned Perkins: How can we transform Pleasant Street with Section 8 housing? We need housing
185 for workers and the Energizer study said there was no housing available for those making

186 \$60,000/year. *Mr. Hale: 17 units will be professional affordable and 27 units will be market rate*
187 *housing. Half of the 27 will be affordable for the first 5 years and market rate after that. We*
188 *have seen where the presence of nicer properties in the area will encourage other investments*
189 *for improvement to take place, and therefore, make "Pleasant Street pleasant again". Mr.*
190 *Monks: Affordable housing is for a spectrum of people, not just for people at the poverty level.*
191 *Mr. Goldstone: The back of BennHi that faces Pleasant Street will be cleaned up, repaired, and*
192 *lighting added, as well as, resurrecting the Pleasant Street entrance to the building that has*
193 *awning.*

194 Michael McDonough-Planning Commission/Historic Preservation/Better Bennington
195 Corporation/Vermont Downtown Board: Spoke to the fact that BennHi is a "legacy building"
196 that the community cannot allow "to crumble". The project proposal is "in tune with our Town
197 Plan" as it calls for vitality, businesses, agencies, and housing in the Downtown. I ask the
198 community to keep an open mind on this proposal and realize that there are not going to be
199 many more opportunities like this to bring this building back to life. *Mr. Hale: A law was*
200 *recently passed that, if you're in a designated downtown and have mixed income housing and*
201 *mixed use, you can be exempt from Act 250 and be considered a priority housing project.*

202 Mike Bethel: Feels this needs to go to a vote of the people and that it isn't a good time for
203 Bennington to take on a project of this magnitude. Why electric heat? What is the total cost of
204 the building? How much will Hale Resources be paying for 70%? How can someone pay
205 \$146,000 for a building and we're going to give him \$1.1m plus the Senior Center? *Mr. Monks:*
206 *We will be back to the public with the funding sources and whether or not this is a feasible*
207 *project. Electric heat with heat pumps, geothermal power by electricity are by far the most*
208 *efficient heat sources and, with Efficiency Vermont rebates, no more expensive to install than*
209 *fossil fuel sources that are "yesterday's news". With funding sources and tax credits, the*
210 *building may be owned by Hale Resources but the Town will retain control of our portion of the*
211 *building with a multi-generational lease or option. We have a cost estimate online for the*
212 *Town's portion and Mr. Hale added that we are at \$250,000/unit cost making it \$9M-\$10M for*
213 *the residential portion at this time.*

214 John Ryan: What is the trade of the building where Meals on Wheels is located? What is the
215 value of the current Senior Center building? *Ms. Barsotti: We have a lease agreement with the*
216 *current owner of BennHi with an option to purchase and he would take over the current Senior*
217 *Center building valued at ~\$400,000. This will only happen if we proceed with this*
218 *redevelopment of BennHi. We have a range of \$4M-\$9M for the entire project.*

219 Nancy White: Encouraged everyone to go online and see the Select Board meeting of
220 12/28/2020 when the public first started hearing something about BennHi. "Parking will be a
221 nightmare" with 44 housing units and all of the activities. Bennington has paid for the Senior
222 Center for 45 years and provide services to all of Bennington County as does Meals on Wheels.
223 Will other towns contribute to the payment of the BennHi project? Why hasn't the lease
224 agreement been posted online? If this is approved, citizens have 30 days to get signatures on a

225 petition. *Mr. Monks: We discussed the parking plan earlier and the lease agreement has been*
226 *posted online for months and is now posted again on our BennHi website. When we have*
227 *secured the funding sources we will bring them to the public. Our attorney drafted the*
228 *documents on the sale of the Senior Center building so we are confident that was done*
229 *correctly.*

230 Sam Restino: Encouraged Bennington to educate themselves as to all of the projects that are
231 going on in Bennington.

232 Lilly West Williamson-Real Estate Company Owner: Kudos to those that have/are working on
233 the project to get funding sources that are not on the taxpayer, additional housing, spaces
234 dedicated to our fast growing senior population, and money coming into the Town from this
235 project. By seniors paying the affordable rent in the new units, their homes then can be sold to
236 the teachers, etc. looking to buy a house. She supports the project 100% and has some ideas
237 on the parking situation.

238 Heather Starzynski-NeighborWorks: Supports the housing initiative as we lack housing
239 throughout the State. We have worked with Hale Resources on rental rehabs in Bennington
240 and we support their quality of work resulting in safe housing units.

241 Ilsa Svoboda-Meals on Wheels: Supports the project but is concerned about the parking. We
242 have 60-80 seniors coming in every day for meals. Six years ago we were delivering 400
243 meals/week and now we are delivering over 1,000/week. Meals on Wheels would be willing to
244 wait for their move to BennHi so that housing can go in first to have more housing available for
245 seniors - some have been waiting 4 years for housing that they could afford with an average of
246 \$15,000/year income. *Ms. Barsotti: The Senior Center and Meals on Wheels at BennHi is going*
247 *to be happening at the same time as the housing. Mr. Hale: The Town needs us to do their part*
248 *and we need them to do our part.*

249 Cat Bryars and Madison Cramer-Shires Housing: Kudos to the Town and Hale Resources for
250 taking on this project.

251 **3. INFORMAL DISCUSSION TO ANSWER QUESTIONS WITH ANYONE INTERESTED IN PROJECT**

252 The Town set up in one area of the room, Goldstone Architecture set up in another area
253 of the room, and Hale Resources, LLC set up in a third area of the room for the public to come
254 and ask any additional questions that they may have.

255 ***At 7:37pm, the formal portion of the meeting adjourned to go into the informal***
256 ***breakout session.***

257 Respectfully submitted,

258 Nancy H. Lively
259 Secretary

1 **BENNINGTON SELECT BOARD MEETING**

2 **130 RIVER STREET**

3 **BENNINGTON, VERMONT 05201**

4 **OCTOBER 24, 2022**

5 **MINUTES**

6 **SELECT BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jeannie Jenkins-Chair; Jeanne Conner-Vice Chair; Bruce
7 Lee-Clark; Jim Carroll-by phone; Gary Corey; Sarah Perrin-by phone; and Tom Haley.

8 **SELECT BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** None.

9 **ALSO PRESENT:** Stuart Hurd-Town Manager; Dan Monks-Assistant Town Manager; Shannon
10 Barsotti-Community Development Director; Jonah Spivak-Communications Coordinator; Dr.
11 Trey Dobson-SVHC Chief Medical Officer; Jon Hale and Zak Hale-Hale Resources, LLC; Jackie
12 Kelly; Nancy White; Representative Mary Morrissey; Donald Washum; Sam Restino; Debbie
13 Mann; Clark Adams; 10 citizens; CAT-TV; and Nancy H. Lively-Secretary.

14 At 6:00pm, Chair Jeannie Jenkins called the meeting to order.

15 *Gary Corey moved and Bruce Lee-Clark seconded to add "Item #3A. COVID UPDATE" to*
16 *the Agenda. The motion carried unanimously.*

17 **1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

18 The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

19 **2. VISION STATEMENT**

20 Ms. Conner read the Town's Vision Statement that was adopted by the Select Board on
21 August 24, 2020:

22 "Bennington is a welcoming, engaged, inclusive, resilient community where everyone
23 regardless of identity shares in our vitality and benefits from an outstanding quality of life."

24 **3. CONSENT AGENDA**

25 **A. MINUTES OF OCTOBER 10, 2022**

26 **B. WARRANTS**

27 **C. LIQUOR LICENSE**

28 *Bruce Lee-Clark moved and Tom Haley seconded to approve the Minutes of October*
29 *10, 2022 amended as follows.*

30 *Page 3, Line 81, Change "gave" to "have"*

31 ***The motion carried unanimously.***

32 **3A. COVID UPDATE**

33 Dr. Trey Dobson, SVHC's Chief Medical Officer, did the following update:

- 34 • COVID cases for hospitalizations are increasing in the Northeast which includes "the
35 capacity which is measured in a very complicated way". However, it is "less virulent".
- 36 • Bennington numbers are skewed because the Albany area is included in those.
- 37 • We no longer get numbers on testing.
- 38 • SVHC has been at 4 patients hospitalized whereas it was 8 today. We don't know if that
39 will be a trend.
- 40 • The increases are due to new variants, those that are unvaccinated, and the elderly.
- 41 • The treatments that we had a year ago are still affective as are the vaccinations.
- 42 • SVHC is still vaccinating on Tuesdays and Thursdays and is the only place in the State still
43 doing so. We will probably stop, as well, at the end of the year.

44 *Board questions/comments answered by Dr. Dobson:*

45 Ms. Conner: Massachusetts can't get vaccines - Can they come to our hospital and get
46 vaccinated? *Yes.*

47 Ms. Conner: Is the increase in RSV COVID related? *It isn't directly related to COVID.*

48 Ms. Perrin: Stated that she had COVID, encouraged everyone to be careful, and thanked Dr.
49 Dobson for the update. *It's OK to not be as vigilant as we were a year ago without being*
50 *complacent either. However, it is best to be more careful, i.e., wearing a mask, if you live with*
51 *someone that is vulnerable or are travelling.*

52 Mr. Corey: If you have had COVID recently, what are the chances of getting COVID with the new
53 variants? *You're eligible to get a booster as soon as you recover from COVID 19, especially if*
54 *you're immune compromised.*

55 Mr. Hurd: Is the Pfizer vaccine the only one still available? *We have three now - Pfizer,*
56 *Maderna, and Novavax.*

57 *Public questions/comments answered by Dr. Dobson:*

58 Sam Restino: What's the feeling on Trick or Treating in Bennington and surrounding
59 communities? *If someone is vulnerable or it causes them anxiety, then don't do it.*

60 **4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

61 The following Public Comment Practices to make the experience for all involved a
62 productive and informative use of the Public Comment period at Select Board meetings was
63 placed on the podium for those that wish to make Public Comments to reference:

1. Public Comment is to allow residents an opportunity to share information or make announcements that benefit the community at large.
2. The topic should not be related to an agenda item. If a member of the public wants to comment on an agenda item they can do so during the discussion of that item.
3. Comments should be 3 minutes or less.
4. You are required to state your real name and town of residence.
5. Sharing comments, announcements and concerns are encouraged rather than asking questions. Public Comment is not a time for discussion. If you have specific questions it is best to call the Town Manager to get a full explanation and accurate information.
6. If the topic requires much discussion the item will be considered as an agenda item at a future meeting.

Nancy White: Noted the destruction that has been taking place at the cemetery behind the old Stewarts where many of those there were the founders of our Town. She requested that the Select Board come up with something so the vandals will get fined \$500.00 for being in the cemetery at night.

5. BENN HI REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Ms. Jenkins noted the following:

- In 2021, the Select Board asked Town Staff to reach out to Town Departments, BCRC, Health Department, BBC, and others to compile a list of projects for ARPA funding followed by a month long public comment period with a presentation to the Select Board and the community in March 2022.
- Since then, we have been getting regular updates as they are moving through the process.
- We had a very well attended Special Meeting on October 19th and this is the second meeting following that.
- This evening we are focusing on the next steps.

Dan Monks did the following presentation:

- The website has been updated with more information since the October 19th meeting.
- Any questions for more information can be sent to info@benningtonvt.org and will be answered and posted if the information is not already there.
- Staff recommendations for Select Board approval are:
 - ❖ Commit, but not expend at this time, up to \$2M of ARPA funding to the Benn Hi Project. We can't leverage additional funds without this commitment.

- 98 ❖ Formalize our agreement with Hale Resources.
- 99 ❖ Staff to identify cost savings and quantify the cost of the whole project.
- 100 ❖ Staff to continue the pursuit of additional funding.
- 101 ❖ Staff to explore ownership models for funding. This is the best way for the Town
- 102 and Hale Resources to each control the respective portions of the property.
- 103 ❖ Report back to the Board in 90-120 days.

104 *Board questions/comments answered by Mr. Monks, Ms. Barsotti, Jon Hale, and Zak Hale:*

105 Mr. Corey: Does the \$2M include the feasibility studies? *Mr. Monks: That is only for the*
106 *construction of the project. The feasibility portion was previously authorized for the Town to*
107 *pursue.*

108 Mr. Corey: Will we have an interim update prior to the 90-120 days? *Mr. Monks: If you would*
109 *like one, just let us know. We will be back to sign the agreement with Hale Resources and/or we*
110 *run into a “show stopper”.*

111 Mr. Corey: Do you expect to have secured some funding by 90-120 days? *Mr. Monks: We hope*
112 *to have identified it all and secured some, but not all of it, by then.*

113 Mr. Haley: People are concerned about the effect on their taxes. *Mr. Monks: Our goal is to*
114 *keep it neutral to the taxpayer. The bond would be a TIF Bond which would be paid for from the*
115 *taxes on the Benn Hi property so there’s no impact on the general taxpayer. We can’t*
116 *guarantee that there will be no impact at all because there may be an impact on the Town’s*
117 *general budget for our cost of maintaining our portion of the building. However, what we*
118 *receive in rents will help offset that, as well.*

119 Ms. Perrin: Do you anticipate additional costs for staff or studies to pursue funding sources?
120 *Mr. Monks: Some funding may require additional documentation but most will be staff time so*
121 *we don’t foresee any additional significant expenditures.*

122 Mr. Carroll: What will the new Benn Hi building generate in taxes? *Mr. Monks: Right now it’s*
123 *assessed at under \$200K and we expect the new assessment to be between \$4M-\$6M, and*
124 *maybe higher. Mr. Hurd: Added that \$4M would generate more than \$60,000 in taxes.*

125 Ms. Conner: Will the funding sources for the two projects - which are separate - ever crossover?
126 *Mr. Monks: Each will pursue funding sources specific to their respective projects, however,*
127 *neither can go forward without the other. The residential project must have the space they’re*
128 *not using be put into active income generating use, and the Town, doesn’t have the expertise to*
129 *do residential development. A private partner can leverage tax credits for the entire project.*
130 *We will need to work out any shared space, such as “a shared hallway”, but there will not be*
131 *any shared subsidies, per se, between the two projects.*

132 Ms. Conner: Does being awarded a sizeable grant by one funder motivate other funders to be
133 part of the project? *Ms. Barsotti: Yes. Some of the larger funders will organize a “Funders*

134 *Meeting” to pull together these large projects. Having a couple of Select Board members attend*
135 *this meeting would show the funders the Town’s commitment to the project. Mr. Monks: Added*
136 *that these funders can then tout how their smaller dollar amount leveraged a much larger*
137 *amount.*

138 Mr. Lee-Clark: Can you provide a general ownership model with the understanding that there
139 will be more coming on this at a later date? Mr. Monks: *This would be within our Development*
140 *Agreement with Hale Resources. One possibility would be that Hale Resources would own the*
141 *whole building and we would lease our 30,000 square feet with a multigenerational lease that*
142 *may include an option to buy for a nominal fee. There are many options, but regardless of what*
143 *we do, Hale Resources will control their portion and we will control our portion.*

144 Mr. Lee-Clark: TIF funding is a bond that will require a vote, and the expectation is, that the
145 taxes generated by the new building will pay for the bond with any impact on the taxpayers
146 being “negligible”. Mr. Monks: *This has been determined by experts at the State that the*
147 *Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) have hired. We can’t proceed with a bond vote until*
148 *VEPC agrees that the taxes will pay for the bond. And, we can’t bring this to VEPC until we have*
149 *a Development Agreement with Hale Resources. The process would be 1. Development*
150 *Agreement; 2. Bring it to VEPC for approval; and 3. Authorizing a bond vote.*

151 *Public questions/comments answered by Mr. Monks, Ms. Barsotti, John Hale, and Zak Hale:*

152 Jackie Kelly: Seniors look at their present facility as their “club house” and don’t feel that the
153 new location will be as welcoming. People look at this project as a “house of cards” with two
154 phases given that the Putnam Block is Phase 1 and Phase 2 without completion. Most people
155 feel the \$2M should be spent on homeless shelters instead and vacant store fronts transitioned
156 into warming shelters. Ms. Jenkins: *In 2021, the Select Board asked Town Staff to reach out to*
157 *Town Departments, BCRC, Health Department, BBC, and others to compile a list of projects for*
158 *ARPA funding followed by a month long public comment period. Several people chose to*
159 *participate with their ideas on how to spend the ARPA funding. Also, 3 years ago, the Town*
160 *began monthly attendance of the Continuum of Care meetings which are people involved in all*
161 *aspects of housing with significant focus on unhoused individuals. It isn’t as easy as redoing a*
162 *store front as shelters require people that are experienced in this work. Ms. Barsotti: Mr.*
163 *Goldstone has made changes to the Senior Center plan at the new building based on input from*
164 *the Seniors to make it as welcoming as the current Center is. What we will have but don’t have*
165 *now is that everything will be on one level with Meals on Wheels across the hall with double the*
166 *capacity and exercise rooms across the hall in the other direction.*

167 Sam Restino: Stated that there was an Open House at the Senior Center, Meals on Wheels, and
168 the YMCA from 10:00am-2:00pm this Wednesday, and wonders how people are getting their
169 information. There are questions that haven’t been answered from the October 19th meeting,
170 there’s still asbestos in the building, and TIF. Other than Mr. Lee-Clark and Mr. Hurd, there has
171 been no response from other Select Board members on “What is best for Bennington?”.

172 Debbie Mann: The YMCA set up a Grandparent/Grandchild event and no one from the YMCA
173 showed up. Seniors don't want children around because they fear the potential exposure to
174 illness and inadequate parking at the new building is a major concern. It doesn't seem like a
175 good sign that Mr. Goldstone has been working with this building for 20 years with nothing
176 having gone forward. Also, understood that the current Senior Center had been purchased by
177 someone and given to the Town to be used as a Senior Center and doesn't understand how the
178 Town can relinquish ownership of it. *Mr. Monks: We plan to reserve parking for seniors on the
179 Benn Hi site and not adjacent to it. The current Senior Center is next to a large housing project
180 and the numbers are similar. Mr. Spivak: The housing project next to the Senior Center has 50
181 units with 20 parking spots for the project and 12 parking spots for the Senior Center and Meals
182 on Wheels with parking at Benn Hi to be 67. Mr. Monks: We will continue to look at parking to
183 ensure that it will be adequate for the needs of the new facility. Our attorney has looked into
184 the selling of the current Senior Center and there are no issues in doing that. Now is a better
185 time to renovate the building than past years because of the availability of funding, the current
186 owner has done significant stabilization of the building, and we have a partner.*

187 Clark Adams: Would like clarification on who's responsible for the \$9M cost of the building. *Mr.
188 Monks: We have an estimate for \$9M, and also for \$6M and \$4M, so the range of the estimates
189 is \$4M-\$9M for the Town's portion of the building. Our charge is to fund the project without the
190 use of taxpayer funding. We will be coming back in 90-120 days with an update on funding
191 sources and reducing the costs. Mr. Jon Hale: Stated that Hale Resources has been involved
192 with the Benn Hi building for 13 years and the funding sources are available now to see this
193 project through. The unfortunate side is that it takes a lot of money to bring these old buildings
194 back to life when the resulting assessment will be much less than the cost. This is an
195 opportunity for us and the Town to bring housing and a community asset to Bennington.
196 Neither of us can do it without the other. Mr. Zak Hale: The grants that we are going after is
197 money that is going to be spent anyway so to have it spent in Bennington rather than elsewhere
198 in the State is a win for our community. Ms. Jenkins: This will also bring income to local
199 businesses, provide a location where seniors could live in the building where they have meals,
200 exercise and socialize with funds that will be spent elsewhere if we don't take it. Anyone that
201 hears about this project sees it as a wonderful idea.*

202 Representative Mary Morrissey:

203 1. Explain the 9% downtown tax credit if partnered with Hale Resources as her
204 constituents are questioning that we are "jumping into another project" when the belief was
205 that Shires Housing would be doing the housing portion. It's difficult for the community to
206 "wrap their arms around this project" because we haven't seen the next phases of the Putnam
207 Block project with this being a similar situation. And, how are we going to use the TIF dollars?
208 *Mr. Monks: We do have a Memorandum of Understanding with Hale Resources and will be
209 doing a Developer Agreement to be able to proceed with funding sources (if authorized tonight).
210 We are both committed to this project. Shires Housing had staffing issues that had nothing to*

211 do with this project. The TIF dollars will be expended on Phase 2 which is the gymnasium, locker
212 rooms, changing rooms, etc. Disagrees that the Putnam Block was not successful and it is not a
213 Town project. The only interest in the project is a \$300,000 loan. There is housing, Bennington
214 College, a coffee shop, the Nurses, a salon, a pet shop, and a restaurant being worked on there
215 so far. Mr. Zak Hale: Tax credits are reimbursed at a percentage on certain expenditures of a
216 project - we don't get reimbursed dollar for dollar. If we don't use them, we can then sell them
217 at a certain percentage. Tax credits are not all the same. There are downtown tax credits,
218 historic preservation tax credits, etc. In addition, the Town has changed a lot since 2018 and the
219 Putnam Block is a huge part of that. Reiterated that if these dollars don't come to Bennington,
220 they will go elsewhere.

221 2. It will cost \$9M but only be assessed for \$4M-\$6M? Mr. Jon Hale: Reiterated that it
222 takes a lot of money to bring these old buildings up to code and energy efficient "and that cost
223 is exuberantly more than the building will be worth when it's completed". Ms. Jenkins: The
224 ARPA funding as seed money is allowing us to bring in the additional money.

225 3. What is Mr. Gilbert's (the current owner of Benn Hi) role going forward? Mr. Monks:
226 Reiterated that the Town has a 30-year lease-to-own for a low interest rate payment each
227 month with Mr. Gilbert to gain site control of the property and can be terminated at any time.

228 4. Have you anticipated an amount of funding from private investments? Mr. Zak Hale:
229 We could raise \$1.5M-\$2M from private investments but, "this is not cast in stone" and because
230 of the poor return on a dollar, most of our funding will be from grants.

231 5. How are you going to deal with the asbestos and the potential mold from years of the
232 windows being broken? Mr. Monks: We have done our due diligence on the asbestos with
233 Catamount Environmental. There is some, mostly under the gym floor undisturbed, it will be
234 removed the cost of which is in the estimate. Most of it had already been removed by Matt
235 Lewis, a previous owner. The rest is on the pipes as it is in all old buildings. We haven't seen
236 any significant mold in the building. However, if present, the material that it is on just needs to
237 be removed. And, the building is clean of PCB's. Mr. Jon Hale: Added that they are also having
238 environmental testing done and, "for its age, this building is in very good environmental
239 condition".

240 Sam Restino: Is there any lead in the building and is there a document through the State on the
241 abatement of asbestos? Mr. Jon Hale: The abatement of asbestos is all registered with the State
242 and any building built before 1978 is considered to have lead paint. It does not have to be
243 removed. It has to be stabilized and inspected annually. Mr. Monks: Our estimates assume lead
244 paint on all surfaces.

245 Nancy White: Benn Hi was at the top of the ARPA project list from December 2021 and the
246 citizens had no say. "Seniors are getting the short end of the stick", and to put seniors in the
247 Benn Hi project with children is ridiculous. There isn't going to be enough parking to dedicate
248 some to only seniors. Ms. Jenkins: Reiterated that the community gave several uses for the

249 ARPA funds and Benn Hi was a top priority. Mr. Monks: The Seniors will have more space in the
250 Benn Hi building plus access to a community room, meals, and exercise areas. The current
251 Senior Center does not have this within the building. Added that the YMCA will continue to
252 operate programs in a Town building, albeit owned or leased - and is under contract with the
253 Town to do so. They will not own any portion of the building. We are building this space for the
254 community to take advantage of what will be happening in that space.

255 Is Hale Resources going to own the entire building and the Town will lease back its 30%? Mr.
256 Monks: We don't know who will own it at this time. If Hale Resources does own it, the Town
257 would have a multigenerational lease agreement.

258 Have we been using ARPA money to pay all of Mr. Gilbert's bills plus the lease since April 1,
259 2022? Mr. Monks: The lease is a typical "triple net lease" where you pay a lease payment, the
260 taxes, and insurance on the property. The lease has been online for months and we are not
261 paying Mr. Gilbert's bills.

262 How can you gift the Senior Center to Mr. Gilbert when the taxpayers have been paying for it
263 for 45 years and needs to see where an attorney says the Town is able to do this? Mr. Monks:
264 The State does say that if a Town owned property is being sold, a public notice has to be done to
265 give the public 30 days to petition. We did that long ago. We don't have to go through with it
266 but we can if the Select Board so chooses.

267 How is Mr. Gilbert going to use the Senior Center building? Mr. Monks: The lease doesn't
268 dictate how Mr. Gilbert will use that property.

269 **Gary Corey moved and Bruce Lee-Clark seconded to authorize the following Next Steps:**

- 270 ❖ **Commit up to \$2M of ARPA funding to the Benn Hi Project.**
- 271 ❖ **Formalize our agreement with Hale Resources.**
- 272 ❖ **Staff to identify cost savings and quantify the cost of the whole project.**
- 273 ❖ **Staff to continue the pursuit of additional funding.**
- 274 ❖ **Staff to explore ownership models for funding. This is the best way for the Town and**
- 275 **Hale Resources to each control the respective portions of the property.**
- 276 ❖ **Report back to the Board in 90-120 days.**
- 277 ❖ **Report back to the Board with interim reports as needed.**

278 Ms. Perrin agrees with the interim reports as needed.

279 Mr. Haley clarified that we are committing to the funding but not expending it. Ms. Perrin
280 added that the project can't move forward without the funding in place.

281 **The motion carried unanimously.**

282 **6. IMPLEMENTING THE TOWN VISION**

Mr. Haley, as the CPARB liaison, stated that the first CPARB public meeting which will be mainly organizational will be on Thursday at 6:00pm at the Fire Facility.

Ms. Jenkins noted that, as of this week, Bennington was included in the IDEALVT program with the Office of Racial Equity. Mr. Monks (Town), Jonathan Phipps (SVSU), and Ms. Jenkins (Town) will be going to Randolph Center for an 8:30am meeting on Wednesday. There are 10-12 communities that are taking part in this.

7. MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Hurd did the following report:

Bruce Lee-Clark moved and Gary Corey seconded to allow CAT-TV to place an 18"x24" sign on the Town Office lawn to honor Veterans from November 1, 2022-November 30, 2022. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Hurd clarified that the Senior Center building was donated to the Town and occupied by VNA Hospice and the Senior Center. It was never dedicated as only the Senior Center though that is what it became over time.

8. UPCOMING AGENDA

November 14, 2022 - Lake Paran Presentation

November 28, 2022 - Revised Chelsea Project (to the Planning Commission tentatively on 11/10/22)

Future Date - Municipal Planning Grant - New Town Plan

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Corey: Expressed his disgust at the cemetery vandalism and would like to see a way for those to pay for what they're doing.

Mr. Carroll: Expressed his disgust at the cemetery vandalism and would like to install cameras to make the cemetery more secure.

Mr. Hurd: We are looking into what we can do to make the cemetery more secure.

Ms. Conner: Reminded everyone to vote - November 8th is Election Day.

Mr. Lee-Clark: Commended Paul Dansereau for his report on Willow Park and what is our status at this time? Mr. Monks answered that Play By Design will begin the work at Willow Park on October 25th with a better curbing product than originally planned at no additional cost and with the poured in place rubber in early November.

Mr. Lee-Clark: Noted that the Rail Trail "is gorgeous". The trestle is being worked on and will work well when done.

315

316 ***At 8:20pm, Gary Corey moved and Bruce Lee-Clark seconded the adjournment of the***
317 ***meeting. The motion carried unanimously.***

318

319

320 Respectfully submitted,

321 Nancy H. Lively

322 Secretary

323



Bennington County Regional Commission

210 SOUTH STREET • SUITE 6 • BENNINGTON, VERMONT 05201 • (802) 442-0713

To: Bennington Planning Commission
Bennington Select Board

From: Jim Sullivan, Director
Bennington County Regional Commission

Date: November 8, 2022

Subj: FY23 Municipal Planning Grant Application for Bennington Town Plan Update

The Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) will work with the Town of Bennington to apply for an FY23 Municipal Planning Grant (MPG) to complete an update to the Bennington Town Plan. This year, the application is due on December 1, 2022. The process for developing a new Town Plan will include two related and successive phases: (1) an extensive public outreach component to identify key themes that will provide a framework for each section of the plan while informing recommended policies, actions, and priorities and (2) development of a Town Plan that includes all elements and maps required by statute while providing fresh insights on equity and inclusion across all issues in the community. Based on new state guidance, the Town Plan also will include an enhanced implementation table.

The BCRC suggests the following work plan for **Phase 1** of this project:

- Review and evaluate the existing Bennington Town Plan. Provide examples of municipal plans in Vermont that present information in more accessible formats and which are tied together by unifying themes carried through each section. Submit a brief report to the Planning Commission suggesting possible format and content for a new Town Plan document.
- Develop a public participation process that uses open meetings and surveys, as well as meetings with targeted groups, to identify fundamental values that should be supported by the Plan. This process will include efforts to identify and assess townwide issues and concerns while topic-specific meetings also will be organized around each main plan element (as identified in statute).
- A consultant trained in DEI (Diversity-Equity-Inclusiveness) will work with the Vermont Office of Racial Equity and other organizations with expertise in DEI issues to ensure that all residents, including marginalized populations, are heard from.
- Draft value statements, goals, and policies that reflect community-wide concerns, needs, and aspirations for each element of the Plan. Work with the Planning Commission to develop themes that apply throughout the Plan and tie the sections together.
- Compile a list of possible strategies that may be used to support implementation of the Plan's goals. These strategies will be evaluated and included, modified, or deleted upon technical evaluation during the second phase of plan development.

- Prepare a draft report that includes an overall vision for the Town, and values, goals, and policies suggested by the public input process and grounded in DEI principles for each required Plan element. Each element will refer to this set of themes and use them as guiding principles. Potential implementing strategies will be described in terms of their connection to those themes.
- The consultant will meet with the Planning Commission throughout the planning process, will work with town staff to organize public and stakeholder meetings and any surveys/interviews, and will review the draft report with the Planning Commission and revise as needed. The BCRC will produce a final report that will provide the philosophical framework for a new Town Plan.

Estimated total project cost: \$20,000

*A local match of 10% of the total project cost is required for the MPG

Planning staff at the BCRC are happy to discuss the program with you. The grant application deadline is December 1st, and to participate your planning commission and legislative board must sign the attached resolution which must be submitted through the online grant application portal.

We look forward to discussing this opportunity with you and to working with Bennington to ensure that your town plan reflects the town's priorities and values.

BCRC Contacts

Jim Sullivan, Director
jsullivan@bcrct.org

Callie Fishburn, Regional Planner
cfishburn@bcrct.org

Office phone: 802-442-0713

FY23 Municipal Resolution for Municipal Planning Grant

WHEREAS, the Municipality of _____ is applying for funding as provided for in the FY23 Budget Act and may receive an award of funds under said provisions; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Housing and Community Development may offer a Grant Agreement to this Municipality for said funding; and

WHEREAS, the municipality is maintaining its efforts to provide local funds for municipal and regional planning purposes or that the municipality has voted at an annual or special meeting to provide local funds for municipal and regional planning purposes,

Now, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED

1. That the Legislative Body of this Municipality enters into and agrees to the requirements and obligations of this grant program including a commitment to match funds.
2. That the Municipal Planning Commission recommends applying for said Grant;

(Name of Planning Commission Chair)

(Signature)

- 3a. That (Name)_____ Title_____

who is either the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), as defined by 10 VSA §683(8), or is a Select Board Member, the Town Manager, the City Manager, or the Town Administrator, is hereby designated to serve as the Municipal/Authorizing Official (M/AO) for the Grant Electronic Application and Reporting System (GEARS), and to execute the Grant Agreement and other such Documents as may be necessary to secure these funds.

- 3b. (Alternate Authorizing Official for redundancy)

That (Name)_____ Title_____

who is either the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), as defined by 10 VSA §683(8), or a Select Board Member, is the Town Manager, the City Manager, or the Town Administrator, is hereby designated to serve as the Municipal/ Authorizing Official (M/AO) for the Grant Electronic Application and Reporting System (GEARS), and to execute the Grant Agreement and other such Documents as may be necessary to secure these funds.

- 3c. That (Name)_____ Title_____

is hereby designated as the Grant Administrator, the person with the overall Administrative responsibility for the Municipal Planning Grant program activities related to the application, and any subsequent Grant Agreement provisions.

Passed this _____ day of _____, _____.

- ☐ **(For rural towns or consortia only)** The regional planning commission will serve as agent for the municipality or consortium. *(Check the box if the municipality authorizes its regional planning commission to prepare the application, support grant administration and be exempt from competitive selection if serving as project consultant.)*

LEGISLATIVE BODY

(name)

(signature)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESOLUTION FORM

- A. The Legislative Body of the Municipality must adopt this resolution or one that will have the same effect. This Form may be filled in or the adopted Resolution may be issued on municipal letterhead, filling in the name of the municipality, the Legislative Body (e.g. Selectboard), and the name and title of the Municipal/ Authorizing Official(s) (M/AOs); and the Grant Administrator.
- B. Following formal adoption, a majority of the legislative body must sign the Resolution. The Chair of the Planning Commission must also sign upon endorsement by vote of the Planning Commission.
- C. This form must be either uploaded to the online application or grant, or mailed to:

Municipal Planning Grant Program
 Department of Housing and Community Development
 One National Life Drive, Sixth Floor
 Montpelier, VT 05620-0501
- D. If mailed, an electronic copy of the submitted Resolution document will be uploaded by DHCD staff and available online.
- E. Please note that the designated Municipal/Authorizing Official(s) and Grant Administrator must also [register for an account](#) in the online grants management system, if they have not done so already, before the application can be considered complete.

CONSORTIUM APPLICATIONS: For a consortium, each municipality must complete a separate Resolution form. All municipalities in a consortium must designate the same Municipal/Authorizing Official(s) and grant Administrator.

MANAGER'S REPORT
November 14, 2022

ACTION

Nothing at this time.

INFORMATIONAL

Benmont Ave/ County Street Sewer Line Replacement This project is underway. Much of the work along and within the paved portion of the roadway is completed. You will note that they have been working just to the north of the Big Mill west of Benmont Ave. This is the vault where the connection to the existing main is made. They still must complete a manhole at County and Benmont. It is expected that Benmont will be paved before Thanksgiving weather permitting.

Franklin Lane Pedestrian Improvement Project This project is essentially completed. Lighting and some small improvements remain.

Distribution of COVID Test Kits Distribution of the 220 test kits has been completed. We have reached out to the Department of Health to see if we can obtain more kits. We will once again make them available at various municipal buildings if we can obtain them.

Tax Sales Tax sales for this year went very well. All but one property sold at sale. The one year redemption period is underway.

FOLLOW UP

Willow Park Playground Paul Dansereau provided the attached update.

Fleet Manager position Unfortunately, the individual we had in mind found another job. The position remains unfilled while we look for another individual with the training and skills we need.

The Community Development and Permitting/Planning Reports are attached.
The Chief and Lieutenant will be presenting to the Board at this meeting.

November 9, 2022

Town of Bennington Willow Park Play Structure Project Update 11/09/2022

Prepared by: Paul T. Dansereau

- 1. Purpose:** Provide the Town of Bennington Select Board an update of the Willow Park Play Structure Project.
- 2. Recent Completed Work:**
 - a. Play by Design work crew mobilized and were on site 10/25 to 10/28 to complete the following:
 - i. Remove all pre-cast curbing that was installed not to industry standard specifications by Childscapes sub-contractor
 - ii. Verify finished curb elevations and install gravel sub-base to specifications
 - b. Curbing sub-contractor mobilized and installed extruded concrete curbing 11/2 to 11/3
 - c. Play by Design work crew mobilized and returned to site 11/7 to complete the following:
 - i. Complete lower play structure equipment punch list items
 - ii. Verify and correct gravel pathways elevations and widths
 - iii. Prepare the lower playground for poured in place rubber installation
 - iv. Complete upper playground punch list items
 - v. Verify upper playground sub-base elevations and ensure sub-base is ready for poured in place rubber installation
 - vi. Complete final site work and landscaping
 - d. Vitriturf, the poured in place rubber installation contractor, is scheduled to mobilize and start poured in place rubber installation on Thursday 11/10.
- 3.** Play by Design is committed to ensure the playground is completed to provide a quality, fully compliant, and long lasting playground to the Town of Bennington
- 4.** Additional updates will follow as they become available.

Recreation:

YMCA program planning:

The Bennington Community Center (Rec Center) pool schedule and fall programs for adults and youth are updated regularly on the Facebook page and town's website. New exercise equipment is available in the weight room, and a strength and conditioning room has opened up in the basement. YMCA afterschool programs and youth and adult fitness programming is happening at the Bennington Sports Center as well, with many new classes for seniors.

Bennington Outdoor Recreation Collaborative:

The Town of Bennington received a \$10,000 grant from the Vermont Community Foundation to support outdoor recreation with wayfinding signs, photography, graphic design, and print media. Jonah Spivak redesigned the Town's recreation page to highlight more outdoor recreation opportunities and partners. GVH studio has completed the wayfinding signs and they will be installed by the Town's Highway Department this fall.

Recreational Facilities and Animating Infrastructure Grant:

The Town of Bennington received a Recreation Facilities grant from the State of Vermont to add fencing around the green space next to the Morgan Springs water facility at Memorial Park (Rec Center). This is a sizable green space that will be used for youth programming, outdoor exercise classes, and community picnics. The new fencing is installed in the green space and the YMCA staff are using the space for youth and family programming. An Animating Infrastructure grant from the Vermont Arts Council is supporting art installations along the fence, such as creative benches and gates, collaborating with local artists and designers through the Vermont Arts Exchange. We are also working with a local landscape designer for ideas on landscaping the area. These installations will be completed this month. An MAUHS student, Luisa Novelli, from the Community Engagement class is helping to document this project and has also met with YMCA staff to create a survey for teens about how they use the Rec Center to gather their ideas about improving the Rec Center campus.

Trolley line path:

I am on the advisory committee for the Trolley Line path scoping study that is led by Cat Bryars and Mark Anders of BCRC. This study examines the feasibility of converting the abandoned electric trolley car bed in Southwestern Vermont into a 14-mile shared-use path for pedestrians and cyclists traveling between Bennington and Pownal, VT and Williamstown, MA.

Willow Park play structure upgrade:

I am on the working group with Paul Dansereau, Mark Sawyer, and Jonah Spivak. We reviewed the proposals that responded to the RFP and selected Play by Design to lead the project. Play By Design removed the old play structures and the new play structures have been installed but some modifications are needed before the park can reopen.

Vermont Begins Here:

Eight Oh Two Marketing is continuing the digital marketing campaign to promote Bennington. We are running Facebook ads to promote fall travel to Bennington. The VBH blog post for November promoted Breakfast in Bennington with a spotlight on the Blue Benn diner as well as upcoming events.

Local Food Security:

I meet quarterly with the Southern Vermont Regional Food Network, which promotes a stronger regional network for sustainable local agriculture and community food security.

The downtown market advisory group developed out of the SVRFN and is focused on a downtown market that supports local farms and food producers and supplies fresh produce to downtown Bennington. They have formed a nonprofit, the Bennington Community Market, and the new market is located at 239 Main Street. The market received a town loan of \$200,000 to begin construction on a commercial kitchen at the market space and was awarded a \$35,000 grant from the Citizens for Greater Bennington. They have a website- <https://www.benningtonmarket.com> and have launched a social media campaign and fundraising campaign. They have also received their 501c3 status from the IRS as a non-profit organization. Construction is almost complete on the space and the market's board hired a new general manager who is preparing the market for opening in December.

Congressman Peter Welch nominated the Bennington Community Market along with other local partners for a federal earmark and he visited the market on his recent trip to Bennington. I also met with Bennington College students from the Community Kitchen class to visit the community kitchens at GBICS, Sunrise Family Resource Center, and Orchard Village.

Community Development Block Grants:

The Berkshire Family YMCA, UCS Head Start, and Sunrise Family Resource Center received VCDP grants to support Covid-19 related expenses and HVAC upgrades. The Town also received a VCDP grant of \$500,000 to support the Shire Housing Bennington Family Housing project at 300 Pleasant Street. I submit paperwork required for each grant agreement and subgrant agreement along with progress reports. Shires Housing has received VCDP funding for two recovery housing projects and Hale Resources received additional funding for the affordable housing development at 219 Pleasant Street.

Historic Preservation Grants:

I worked with GVH Studio on a history/recreation/arts and culture panels for a new downtown kiosk funded with an historic preservation (CLG program) grant. The kiosk was recently installed in the green space at the back entrance to the Putnam block. I also submitted another historic preservation grant in partnership with Bennington College to put the college campus on the National Register of Historic Places, and we were awarded this \$5,000 grant.

Franklin Lane Improvement Project:

The Town's Highway Department has finished the paving at the site and the final lighting and metal screening is being installed over the next few weeks. This project is funded with a \$50,000 Downtown Transportation Fund grant.

Walloomsac Riverwalk Improvement Project:

The Town also received a \$200,000 grant for improvements along the Riverwalk that will begin next spring. I met with Dan Monks and Michael McDonough to discuss next steps for the project, including new lighting along the Riverwalk.

Benn Hi Redevelopment Team:

I am on the team with other town staff Dan Monks, Mark Sawyer, and Paul Dansereau and we are meeting weekly to plan the redevelopment. The Town hired Goldstone Architecture to create conceptual plans and Engelberth Construction to do a cost estimate on the project. I organized meetings with Jeff Goldstone and our partners at the Senior Center, Meals on Wheels, and the Berkshire Family YMCA for their input on program design. Jonah Spivak and I are meeting with seniors at the Senior Center on November 9 to discuss the next steps for the project. The Town signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Hale Resources, a private local housing developer, to work on a plan for creating housing at Benn Hi. I am researching grants to help support the redevelopment of the building and identifying partners for the community spaces. I also helped gather letters of support and wrote the narrative for the Hale's upcoming grant application for the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board funding.

Town website redesign project team:

I met with Jonah Spivak to review the proposals submitted for the Town's website redesign and interviewed final candidates. The web developer Revize was awarded the contract for the Town's website and is working on the redesign.

Armory Reuse Study:

I am on the committee that the BCRC is convening to explore the municipal and community reuse of the Armory building. The study is funded by a Municipal Planning Grant.

Vermont Council on Rural Development

VCRD asked me to join their board as a local government representative and I will attend their board meeting on November 16.

Community Outreach:

In the past month, I have met with the Benn Hi Redevelopment team, Berkshire Family YMCA management team, the Bennington Senior Center, Meals on Wheels, Hale Resources, Eight Oh Two Marketing, Historic Preservation Commission, Bennington Historical Society, Bennington Community Market, Bennington College, Vermont Arts Exchange, Goldstone Architecture, Better Bennington Corporation, and Armory Reuse Committee.

**12-Years At a Glance
Permit Totals Only**

Month	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
January	6	12	11	5	8	15	10	5	6	5	11	15
February	7	7	6	7	15	8	5	7	5	8	9	10
March	6	31	13	12	10	14	19	11	13	9	19	22
April	34	31	18	22	27	14	15	15	23	11	29	33
May	27	27	38	20	23	19	27	23	24	19	23	29
June	34	32	20	19	21	19	10	14	12	25	16	21
July	20	24	33	29	47	16	29	30	28	12	16	20
August	14	30	21	29	20	18	25	25	16	27	16	28
September	15	21	32	27	22	21	21	23	26	9	14	23
October	19	38	30	21	28	9	19	20	20	17	29	17
November	22	10	16	11	12	8	16	11	8	15	19	
December	17	18	18	7	10	5	8	11	11	5	10	
Total	221	281	256	209	243	166	204	195	192	162	211	

Summary of Building Permits Issued
October 2022

Construction Type	Month to date	Month to Date Volume	Year to date	Year to Date Volume
	Permit Totals		Permit Totals	
Single Family Dwelling	1	\$200,000.00	5	\$1,425,000.00
Duplex	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Mobile Homes	0	\$0.00	3	\$321,100.00
Apartments	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Apartment Renovations	0	\$0.00	8	\$272,400.00
Condominiums	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Residential Renovations	0	\$0.00	17	\$898,859.00
Residential Additions	0	\$0.00	7	\$903,800.14
Commercial Construction	0	\$0.00	4	\$2,195,000.00
Commercial Renovations	1	\$350.00	16	\$2,432,258.00
Industrial Construction	0	\$0.00	1	\$608,898.00
Industrial Renovations	0	\$0.00	3	\$72,900.00
Garages	2	\$70,000.00	11	\$273,600.00
Sheds	2	\$17,000.00	14	\$70,479.00
Decks	2	\$33,000.00	13	\$130,250.00
Institutions	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Signs	5	\$11,130.00	29	\$101,541.00
Use & Zoning	0	\$0.00	11	\$31,317,500.00
Subdivision	0	\$0.00	4	\$0.00
Home Occupation	0	\$0.00	1	\$0.00
Propane Tank/Storage Tank	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Boilers/Furnaces/RTU's, A/C	0	\$0.00	6	\$97,050.00
Tents	0	\$0.00	6	\$25,605.00
Handicap Access/Ramps	1	\$2,500.00	3	\$16,000.00
Concreate Slabs	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Cell Towers/Communications	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Solar Installations	2	\$9,305.00	13	\$412,599.25
Camps	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Withdrawn	0	\$0.00	2	\$0.00
Demolition	1	\$0.00	20	\$0.00
Fire Supression	0	\$0.00	6	\$0.00
Sprinkler System	0	\$0.00	4	\$0.00
Exhaust Hood	0	\$0.00	2	\$0.00
Fire Alarm	0	\$0.00	9	\$0.00
Total	17	\$343,285.00	218	\$41,574,839.39

Town of Bennington Planning and Zoning

Detailed Permit Report

Permit types included: Building

Approval status included: Granted

Occupancy status included: Any status

Decision dates included: Between 10/01/2022 and 10/31/2022

<i>Parcel number Land Record Book and Pages</i>	<i>Permit number</i>	<i>Owner's name Applicant's name Location</i>	<i>Permit type Cert. of Occ.</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Fee paid Cost of project</i>
33503300	22-137	PROUTY RAYMOND B JR & NANCY D Habitat for Humanity 185 AIRPORT RD Construct A Handicap Ramp	Building C.O. Pending	Granted 10/07/2022	25.00 2,500.00
51521500	22-138	BRUSO TAMMIE L Byron Bleau & Tammie Bruso 615 COUNTY ST Install A 10x20 Prefabricated Shed	Building C.O. Pending	Granted 10/12/2022	45.00 7,500.00
22500800	22-139	VERMONT PERMANENCY INITIATIVE INC Vermont Permanency Initiative Inc 662 MATTESON RD Construct A New Wall in Existing Space To Make A	Building C.O. Pending	Granted 10/11/2022	50.00 350.00
56506600	22-141	NAPOLITANO ANTHONY JR & GEORGIA Anthony Jr & Georgia Napolitano 99 MERSON ST Construct A 24x60 Garage	Building C.O. Pending	Granted 10/14/2022	160.00 40,000.00
50570700	22-142	BUCKLEY DAVID G David Buckley 200 FRANKLIN LN Install Windows & Enclose Existing Porch (360 Sq-Ft)	Building C.O. Pending	Granted 10/14/2022	36.00 18,000.00
43525300	22-143	TURGEON STACEY L Apex Solar Power and EV 34 ROBINSON AV Install Rooftop Solar	Building C.O. Pending	Granted 10/24/2022	25.00 5,280.00
09010800	22-144	WANGLER ROSE A LIFE ESTATE Rose Wangler Life Estate 116 RICHARD'S DR Construct A Garage W/Accessory Dwelling (1,344	Building C.O. Pending	Granted 10/27/2022	241.60 200,000.00
04015900	22-145	TRABER MELVILLE C JR & DEBRA L Melville & Debra Traber Jr 474 ORE BED RD Construct A 32x24 Storage Shed	Building C.O. Pending	Granted 10/27/2022	126.40 9,500.00
17502800	22-147	MCKENZIE CATHERINE & MICLETTE Catherine McKenzie & Colleen Miclette 1487 HARWOOD HILL RD Construct A New Garage (1,200 Sq-Ft)	Building C.O. Pending	Granted 10/27/2022	160.00 30,000.00

Town of Bennington Planning and Zoning
Detailed Permit Report

<i>Parcel number Land Record Book and Pages</i>	<i>Permit number</i>	<i>Owner's name Applicant's name Location</i>	<i>Permit type Cert. of Occ.</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Fee paid Cost of project</i>
56515241	22-148	LILLIE ROBERTA JANA-SCOTT Nathaniel Court Condo Association 432 SOUTH ST Repair/Renovate Existing Community Porch	Building C.O. Pending	Granted 10/31/2022	50.00 15,000.00
65500400	22-150	GAUTHIER JOSEPH & LINDA Power Guru LLC 1025 MIDDLE POWNAL RD Add 5 Panels To Existing Solar Array	Building C.O. Pending	Granted 10/31/2022	25.00 4,025.00

Town of Bennington Planning and Zoning
Detailed Permit Report**Permit types included:** Local/Custom**Approval status included:** Granted**Occupancy status included:** Any status**Decision dates included:** Between 10/01/2022 and 10/31/2022

<i>Parcel number Land Record Book and Pages</i>	<i>Permit number</i>	<i>Owner's name Applicant's name Location</i>	<i>Permit type Cert. of Occ.</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Fee paid Cost of project</i>
49510200	2022	BENNINGTON MUSEUM INC Bennington Museum Inc 101 MAIN ST Demo Existing Building Due To 160 Sq-Ft	Local/Custom C.O. Not required Of Asbestos	Granted 	10/11/2022 50.00

Town of Bennington Planning and Zoning

Detailed Permit Report

Permit types included: Sign

Approval status included: Granted

Occupancy status included: Any status

Decision dates included: Between 10/01/2022 and 10/31/2022

<i>Parcel number Land Record Book and Pages</i>	<i>Permit number</i>	<i>Owner's name Applicant's name Location</i>	<i>Permit type Cert. of Occ.</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Fee paid Cost of project</i>
50562700	S22-025	LACHANT FAMILY REALTY LLC Berkshire Sign Studio 445 MAIN ST Juniper Lane	Sign C.O. Not required	Granted 10/04/2022	40.00 3,085.00
36515801	S22-026	100 NORTHSIDE DR LLC SB Signs, Inc. 100 NORTHSIDE DR Replacement Signs for KFC & TACO BELL	Sign C.O. Not required	Granted 10/14/2022	40.00 5,000.00
51557500	S22-027	MT ASSOCIATES LLC AJ Sign Co. 100 BEECH ST Replace Existing Box Sign - TenneyBrook Car Wash (31.6 Sq-Ft)	Sign C.O. Not required	Granted 10/17/2022	79.00 735.00
50570601	S22-029	BENNINGTON COUNTY INDUSTRIAL The Gift Garden 101 SOUTH ST The Gift Garden's Holiday Cottage	Sign C.O. Not required	Granted 10/27/2022	20.00 810.00
50572500	S22-030	VERMONT REALTY LLC Diana Shepherd 239 MAIN ST Bennington Community Market	Sign C.O. Not required	Granted 10/27/2022	99.13 1,500.00