

Mon., Feb. 3rd	Design Review Committee Meeting	5:30 PM	City Council Chambers, City Hall
Tue., Feb. 4th	Montpelier Energy Disclosure Ordinance Working Group	3:30 PM	Montpelier High School
	Parks Commission	6:00 PM	Community Conference Rm., Police Dept.
	Transportation Infrastructure Committee	6:00 PM	Memorial Room, City Hall
Wed., Feb. 5th	Social & Economic Justice Advisory Committee	8:30 AM	City Manager's Conference Rm., City Hall
	Homelessness Task Force	11:30 AM	City Council Chambers, City Hall
	Complete Streets Committee	5:00 PM	Memorial Room, City Hall
Thur., Feb. 6th	Tree Board	5:30 PM	Memorial Room, City Hall
Wed., Feb. 12th	City Council Meeting	6:30 PM	City Council Chambers, City Hall



Community Prosperity

Permit numbers steady in 2019:

At the last Council meeting it was noted that there had not been a Development Review Board (DRB) meeting in a number of months and that development may be slowing down. The Planning & Community Development Department took a look at some numbers and think the actual cause of the lack of hearings may be a combination of the usual winter slow down combined with the impacts of the zoning amendments passed in 2018. By the numbers- in 2017 (under the old zoning) we issued 148 permits; in 2018 there were 126; and last year there were 145 permits issued.

There were three significant sets of changes to the bylaws in 2018 that were designed to have the effect of streamlining permits. This faster review was not intended to simply let projects get approved without review but rather to provide clear rules for small projects so that they could be approved administratively (without a hearing). This meant that in 2017 there were 74 DRB applications which dropped to 33 DRB applications in 2018 and down to 21 in 2019. So over all we issued nearly the same number of permits but we now see 72% less DRB applications. Having significantly less DRB applications overall combined with the winter slowdown may be why we have not had any hearings.

In case someone was wondering, those three zoning changes that made a difference include:

1. We adjusted the zoning district requirements to reflect what we see on the ground. In the old zoning, upwards of 70% to 80% of houses in a neighborhood may not meet basic zoning

requirements like lot size and setbacks. By matching the rules to the neighborhoods we could allow someone to build a deck on their house without needing a variance for example. In the old zoning we had many variance applications but in the two years since adoption we have not had any.

2. Design Review applications no longer need to go to DRB for consent approval. Vary rarely did the applicant or DRB disagree with the recommendations of the DRC so we abbreviated the process in 2018 and sent the DRC recommendation to the Zoning Administrator to issue the permit unless the applicant disagrees with the DRC recommendation.
3. We now allow administrative site plans for smaller projects. Many applications in past went to DRB for rather minor amendments to an already approved site plan. Allowing for administrative adjustments meant a number of projects avoided that process.

If anyone has questions about our permit process or about a project they may be considering, then they should contact the talented staff in the Planning Office including Audra Brown (abrown@montpelier-vt.org) and Meredith Crandall (mcrandall@montpelier-vt.org). Other general questions can be directed to Director Mike Miller at mmiller@montpelier-vt.org.



Responsive and Responsible Government

Advisory Council Vacancies, Nominations and Election Dates

The MSAC Advisory Council currently has one vacancy, and three additional vacancies are coming up at the end of June. We encourage all members to consider joining or nominating another member, and you can learn about the expectations of serving by reading the latest edition of the Governance Policies & Procedures available on the website and in the lobby. Terms are currently three years, but the Advisory Council is considering changes to shorten term lengths and amend other expectations - stay tuned! Only MSAC members may nominate themselves or other MSAC members for an AC seat. Nominations must be in writing and include the candidate's name, address, telephone number and email address (if any), and confirm that they are an MSAC member. Nominations must be delivered or emailed (msac@montpelier-vt.org) to the MSAC office by March 31. Before April 15, the nominee must accept the nomination and provide to the MSAC office a brief biographical statement and photo. The May edition of our Active Times newsletter will include candidate information and photos as well as the ballot, and voting ends June 1.



More Housing

Sabin's Pasture

I am working with Trust for Public Lands, the property owners, MDC and some other interested parties to look at viable options for moving a Sabin's Pasture housing and open space project forward. We will be scheduling an executive session briefing after the new Council is seated in March.



Inclusive, Equitable and Engaged Community

Rink at State Street:

The weather has finally been cooperating for this year's skating 'Rink at State Street'. The Rink at State Street is a winter-season, public, outdoor ice rink situated on the State House lawn. We re-flooded the rink- and it's been cold enough to have it freeze solid this time! Estimates are that the rink will be open on Friday January 31, or Saturday February 1st. We have appreciated your understanding and patience!

Thank You National Life Volunteers!

Nine volunteers from National Life spent part of their day on Tuesday, Jan. 28 adding the MSAC public appeal to over 3,000 Montpelier water bills. Thank you so much volunteers, we couldn't have done it without you!

Ice on Fire is this Sunday!

Montpelier's celebration of winter, Ice on Fire takes place this Sunday, February 2nd, 2-4:30pm at North Branch Nature Center. Hope to see you there! <http://montpelierlive.org/calendar.aspx?eid=1772>

Recreation

Dust off your dancing shoes – Parent-Child Dance Tickets now available!

This year's dance will take place on Tuesday, February 11th at the Capitol Plaza from 6:30-8:30 pm. Tickets are \$20 per couple and \$5 for each additional guest between now and February 10 at 4 pm. Tickets will be sold at the door for \$25 per couple and \$7 per each additional guest. Tickets can be purchased at the Community Services Department Office, located on the 1st floor of the Senior Center at 58 Barre Street, 9am-4pm Mon-Fri.

February Break Day Camp

Got a child looking forward to Feb. break but you have to work? Montpelier Rec has you covered! Our Feb. day camp is accepting registrations until February 13. For more details, please visit: <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/847/School-Vacation-Day-Camps>.



Sustainable Infrastructure

WRRF:

This week one of the new high strength waste pumps was installed and the manufacturer was onsite for a successful startup! New methane boiler installation and HVAC work continued in the Dewatering building. Control wiring for the Grit Removal system also continued this week. Next week work will primarily be focused on preparing for the installation of the new dewatering equipment.

DPW Street & Water/Sewer Divisions:

The City's Street Division maintains roads (including our dirt roads) and our city sidewalks throughout the recent winter storms. Although we haven't seen significant snow accumulation in each of the storms, staff spent daytime hours using loaders and trucks to remove snow from side streets (Barre St. to Main St.; and East State St. to Barre St.) In addition, Thursday we completed night time snow removal in our main travel areas. Crews also completed tasks throughout the week as follows:

- Pot hole repairs,
- Removal of the kiosk and signs from Capital Plaza lot,
- Installation of new trash cans on bike path off Taylor street by the walking bridge,
- Cleaned and attended to vehicle maintenance,
- Trained staff on our new asphalt equipment,
- Repaired mailboxes, and
- Undertook sign repairs.

Next week the Street Division will continue maintenance of the City's roads and sidewalks, continue snow removal on secondary streets during the day with trucks and the loader, install a kiosk in the new parking lot behind the former M&M site, along with new signage. The Street Division will also begin using our new asphalt recycler, beginning with work on the Bailey Avenue Bridge.

Our Water/Sewer Division helped the Street Division with salting and plowing as well as pushing up the salt pile as needed, and completed other tasks as follows:

- Hydrant maintenance throughout most of the week,
- Asphalt machine training via videos,
- Maintenance of stocked supplies,
- Undertook final water meter readings,
- Exercised valve at #60 College Street to stop it's leaking,
- Safety checked all tools and equipment,
- Helped with cold patching as needed,
- Undertook several dig safes, and
- Attended to day-to-day maintenance.

In the upcoming week, our Water/Sewer Division will work on map field checks, sewer line cleaning (as weather permits), continued hydrant repair and maintenance, sewer pump station maintenance and repairs, and begin IDDE investigations as well as day to day water meter readings, dig safes and responding to any concerned resident calls plus helping keep our streets and sidewalks clear - as needed.



Public Health and Safety

Police Chief Recruitment

We will be posting advertisements for the position immediately. Although the Chief is not retiring until June 30th, we want to build in time to involve some community stake holders and to allow for a wide pool of candidates.



Downtown Master Plan

SE Group Consultants are completing their work. They will provide a preliminary outline to the Council in February to get comments and any final direction. They will return in March to present their recommendation for the Council's consideration.

William Fraser
City Manager

Upcoming Agenda Items (TENTATIVE)

2/12	Home Equity Labeling Ordinance Rental Survey Climate Resolution City Manager Review (exec session) Legislative Agenda MTIC Appointments Conservation Commission Appointment ADA Commission Appointment DRB Appointment Walk & Run for Children UMV Toy Run	2/26	CHP Project contract CVT Solid Waste Appointment Audit Downtown Master Plan
3/3	Annual Meeting Election	3/11	Organizational Meeting Committee Appointments Strategic Plan Outline Sabins Pasture Update (exec session) Downtown Master Plan
3/25	TKS Property Personnel Plan (?) Tax Stabilization (?) Ordinance Amendments	4/8	Ordinance Amendments Parking Fees W/S Budget & Rates

Upcoming Reports

TBD	Hazard Mitigation (likely in fall)
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