Westfield Public Hearing
Agenda
Tuesday, June, 23, 2026 – 6 pm
Westfield Community Center, 59 North Hill Rd., Westfield, VT

Pursuant to Title 24 VSA §4441 there is a Public Hearing before the Town of Westfield Planning Commission, Tuesday, June 23, 2026, 6:00 pm, at the Westfield Community Center to consider:

∞ Two changes to the Westfield Zoning Bylaw Table of Uses:
- Allow accessory structures as defined in the Bylaw in the Recreation/Residential District
- Prohibit storage rental units in Village District

Hearing process:

A. Welcome attendees

B. Define germane comments

C. Disclosure of conflicts of interest

D. Take comments on the proposed changes to Zoning By Law

E. Accept written comments presented to the Commission

F. Other business

G. Adjourn Hearing

There is a public right to a "reasonable opportunity" to comment and express "opinion" on any matter under consideration at an open meeting, **"as long as order is maintained"** and "subject to reasonable rules established by the chairperson." 1 V.S.A. § 312(h).

How we maintain order:

- Wait to be recognized before speaking
- State your name
- Address your comment or suggestion to the Planning Commission
- Adhere to established speaking times
- No side conversations
- The Chair will stop the speaker if they raise non-germane issues
- Failure to abide by procedure guidelines may result in removal from the Hearing.

Notice of Public Hearing

The Westfield Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on June 23 at 6pm, at the Westfield Community Center at 59 North Hill Road. The purpose of the Hearing is for the Planning Commission to receive comments and answer questions regarding proposed revisions to the Town of Westfield Zoning Bylaw.

The Planning Commission is proposing two revisions to the Town of Westfield Zoning Bylaw.

Lands in the Recreational-Residential Zoning District and the Village Zoning District in the Town of Westfield are affected by the proposed changes.

Revisions proposed to the current Zoning Bylaw:

- TABLE 1. TABLE OF USES
  Change Accessory Structures from "P/S" (Permitted with Site Plan Approval) to "P" (Permitted) in the Recreational-Residential Zoning District.

  And

- TABLE 1. TABLE OF USES
  Change Self-storage units from "C/S" (Conditional Use Review and Site Plan Review) to "--" (Prohibited) in the Village Zoning District.

The following information may be examined on the Town of Westfield website, in person at the Town Clerk's office at 38 School Street Monday-Thursday 8 am- 4 pm, and at the Hitchcock Library at 1252 VT RT 100:

- Existing and Proposed Table of Uses
- Report summarizing the revisions and their purposes

Planning Commission Reporting Form

for Municipal Bylaw Amendments

This report on June 3, 2026, is in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §4441(c) which states:

"When considering an amendment to a bylaw, the planning commission shall prepare and approve a written report on the proposal. A single report may be prepared so as to satisfy the requirements of this subsection concerning bylaw amendments and subsection 4384(c) of this title concerning plan amendments..... The report shall provide(:)

(A) brief explanation of the proposed bylaw, amendment, or repeal and .... include a statement of purpose as required for notice under §4444 of this title,

The proposed changes to the Westfield Zoning Bylaw include:

- Change accessory structures from "P/S" (Permitted with Site Plan Approval) to "P" (Permitted) in the Recreational-Residential Zoning District, in Table 1. Table of Uses

Purpose: Currently in the Recreational-Residential Zoning District, residential structures are permitted and accessory structures require Site Plan Review. This creates a situation where someone could construct a dwelling with an attached garage as permitted development subject to administrative review without Site Plan Review. However, a landowner could not build a detached garage at some later date without Site Plan Review. In addition, at the time the Site Plan Review requirement was put in place, the cost to pursue Site Plan Review from the Development Review Board was $150. This has increased to $370 creating a more substantial burden for an applicant seeking permission to build a simple garage, for example, as an accessory structure. The current situation seems inequitable; In all other zoning districts where residential development is a permitted use, accessory structures are also a permitted use.

The additional level of review exists in the current Zoning Bylaw to protect the scenic qualities of the byways where the Recreational/Residential District is located. The Planning Commission concludes that accessory structures would not detract from the scenic quality. From a scenic drive perspective, accessory structures such as a garage or shed fit into the existing residential aesthetic of the Recreational-Residential Zoning District.

This proposed change to the Zoning Bylaw would create more equitable treatment for landowners in the Recreational-Residential Zoning District without detracting from the goals of the Zoning District.

- Change self-storage units from "C/S" (Conditional Use Review and Site Plan Review) to "--" (Prohibited) in the Village Zoning District, in Table 1. Table of Uses.

Purpose: The Planning Commission concludes that rental storage units typically are not a destination someone walks to and are a more appropriate use outside a dense walkable Village. Removing this permitted use better aligns with town goals and smaller lots to allow for dense Village housing where shared services are available.

(A)nd shall include findings regarding how the proposal:

1. *Conforms with or furthers the goals and policies contained in the municipal plan, including the effect of the proposal on the availability of safe and affordable housing:*

The Westfield Town Plan sets out recommendations for safe and affordable housing:

- Ensure zoning regulations offer options for future home sites, especially in the areas of town most able to support new growth.

The Planning Commission concludes that rental storage units typically are not a destination someone walks to and are a more appropriate use outside the dense Village development. Removing this permitted use better aligns with town goals and smaller lots to allow dense Village housing where shared services are available.

Making accessory structures permitted in the Residential-Recreation Zoning District does not detract from the availability of safe and affordable housing, and may create more equitable means for landowners to pursue a residence with appurtenant accessory structures in a step wise sequence creating a more affordable pathway to meet their needs.

2. *Is compatible with the proposed future land uses and densities of the municipal plan:*

The overall vision for land use and density in the Town Plan is "We want to maintain local recreation access to farm and forest land for hunting, fishing, skiing, biking, snowmobiling, and hiking. We welcome residential growth at a pace that allows us to retain Westfield's rural character, and provide municipal services. We will maintain community spirit by welcoming newcomers, and by maintaining the Town's neat appearance." The Westfield Town Plan heavily emphasizes the goal of keeping open working land viable for agriculture, while including residential uses in the same areas. **The proposed revision to change Self storage facilities from Conditional Use and Site Plan approval to Prohibited in the Village District is consistent with the Town Plan recommendation to support housing growth in the Village.**

On future forest-land use, the Town Plan states: "This plan identifies forest resources, and provides planning guidance to encourage environmentally sustainable forestry practices that also provide adequate wildlife habitat and connectivity. It allows some subdivision and residential growth at edges of forest blocks along existing roads." **By permitting accessory structures in the Recreational-Residential Zoning District which is adjacent to the existing road, pressure to locate accessory structures further away from the road or near the rear of a parcel relieves some pressure to construct long driveways or further infringe on forest and wildlife habitat to meet residential needs.**

3. *Carries out, as applicable, any specific proposals for any planned community facilities."*

There are no specific proposals for planned community facilities in the Westfield Town Plan.

TABLE 1. TABLE OF USES

P Permitted; Administrative Review for Zoning Permit
C Conditional Use Review and Zoning Permit
S Site Plan Review and Zoning Permit
-- Prohibited
E Exempt; Written notification to Town

	Village	Recreational-Residential	Rural-Agricultural	Mountain	Corridor See Table 3 River Corridor Overlay and Special Flood Hazard Area Table of Uses in Article 10
Accessory On-Farm business (AOFB)	P/S	P/S	P/S	P/S	
Accessory use/structure	P	P/S Existing P Proposed	P	C/S	
Agriculture and Forestry	E	E	E	E	
Auto repair	C/S	C/S	C/S	--	
Bank	P/S	C/S	C/S	--	
Bar/Nightclub	C/S	C/S	C/S	--	
Camp	P	C/S	P	P	
Campground	C/S	C/S	C/S	--	
Campsite	C/S	C/S	C/S	C/S	
Cemetery	C/S	C/S	C/S	--	
Child Care home Registered	E	E	E	E	
Child Care home Licensed by State of Vermont	C/S	C/S	C/S	--	
Club (formerly Private Club)	C/S	C/S	C/S	--	
Communications Antennas and Towers (formerly personal wireless telecom facilities)	--	--	C/S	--	
Community Center	C/S	C/S	C/S	--	
Demolition, removal of a structure	E	E	E	E	
Dwelling, accessory	P	P	P	C/S	
Dwelling, multiple households	C/S	C/S	C/S	C/S	
Dwelling, single household	P	P	P	C/S	
Dwelling, two household	P	P	P	C/S	
Public or Private Large Event	C/S	C/S	C/S	C/S	
Excavation, Grading, & Filling (non-commercial)	C/S	C/S	C/S	C/S	
Food Trucks	P	P	P	--	
Funeral home	C/S	C/S	C/S	--	
Gas station/ Charging Station	C/S	C/S	--	--	
Group Home	P	P	P	--	
Helipad or Personal Airstrip	C/S	C/S	C/S	--	
Home Occupation	E	E	E	E	
Home business	C/S	C/S	C/S	C/S	
Hydro energy systems	C/S	C/S	C/S	C/S	
Lodging Facility	C/S	P/S	C/S	--	
Indoor Recreation	C/S	C/S	C/S	--	
Salvage Yard (formerly known as Junkyards)	--	C/S	C/S	--	
Light manufacturing	C/S	C/S	C/S	--	
Natural Resource Extraction (commercial) (formerly Earth Resource Removal)	--	C/S	C/S	--	
Outdoor Recreation	C/S	C/S	C/S	C/S	
Place of Worship (formerly religious uses)	P/S	P/S	P/S	--	
Planting projects for restoration which do not include any construction or grading	E	E	E	E	
Post Office	P/S	C/S	C/S	--	
Professional Offices	P/S	C/S	C/S	--	
Professional Services	C/S	C/S	C/S	--	
Public facility	P/S	P/S	P/S	--	

P Permitted; Administrative Review for Zoning Permit C Conditional Use Review and Zoning Permit S Site Plan Review and Zoning Permit -- Prohibited E Exempt; Written notification to Town	Village	Recreational-Residential	Rural-Agricultural	Mountain	River Corridor Overlay
Restaurant/Bakery	P/S	P/S	C/S	--	
Retail sales	~~C/S~~ Existing	C/S Proposed	C/S	--	
Schools	P/S	-- P/S	P/S	--	
Self-storage units	C/S	C/S	C/S	--	
Short term rental	C/S	C/S	C/S	--	
Signs	P	P	P	--	
Solar panels for home use; ground or rooftop	P	P	P	P	
Wetland/Habitat restoration approved by VT Agency of Natural Resources	E	E	E	E	
Wind energy systems	C/S	C/S	C/S	C/S	

Westfield Public Hearing
Minutes
Tuesday, June, 23, 2026 – 6 pm
Westfield Community Center, 59 North Hill Rd., Westfield, VT

Planning Commission Members Present: Pat Sagui, Chair; Loren Petzoldt, Vice-Chair; Ellen Fox; Kitty Edwards, Brian Dunn

Others Present: Will Young, Zoning Administrator; Dennis Vincent, Selectboard; Niki Dunn, Town Clerk

A. Welcome attendees: Meeting was brought to order by Pat Sagui at 6:00PM.

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- Two changes to the Westfield Zoning Bylaw Table of Uses:
  - Allow accessory structures as defined in the Bylaw in the Recreation/Residential District
  - Prohibit storage rental units in Village District

No attendees were present at the start of the meeting.

B. Define germane comments

C. Disclosure of conflicts of interest: None

D. Take comments on the proposed changes to Zoning Bylaw: Pat Sagui and Ellen Fox attended the last Selectboard meeting and informed the Selectboard of the changes they were proposing to the zoning bylaw. The Selectboard felt okay with the changes. Ellen noted that they inquired about the protocol of what happens after this hearing.

Dennis Vincent questioned what happens to existing storage units in the village. It was noted that existing structures can continue to be maintained, but non-conforming use may prohibit them from being expanded. This would not affect any permits currently in place and active.

E. Accept written comments presented to the Commission: No written comments were received.

F. Other business: The next step will be to forward the proposal to the Selectboard. The Selectboard will then hold a hearing before approving the final changes. This hearing can happen before their next regular Selectboard meeting in July.

G. Adjourn Hearing: At 6:15PM there were no new attendees and no more comments. Loren Petzoldt motioned to adjourn at 6:17PM, Kitty Edwards seconded. Motion passed.