

Weekly Report

September 15, 2023

Date	Committee	Time	Location	Links
9/18	Cemetery Commission	12:00 PM	Cemetery Garage	Agenda
9/18	Special City Council Meeting	12:00 PM	Zoom Only	Agenda and Zoom Link
9/18	Design Review Committee	5:30 PM	Zoom Only	Agenda and Zoom Link
9/18	Development Review Board	7:00 PM	Zoom Only	Agenda and Zoom Link
9/19	Energy Advisory Committee	7:00 PM	Zoom Only	Agenda and Zoom Link
9/20	Social and Economic Justice Advisory Committee	8:00 AM	Zoom Only	Agenda and Zoom Link
9/20	Homelessness Task Force	11:30 AM	Zoom Only	Agenda and Zoom Link
9/20	Restroom Committee	1:00 PM	Zoom Only	Agenda and Zoom Link

Improve Public Health and Safety

City Hall

We have re-opened the front of City Hall (Clerk, Manager, Assessor) to the public with the proviso that we will need to make reasonable accommodations for people who are differently abled. The rest of the building is closed to the public.

With regard to City facilities – The City team met with FEMA representatives to get a better understanding of how to move forward addressing issues. We have created groups of “projects” (repairs or upgrades to buildings, facilities and infrastructure) which will go through the FEMA process.

The biggest “project” is restoration of City Hall, Police Station, and Fire Station. We have the go ahead to seek consulting services (architect, engineering, hydro engineering) to review the needs in these buildings, explore mitigation options which may include major internal building changes and/or external dry flood proofing, and designing the final choices for construction.

We are looking at a schedule something like this:

- Issue Request for Proposals (RFP) and receive proposals. Award contract to winning bidder at 10/25 Council meeting.
- Evaluations and design work completed by end of July 2024 (assuming 9 months for this)

- Construction bids and completion of work completed by April of 2025 (assuming 9 months for this, will vary depending on choice of work)
- Fully reoccupy City Hall in May of 2025.

We'll advance the work at the Fire and Police stations, as well as relocating utilities and getting the elevator and generator functioning at City Hall as soon as possible. Obviously if we can expedite other things we will.

This means that current office relocations may remain for close to two years. It doesn't make sense to bring people back to city hall temporarily only to have them move out again while construction is happening.

Country Club Road Building

As mentioned at the Council meeting, this building has a significant amount of mold in it, likely a result of the very wet weather and being closed up with no activity. The City is actively mitigating this issue and the site will be ready for the Shelter in November. Once the mold is removed, the building will be available for use for city programs and activities and/or short term rentals.

Flood Follow Up

As discussed, this week, City staff is performing an after-action review of flood response and lessons learned. Our goal is to create a written summary for future use if needed.

Provide Responsible and Engaged Government

Permit Information new

Questions were asked at this week's meeting about city permits for flood related projects in recent weeks. There was an expressed concern that city permitting was delaying improvement projects from occurring.

The facts show that city Planning & Development staff members have done an outstanding job of processing permits and working with building owners.

Since the flood, only one property owner has been required to go to either the DRB or the DRC for flood related repairs. That single project was for a new exterior door in a building for a new utility room. Other than that, all permits have been issued within 24 hours of application.

Since July the City has issued 27 flood hazard permits; 26 of them within 24 hours. The one exception was the DRC permit above. There were 27 administrative zoning permits; all issued within 24 hours.

At least one major commercial landlord has not submitted permit applications since the flood. We aware that they are making repairs but we have not been pressing him yet to start the required permitting process. Therefore they have not been delayed in any way.

The referenced delays associated with the Northfield Savings Bank were for a state wastewater permit, city permits for that project were issued within one day.

Between July 10 and September 14th, 72 Building permits have been issued. 42 for flood related

projects , 30 non-flood related. The average time to issue the flood related permits was less than a day. 19 were issued on same day as application, 15 took 1 day, 5 took 2 days and 3 took 3 days.

Where Can I Get More Updates from the City? The City of Montpelier is expanding the ways we share information and keep our community informed. You can now sign up for general updates from the City of Montpelier using the “Notify Me” feature on the City’s website.

How to sign up: Go to <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/> and click on the “Notify Me” tile in the popular links, fill in the subscription box with your email, then check the box next to the “City of Montpelier” list name. You’ll receive an email with a link asking you to confirm your subscription. Once your email is confirmed, you’ll start receiving updates.

City Council Strategic Planning After flood related delays, the Council will hold the annual strategic planning workshop on October 18th. Paul Costello will be the facilitator. The Council will identify priority policy goals and key initiatives to accomplish those goals.

Recovery and Resiliency Commission update: As of the deadline, 29 people submitted notices of interest.

At the recent flood recovery forums, community members have consistently called for the establishment of a new leadership structure to coordinate and drive forward recovery and resilience work. In response to this feedback, the Montpelier Commission for Recovery and Resilience will be formed to serve as a convening and resource partner for the City and all working groups advancing recovery and resilience projects in the City.

Chaired by a private sector member, the Commission will provide leadership to coordinate recovery and resilience strategies, advocate for the community, oversee staff, and support the progress of initiatives throughout the community.

The founding partners will work to raise funds to hire a Montpelier Recovery and Resilience Director answerable to the members of the commission. Under the oversight of the Commission and with support of staff of the City of Montpelier, the Director will:

- Provide support and coordination to recovery and resilience working groups in the city;
- Convene leadership around key aspect of recovery, from best practices for hardening buildings, to developing collective inventory space and other practical recovery projects;
- Convene public dialogues as needed;
- Bring together engineers and architects to envision and develop projects to advance the downtown and its resilience;
- Convene regional governments, planners, business leaders, engineers, architects, hydrologists and environmental scientists to evaluate opportunities, then plan and implement mitigation strategies to slow and hold water to minimize the impact of future flooding events.

Commissioners will be selected by a committee of Montpelier Alive, the Montpelier Foundation and the City of Montpelier which will each have equal weight in appointing members from the public. The City Manager, the Executive Director of Montpelier Alive, and the President of the Montpelier Foundation (or their designees) will be founding members.

Commissioners will be certified, and the authority established for two years, at which time the efficiency of the effort and implementation results will be evaluated toward a decision on continuing or reforming the initiative. The three organizing entities will work to raise funds toward a two-year budget for the Commission.

The Commission must represent the community and have needed expertise to be effective. Applicants to participate on the Commission should describe skills related to the following categories: Architecture; Hydrology/Engineering, Environmental Science; Downtown Development; Fundraising (especially related to state and federal resources); Land Use Planning; Property Ownership; Business; Low Income Issues; Non-Profit Management; Financing; Clean Energy Development; Housing; Public Health; Resilience Planning and Other pertinent skills. Applicants will be also be reviewed with a lens to youth and diversity.

To apply or to nominate someone to the commission, email contact information and a one-paragraph description of qualifications to: msmith@montpelier-vt.org by the end of the day on September 14 with the Subject Line "Montpelier Commission for Recovery and Resilience."

Pending Legal

Moody vs. City of Montpelier. Insurance case filed regarding a pothole. Costs handled by VLCT PACIF, City represented by Attorney Brian Monaghan

Create More Housing

FEMA Housing update:

With the Council go ahead granted we will move full steam ahead with making an agreement for this project.

Improve Community Prosperity

****The Community Services Department weekly newsletter can be found at the end of the this report, beginning after strategic plan items.****

Build and Maintain Sustainable Infrastructure

****The Department of Public Works weekly newsletter can be found on the City's Department of Public Works webpage.****

Employment and Personnel Announcements

NOTE – the City is currently in a hiring freeze due to financial circumstances

Municipal Job Openings

Visit the City website for more information: <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/Jobs.aspx>

Mental Health Clinician: Montpelier Police, Barre City Police and Washington County Mental Health are still looking for a police mental health clinician to work with our agencies. If you have any interest either call Chief Nordenson at 802-223-3445 or apply directly at : <https://wcmhs.applytojob.com/apply/rZGj0OPhbn/Police-Mental-Health-Clinician>

Reminders

ORCA MEDIA

ORCA Media supports the City of Montpelier by live streaming videos to local TV and on YouTube. Recently, Comcast changed the government channel to 1085.

- [Click here to see City Council Meeting:](#)
- [Click here for Live Stream:](#)

Thank you,



William Fraser, City Manager

Council Meeting Agenda Schedule and Strategic Planning Items on following pages

Upcoming Agenda Items (*TENTATIVE*)

9/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year End financials • Winter & Budget Schedule • Outside Agency Policy • 2023 Strategic Plan wrap up • Staff Appreciation • Confluence Park • City Hall Update • Interim Zoning • Permit Fee Waiver extension 	10/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be determined whether a meeting will be held • Revised FY24 Budget?
10/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 Strategic Planning 	10/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Plan Draft • Budget Preview • Award RFP for City Hall design? • CCR Use Policy • CCR Rec Planning
11/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	11/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
12/6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget 	12/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget

? = Date is tentative, may shift to a different date

11/15 and 12/20 dates are possible conflicts with School Board

Topics from the FY22-23 City Council Strategic Plan for Future Council Agendas:

Month	Tentative Topic(s)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stormwater Utility – delayed due to DPW staffing



Montpelier City Council Meeting

September 13, 2023

Meeting Summary

[Meeting Agenda & Documents](#)

[Meeting Video](#)

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Highlights On the Agenda

5. 2023-277. Consent Agenda

a. Minutes

- b. Payroll and Warrant Approval
- c. Boundary between City and Fecteau Residential.
- d. Waiver of permit fees for flood-related projects
- e. Asphalt Crushing Contract
- f. Street Closure Applications for Approval
- g. Approve a Positive Pie food truck in front of the restaurant

6. 2023-278. Appointment to the Social and Economic Justice Advisory Committee – Rebecca Coleman

7. 2023-279. Appointments/Reappointments to the Design Review Committee - Eric Gilberston and Stephen Everett

8. 2023-280. Country Club Road Workshop

Public Comment

(None)

Consent Agenda

(video start time = [15:45](#))

Noteworthy

This was our first meeting at Montpelier High School post-flood. We'll be holding City Council Meetings there for the foreseeable future while City Hall is being repaired. Thank you, MRPSD!

Council Business

(video start time: [2:42](#))

Action Taken

- **Consent Agenda:** Moved and approved with the exception of item D.
- **FEMA Trailers:** Authorized to expedite/negotiate for 36 FEMA emergency housing units for 24 months
- **Country Club Road master planning:** City staff authorized to continue site planning as laid out in the Actionable Plan, specifically move forward on Next Steps outlined in the AP

Follow-Up & Learn More

[City Website](#)

[Community Project Portal](#)

[Country Club Road Site](#)

Community Services Department Report, Week in Review: **September 11th – 15th**

Community Services **Department Updates**

- **The volunteer hub is now a remote operation** Due to a lower volume of requests, **the physical volunteer hub at Barre & Main Streets has now closed.** If you need help or wish to volunteer, please find all hub information on their website: www.montpelierhub.com.
 - If you'd like to stay informed on all volunteer and hub activities, subscribe to our email list found on **the City of Montpelier's Resource Log**, which has all resources related to flooding event in Downtown Montpelier: <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=467>
- **For more updates and resources**, follow the City of Montpelier's Facebook page: [@MontpelierVT](https://www.facebook.com/MontpelierVT) and our new Volunteers pages: [@MontpelierVolunteers](https://www.facebook.com/MontpelierVolunteers) on Facebook and Instagram. You can also follow our Community Services Departments pages: [@MontpelierSeniorActivityCenter](https://www.facebook.com/MontpelierSeniorActivityCenter), [@MontpelierRec](https://www.facebook.com/MontpelierRec), and [@MontpelierParks](https://www.facebook.com/MontpelierParks).

Montpelier Senior Activity Center (MSAC)

- **Read the September Newsletter and Fall Program Guide here:** <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/304/Newsletter>
- **MSAC Fall Class Registration ends on Friday, September 22nd** See the full fall lineup of classes at: <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/751/Classes>. Most classes begin the first week of October.
 - ***New Class!*** Needle Felting with Gail Carrigan | When: Weekly on Tuesdays, 3 to 5 PM, from Nov 7 through Dec 5, 2023 | Where: Montpelier Senior Activity Center, Barre Street, Montpelier, VT
 - Starting 11/7 and ending 12/5, Gail Carrigan will be teaching needle felting classes at the Montpelier Senior Center. The cost for MSAC Montpelier Members is \$50, plus \$17 for materials. The materials include all your wool and ancillary materials for making creatures or holiday ornaments.
- **Next FEAST congregate lunch is Thursday, September 21st at noon inside MSAC. Menu: Meatball Subs, Roasted Veggies, Fresh Green Salad, and Sugar Cookies**

- **OLLI Lecture Series returning to MSAC this Fall!** The OLLI lecture series begins on Wednesday, September 20th with Singer and Historian Linda Radtke for *From Parlors to Polls: Vermont Suffragettes*. Go to learn.uvm.edu/olli/centralvt and register online, or pick up a brochure in our office for other registration options.
- **Sprouting Change: A FEAST Senior Meals Fundraiser**
 - *Can you be a champion for local food and nutrition?*
 - After the July 2023 flood, FEAST Senior Meals is looking to our community to support us and sprout change from now until September 30th. The floodwaters devastated our farm, which provided vital produce for our Meals on Wheels program. We're asking you to support local food and nutrition through this small dollar donation drive.
 - By going to our website, www.montpelier-vt.org/FEAST, you can donate \$15, which is the average cost of a meal for client, then ask a friend to do the same. Together, we can regrow our local food system and sustain our operations during this critical time of year for our older adult neighbors in Central Vermont.
- **FEAST Farmstand is returning soon!** Although we lost almost all our annual crops at the FEAST Farm, the FEAST Farmstand will be returning in September with donated produce and other goodies to sell. We have not set a return date yet, but we will have an announcement in the next couple of weeks. Thank you for your support of FEAST during this tumultuous time!
- **Seeking Some Fun?** Join our wide variety of drop-in groups, most open to all ages. Hankingering for music? Poetry? Drumming? Dancing? Community service? Games? Coffee & Conversation? Book discussions? Meals? Drag Bingo? We've got it all!



Montpelier Recreation News

- **Program Registration** – You can deliver registration forms either:
 - In person at the Recreation Center
 - By mailing forms and payment to 58 Barre Street, or
 - Using [our online registration platform](#) (**ONLY IF YOU HAVE A USER ACCOUNT ALREADY! Please call 802-225-8699 for setup assistance**)

Extra registration forms and a locked drop box are in the side vestibule of 58 Barre Street (the Senior Activity Center) for after-hours use.

- **Capital Kids Afterschool Program suspended until January** Due to low staffing, the Capital Kids Afterschool Program will be suspended for the fall semester.
- **2022-23 Pickleball Open Gym**

- The Montpelier Recreation Center offers two indoor courts. There is a 12-player maximum per session. Open gym is for adults (18+). Please bring your own paddles. The Recreation Department will supply balls to play on open gym days. All levels are welcome. See below for days and times.
- Find us on playerlineup.com. Search: “Montpelier Rec Center PB”
- **Open Gym Schedule (based on skill level)**
 - **Beginner:** Mondays → 1:30 – 3:00 pm | Wednesdays → 9 – 10:30 am
 - **Beginner/Intermediate:** Thursdays → 1:30 – 3 pm
 - **Intermediate:** Mondays → 9 – 10:30 am | Wednesdays → 1:30 – 3 pm | Thursdays → 1:30 – 3 pm
 - **Intermediate/Advanced:** Fridays → 9 – 10:30 am
 - **Advanced:** Tuesdays → 9 – 11 am
- **Open Gym Fees:**
 - **Walk-Ins:** Montpelier Residents: \$4; Non-Montpelier Residents: \$6
 - **Punch Cards (22 visits, pickleball only):** Montpelier Residents: \$45; Non-Montpelier Residents: \$60
- **2023 Summer Noontime Basketball**
 - 2023 Summer Noontime Basketball takes place in the Recreation Department gym at 55 Barre Street on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 11:45am – 1:15pm.

Montpelier Parks

- **Enchanted Forest will be returning to Hubbard Park soon!**
 - We will have an announcement to share about Enchanted Forest within the next week or two, so stay tuned. We hope you’re excited for fun fall festivities with the Parks Department!