



BARRE TOWN MUNICIPAL NEWSLETTER

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www.barretown.org

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COVID-19 Update

As of this writing, all town buildings are open to the public. Tax payments, permits, and other paperwork may be deposited in either drop box at the town offices at 149 Websterville Road, or brought in. Please wear a mask in town buildings, whether you have been vaccinated or not.

If you need time in the town vault or are a title searcher, we strongly encourage you make an appointment by calling the Town Clerk's Office at 479-9391. Appointments help ensure safety of customers.

All public meetings held by town boards, commissions and committees provide the option to call in. Some may provide a video option. If you wish to attend a Selectboard, Development Review Board, Planning Commission, Traffic Safety Advisory Committee, Board of Abatement, Recreation Board, or Budget Committee meeting, visit www.barretown.org and click on the Boards and Commissions menu to find the meeting agenda and participation options. Or call 479-9331.

All Town departments are working and providing their usual services. Playgrounds and the tennis-pickleball courts are open. Town staff are exercising recommended precautions. The biggest challenge currently are the number of close-contact notifications, especially among staff's children.

Barre Town EMS is co-managing a vaccine clinic with Waterbury Ambulance. The clinic opened in AOT's David Dill building on September 27 and is now operating in the Berlin Mall. Hours for people 12 or older are M-F, 8am-6pm and weekends 8am-4pm. At the clinic the initial vaccination and the booster shot are available using Pfizer, Moderna or Johnson & Johnson. Vaccinations for children ages 5-11 are available, by appointment only. Hours are M-F, 6pm-8pm and Saturdays 4pm-6pm.

BTEMS staff helps manage the clinic, provide support services and administer the vaccines. The Vermont Department of Health reimburses the Town for BTEMS's work at the clinic. The COVID vaccinations are free. This clinic is expected to remain open at least through the end of the year.

BTEMS also offers the J&J initial vaccination and booster at the EMS Station (4 McLaughlin Road) on Mondays and Thursdays from 3pm-5pm.



Inside This Issue:

Dates & Events.....	2
Seeking Volunteers-Vacancies.....	2
Employee Changes.....	2
ARPA/CLFRF Funding.....	2
Tax Rate.....	3
Final Reappraisal Report.....	3
Apply for Budget Committee.....	3
Pedestrian Safety.....	4
Winter Rec Activities Around Town....	4
Christmas Tree Collection.....	4
Housing Rehab & Weatherization.....	4
Safe Winter Driving.....	5
Winter Plowing/No Snow in Road.....	5
Shoveling Under Mailboxes.....	5
Winter Parking Ban.....	5
Winter Sand Available.....	5
Summer Workers Needed.....	5
Roadside Ash Tree Removal.....	5
Thanksgiving 5K.....	6
Town Engineer's Office.....	6
Water Valve Exercising.....	6
Digitization of Land Records.....	6
Project Updates.....	7
CV Fiber Action Update.....	7
Board & Commission Reports.....	8

ARPA in Vermont

Did you know that the State of Vermont will receive more than \$2.7 billion in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds? The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources is offering programs to assist homeowners through the Healthy Homes Initiative.

Individual Drinking Water and Wastewater:

This program will provide assistance to residential property owners who need to repair or replace their on-site water (such as wells) or wastewater systems (such as septic tanks and leach fields). Eligibility requirements are currently being developed. Currently funding is only available to owner-occupied properties.

The agency will finalize program details in the coming months, but in the meantime be sure to visit <https://anr.vermont.gov/content/funding-install-or-replace-water-or-wastewater-systems> and click "Get on the List" to be notified as the program develops.

3-Acre Stormwater:

If you own a property with 3 or more acres of impervious surface (roof, pavement gravel) you may have already been contacted by the Department of Environmental Conservation Stormwater Program. Properties with three acres or more of impervious surface have already been identified as needing to implement stormwater treatment practices. Previously, the expense of these projects would fall on the landowner, but using ARPA money the state is offering financial assistance.

To learn more and receive updates please visit <https://anr.vermont.gov/content/controlling-phosphorus-pollution-developed-lands> and click "Get on the List".

By Katelyn Kran, Finance Director

Dates & Events:

- Nov. 1 - Apr. 1: Winter On Street Parking Ban
- November 25: 5K Walk/Run (Turkey Trot)
- December 30: Budget Committee Letters Due
- Jan. 3 - Jan. 14: Christmas Tree Collections
- January 25, 2022: Budget Review Begins
- February 15, 2022: Property and Sewer Taxes Due

Seeking Volunteers-Vacancies

Several Barre Town volunteer board, committee positions are unfilled. The Selectboard is seeking letters of interest from Town residents willing to serve the town:



Cemetery Commission: One vacancy. Meets 4th Wednesday of the month at 6:30pm.

This commission oversees the care and maintenance of the town's cemeteries, including policies, rules and regulations for operation, and prices for services provided.

Housing Advisory Committee: One vacancy. Meets as needed. This committee deals with housing rehabilitation programs operated by the town and advises the Selectboard on housing related issues.

Deputy Health Officer: This position pays a small stipend. The Deputy Health Officer handles calls and cases in the Health Officer's absence, maybe a handful of times a year. The Health Officer and Deputy Health Officer enforce state rental housing regulations and deal with dog bite cases. Training is available.

Applications or letters of interests will be considered for appointment upon receipt. For more information, see the town website at barretown.org or call the Town Manager's Office at (802) 479-9331.

Employee Changes

Full-Time: Police Officer **Joe Tremblay**, who was initially hired per diem in July, transitioned into a full-time slot on October 2nd. Joe comes to us after a twenty-year career in the military. Originally from Barre, Joe started the full-time academy October 25 and will graduate in late February.

Leaving: DPW employee **Brandon Guyette** has taken a new position as Wastewater Operator for the City of Barre. We are happy for Brandon advancing his career, but he will also be missed here at Barre Town.

By Elaine Wang, Assistant Town Manager

ALL TOWN OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED ON:



- Thursday, November 25
- Friday, November 26
- Friday, December 24
- Friday, December 31

ARPA / CLFRF Funding

The U.S. Congress adopted the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), which is granting money to the states and units of local government to help mitigate effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and help better situate government should the conditions of the spring and summer of 2020 return. The U.S. Treasury is granting money directly to units of local government that voted to accept it. The local government program is called Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funding (CLFRF). The state also is receiving ARPA funds and is allocating some of its grants to programs similar to the eligible uses of CLFRF.



In other states counties are units of general purpose government, thus are receiving CLFRF. Vermont's counties do not meet that requirement. The state, Vermont's congressional delegation and the Vermont League of Cities and Towns advocated for the U.S. Treasury to award the money Vermont's counties would have received to Vermont's municipalities. The U.S. Treasury decided to do just that. Barre Town's total allocation of CLFRF has been raised from \$808,189 to \$2,307,709.

The Town received one-half of that total on September 3. The money was deposited to a new fund which is to be used only for CLFRF grants and expenditures. The separation will make tracking and reporting easier.

Although the U.S. Treasury has not issued its final rule for using CLFRF, the Selectboard is beginning the process of planning for use of the money. On October 26 Finance Director Katelyn Kran briefed the Seletboard on requirements and eligible uses. The Selectboard scheduled a discussion about CLFRF to be held during its November 2 meeting. The board talked about a public input phase or process. Check the Town homepage announcements or call the Town Manager's Office (479-9331) for more information about public input.

The CLFRF may be used to reimburse the Town for COVID-19 pandemic expenses not already reimbursed by other grants. The Town is likely to collect those reimbursements, which are minimal. Compensating for revenue lost because of the pandemic is another allowed use. The Town will look at all of its revenue accounts in all funds to determine which experienced a pandemic caused decrease in receipts. The Treasury's preliminary rule provides a formula to calculate the amount of lost revenue.

The Selectboard took a preliminary step toward using some of the money for a waterline project (another eligible use) in upper Websterville. Instead of the DPW replacing pipes over several years, the Selectboard approved an engineering service agreement for the Town's consulting water engineer (Otter Creek Engineering) to prepare specifications for one contract. The plan is to release bidding specifications this winter for construction next summer and fall.

The pandemic highlighted the need for a current digital audio-visual meeting room system. This is an eligible use that many municipalities are considering. The Town should wrap up its research and evaluation soon followed by Selectboard authorization to make the purchase.

Staff has suggested that after public input and research the Selectboard should adopt a CLFRF Use Plan listing projects/purchases, dollar amounts and timeline. That action could be taken in January, 2022.

By Carl Rogers, Town Manager

Tax Rate

Because of the reappraisal the Selectboard set the property tax rates on August 20, about seven weeks later than usual. The reappraisal increased the Grand List which results in an increase of property tax revenue per 1¢ on the rate. The revenue per 1¢ increased from \$66,610 in 2020 to \$91,600 in 2021.

For property tax purposes properties are categorized as Homestead or Non-homestead, per state law. This is done for state education tax purposes. Each category of property has four tax rates: 1) Town Highway Fund; 2) Town General Fund; 3) Town Local Agreement; and 4) the appropriate state education rate. The state sets the education rates and the Town is required to use those rates. For '21-'22 the Homestead rate is \$1.2289 and the Non-homestead rate is \$1.4620. Both rates are less than the prior year because of the reappraisal. The Town's Highway Fund rate was set at \$.3140. The General fund rate was set at \$.3981, and the Local Agreement rate was set at \$.0022. The local agreement makes up for the state education tax break the Town agrees to give. At this time the entire local agreement rate results from voter approval of reducing disabled veterans' property value by \$40,000. \$20,276 in tax revenue was needed to replace the tax benefit granted to disabled veterans.

Overall tax rates decreased because of the reappraisal. The chart below lists the tax rate before and after the last five reappraisals:

<u>Fiscal Years</u>	<u>Before</u>	<u>After</u>
1980-81/1981-82	\$2.70	\$2.21
1988-89/1989-90	\$3.40	1.92
1997-98/1998-99*	\$2.64	\$2.44
2003-04/2004-05	\$2.88	\$1.7173 ¹
2020-21/2021-22	\$2.6212 ¹	\$1.9432 ¹

¹ Homestead rate *Land only

Setting the municipal tax rates starts with the voter approved General Fund (GF) and Highway Fund (HF) budgets. The non-tax revenue in each budget is subtracted from the approved budget amount to determine the amount of property tax revenue needed. The tax revenue needed is divided by the expected revenue per 1¢ of tax rate to arrive at the tax rate. The expected revenue per penny (\$91,600) of taxes is provided by the Assessor's Office.

Before the tax rate is actually set, however, the Selectboard makes adjustments in amount of tax revenue to raise. The Selectboard decides how much, if any, fund balance to apply. For the '21-'22 tax rates, the Selectboard applied \$48,930, on account of non-recurring expenses, to the HF. The Selectboard helped keep the GF tax rate down by factoring in \$277,090 of fund balance. These amounts are similar to prior years.

By Carl Rogers, Town Manager

Final Reappraisal Report

The Board of Civil Authority (meeting as the Board of Tax Appeals) plans to complete its appeal hearings and issue all remaining appeal decisions in November. Barring appeals of the Board's decisions work on the 2021 reappraisal, which began in the fall of 2019, would be finished.

In Barre Town there are about 3,500 parcels owned by about 3,100 different owners. After the Notice of Change of Appraisals were mailed last summer 415 owners requested a grievance hearing with the Assessor. Based on those grievance hearings the Assessor made decisions about changing the assessed value of those properties. Decision letters were

mailed to all grievants. Thirty owners of 36 properties appealed the Assessor's grievance decision to the Board of Tax Appeals. Six owners withdrew their appeals before a hearing was held. As of October 27 the BTA had made 19 decisions. For 10 cases the BTA lowered the assessed value. For 8 others the BTA decided no change was warranted. The value of one property was increased when new information was provided during the appeal process. These 19 decisions resulted in a net decrease to the Grand List of \$1,871,688. The total Grand List is approximately \$920,000,000.

When the state issued Barre Town's state education tax rates in August, the state reported Barre Town's common level of appraisal (CLA) is 110.26%. That figure is not unexpected immediately after completion of the reappraisal. At the end of October, 2021 the reappraisal cost \$234,992.33. More expenses for conducting the appeal hearings have to be paid.

By Carl Rogers, Town Manager

Apply for Budget Committee

The Town Charter established a Budget Committee consisting of five citizens and the five Selectboard members. The Town Clerk appoints one citizen to the Committee. The Selectboard appoints two citizen members. Those three appointees select the other two Committee members. The Selectboard is seeking letters



or emails from registered town voters interested in serving on the Budget Committee.

Typically the Committee's meetings start the last Tuesday night of January and run through to the end of March. The Committee may decide to hold extra meetings to complete its thorough review of all budgets before the end of March deadline.

Budgets for nine funds are prepared by the Town Manager with input from the appropriate department. The Committee reviews these budgets and sets the final amount for the Sewer Fund, Sewer Capital Improvement Fund, Water Fund, Equipment Fund, Building Fund, Cemetery Fund and Ambulance Fund. The Committee may make water and sewer rate recommendations to the Selectboard. Voters approve the General Fund and Highway Fund budgets. It is the Committee's job to determine the GF and HF budgets that will be placed on the ballot for voter consideration.

Serving on the Committee is an excellent course to learn about Town operations because each budget is reviewed in detail, including an explanation of operations. Department heads usually attend meetings when their budgets are reviewed. Some of the organizations, such as the Aldrich Public Library, Barre Area Development and Green Mountain Transit, that are included in the General Fund budget, give presentations with helpful background information.

Applications in the form of a letter or an email will be accepted until 12:00 pm Thursday, December 30, 2021. Letters may be dropped off at the Municipal Building or mailed to the Town Manager's Office, P.O. Box 116, Websterville, VT, 05678. Emails may be sent to crogers@barretown.org. For more information about the Committee or how to apply call the Manager's Office at 479-9331.

By Carl Rogers, Town Manager

In 2019, 6,205 pedestrians died as a result of traffic crashes. Pedestrian safety is both the responsibility of the pedestrian as well as those driving on the roadways. By following a few simple tips, pedestrians can increase the safety margin. Be alert and



follow the rules of the road, including traffic signs, walking on sidewalks when available, and crossing at sidewalks or intersections when no crosswalk is available. Also important is wearing bright colors and using a reflective belt, vest, or light. Drivers should use extra caution around crosswalks and on roads without sidewalks. Adjust your speed according to your surroundings, such as schools or congested areas, or during darkness, rain and fog. And, certainly of equal importance, never drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

By William Dodge, Chief of Police

Winter Recreation Activities Around Town



The Recreation Board does not plan to offer indoor pickleball in Barre Town this winter due to the pandemic. Players looking for indoor pickleball might check barrepickleball.playerlineup.com for any independently organized play.

There's still plenty of outdoor recreation available in Barre Town through the winter. Groomed trails for skiing, snowshoeing, and fatbiking are available for free in the Barre Town Forest and the Rec Area by Barre Town School. Grooming is done by the Millstone Trails Association (MTA). If you'd like to know whether the trails are open before you bundle up and drive over, visit this MTA webpage: www.millstonetrails.org/trail-maps and click on the blue button, "Follow our trails on TrailHUB." Dogs must be leashed. Also, note that both hunting and pedestrian uses are allowed in the town forest during hunting season. Mountain biking and fat biking, however, is prohibited during the deer rifle season, November 13-28 this year, and the late deer muzzleloader season, December 4-12 this year.

The three Barre Town bike paths will also be available:

Millstone West Bike Path, partly groomed, from the school to Lower Graniteville. Access from the Barre Town School parking lot. It can also be accessed on foot from Compo St. (no public parking on that end).

South Barre Bike Path, not groomed, from Bridge St. to Fairview St. in Barre City. Access in Barre Town on foot next to the bridge (no public parking). Access in Barre City from Parkside Terrace by Playground 2000, which has public parking.

East Barre Bike Path, not groomed, from Websterville Road and Church Street to the fields behind the town offices. Access from 449 Websterville Road - Park a short walk away along Mill Street or Websterville Road near the East Barre Post Office. If you know how to get to the path from the town offices, you may also park at the town offices at 149 Websterville Road.



Speaking of the fields behind the town offices, keep an eye on the town Recreation Facebook page for an announcement that there's enough snow for sledding on those gentle hills.

5K Snowshoe Run: If you like to snowshoe, the Central Vermont Runners are hosting a 5K Snowshoe Race in the Town Forest on Saturday, February 12th, 2022, starting at 10 am. Meet at 44 Brook Street in Websterville. You'll need your own snowshoes. Proceeds will be donated to a youth running group. Visit CVRunners.org for more information.

By Elaine Wang, Assistant Town Manager

Christmas Tree Collection

The Department of Public Works (DPW) will pick up discarded Christmas trees during the first two full weeks of January. See the schedule shown below. Pick up service is suspended temporarily if DPW has to plow snow or salt and sand roads.



Completely remove all lights, decorations, string and garland before placing the tree by the street or road side. Put the tree out for collection before the end of the collection week for your neighborhood. If the tree is along the road after the collection week call the DPW (476-3522) or Town Manager's Office (479-9331).

The service is offered to help residents dispose of a large and eventually unsightly item. The Town is interested in keeping ditches and waterways clear. Trees tossed over the bank of a drainageway or brook could cause minor isolated flooding. The Town also is interested in reducing outdoor fires. Land-filling organics such as a Christmas tree is not a legal alternative.

Trees collected by DPW are added to the brush pile at the lawn waste site and chipped for wood mulch. If residents don't have their tree collected in January they may take the tree to the lawn waste site next spring.

January 3 - 7: North of 302, including Richardson Road, Beckley Hill Road, Camp Street, Windywood Road, East Hill, Trow Hill and Cobble Hill.

January 10 - 14: South of 302, including East Barre, Websterville, Graniteville, Quarry Hill, Sterling Hill, South Barre, and West Hill.

By Carl Rogers, Town Manager

Housing Rehab & Weatherization

Do you own and live in a Washington County home that needs major repairs, weatherization, or changes to make it more accessible for elderly and/or disabled household members? The low-cost Green Mountain Home Repair loan from Downstreet Housing may be an option for you. Barre Town has its own share of money in this program allocated for Barre Town residents. Find out if the loan program is right for you to help make your home better for your household.

Those with income less than 80% of the Washington County median income are eligible. Currently, that means less than \$46,050 for 1-person households, \$52,600 for 2-person households, \$59,200 for 3 person households, \$65,750 for 4-person households, or \$71,050 for 5-person households. Find out more from Pattie Dupuis: pdupuis@downstreet.org or (802) 477-1343.

By Elaine Wang, Assistant Town Manager



Safe Winter Driving

Winter will be upon us soon, and with that comes slippery roads. The majority of the accidents we see can be avoided by making sure your car is ready for winter. Good winter tires, wiper blades and other equipment is essential. Before driving, make sure to clean your car off entirely. Even though you may have cleaned your windshield, snow and ice on your roof can dislodge and may strike other vehicles. If you don't need to drive when the roads are bad, stay home. If you do need to drive when roads are bad, slow your speed to give yourself, and other drivers more time to react to the unknown. Keep extra clothes, a shovel, and your cell phone and charger in your car in case you become stuck. Following these tips will help ensure everyone is safe.

By William Dodge, Chief of Police



Winter Plowing / No Snow in The Road

Winter is coming and soon snow will be falling from the sky, blanketing the landscape. Plow drivers will be getting their coffee and heading out in the wee hours of the morning to clean driveways. Some driveways will get cleaned before the Town truck has gone by, and some will not. In either case, please refrain from illegally pushing snow across the road or leaving snow from your driveway in the road. It is dangerous for the motoring public and can cause unnecessary accidents. More detail can be found in the Town Code of Ordinance, Section 6-2.



Shoveling Around Your Mailbox: Snow needs to be removed under and around your mailbox. This allows for the mail to be delivered and keeps snow from being pushed up against your mailbox. If the Town plow truck hits your mailbox with its wing or plow, the Town will repair it. The Town is not responsible when snow coming off the plow damages the mailbox. It is also important that when you remove snow from your driveway, that you remove it to right side of your driveway as you face the road. By moving the snow to the right side of the driveway, the Town will not push the snow you removed from your driveway back into the entrance of your driveway.

By Josh Martineau, Town Engineer

Winter Parking Ban

This winter, remember that per town ordinance you may not park any vehicle on the street, or within the town right of way between the hours of 11:00 pm and 7:00 am between November 1st and April 1st. Vehicles may be ticketed and towed at the owner's expense. Please help our public works employees keep our streets safe by moving your vehicles so the plows can get by and do a thorough job.

By William Dodge, Chief of Police



Winter Sand Available

Would a little sand make your home driveway or walkway safer this winter? Winter sand is available free to town residents for their home use. The self-serve pile is outside of the public works fence at 129 Websterville Road. You may stop by any time, but stock up during good weather to avoid disappointment! DPW tops off the pile when they have time outside of maintaining and plowing roads, so the pile may be low when weather is bad. Please be thoughtful of others and take a reasonable amount, like a couple of five-gallon buckets full. You'll need to bring your own containers and shovel.



By Elaine Wang, Assistant Town Manager

Summer Workers Needed

Next spring the Town expects it will need two new full-time seasonal workers: one for the Cemetery Division and one for the Recreation Division. For succession planning there may be a new assistant cemetery sexton/recreation maintenance supervisor position. The start of work is almost four and a half months away, but start passing the word about these summer positions. The Cemetery crew typically works M-F, 8:00am - 3:30pm. The recreation crew's day usually starts at 7:00am and finishes at 3:30pm. Work in both operations includes a lot of mowing and trimming. If there is a new assistant position, the assistant will work with both crews and spend time with the current sexton/maintenance supervisor when meeting with customers and performing administrative duties. The intent is to learn both operations. Contact the Town Manager's Office (479-9331) for more information or look for another article in the February newsletter. Women and men are welcome to apply.

By Carl Rogers, Town Manager

Roadside Ash Tree Removal

This winter the public works department (DPW) will resume cutting down ash trees in road right-of-ways. Last spring DPW started removing trees along Cutler Corner Road. DPW's first assignment this winter will be finishing Cutler Corner Road. When Cutler Corner is finished lower Phelps Road (Cutler Corner to Anderson) is next. Property owners along that section of road received a notification already, but if any owner on the section of road has a question they are invited to call the Town Manager's Office (479-9331). After lower Phelps, the upper half of Osborne, Belding, Maplecrest, Jalbert and Anderson (from Phelps to Jalbert) will be tackled. Letters will be mailed to owners along these roads closer to the time tree cutting might begin.



Ash trees are being removed because of the emerald ash borer which kills the ash trees on which they feed. Private property owners should check their property for ash trees and assess the risk posed by dead trees. Dead ash trees are known to drop their limbs or topple with no wind evident. For more information about the emerald ash borer check out:

<https://vtinvasives.org/land/emerald-ash-borer-vermont>.

Thanksgiving 5K

Runners, walkers, children in strollers and dogs on leashes are welcome to participate in the Barre Congregational Church's Gobble Wobble Turkey Trot. Proceeds from the Thanksgiving morning tradition benefit the Church's community support programs. Online registration at [runsignup.com/Race/VT/Barre/BCCGobbleWobble](https://barrecongregational.org/runsignup.com/Race/VT/Barre/BCCGobbleWobble) is open until November 20. Registration fee is \$20. Race shirts are available online for an additional \$20. Same day registration is offered; the fee is \$30 on Thanksgiving morning.



Registration and pre-registration pickups will be available outside the Barre Town School starting at 8:00 am. Everyone must wear a mask before the race starts at 9:30. Social distancing is required. Waiting in a car before the race is advised.

The start and finish line will be in front of the school. Participants will enter Websterville Road at the school and head towards the cemeteries. At the 4-way intersection runners and walkers will turn left and go to Rock of Ages' Visitors' Center. If there is not too much snow or ice on the bike path participants will use the path to reach the finish line. If there is too much snow or ice on the path the course doubles back to the school. 5K is 3.1 miles.

Drivers should be aware participants will be on Websterville Road from 9:30 to about 9:45 and possibly again from 9:50—11:00. On Graniteville Road drivers might see participants from 9:45 to 10:45. Use extra caution if driving these roads during these times.

For more information about the event go to <https://barrecongregational.org/gobble-wobble>.

By Carl Rogers, Town Manager

Town Engineer's Office

In May the Town Engineer, Josh Martineau, moved to an empty office at 79 Pitman Road, the Town Maintenance Building. The move allowed the new Finance Director and Town Treasurer to utilize the old engineering office. If you need to see the Engineer, please call (802) 479-2595 or email him at JMartineau@barretown.org to set up an appointment since most of his time is spent in the field. If you need a permit or have questions about permits, please contact the zoning office at (802) 479-2595.

By Josh Martineau, Town Engineer

Water Valve Exercising

This fall the Town received a grant from the Drinking Water Capacity Development and State Revolving Loan Programs to have the waterline gate valves exercised. The grant paid for a contractor to spend 2 days in the Town exercising the mainline valves. Exercising the valves is a key maintenance strategy the Town utilizes so valves do not seize open making it hard or impossible to shut down in case of a waterline break. While they were at each of the valves, they painted the cover with blue paint. Painting of the covers is also a strategy we use to help us locate valves in case of an emergency.

By Josh Martineau, Town Engineer

Digitization of Land Records

The Town Clerk's Office is the designated keeper of our community's public records. The Town Clerk is responsible for recording, preserving and restoring documents which pertain to land and property in Barre Town. Vermont law states that municipal records including deeds, instruments or evidence



respecting real estate, tax records, land use permits, minutes, and other written computerized material designated by the Statewide Records and Information Management Program must be available to the public. The safety, accessibility, and enforcing retention schedules are all systematically managed and can be demanding without office automation. Barre Town's records date back to 1895 and are available to the public for research. In 1995 Barre Town signed a contract with an outside company to commence digitizing and indexing its land records. As part of the contract, microfilming and indexing was completed back to December 18, 1986. Present day, the Town is currently indexing and digitizing all land records in-house and continue the process of the back scanning involved with the digitization of the historic records.

In April of 2019 the Town of Barre partnered with Kofile, a cloud-based Records Management System. Kofile's core functionality includes customizable workflows, document preservation, and provides backup and file protection services. By teaming up with Kofile, records are scanned as land transactions occur, stored on a secure off-site server, and uploaded to the Town's online record search site, Town Fusion.

The State of Vermont offered Coronavirus Municipal Records Digitization Grants to help provide economic support to town offices which were impacted by increased customer demand due to COVID-19. On September 14, 2020 the Town of Barre was awarded the Act 137 Digitization of Land Records Grant in the amount of \$14,960.00. This money was helpful with the overall process and goals in streamlining our system to one day allow title searchers online access to 40 years of land records information.

Attorneys and real estate agents often need copies of land records. The enhanced capabilities of an online records management system have never made obtaining a document so easy! Document digitization allows individuals remote access to land records from their office chair! This eliminates the need to drive to the Town Clerk's Office for a title search. There is no fee to search and view records online. The fee for printing documents is \$3.00 per page.

Kofile has been a notable addition to the Barre Town Clerk's Office. The Town is eager to continue utilizing their state-of-the-art management system for document digitization, restoration, preservation, and storage. The systems efficiency provides a simplified process for our in-house staff and citizens.

For land records questions or requests, please contact the Town Clerk's Office at (802) 479-9391.

By Tina Lunt, Town Clerk

Project Updates

Websterville Waterline Upgrade: The Town has completed the Littlejohn Road section of the Websterville waterline upgrades. The multiyear plan is to upsize the waterlines in Libercent, Brook, Violette and Casanova Streets. These are much-needed upgrades to reduce leaks and to improve water flow for fire suppression.

Quarry Hill Intersection: The State of Vermont Agency of Transportation, VTTrans, is in the preliminary design stage of the Quarry Hill intersection project. Property owner meetings are being held currently. The project will include a new configuration at Quarry Hill and VT 14 intersection. It will also have two downhill lanes that continue from the Town into Barre City to the VT 14 intersection. Construction of the project is scheduled for 2024.

Bridge Street Intersection: The Bridge Street and VT 14 intersection project includes addition of a traffic signal, and widening on VT Rte. 14 to accommodate left turn lanes, minor realignment of VT Rte. 14, new pavement, drainage, and signage. Construction is slated for 2023-2024.

Town Forest Logging: The Selectboard decided it would not finish the logging with the same equipment used during the 2020-2021 winter. The Selectboard was open to having the logging done by other means. Limlaw Pulpwood decided it would not log the final 20-30 acres, if it could not use the same equipment used last winter. Consulting forester Jeff Smith was searching for a logger who could do the logging by chainsaw and skidder (or other means). September and October is late for lining up logging work for the winter. By the end of October no one had been found. The Selectboard called off the search. Unless a logger comes forward, on their initiative, and makes an acceptable offer, there will be no logging in the town forest this winter.

Rec Area Stormwater: The state determined the Town recreation area has more than 3 acres of impervious surface thus is subject to the new stormwater treatment rules. The Friends of the Winooski River (FWR) secured a 100% grant to pay for the project design, construction and construction oversight. Nine bids for construction were opened on August 20, 2021. The low bidder was Hebert Excavation with a bid of \$135,600. The Selectboard awarded the contract to Hebert on August 31, 2021. After receiving the stormwater permit for the new facility, and another permit for the construction activity, an Act 250 permit minor amendment was re-



ceived. A notice to proceed to was issued to Hebert Excavation on October 5. The contractor started work promptly. The contract includes filling and stabilizing an eroded bank at the edge of the woods behind St. Sylvester Cemetery; improving the swale from the rec area with a wider, flatter bottom and stone check dams; constructing a bioretention basin; and building a level lip spreader pole inventory is being conducted in five municipalities and is for

discharge from the basin. Completion is expected on November 9. The Town will be responsible for maintenance.

DPW Yard Stormwater: The FWR received a \$126,844 grant on the Town's behalf. The project, at the Town's request, will use underground storage and release chambers. These chambers will allow the Town to use the ground over stormwater treatment site. The underground chambers are more costly than an open-air basin, consequently the cost per pound of phosphorous removed was high and made for an uncompetitive application. The Town offered a \$40,000 (25%) match to make the application more competitive. Watershed Consulting Associates will work on construction plans. Construction is expected during the second half of 2022.

By Josh Martineau, Town Engineer and Carl Rogers, Town Manager

CVFiber Action Update

CVFiber is a communications union district (CUD) formed under Vermont state law. Barre Town is one of 21 central Vermont municipalities that are members of CVFiber. The Selectboard appoints the Town's delegate and alternate delegate to the CVFiber board. Per state law CUD's are to be wholly self-sufficient. The Town does not contribute money to CVFiber through the Town budget.

Currently, CVFiber is taking many, significant actions. A pole inventory is being conducted in five municipalities and is more than 50% complete (as of October 22). The pole inventory will begin in twelve additional municipalities, including Barre Town, very soon. The pole inventory is needed to design and build the fiber network. The inventory includes poles on private property. CVFiber's Community Update for October states the pole inventory workers will use vehicles displaying CVFiber magnetic signs.

Recently the Vermont Community Broadband Board awarded CVFiber a \$2.8 million pre-construction grant from the state's ARPA funds. The grant will help pay for the pole inventory, and high-level and detailed design for operations in the seventeen municipalities. The high-level design should be completed before the end of 2021. The high-level design maps out the structure of the system. The detailed design to be done in 2022 will plan service drops to each address.

During the summer CVFiber released requests for proposals (RFPs) for a network developer-operator. Two proposals presently are being evaluated. CVFiber also issued RFPs for accounting services and for auditing services. Decisions are expected this month.

CVFiber has requested member municipalities contribute some of their CLFRF funds to the construction effort. Barre Town has not made a decision about that contribution request. See article on page 2. To follow CVFiber news look at its website <https://cvfiber.net/news/>.

By CV Fiber delegate Josh Jarvis and Carl Rogers, Town Manager



BOARD AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Development Review Board – *By Cindy Spaulding; Members: M. Reaves, C. Sanborn, J. Valsangiacomo, C. Neddo, A. Valentini, J. Fecteau and M. Gilbar. Alternates: M. Titus and A. Labrador*

CUP=Conditional Use Permit; SD=Subdivision; BLA=Boundary Line Adjustment

August, 2021: Appr. SD & BLA for Sunset and Neddo Roads; Appr. CUP for 580 S. Barre Road; Denied CUP 8 - unit apartment at 130 Mill Street.

September, 2021: Appr. CUP 8 - unit apartment at 130 Mill Street

October, 2021: Appr. SD 2 - lot at 179 Mill Street; Appr. SD 3 - lot on Airport Road.

Planning Commission – *By Cindy Spaulding; Members: C. Sanborn, C. Violette, T. Reil, B. Atwood, G. Clain, M. Gilbar and C. Chase*

AUD=Allowed Use Determination

August, 2021: Meeting Cancelled

September, 2021: Review Code of Conduct and Rules of Procedures

October, 2021: Appr. AUD for Lucas John at 217 Church Hill Road (residence) and 223 Church Hill Road (fitness center)

Traffic Safety Advisory Committee - *By Josh Martineau; Members: S. Corbett, J. Blow, W. Kirby, D. Freeman, B. Meyer*

August, 2021: Discussed speed study on Cassie Street, Hill Street, Camp Street, Windywood Road, Pine Hill Road and Conti Circle. Voted not to install speed tables on Conti Circle.

September, 2021: Discussed overweight permits with Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles; discussed ATV use on town roads; discussed speed study on Windywood Road in the 35 mph zone.

October, 2021: No Meeting.

*Look for the next edition of the Barre Town newsletter
in February, 2022!*

