

HARTFORD PLANNING COMMISSION  
September 15, 2025  
Special Meeting Notice and Agenda

The Hartford Planning Commission will meet on Monday, September 15, 2025, beginning at 5:00 p.m. to consider nominating Jo-Ann Ells to be re-appointed as Zoning Administrative Officer in accordance with state statute 24 V.S.A. § 4448.

This meeting will be conducted in person at Hartford Town Hall, 171 Bridge Street, White River Junction, Vermont. In addition, you may join the meeting remotely as follows:

**Microsoft Teams [Need help?](#)  
[Join the meeting now](#)  
Meeting ID: 231 384 859 181 8  
Passcode: 4Ne99zw7**

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**Dial in by phone  
[+1 802-377-3677,,371741269#](#)  
1 (802) 377-3677  
Phone conference ID: 371 741 269#**

If you have problems accessing this meeting, please email Jo-Ann Ells at [jells@hartford-vt.org](mailto:jells@hartford-vt.org)

Please call the Department of Planning and Development (802) 295-3075 with any questions.

# Memorandum

**To:** Hartford Planning Commission  
**From:** Lori Hirshfield, Director of Department Planning and Development  
**Date:** September 3, 2025  
**Re:** Zoning Administrator Nomination

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Every three years the Selectboard must appoint a Zoning Administrative Officer in accordance with state statute 24 V.S.A. § 4448 (see attached).

The Statute states in part:

#### Appointment and powers of administrative officer

(a) An administrative officer, who may hold any other office in the municipality other than membership in the board of adjustment or development review board, shall be nominated by the planning commission and appointed by the legislative body for a term of three years promptly after the adoption of the first bylaws or when a vacancy exists.

In Hartford, the duties, responsibilities and powers of the administrative officer (also referred to as Administrator) are assigned to the Town's Zoning Administrator staff position.

On October 17, 2022 the Planning Commission approved a nomination for Jo-Ann Ells as Zoning Administrator.

On November 15, 2022, the Selectboard voted to re-appoint Jo-Ann for a 3-year term ending on November 22, 2025.

Since you do not have a regular Hearing scheduled in October and the Selectboard needs time to consider your recommendation, I suggest you consider scheduling a meeting in the upcoming weeks. Jo-Ann will email you some dates and times.

## **The Vermont Statutes Online**

The Statutes below include the actions of the 2024 session of the General Assembly.

**NOTE:** The Vermont Statutes Online is an unofficial copy of the Vermont Statutes Annotated that is provided as a convenience.

### **Title 24 : Municipal and County Government**

#### **Chapter 117 : Municipal and Regional Planning and Development**

##### **Subchapter 009 : ADOPTION, ADMINISTRATION, AND ENFORCEMENT**

**(Cite as: 24 V.S.A. § 4448)**

- **§ 4448. Appointment and powers of administrative officer**

(a) An administrative officer, who may hold any other office in the municipality other than membership in the board of adjustment or development review board, shall be nominated by the planning commission and appointed by the legislative body for a term of three years promptly after the adoption of the first bylaws or when a vacancy exists. The compensation of the administrative officer shall be fixed under sections 932 and 933 of this title, and the officer shall be subject to the personnel rules of the municipality adopted under sections 1121 and 1122 of this title. The administrative officer shall administer the bylaws literally and shall not have the power to permit any land development that is not in conformance with those bylaws. An administrative officer may be removed for cause at any time by the legislative body after consultation with the planning commission.

(b) The planning commission may nominate and the legislative body may appoint an acting administrative officer who shall have the same duties and responsibilities as the administrative officer in the administrative officer's absence. If an acting administrative officer position is established, or, for municipalities that establish the position of assistant administrative officer, there shall be clear policies regarding the authority of the administrative officer in relation to the acting or assistant officer.

(c) The administrative officer should provide an applicant with forms required to obtain any municipal permit or other municipal authorization required under this chapter, or under other laws or ordinances that relate to the regulation by municipalities of land development. If other municipal permits or authorizations are required, the administrative officer should coordinate a unified effort on behalf of the municipality in administering its development review programs. The administrative officer should inform any person applying for municipal permits or authorizations that the person should contact the regional permit specialist employed by the Agency of Natural Resources in order to assure

timely action on any related State permits; nevertheless, the applicant retains the obligation to identify, apply for, and obtain relevant State permits.

(d) If the administrative officer fails to act with regard to a complete application for a permit within 30 days, whether by issuing a decision or by making a referral to the appropriate municipal panel, a permit shall be deemed issued on the 31st day. (Added 2003, No. 115 (Adj. Sess.), § 100.)