



**TOWN OF MORRISTOWN SELECTBOARD
MEETING NOTICE & AGENDA
COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM**

On Zoom and at 43 Portland St. Morrisville, VT 05661
5:30 PM Monday, August 3, 2026

[Join Zoom Meeting](#) or by phone join via conference call (audio only): 1 (646) 558-8656 | Meeting ID: [810 342 4528](#) | Passcode 05661

The meeting will be live streamed on the Town of Morristown's website:

<https://www.morristownvt.gov/community/page/meetings-agendas-minutes> and on [Town GMATV YouTube Channel](#) when possible

I. 5:30PM - CALL SELECTBOARD MEETING TO ORDER

II. 5:31PM - AGENDA CHANGES/ADDITIONS

III. 5:33PM - COMMUNITY COMMENTS

IV. 5:47PM - APPROVE MINUTES

1. Approve minutes 7-20-2026

V. 5:50PM - NEW BUSINESS

1. Set 2026-2027 municipal tax rate
2. Town Clerk Update
 - A. Reminder - Primary Election August 11, 2026
 - B. Approve placing Justice of the Peace names on the back of the General Election ballot and automatically mailing them to all active voters.
3. Request to use Pleasant View Cemetery for CVCOA walking group
4. Cancel Selectboard regularly scheduled meeting of 9-7-26 due to Labor Day Holiday.
5. Approve CivicPlus NextRequest software for Public Records Request
6. Review Interim Zoning Bylaw language

VI. 6:20PM - OLD BUSINESS

VII. 6:20PM - APPROVE WARRANTS

VIII. 6:30PM - SCHEDULE

1. Monday, August 17, 2026 - SB Meeting - 5:30PM
Monday, August 24, 2026 - SB Public Hearing - 5:30PM Interim Zoning Bylaws
Monday, September 7, 2026 LABOR DAY - CANCEL - SB Meeting - 5:30PM
Monday, September 21, 2026 - Site Visit - 4:00PM Ledge Road
Monday, September 21, 2026 - Site Visit - 4:30PM Davison Road
Monday, September 21, 2026 - SB Public Hearing - 5:30PM Ledge Road
Monday, September 21, 2026 - SB Public Hearing - 5:45PM Davison Road (or immediately following the close of the Ledge Road hearing, whichever occurs first.
Monday, September 21, 2026 - SB Meeting - 5:30 regular time but will begin immediately following the public hearings for Ledge/Davison Road

IX. 6:35PM - OTHER BUSINESS

1. Executive Session - Negotiating or securing of real estate

X. 6:40PM - ADJOURN



**SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
OF JULY 20, 2026**

Members: Don McDowell, Richard Craig, George Cormier, Leah Hollenberger, Rose Belanger

Absent:

ADMINISTRATION and STAFF: Brent Raymond, Town Manager; Judi Alberi, Executive Assistant; Tyler Machia, Zoning/Planning Administrator; Adele Taplin, ECDD; Josh Goldstein, Chair PC; John Meyer, PC Member; Jamie Morris, PC Member; Wally Reeves, PC Member; Gary Nolan, DRB Chair; Donnie Blake, DRB Member; Susanna Burnham, DRB Member; Hilary Warner, MCC Member

PARTICIPANTS/GUESTS: Tasha Wallis, LCPC; Seth Jensen, LCPC; Lily Rapvano, LCPC; Dan McClaughlin, Rebecca Gonyea, Bob Bortree, Lisa Andrus, Laura Green

**participating via Zoom*

5:30PM - CALL SELECTBOARD MEETING TO ORDER

Don McDowell called the Selectboard Meeting to order at 5:30 PM at the Tegu Building.

5:31PM - AGENDA CHANGES/ADDITIONS

None

5:33PM - COMMUNITY COMMENTS

One resident requested an agenda item for the next meeting regarding loud traffic and possible actions.

5:47PM - APPROVE MINUTES

1. Approve minutes of 7-6-26

Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the minutes of 7/6/26. Motion seconded by Rose Belanger. Motion carried (5/0) with amendments.

Don McDowell indicated he had abstained from four votes.

5:50PM - NEW BUSINESS

1. JOINT MEETING WITH PLANNING COMMISSION:

A. Discussion with Planning Commission and LCPC representatives: Data Centers, Earth Extraction and Interim Zoning Bylaws

B. Review and discuss the Town Plan Implementation Plan with Planning Commission and LCPC representatives

A. The Selectboard and Planning Commission held a joint discussion on potential interim zoning bylaws to address data centers. Leah Hollenberger reported that she has been compiling information from Vermont municipalities that have adopted data center regulations and researching associated environmental and economic impacts. She noted that Morristown currently has no zoning bylaws specific to data centers and referenced prior discussions at a joint Selectboard and Trustee meeting

when most members were in agreement. Leah proposed a two-year interim bylaw establishing a moratorium on high-impact AI data centers, defined as new commercial data centers with anticipated electrical demand of 20 MW or greater. She stated this approach would allow time to develop permanent zoning standards while preserving flexibility for future economic development and enabling the Planning Commission to continue its current work on earth extraction language and Planned Unit Development (PUD) conservation bylaws. Rose recommended expediting a moratorium on data centers. Joshua Goldstein expressed support for Leah's work, and George commended her research efforts. Members cautioned that definitions should not unintentionally limit opportunities for appropriate commercial development, and the group discussed the importance of clearly defining "data center" while ensuring appropriate exemptions for uses such as schools and hospitals. There was consensus to proceed using zoning bylaw language rather than Town Plan language for an interim zoning bylaw public hearing on a moratorium on high-impact AI data centers. Leah agreed to provide draft language by Wednesday for Selectboard review, and the Selectboard agreed to move forward with scheduling a public hearing to consider interim data center bylaw language for August 24, consistent with the procedural requirements under 24 V.S.A. § 4415.

Attorney David Rugh of SP&F Attorneys provided guidance on zoning performance standards and municipal authority. He explained that enforcement is typically complaint-driven and may involve multiple agencies depending on the issue. Municipalities may adopt performance standards for earth extraction through zoning bylaws, including limits on noise, smoke, and dust; however, ongoing monitoring requirements are generally not permitted due to zoning permit finality. David reviewed the limitations of municipal authority under Dillon's Rule and outlined the procedural requirements for adopting interim bylaws, including the need for a public hearing under 24 V.S.A. § 4415, clarifying that specific language does not need to be approved prior to warning the hearing. A letter from Jerry Throne was read into the record, asserting that the town has authority to establish and enforce its own air pollution control program related to dust from earth extraction; David Rugh respectfully disagreed with some of the statements in the letter, noting such programs are separate from zoning and technically complex for municipalities. Tyler noted that the town is pursuing a tiered regulatory approach based on extraction volume rather than relying on the concept of incidental extraction, using performance standards as the primary regulatory mechanism available under current state law.

B. The Selectboard and Planning Commission reviewed the town implementation plan, with representatives from the Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) advising on priorities and best practices for updating the plan by 2030. Don reviewed some of the prioritized goals in the town plan and the progress made in addressing several of the objectives, noting that some items were aspirational and others needed prioritizing. Discussion touched on 11 priority items, including parking expansion, emergency services facilities, and energy efficiency. LCPC representatives Seth Jensen and Tasha Wallis advised that the plan is an aspirational vision used to support grant applications and should be updated every eight years. They emphasized the importance of including current influences on the town in the summary and highlighted the addition of maps to the town plan in relation to targeted objectives. They added that Act 250 reviewers look to see if the town's projects are reflected in the town plan and that the language supports business growth when determining grant funding.

The Selectboard identified several items under their responsibility that need prioritization over the next 3–4 years of the town plan, including continued attention to Data Centers, Earth Extraction, and Interim Zoning Bylaws. The Board and LCPC representatives agreed that aligning the implementation plan with current municipal priorities will strengthen the town's position for future funding and regulatory reviews.

2. MACC Grant Agreement and Attestation

Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the MACC Grant Agreement and authorize the Selectboard to sign the Municipal Letter of Attestation for the Downtown Vibrancy Fund, acknowledging the \$25,000 in state funding. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried (5/0).

3. Consideration of discontinuance proceedings under 19 V.S.A. Chapter 7 for Ledge Road, Davison Road, Lepper Road, and Cloverdale Road

The following discontinuance proceedings are planned under 19 V.S.A. Chapter 7 for the following cited below.

Motion made by Richard Craig to commence discontinuance proceedings for Ledge Road (T.H. 26), Davison Road (T.H. 79), Lepper Road (T.H. 17), and Cloverdale Road (T.H. 73), pursuant to 19 V.S.A. § 708(a). Site visits and public hearings for these proceedings are scheduled as follows:

Ledge Road and Davison Road (September 21):

Site visits will begin at 4:00 p.m. (Ledge Road) and 4:30 p.m. (Davison Road).

Public hearings will be held at the Town Office at 5:30 p.m. (Ledge Road) and 5:45 p.m. (Davison Road), or immediately following the close of the Ledge Road hearing, whichever occurs first.

Cloverdale Road and Lepper Road (October 5):

The site visit will begin at 4:00 p.m. (Cloverdale Road) and 4:30 p.m. (Lepper Road).

A public hearing will be held at the Town Office at 5:30 p.m. (Cloverdale Road) and 5:45 p.m. (Lepper Road) or immediately following the close of the hearing at Cloverdale Road, whichever occurs first.

Motion seconded by Rose Belanger. Motion carried (5/0).

4. Consideration for a Policy for Temporary Nonprofit Window Displays on Municipal Property

Motion made by Richard Craig to direct administration to develop a Policy for Temporary Nonprofit Window Displays on Municipal Property. Motion seconded by George Cormier. Motion carried (5/0).

5. Morristown Trails Committee Structure - Adele Taplin

Adele Taplin presented the formation of the Morristown Trails Committee. She thanked the Conservation Committee for their contributions to this committee's development. A member of the MCC will be on the Trails Committee. Both Richard and Leah thanked Adele for her work on this project. Brent thanked Hillary Warner for the information she provided.

Motion made by Richard Craig to establish the Morristown Trails Committee as an advisory and coordinating body to the Selectboard, with no fewer than five and not more than eleven volunteer members appointed by the Selectboard, serving staggered one, two, and three-year terms, and with membership and liaison roles as outlined in the Trails Committee Structure Memo. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried (5/0).

6. Morristown Trail Inventory Assessment and Connectivity Planning Project – Consultant Selection - Adele Taplin

Adele announced that the Town of Morristown was awarded a Vermont Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Planning Grant to complete a Trail Inventory, Assessment, and Connectivity Planning Project. The project will inventory and assess approximately 20 miles of locally managed natural surface trails, identify opportunities to improve connectivity to the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) and other local destinations, and develop recommendations and priorities to guide future trail improvements. The project also includes volunteer training, community engagement, and preparation of a Trail Inventory, Assessment, and Connectivity Plan.

Motion made by Richard Craig to award the consulting contract for the Morristown Trail Inventory, Assessment, and Connectivity Planning Project to Sinuosity, LLC in the amount of \$19,100, and to authorize the Town Manager to execute the consultant agreement. Motion seconded by George Cormier. Motion carried (5/0).

6:20PM - OLD BUSINESS

None

6:20PM - APPROVE WARRANTS

Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the warrants. Motion seconded by Rose Belanger. Motion carried. (5/0)

6:30PM - SCHEDULE

1. Monday, August 3, 2026 - SB Meeting - 5:30PM
Monday, August 17, 2026- SB Meeting - 5:30PM

6:35PM - OTHER BUSINESS

None

6:40PM - ADJOURN

Motion made by Richard Craig to adjourn. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried. (5/0)

Meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm
Submitted and filed this 7/22/26.
Bonnie McDermott, Scribe

Please note all minutes are in Draft form and are subject to approval at the next Selectboard meeting.

**TOWN OF MORRISTOWN
TAX RATE INFORMATION**

TOWN TAX RATE Voted FY 7-1-26 to 6-30-27		LAST YEAR	DIFFERENCE	
			\$	%
RESIDENTIAL TAX RATE:				
Municipal	\$ 0.7778	\$ 0.4555	\$ 0.3223	
Highway	\$ -	\$ 0.2850	\$ (0.2850)	
Local agreement	\$ 0.0009	\$ 0.0008	\$ 0.0001	
MUNICIPAL TAX RATE	\$ 0.7787	\$ 0.7413	\$ 0.0374	5.05%
EDUCATION RATE:	\$ 1.0784	\$ 1.0506	\$ 0.0278	2.65%
HOMESTEAD TAX RATE (per hundred of assessed value)	\$ 1.8571	\$ 1.7919	\$ 0.0652	3.64%

NON-RESIDENTIAL TAX RATE:				
Municipal	\$ 0.7778	\$ 0.4555	\$ 0.3223	
Highway	\$ -	\$ 0.2850	\$ (0.2850)	
Local agreement	\$ 0.0009	\$ 0.0008	\$ 0.0001	
MUNICIPAL TAX RATE	\$ 0.7787	\$ 0.7413	\$ 0.0374	5.05%
EDUCATION RATE:	\$ 1.2990	\$ 1.2680	\$ 0.0310	2.44%
NON-RESIDENTIAL TAX RATE (per hundred of assessed value)	\$ 2.0777	\$ 2.0093	\$ 0.0684	3.40%

SUGGESTED MOTION:

I move to set the FY 26/27 municipal tax rate of \$.7787

Town of Morristown **ESTIMATED 2026-2027 MUNICIPAL** Property Tax Rates

*Based on 2026-2027 Grand List Figures (pending final Current Use figures)

PROPOSED 2026-2027 Municipal Property Tax Rates							
Approved March 3, 2026							
Tax Description	Estimated	Housesite Value					
		\$ 200,000.00	\$ 300,000.00	\$ 400,000.00	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 600,000.00	\$ 700,000.00
Municipal	\$ 0.7778	\$ 1,555.60	\$ 2,333.40	\$ 3,111.20	\$ 3,889.00	\$ 4,666.80	\$ 5,444.60
Local Agreement	\$ 0.0009	\$ 1.80	\$ 2.70	\$ 3.60	\$ 4.50	\$ 5.40	\$ 6.30
Total	\$ 0.7787	\$ 1,557.40	\$ 2,336.10	\$ 3,114.80	\$ 3,893.50	\$ 4,672.20	\$ 5,450.90

2025-2026 Municipal Property Tax Rates							
Approved March 4, 2025							
Tax Description		Housesite Value					
		\$ 200,000.00	\$ 300,000.00	\$ 400,000.00	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 600,000.00	\$ 700,000.00
Municipal	\$ 0.7405	\$ 1,481.00	\$ 2,221.50	\$ 2,962.00	\$ 3,702.50	\$ 4,443.00	\$ 5,183.50
Local Agreement	\$ 0.0008	\$ 1.60	\$ 2.40	\$ 3.20	\$ 4.00	\$ 4.80	\$ 5.60
Total	\$ 0.7413	\$ 1,482.60	\$ 2,223.90	\$ 2,965.20	\$ 3,706.50	\$ 4,447.80	\$ 5,189.10

Estimted Increase	\$ 74.80	\$ 112.20	\$ 149.60	\$ 187.00	\$ 224.40	\$ 261.80
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SELECTBOARD MEMORANDUM

To: Selectboard
From: Sara Haskins, Town Clerk
Date: August 3, 2026
Subject: Town Clerk Update
A. Reminder - Primary Election August 11, 2026
B. Approve placing Justice of the Peace names on the back of the General Election ballot and automatically mailing them to all active voters.

Background:

The Selectboard (SB) must approve printing the names of the Justice of the Peace (JP) on the back of the general election ballot, because the Secretary of State (SOS) automatically mails the general election ballot to all active voters. This is because, otherwise, the JP would be printed on its own local ballot, and under **17 V.S.A. § 2680**, a town's legislative body (SB) must formally vote to approve mailing local ballots to all active voters.

By having the SOS print and mail the JPs on the back of the general election ballots, there is only one ballot and no printing or mailing costs to the Town. We have been doing this for 20+ years.

Suggested Motion:

I move to approve printing the Justice of the Peace candidates on the back of the 2026 General Election ballot that the State of Vermont will automatically mail to all active voters.

Attachments:

None



MEMO

TO: Brent Raymond
FROM: Judi Alberi
DATE: 7-22-26
RE: Recommendation to Purchase CivicPlus NextRequest Software

I strongly recommend that the Town of Morristown move forward with purchasing CivicPlus NextRequest software to manage public records requests. This purpose-built system handles the full public records request process, from intake and routing to redaction, tracking, and release, all in one place. Right now, that work is spread across multiple steps and staff, administered by MPD Desk Officer Jay Lamell and me, which creates a significant time burden. Staff and, at times, attorneys will still be closely involved in producing and redacting documents, but the other steps will be far more efficient. NextRequest brings it all together into a single, streamlined workflow.

Why this matters is simple: our current process is entirely manual. Jay and I are responsible for tracking requests, managing deadlines, maintaining logs, coordinating redactions, and following up throughout the process. NextRequest centralizes these tasks and adds automation where it makes sense. Features like automated workflows, centralized tracking, and RapidReview redaction tools allow for batch redactions, automatic logging, and more efficient document handling. Staff will still be responsible for carefully reviewing and redacting records, but the system reduces the administrative burden of organizing and managing each request.

Jay and I had a demo of the software and was able to see how this works in practice. We spoke with Essex, Vermont, and Christiansburg, Virginia, both of which currently use NextRequest, and their feedback was overwhelmingly positive. The biggest takeaway was the amount of administrative time saved. Importantly, they emphasized that the software doesn't replace the need for careful review; it simply makes the entire process more manageable and efficient. That real-world perspective reinforces the system's value beyond what the vendor presents.

From an operational standpoint, NextRequest strengthens record keeping and accountability by keeping everything, requests, communications, and actions, in one place. Built-in reminders help ensure deadlines are met, and the system creates clear, audit-ready documentation.

An additional benefit is the ability to make our request log **publicly accessible**, so anyone can go online and see what records have been requested and their status. Given the level of public records activity we've seen in Morristown over the past two years, this added transparency would be especially valuable. It helps reduce duplicate requests, keeps the public better informed, and reinforces trust by demonstrating that the Town is handling requests consistently and openly, as required by state statute.

Just as important, this purchase is worth considering even if it falls outside the current budget cycle. Public records compliance is **not optional**, and the workload will continue regardless of whether we invest in better

tools. Without a system like NextRequest, we're effectively absorbing the cost through staff time, inefficiencies, and the risk of missed deadlines or inconsistent tracking. Investing now helps prevent those hidden costs from growing, and it positions the Town to respond more efficiently to the increasing demand for transparency and records access.

This should be viewed as an investment in staff efficiency, not just a software purchase. If the system reduces the time staff spend on administrative tasks, that time can be redirected to other priorities, effectively increasing our capacity without adding personnel. Over time, those efficiencies can help offset the subscription cost by reducing manual work, follow-up, and delays.

Morristown is focused on improving service, staff efficiency, and compliance. NextRequest is a practical and defensible choice. Based on both its capabilities and feedback from other municipalities, it delivers what we need: better tracking, improved redaction support, reliable reminders, and a more streamlined overall process. Jay and I both recommend moving forward with the purchase and beginning implementation as soon as possible.

**CivicPlus**

302 South 4th St. Suite 500
Manhattan, KS 66502
US

Quote #:
CivicPlus Pricing
Approval Date:
Expires On:

Statement of Work
Q-139986-1
7/21/2026 10:13 AM
8/7/2026

Client:
Town of Morristown, VT

Bill To:
MORRISTOWN TOWN (LAMOILLE
COUNTY), VERMONT

SALESPERSON	Phone	EMAIL	DELIVERY METHOD	PAYMENT METHOD
Kevin Hyde		kevin.hyde@civicplus.com		Net 30

Discount(s)

QTY	PRODUCT NAME	DESCRIPTION
1.00	NextRequest Year 1 Annual Fee Discount	Year 1 Annual Fee Discount

One-time(s)

QTY	PRODUCT NAME	DESCRIPTION
1.00	NextRequest PT Standard Implementation	Standard Implementation (Virtual Only): Admin Users: 1 Kickoff Call, 1 Admin Training. Staff Users have Access to a monthly webinar for general training and questions

Recurring Service(s)

QTY	PRODUCT NAME	DESCRIPTION
1.00	NextRequest PT Standard Plan	NextRequest Standard Plan for local agencies; Unlimited Staff Users, Up to 10 Admin-Publisher Users, Up to 2TB Storage. Core Features: Review & Redaction Features, Payments, IT & Compliance Features

List Price - Initial Term Total	USD 10,998.00
Total Investment - Initial Term	USD 8,623.50
Annual Recurring Services (Subject to Uplift)	USD 9,498.00

Initial Term	8/4/2026 - 8/3/2027, Renewal Term 8/4 each calendar year
Initial Term Invoice Schedule	100% Invoiced upon Signature Date

Renewal Procedure	Automatic 1 year renewal term, unless 60 days notice provided prior to renewal date
Annual Uplift	5% to be applied in year 2

This Statement of Work ("SOW") shall be subject to the terms and conditions of the CivicPlus Master Services Agreement and the applicable Solution and Services terms and conditions located at <https://www.civicplus.help/hc/en-us/p/legal-stuff> (collectively, the "Binding Terms"). By signing this SOW, Client expressly agrees to the terms and conditions of the Binding Terms throughout the term of this SOW.

Please note that this document is a SOW and not an invoice. Upon signing and submitting this SOW, Client will receive the applicable invoice according to the terms of the invoicing schedule outlined herein.

Client may issue purchase orders for its internal, administrative use only, and not to impose any contractual terms. Any terms contained in any such purchase orders issued by the Client are considered null and will not alter the Binding Terms, the Agreement or this SOW.

Acceptance of Quote # Q-139986-1

The undersigned acknowledges having read, understood, and agreed to be bound by the binding terms and conditions incorporated into this SOW. This SOW shall become effective as of the date of the last signature below ("Effective Date").

For CivicPlus Billing Information, please visit <https://www.civicplus.com/verify/>

Authorized Client Signature

CivicPlus

By (please sign):

By (please sign):

Printed Name:

Printed Name:

Title:

Title:

Date:

Date:

Organization Legal Name:

Billing Contact:

Title:

Billing Phone Number:

Billing Email:

Billing Address:

Mailing Address: (If different from above)

PO Number: (Info needed on Invoice (PO or Job#) if required)

TOWN OF MORRISTOWN AND VILLAGE OF MORRISVILLE
INTERIM ZONING BYLAW
MORATORIUM ON DATA CENTERS
DRAFT — August, 3, 2026

1. PURPOSE

This Interim Zoning Bylaw is adopted to provide the Town of Morristown and the Village of Morrisville (“Town” and “Village,” respectively) sufficient time to conduct and complete studies to determine what, if any, amendments may be needed to the 2026 Town and Village Zoning and Subdivision Bylaws (the “Bylaws”) to address the land use impacts associated with AI and Crypto Data Centers, before any zoning permit application for such use is filed. The rapid growth of artificial intelligence has created unprecedented demand for large-scale data centers throughout North America. Although the Town and Village presently have no pending application for such a facility, the Vermont Legislature, neighboring municipalities, and other states have begun evaluating, or have adopted, standards or moratoria to mitigate the land use impacts from such facilities. The purposes of this Interim Zoning Bylaw are to:

- (1) protect existing residential neighborhoods, commercial uses, and municipal facilities from the impacts of a Data Center project without adequate performance standards in place;
- (2) preserve the Town’s and Village’s ability to coordinate land use planning with Morrisville Water and Light’s (“MWL”) electric and water utility capacity;
- (3) prevent the zoning approval of a Data Center project under existing standards that do not adequately address power/electricity demand, water consumption, wastewater discharge, noise, traffic, and other impacts to the public health, safety and welfare; and
- (4) provide the Planning Commission and Selectboard sufficient time to develop permanent zoning standards applicable to Data Center projects while preserving flexibility for future economic development.

This Interim Zoning Bylaw is not intended to prohibit all development permanently, but rather to ensure that appropriate regulations are in place before a Data Center project is proposed.

2. AREA AFFECTED

This Interim Zoning Bylaw affects all lands and zoning districts within the Town of Morristown and the Village of Morrisville.

3. LIMITATIONS ON LAND DEVELOPMENT

- A. Prohibited Uses. During the effective term of this Interim Zoning Bylaw, the Town and Village shall not accept, review, or approve any application proposing the siting, construction, or expansion of a Data Center, as defined in Section 4 below, regardless of how such use may be proposed or categorized under the existing Bylaws. In other words, in an area subject to the existing Bylaws, all Data Center uses are prohibited.
- B. Exceptions. This Interim Zoning Bylaw shall not apply to:
 - (1) a conventional, small-scale data center that is necessary for the administrative or operational support of an existing business, hospital, school, municipal service, or residence; or
 - (2) a facility that has obtained complete local permits before the effective date of this Interim Zoning Bylaw.
- C. No Waivers or Modifications. There shall be no approval of a waiver, modification, variance, or conditional use permit that would authorize a use prohibited under Section 3(A).

4. DEFINITIONS

Words specifically defined in the existing Bylaws shall have the same meaning in this Interim Zoning Bylaw unless another meaning is clearly indicated below.

Data Center: A facility used for the storage, management, processing, and/or transmission of digital data, including for data processing, machine learning, model training, hosting or operating artificial intelligence models, AI computational processing, or validating blockchain transactions, generating digital assets, or proof-of-work processing, that typically contains computers, network equipment, systems, servers, appliances, and other accessory components necessary for such operations, whether operated by a single entity for its own primary use or for the shared use of entities engaged in other primary uses.

All data center structures on a property, or within one-half-mile of any point on a property on which a Data Center is or is proposed to be located, shall be aggregated to calculate the total scale of the use. A facility shall be defined as a Data Center subject to this Interim Zoning Bylaw if it meets the above definition and one or more of the following criteria: (i) is capable of consuming 10 or more megawatts of electric power; (ii) is larger than 5,000 square feet; (iii) uses 57,600 gallons or more per day (40 gallons per minute) of surface or ground water; (iv) contains PFAS in amounts over 10 parts per trillion in its wastewater discharge; (v) creates 10 acres or more of impervious surface; (vi) emits 70 decibels Lmax or more of persistent

noise audible to adjacent properties; and/or (vii) otherwise strains community resources during construction.

5. EFFECT OF EXISTING REGULATIONS

Except as otherwise provided herein, this Interim Zoning Bylaw shall not repeal or alter any existing ordinances, regulations, or bylaws of the Town of Morristown or the Village of Morrisville. The restrictions established in this Interim Zoning Bylaw are in addition to those contained in any other Town or Village ordinances, bylaws, or regulations.

6. SEVERABILITY

If any provision of this Interim Zoning Bylaw is deemed by a court of competent jurisdiction to be unconstitutional, invalid or unenforceable, that provision shall be severed from the Interim Zoning Bylaw and the remaining provisions that can be given effect without the severed provision shall continue in effect.

7. ENACTMENT PROVISIONS

This Interim Zoning Bylaw is enacted pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 4415, shall be administered in the manner provided in said section, and shall be effective upon passage for a period of two (2) years. It may be extended for one additional one-year period beyond the initial two-year term in accordance with the procedures for adoption set forth in 24 V.S.A. § 4415.

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 2026.

SELECTBOARD OF THE TOWN OF MORRISTOWN

By: _____
Don McDowell, Chair

By: _____
Richard Craig

By: _____
George Cormier

By: _____
Leah Hollenberger

By: _____
Rose Belanger

Morristown / Morrisville Data Center Moratorium

Consideration for a Temporary Two-Year Moratorium

The rapid growth of artificial intelligence has created unprecedented demand for large-scale data centers throughout North America. Although Vermont presently has no major AI data centers, both the Vermont Legislature and several municipalities have begun evaluating how such facilities should be regulated before development proposals arise.

Royalton voters recently approved a 5-year moratorium on the siting and construction of AI and Crypto Data Centers or any single commercial or industrial project that is considered High Impact Use. The State Legislature, with great bipartisan support, spent much of the 2026 session considering statewide standards for large data centers consuming 20 MW or more. South Burlington updated their bylaws to address Data Centers with a tiered land-use approach. New York State just passed a state-wide moratorium. These actions and discussions reflect a common theme: communities should have the opportunity to develop thoughtful regulations before development proposals arise.

Morristown / Morrisville are now considering whether a similar temporary planning measure would be appropriate.

Likelihood of Data Center Development in Morristown Morrisville

At present, Morristown appears unlikely to become a preferred location for a hyperscale AI data center.

Several factors reduce their attractiveness:

- Morrisville Water & Light (MWL) currently serves a system annual peak demand of approximately **10 MW**, meaning a single 20 MW facility would exceed the community's existing electric system peak.
- MWL's electric system is supplied through a **34.5 kV sub transmission system**, which would likely require significant upgrades before serving very large industrial loads.
- Retail electric rates of approximately **\$0.20 per kWh** are above those found in many regions actively recruiting data centers.

Conversely, several factors could improve Morristown's attractiveness over time:

- ISO New England transmission improvements are expected to increase transfer capability into northern Vermont by approximately **55 MW**, potentially making additional electric capacity available. Other Vermont based enhancements are also in the works.

- MWL's water system possesses a reliable aquifer with substantial unused capacity and has historically not encountered maximum production limitations, reducing one of the infrastructure constraints commonly faced by large data center developments.
- Vermont's cool climate can reduce cooling costs compared to many competing regions.

Overall, while Morristown is not presently among the state's most likely locations for a major AI data center, future electric infrastructure improvements could alter that assessment.

Capacity Versus Capability

As Morristown and Morrisville evaluate future development, it is important to distinguish between **regional transmission capacity** and **local utility capability**.

The anticipated ISO New England transmission upgrades may increase the amount of electricity that can be delivered into northern Vermont. However, the existence of additional regional transmission capacity does not necessarily mean that MWL's local electric system is capable of serving a very large new customer.

Serving a 20 MW or larger data center could require substantial investments in local substations, sub transmission facilities, distribution infrastructure, protection systems, and system redundancy. Determining whether such improvements are technically feasible, economically justified, and consistent with MWL's long-term planning requires detailed engineering analysis.

Accordingly, regional transmission improvements should not be viewed as eliminating the need for careful local planning.

Concerns About High Impact Use Facilities/Data Centers

Environmental and community impacts related to power demand, cooling, local noise, and economic and community impact are the key concerns.

Energy Consumption

- **Power Draw:** Data Centers operate 24/7 at high density, potentially straining regional capacity. A 10 MW data center consumes as much energy as 8,000 average homes.
- **Emissions:** Depending on the local energy mix, the ongoing draw can significantly contribute to regional carbon emissions.
- **Increased Utility Costs for Residents:** Customers served by RTOs in other regions have experienced substantial increases in electric rates from peak capacity costs for existing and planned data centers. Communities may require “causer pays,” where the developer bears full cost of infrastructure required solely to serve their project. It should be noted that some Data Centers independently purchase their own source of electricity. In this instance, a local Data Center would compete wholesale with MWL to purchase power, be it solar, wind, hydro, and/or fossil fuel power, which may result in increased costs for retail customers due to scarcity.

Water Consumption

- **Cooling Needs:** Data centers use significant volumes of water for cooling to maintain optimal server temperatures. In response, some data centers are introducing a closed-loop cooling system. The first loop is closed, but the second loop - the heat exchanger loop - is not. These may slightly reduce direct water consumption, but they use more electricity and require regular use of toxic chemicals (antifreeze, nitrates, PFAS and others) that present corrosion, leak and waste-water concerns.
- **Waste Water/Chemical Runoff:** Water that is warm/heated from the cooling needs may be discharged, negatively affecting local waterways. Wastewater may also have PFAS or other toxic chemicals from the cooling system.
- **Local Impact:** The needed water capacity may affect municipal water supplies during drought or times of other emergency use.

Environmental & Noise Pollution

- **The Hum:** Cooling fans and HVAC systems run continuously, resulting in an ever present industrial-level drone.
- **Backup Generators:** Data Centers rely on backup diesel or propane generators during grid outages or testing. In some areas of the country, generators are commonly used due to the limited capacity of the power grid. These generators contribute to noise pollution and may also affect air quality with particulate matter and nitrogen oxides.
- **Heat:** Large facilities exhaust significant heat.

Community Concerns

- **Aesthetics & Traffic:** These facilities look like a series of large warehouses placed across a large lot. Substantial construction needs may strain the community.
- **Quality of Life:** People living near these large projects have documented a reduction in the quality of life due to the factors listed above.

Economic Impact

- **Jobs:** Substantial construction is required at first, and then minimal labor is involved.
- **Financial Instability:** Economists, financial analysts and tech-industry observers are questioning if the AI Industry and the Data Center boom is sustainable. Technology companies have issued historic amounts of debt, yet there is not a viable business model. What would happen if the data center developer and/or its client goes bankrupt?

Reasons for Supporting a Temporary Moratorium

A temporary moratorium would provide the Town & Village with sufficient time to:

- Evaluate whether existing zoning adequately addresses High Impact Use and Data Center concerns
- Develop performance standards for noise, lighting, emergency power generation, water consumption, waste water, visual impacts, traffic, and security.
- Coordinate land use planning with MWL's electric and water utility planning.
- Assess potential impacts on electric utility operations, rates, and long-term system planning.
- Give the industry time to shake out; if the AI bubble implodes, the town/village will not be injured.
- Ensure that future development is compatible with community goals.

Importantly, the purpose is not to prohibit development permanently but rather to ensure that appropriate regulations are in place.

Recommendation: Interim Bylaw for Moratorium on High Impact Use Projects including AI and/or Crypto Data Centers

Transmission improvements, changing economics, and rapidly evolving technology make it reasonable for the town to plan proactively rather than react after a proposal has been submitted. Accordingly, a 2-year moratorium limited to high impact projects such as new data centers with anticipated electric demands of 20 MW or greater represents a balanced and measured approach. It would provide sufficient time to develop permanent zoning standards while preserving flexibility for future economic development.

Proposed Interim Bylaw:

Section1: Purpose & Scope

Intent: Morristown//Morrisville shall adopt an Interim Bylaw, imposing a temporary moratorium during which time the Town and Village shall not accept or approve applications for the siting or construction or expansion of any single high-impact commercial or industrial project or Business Service including AI and/or Crypto Data Centers in order to protect the town's/village's public health, safety, and general welfare and provide for orderly physical and economic growth.

Per 24 V.S.A. Section 4415 (a) (f), this interim bylaw shall be limited in duration to two years

from the date it becomes effective and may be extended for a one-year period beyond the initial two-year period in accordance with the procedures for adoption.

This temporary moratorium is adopted to provide the Town and Village adequate time to evaluate infrastructure impacts, MWL utility capacity and capability, renewable energy compliance, emergency services, land use compatibility, and appropriate zoning standards applicable to moderate to large data centers and/or high impact use projects.

A copy of the adopted interim bylaw shall be sent to adjoining towns, to the Lamoille County Planning Commission, and to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development per 24 V.S.A. Section 4415 (g).

Section 2: Definitions

Data Center: A facility used for storage, management, processing and/or transmission of digital data that typically contains computers, network equipment, systems, servers, appliances, and other accessory components necessary for digital data operations and or storage systems operated by a single entity for data processing or machine learning or model training or hosting artificial intelligence models or AI computational processing as the primary use or for the shared use of entities engaged in other primary uses for their data center uses. All data center structures on a site shall be aggregated to calculate the total scale of the use. The facility will consume 20 or more megawatts of electric power and shall be defined as High Impact Use.

Crypto Data Center: A facility or commercial operation utilizing specialized computers or server farms to solve complex mathematical algorithms for the purpose of validating block chain transactions, generating digital assets, or proof-of-work processing. The facility will consume 20 or more megawatts of electric power and shall be defined as High Impact Use.

High Impact Use: A single commercial or industrial project or Business Service that consumes 20 or more megawatts of electric power, or uses 57,600 gallons or more per day (40 gallons per minute) of surface or ground water, or contains PFAS in its waste water discharge, or creates 20 acres or more of impervious surface, or emits 70 decibels or more of persistent noise audible to adjacent properties, or creates less than 10 permanent, onsite jobs per every acre of impervious surface, and/or strains community resources during construction.

Section 3: Prohibited Uses

During this moratorium, high-impact commercial or industrial projects or Business Services including AI and/or Crypto Data Centers are expressly prohibited in all zoning districts within the Town and Village, whether as a principal use, accessory use, or conditional use.

Section 4: Exceptions

This moratorium shall not apply to:

1. Conventional, small-scale local data centers necessary for administrative or operational

support of existing standard businesses (using less than 10 MW), hospitals, schools, municipal services, or residences.

2. Facilities already possessing complete local permits before the moratorium's effective date.

Section 5: Planning Considerations

During this moratorium, the Morristown Planning Commission shall develop permanent zoning standards for high impact use projects and Business Services including Data Centers using 20 or more megawatts, preserving flexibility for future economic development. Any future proposal should be evaluated under six guiding principles:

1. Growth shall be planned rather than reactive
2. Developers shall bear the full cost of infrastructure required solely to serve their projects, consistent with Morrisville Water and Light's "causer pays" policy.
3. Projects must demonstrate compatibility with Vermont's Renewable Energy Standard, Clear Energy Standard, and MWL's long-term resource planning obligations including achieving 100 percent renewable electricity by 2035.
4. Major developments shall proceed only after independent technical studies demonstrate that local infrastructure can accommodate the project without adversely affecting existing utility customers or imposing unreasonable costs on the community
5. The project shall not negatively affect the town's/village's public health, safety, and general welfare; be free of environmental concerns; and provide for orderly physical and economic growth.
6. Information collected during the application process does not constitute sensitive information and cannot be redacted or exempted from public disclosure. The name of all companies involved in the project (including developer, shell companies, data center operators and/or end users, and financiers) shall be disclosed. Special-purpose entity, subsidiaries, shell companies, and/or a third party may not be used to provide anonymous information. Documents, including digital copies must be provided for public review.

Independent Impact Studies

Prior to the acceptance of any application following expiration of the moratorium, the Town shall require applicants for high impact use projects including Data Centers to fund independent studies evaluating the impacts of the proposed development items such as:

Noise study and mitigation

Projected and actual energy usage and mitigation; MWL's electric utility

On-site energy emissions

Projected and actual water usage and mitigation; MWL's water utility

Wastewater infrastructure; water and cooling controls

Noise study and mitigation

Jobs (short-term and permanent, hiring efforts, permanent employee wages)

Transportation and traffic

Emergency Services and Public Safety

Decommissioning and Financial Assurance

These studies shall be performed by qualified independent consultants acceptable to both the Town and MWL, with all costs borne by the applicant. This approach ensures that local taxpayers and utility ratepayers are not required to finance the evaluation of unusually complex developments whose impacts extend well beyond traditional land use consideration.

Section 6: Public Process

The Selectboard shall review and discuss language for a potential interim bylaw during a regular Selectboard meeting following open meeting policy on Monday, August 3, 2025.

The Selectboard shall then hold a Public Hearing on August 24, 2026, to determine if the Town/Village shall pursue an Interim Bylaw for a Moratorium on High impact use including AI and Crypto Data Centers. The hearing shall be warned at least 15 days in advance. The notice shall clearly state the purpose of the hearing, where the text can be reviewed and exactly how the public can participate (in-person and remote options). Meeting minutes shall be taken, recorded, and made available to the public within 5 calendar days of the meeting.

Drafts and the Selectboard's written report shall be available to the public upon request.

Once adopted the town will file the bylaw with the Lamoille County Planning Commission.