

For the Week of March 30, 2020

Manager's Message

Aaron Frank, Town Manager

Town Updates

As of March 29th, according to the Vermont Department of Health, there were 117 positive COVID-19 cases in Chittenden County. Colchester's population is about 11% of the county total. Only those with symptoms are being tested and many people have no symptoms or mild symptoms.

The CDC web page indicates that nationally, most cases are due to close contact vs. travel. CDC also lists community transmission in Vermont as occurring in "defined area(s)". So, it is important for everyone to take hand washing, social distancing, and work restrictions seriously to reduce and slow the speed of the spread of the virus.

Colchester Rescue is our primary emergency service in this emergency. They are supported by Fire, Police, and Emergency Management, along with Town staff in other areas.

Rescue morale is good. Helping people is what they do. At this time Rescue is showing up to all calls in full protective equipment, which includes masks, gloves, and gowns. We have engineering and administrative policies in place to maximize our supply of protective equipment and available staff during this emergency. We continue to provide the staffing necessary to respond; generally Fire and Police will not respond to rescue calls when Rescue is present. I'm incredibly proud of our career and volunteer Colchester Rescue squad.

Generosity is especially important in trying times. *Colchester Helping Colchester (CHC)*, a new peer-to-peer effort connects those in need of non-emergency assistance with those who can volunteer. The Colchester community helps those in need. We currently have 40 volunteers ready to help those in need of assistance. In this time of social distancing *CHC* can help to bring us together

Colchester Helping Colchester is a locally-developed assistance tool that was donated to our community by resident Sergei Serdyuk of RedLeaf Software. Thank you, Sergei, and all who are volunteering with *CHC*. To register for assistance or to volunteer visit <https://colchesterhelping.colchestervt.us/>

GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT'S "STAY HOME, STAY SAFE" ORDER

Governor Phil Scott issued a "Stay Home, Stay Safe" order on March 24, 2020 and directed the closure of in-person operations for all non-essential businesses to take

For further information or comment, please call Linda Gustainis at 802.264.5509

effect on March 25, 2020. When leaving home, Vermonters should adhere to social distancing policies, including remaining six feet from others (except for those with whom they share a home) and thoroughly and regularly washing hands.

These restrictive measures are in place to slow the spread of the Coronavirus and protect the public. These actions were implemented in consultation with the Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Health and his evaluation of the latest data.

The Stay Home, Stay Safe order will be in effect until April 15, 2020 and is available here:

<https://governor.vermont.gov/sites/scott/files/documents/ADDENDUM%206%20TO%20EXECUTIVE%20ORDER%2001-20.pdf>

Cooperate with these restrictions to help slow and contain the spread of the virus!

For the latest information and guidance relating to Vermont's COVID-19 response, visit <http://www.healthvermont.gov/covid19>.

Planning and Zoning Department
Sarah Hadd, Director

The Colchester Planning and Zoning Department is open, however we have modified services due to COVID19. The majority of our services are available on our website at colchestervt.gov (select Planning & Zoning under Town Services).

These online services include applying for and receiving permits, guides for frequently asked questions, and all of our property records. The “Apply for a Permit” tab will walk you through the application process. It can be found directly here: <https://tinyurl.com/ColchesterPermit>. Using the “Buying and Selling Property” option, you can find our “PZ Online Records Search”. This search includes information on all permits issued or applied for on Colchester properties. The “Buying and Selling Property” option also provides a link to the Assessor’s interactive map that includes zoning classification. Deed research in the Clerks Office is linked here including property tax information. A Certificate of Compliance for real estate closings is also available here.

Inspection requests and complaints can also be submitted through our website. Per the Governor’s Executive Order addendum of March 24th, construction at this time is to be limited to repairs for safety and health purposes, and very limited essential construction. All contractors are expected to comply with this Order and those that do not may have permits revoked. Due to current circumstances, inspections are being limited and are prioritized based upon safety and time sensitivity.

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Our Development Review Board and Planning Commission have cancelled meetings through April, deferring work to their May agendas. We are confident these May meetings will occur either in person or electronically. Agendas for our upcoming meetings will continue to be posted on our website. If you wish to attend one of these meetings, please email us at pzinfo@colchestervt.gov and we will confirm the time and location of the meetings with you as the dates approach.

While our staff is working remotely, we are monitoring phones and emails. A directory of our staff is available at: <https://colchestervt.gov/150/Planning-Zoning>. We are processing permits, Board applications, and all other requests, however, we ask for your help. Permits and other applications submitted online through the “Apply for Permit” portion of the website can be entirely processed and paid for online. Permits and applications mailed in will need to be paid for by check and will experience lags in processing. We are unable to accept cash at this time. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with general questions at (802) 264-5606 or email us at pzinfo@colchestervt.gov. We look forward to continuing to serve you.

NOTICE: Be careful what you flush!

Paper towels and facial tissues are designed to not disintegrate when wet. Even “flushable” wipes do not break down after flushing. **The only paper that is safe to flush is toilet paper**, whether you have a septic tank or are on a sewer line. For a guidance brochure see <https://bit.ly/Can-I-flush-it> (PDF).

Upcoming Town Meetings:

In compliance with the Stay Home, Stay Safe order issued by Governor Phil Scott, most Town boards and commissions meetings are cancelled. Selectboard meetings will be held remotely.

- **Planning Commission:** 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of the month, 7:00pm. Next Meeting: **Cancelled**
- **Development Review Board:** 2nd Wednesday of the month, 7:00pm. Next meeting: **Cancelled**
- **Recreation Advisory Board:** 2nd Wednesday of the month, 7:00am, Champlain Room, 2nd floor. Next meeting: **Cancelled**
- **Conservation Commission:** 3rd Monday of the month, 7:00pm, at the Bayside Activity Center or per agenda. **TBA**
- **Library Board of Trustees:** 3rd Thursday of the month, 4:30 PM at Burnham Library. Next meeting: **TBA**
- **Selectboard:** 2nd & 4th Tuesday of the month, 6:30pm. Next meeting: Special Meeting on 3/31. Next regular meeting: 4/14



Colchester Town News

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