Volume 5, Issue 10 October 29, 2026

WHEELOCK NEWS

Wheelock Community Initiative on the Web: https://wheelockcmty.org/ and on Facebook!
Email: wheelockcmty@gmail.com Phone: 802-626-3109, leave message



Meeting notices are on the Town Hall message boards and the town website at:

https://bit.ly/4vMBRPv

You can also join **Selectboard and Planning Commission meetings by phone or via the Internet.**

The agenda for each meeting lists **unique** phone numbers, Zoom links, meeting IDs, and passcodes

ELECTION DAY

Tuesday November 3

Wheelock Town Hall

Polls Open 10 AM - 7 PM

The Town Office will be closed. The Selectboard meeting has been moved to Thursday Nov. 5

PLANNING COMMISSION

Wed. Nov. 4 8:30 AM

Wheelock Town Hall

Meeting agenda & minutes at:

https://townofwheelockvt.org/meetings/

SELECTBOARD MEETINGS

THURSDAY NOV. 5
& TUESDAY NOV. 17
@ 6:00 PM

to attend these meetings remotely see the link at the top of this column

SHEFFIELD FOOD PANTRY

November Open One Day - 11/9
December Open One Day - 12/9
11:30-2:30

Sheffield Town Hall
For emergency food shelf call 802-397-4929

Selectboard News and Notes



Selectboard:
Ann Lawless, Chair
Mike Richardson
Chuck Dill

Similar to fall chores around your property, many of the Selectboard's recent activities have been in preparation for the winter ahead. And some of those projects are supported by grants, so they involve an array of administrative requirements for each.

MERP (*Municipal Energy Resilience Program - Vermont*) funding is for weatherization and projects to reduce energy use and operating costs for municipal buildings. A timely assist as utility costs are projected to be at record high levels this winter. The program supports the current work on the electrical systems, doors, and windows. A portion of these funds are also being used for addressing various ADA-access issues at Town Hall.



The grant funding is getting a boost from the **free labor** provided by St. Johnsbury Academy students for the electrical work.

Before replacing sheetrock removed for the project, a Robert Sincerbeaux Fund grant *(for historic preservation projects managed by the Preservation Trust of Vermont)* provided funding for a local master timber framer who assessed the Town Hall timbers and confirmed nothing needed to be fixed.

Late Season Road Projects

Grant-funded projects through **FEMA** *(Federal Emergency Management Agency)* have been challenging with approval and funding delays. The planned embankment work on Boulay (*$87,300*) and S. Wheelock (*$120,000*) with engineering management costs (*up to $30,000*) have received preliminary approval. The project on the South Wheelock Road is set to begin on Nov. 1 and is expected to last two weeks.

The federal **HSIP** *(Highway Safety Improvement Program)* is funding a project that will begin soon to replace guardrails at several locations along various town roads. In a separate project the Wheelock road crew will trim or remove some roadway trees for better visibility and to improve safety.



Welcome to **Joe Gilbert!** Joe lives in Brownington and starts his position in November as a member of the town road crew.

Cemetery Taskforce Ends Another Good Year



Thanks to many Wheelock supporters, the Taskforce volunteers made great progress this summer towards the restoration of our cemeteries: **Shane Lanpher** for supplying water in the Village Cemetery; **Chris Rossi** for gate posts; **Rita and the late Peter Martin** for their generous plant donations and weed-wacker repair. **The volunteers reset 25 stones and cleaned over 500!**



Town Clerk/Treasurer: Erin Swigart
Tues., Wed., Thurs. 8:00 am -3:00 pm
Email: wheelocktown@gmail.com Phone: 802-626-9094
P.O. Box 1328, 1192 Route 122, Wheelock VT 05851

📖 GOT HISTORY? 📖

There's no time like the present
to learn more about Wheelock's past.

If I Can Get Home This Fall

This column is taking a little break from Wheelock's history to focus on a chapter in our nation's history that had a profound effect on our town and the entire Northeast Kingdom.

At times it seems that the legacy of the Civil War continues to this day. We discuss and often disagree about the causes and the outcomes of the war. The divisions that ignited the conflict had a lasting effect on our national unity for decades after it.

Tyler Alexander is a social studies and history teacher at Champlain Valley Union High School (he and his wife, Aimee, were formerly teachers at North Country). He is the author of an excellent new Civil War history ***If I Can Get Home This Fall*** told through a series of letters that Dan Mason wrote to his fiancee/wife Harriet Clark who lived in his hometown of Glover.

His letters, plus the many other sources Alexander researched at the **Vermont Historical Society,** paint an intimate picture of what it was like to live through that period, both on the battlefield and the home front. Other soldiers' journals, local and national newspaper articles, and war time military records provide additional background and details.



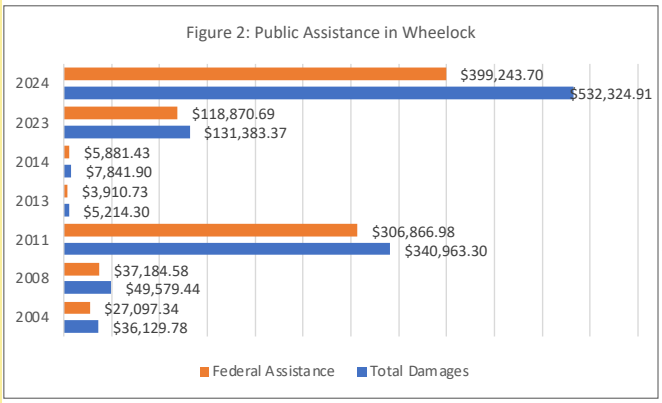
Sergeant Dan Mason, 6th Vermont Infantry, January 1864. Glover, VT Historical Society

Dan Mason is buried in **Westlook Cemetery in Glover.** His gravestone records all the battles he fought in during his four years of service. There are other Civil War soldiers buried there, and Alexander's own grandfather and father.

Planning Commission Update



Commission volunteer, Kim Crady-Smith and NVDA'a Alison Low and Sophie Phelan are pulling together a wide range of materials to write a first draft of our new town plan.



Given our town's recent experiences with flood damage, the plan will have a section addressing flooding and climate resilience.

This chart illustrates the extraordinary cost of the damage to our roads, bridges, and culverts from these flooding events. Federal assistance falls short of the total cost of the damages, which affects local taxes.

NVDA Completes a Draft NEK Regional Plan

The NEK regional plan provides a shared framework for guiding future land use, development, infrastructure, housing, economic development, and community resilience across Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans counties. It also influences each town's planning efforts.

The **2026 draft plan** considers our region's challenges and opportunities and establishes goals, policies, and strategies to help communities plan for the future. The Future Land Use Map provides a framework for land use, but **does not establish** zoning or local development regulations. The NVDA board recently approved the draft plan, which will be forwarded to the state **LURB (Land Use Review Board)** as requited by Vermont law.

Note: *Steve Amos and Eileen Boland represent Wheelock on the NVDA board.*

The NEKCV BEAD Grant Update

*The **Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD)** is a $42.45 billion federal grant designed to expand high-speed internet to unserved and underserved communities.*

After almost 2 years of delays, NEKCV was finally able to sign a contract for $94 million of funding to develop "the last miles" of high speed internet for our region. (The initial grant of $120 million kept getting reduced by the current administration.) These funds were expected to be in hand at the start of 2026, so it has delayed bringing service to some 3200 locations until 2027-2028. It is not the only grant funding for the project, so installations continue, sometimes, however, locations on the same road will be eligible for service at different times due to the grant that supports each address.

An important goal for the project is **affordability**: the basic service is $59 a month, but eligible low-income households (200% of poverty) can qualify for a $30 @mo. discount. For a limited time, the costs for all underground conduit and long distance fiber line are covered. Stay up-to-date on when service is available in your area at **https://get.nekbroadband.org/**. Entering your contact information at the website does not oblige you to take the service, but it does keep you informed about the progress.

Note: *Eileen Boland and David Stahler represent Wheelock on the NEKCV board.*