

Town of Vienna Business Liaison Committee

Draft Meeting Minutes | Thursday, April 9, 2026 | Charles Robinson Jr. Town Hall

Present

Jen Morrow; Tracy McCarty; Brenda Burns; Bill Commerford; Preeti Pinati; Nash Cook; Nicole Toulouse (staff)

Absent

Najee Davis; Greg Bernard

1. Roll Call

The Chair called the April TBLC meeting to order and conducted roll call.

2. Communication from Citizens and/or Commissioners

The Chair opened the floor for citizen communications. Comments included the following:

- Mala of Trace Zero Waste shared updates on a sustainability initiative highlighting environmentally friendly practices by Vienna businesses and encouraged greater community engagement with those efforts.
- Cathy of the Vienna Business Association shared updates on new businesses in Town and raised interest in revisiting outdoor seating to support local businesses.

3. Public Hearings

None.

4. Regular Business

Commercial Outdoor Lighting

The Committee received a presentation from Town Staff's Planning and Zoning and Board of Architectural Review Representatives on proposed outdoor lighting regulations and design standards. Discussion included shielding, sign lighting, curfews, enforcement, and possible impacts on businesses and commercial corridors.

- Members expressed concern about the proposed nighttime lighting curfew, noting that it could make business areas appear closed, reduce visibility for businesses, and create an unwelcome atmosphere along commercial corridors.
- Members also discussed the role lighting plays in branding, safety, and wayfinding, and raised concerns about inconsistent appearance across the business district.
- The committee expressed support for alternatives such as improved shielding and incentive-based approaches to reduce light pollution without negatively affecting local businesses.
- The committee also discussed the need for a future conversation about the role of the Board of Architectural Review and how design expectations are communicated to applicants, with interest in making the process clearer and more business friendly.

Committee members Brenda Burns and Bill Commerford will work with staff to draft feedback on proposed lighting curfew and related business concerns.

5. Department Updates

Staff announced the hiring of a new Marketing and Programs Specialist and provided updates on several development, leasing, and sales activities in Town, including the 444 Maple West project and other notable commercial properties.

- Staff also reviewed updates to the Comprehensive Plan draft and discussed possible changes to commercial water and sewer rate structures affecting high-volume users.
- Members noted the need for clearer information before taking a position.
- The committee discussed plans for a home-based business roundtable during Economic Development Week, including outreach language, meeting format, and scheduling.
- The committee agreed to move its next meeting from May 14 to May 7 to avoid conflict with the Vienna Economic Summit.

5. Chair Updates

Chair Jen Morrow reported on a recent follow-up meeting regarding ViVa Vienna involving Rotary, Parks and Recreation, Economic Development, and Church Street-area businesses.

- She noted that the discussion was more constructive than previous conversations and helped clarify roles, responsibilities, and next steps.
- Discussion included communication with affected businesses, event-day coordination, trash cleanup, barricades, parking, and outreach to property owners and tenants.
- She also noted that while some concerns remain, the conversation was a positive step and several practical improvements are being considered.

The Chair also reminded members about the Mayor’s Volunteer Reception, noting that award recipients had been notified and were excited to attend.

She added that the committee may use the summer months to begin scheduling outreach meetings with Council.

6. Approval of Minutes

No minutes were available for approval.

Action Items / Follow-Up

Lead	Follow-Up Item
Staff	Will continue planning home-based business roundtable and refine outreach language and event details.

Brenda Burns and Bill Commerford

Will work with staff to draft feedback on proposed lighting curfew and related business concerns

Committee

Revisit Comprehensive Plan comments at a future meeting.

6. Adjournment