

**For the Week of October 26, 2026**

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**Manager's Message**

**Aaron Frank, Town Manager**

**Happy Halloween! A few reminders:**

Please remember to drive cautiously and be especially alert during the evening hours on Halloween as there may be more foot traffic on the roads, at intersections, and on medians or curbs as folks partake in trick or treating.



Be safe and have fun!

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**Town Clerk's Office – November Election and Voter Information**

The November General Election Absentee/Early Ballots were mailed out October 1st to all Colchester registered voters.

The address in the registration system as of September 5th is where your ballot is going.

Completed ballots can be:

1. Brought to the Town Clerk's office by noon, November 2, 2026.
2. Dropped off in our Green Drive-up Box between Town Hall and Police Department buildings, by 4:30 p.m., November 2, 2026.
3. Brought to the Colchester High School gym on Election Day, November 3, 2026, and deposited in the drop box at the HELP DESK.

The Town Clerk's Office will close at noon on Monday, November 2, 2026.

Please don't hesitate to contact the Town Clerk's Office with any questions. We can be reached at [townclerk@colchestervt.gov](mailto:townclerk@colchestervt.gov) or 802-264-5521.



### **Apply to Serve on a Town Board:**

The Town of Colchester is looking for interested residents to serve on the volunteer Development Review Board!

Town planning helps provide a framework for private sector development to balance the needs of the natural environment that supports human life and the developed areas where we live, work, learn, shop and recreate. By serving on boards and commissions, or through providing public input, all residents can be meaningfully involved in the creation and administration of these regulations. Specifically, the Colchester Planning Commission develops rules about land use and zoning, and the Colchester Development Review Board evaluates development proposals using the rules the Planning Commission creates.



Both boards are supported by staff members. The work of a volunteer board member is to become familiar with the Town Plan or Development Regulations through training provided by staff, reading the board packets and attending a meeting once a month for a few hours to provide input and make decisions based on your knowledge and understanding of the community considering the information provided.

### **Currently, the Development Review Board is seeking to fill one open Adult Member Seat.**

The Development Review Board meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Offices, Outer Bay Room, 3rd floor.

The Colchester Development Review Board processes and approves:

- Commercial and Residential site plans
- Subdivision applications
- Conditional use and variance applications
- Appeals of the Zoning Administrator's determinations

**APPLY HERE:** <https://colchestervt.gov/formcenter/volunteer-forms-13/town-of-colchester-board-commission-and--67>

For more information about this open position, visit: <https://colchestervt.gov/370/Development-Review-Board> or contact Zachary Maia, Director of Planning and Zoning at [zmaia@colchestervt.gov](mailto:zmaia@colchestervt.gov)

Conservation Corner: A Seasonal Column by the Colchester Conservation Commission

### **Leave the Leaves (And Seeds and Stems)**

The best thing you can do for your yard this fall is wait to “clean up” until spring. This is not only beneficial to wildlife, but also to you! Yes, this method is a huge support for pollinators and invertebrates, but it also means less raking and bagging.

This may require a change of perspective to fight the ingrained need to perfect and “clean” your space. However, the advantages to local flora and fauna are bountiful.

A layer of leaves is immensely beneficial as a habitat for many animals that hide beneath and within the insulated soil underneath. This includes butterflies, moths, pollinators, salamanders, frogs, and more. I hope you are on the same page with me wondering where all of the lightning bugs and luna moths of our childhood went. You don’t have to look farther than the leaves you bag and dump, holding all kinds of beneficial and beautiful creatures. 94% of insect species rely on a layer of leaves to complete their lifecycle.

You may be surprised to learn that thin layers of leaves are also beneficial to grass growth. These leaves serve as a natural mulch for gardens, so if you don’t want to leave them on the grass, move them over to the beds. Imagine that, free mulch! Leaves in your garden will suppress weeds, improve soil quality, hold in moisture, insulate perennials and add nutrition.

If you’re sold on keeping the leaves where they are, please don’t shred them as you will be destroying those beneficial and beautiful insects mentioned above. We suggest using a rake or blower if you need to move the leaves. Other leaf-loving insects in your yard will eat them and break them down over time. Alternatively, you could create a leaf compost pile to allow them to break down. If you absolutely must remove the leaves from your space, please bring them to a local composting facility such as CSWD Organics Recycling Facility at 1042 Redmond Road in Williston.

The seed heads and stems in your yard serve a purpose as well. For avid birders out there, seed heads of perennial plants will feed goldfinches and other birds through the winter. The stems provide shelter for insects. Some examples of native seed heads that will feed the local bird population are Coneflower (*Echinacea*), asters, Bee balm (*Monarda*), Joe-Pye Weed (*Eutrochium*). Many of these plants also have hollow stems that small native bees prefer as habitat. We recommend leaving these stems standing so birds can access the seed heads over the snow in the winter. (Winter birding from your window without having to buy seeds, who knew?). If you absolutely cannot leave the stems up, the recommendation is to cut and leave them in the garden bed or a discrete area of your yard to still provide habitat and food.

As the insects and animals wake up in the spring, they no longer need the leaves and can find food from emerging plants. At this point, feel free to clean up the debris if necessary. However, if you put leaves in your garden bed, they can provide weed suppression through the growing season. So, leave the leaves! And happy gardening.

Additional Resources:

- <https://xerces.org/blog/leave-the-leaves>
- <https://www.uvm.edu/extension/news/designing-bird-friendly-garden>

- [Leave the Leaves to Attract Birds - The National Wildlife Federation Blog](#)
  - [Leave the Leaves to Save Fireflies! - The National Wildlife Federation Blog](#)
  - [What to do With Fallen Leaves - The National Wildlife Federation Blog](#)
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## Department Updates

### Trunk or Treat at the Burnham Memorial Library

On Saturday, October 31 from 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. the library will be hosting its annual Trunk or Treat!

There are two ways to participate in this community event:

- Register your vehicle to decorate and hand out goodies. Remember to keep your theme kid friendly - we don't want to scare anyone. Families & businesses are welcome! Please arrive early enough to have your trunk ready to go for 12:00 PM sharp! Registration is required for all trunks.
  - Last year we had over 200 kids, so please bring enough candy for everyone!
- Come dressed up and walk our parking lot and lawn to collect bags of ghoulish goodies. No need to register.

Walking begins at noon. Please park at our Lady of Grace Church.

Library staff will direct "trunks" to their parking spots.

Reach out to [burnhamlib@colchestervt.gov](mailto:burnhamlib@colchestervt.gov) with questions! We hope to see you there!



## Upcoming Town Meetings & Agendas

**Selectboard Meeting:** Tuesday, October 27, 6:15 p.m. (public portion to begin at 6:30 p.m.) at the Colchester Town Offices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road.

Residents are welcome to attend the meeting. Alternatively, send a note, up to 1,000 words, to [TownManager@colchestervt.gov](mailto:TownManager@colchestervt.gov) with “Citizens to be Heard” in the Subject and your name. As with in-person Citizens to be Heard, we ask that you SHARE YOUR ADDRESS. The email will be shared with the entire Selectboard prior to the meeting and included in the information packet at the next meeting.

- Watch the Meeting Online via Live Stream: <http://lcatv.org/live-stream-2>
- Agenda: [https://records.colchestervt.gov/Colchester-vt?docId=AGENDA&path=Colch\\_CityCouncil%2CColchester\\_BOS\\_Agendas%2CAGENDA%2C](https://records.colchestervt.gov/Colchester-vt?docId=AGENDA&path=Colch_CityCouncil%2CColchester_BOS_Agendas%2CAGENDA%2C)

**Recreation Advisory Board:** Wednesday, November 11, 7:00 a.m. at the Colchester Recreation Center, 80 Dick Mazza Drive. Agenda: [https://records.colchestervt.gov/Colchester-vt?docId=RecAdv\\_1&path=BOARDS%2CRecAdv%2CRecAdv\\_1%2C](https://records.colchestervt.gov/Colchester-vt?docId=RecAdv_1&path=BOARDS%2CRecAdv%2CRecAdv_1%2C)

**Planning Commission:** Tuesday, November 17, 7:00 p.m. at the Colchester Town Offices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road. Agenda: [https://records.colchestervt.gov/Colchester-vt?docId=PLANAGENDA&path=PLAN%2CPLAN\\_Agendas%2CPLANAGENDA%2C](https://records.colchestervt.gov/Colchester-vt?docId=PLANAGENDA&path=PLAN%2CPLAN_Agendas%2CPLANAGENDA%2C)

**Development Review Board:** Wednesday, November 18, 7:00 p.m. at the Colchester Town Offices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road. Residents are welcome to attend the meeting or public comments can be submitted prior to the hearing by email to [pzinfo@colchestervt.gov](mailto:pzinfo@colchestervt.gov) or by mail to Town of Colchester, c/o Development Review Board, 781 Blakely Road, Colchester, VT 05446. Agenda: [https://records.colchestervt.gov/Colchester-vt?docId=DRBAGENDA&path=DRB%2CDRB\\_Agendas%2CDRBAGENDA%2C](https://records.colchestervt.gov/Colchester-vt?docId=DRBAGENDA&path=DRB%2CDRB_Agendas%2CDRBAGENDA%2C)

**Library Board of Trustees:** Thursday, November 19, 4:00 p.m. at the Library Meeting House\*. Agenda: <https://records.colchestervt.gov/Colchester-vt?docId=LibBoard&path=BOARDS%2CLibBoard%2C>

\*Updated Location (830 Main Street)

**Colchester Conservation Commission:** Monday, November 16, 5:30 p.m. at the Colchester Town Offices, 2nd floor Champlain Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road. Agenda: <https://records.colchestervt.gov/Colchester-vt?docId=ConservCommssn&path=BOARDS%2CConservCommssn%2C>

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<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/zBiFlto/ColchesterTownNewsletter>

For more information or to comment, call 802-264-5509 or email [townmanager@colchestervt.gov](mailto:townmanager@colchestervt.gov)