



**Minutes for Town of Pawlet Planning Commission
Working Meeting on 2015 Town Plan Revision
Pawlet Town Office
Pawlet, VT
Monday, July 13, 2015
7:00 p.m.**

Members in Attendance:

**Gary Baierlein
Wayne Clarke
Paul Elsholz
Lenny Gibson
Eric Mach
Fred Stone**

Members Absent:

Harry Van Meter

Others in Attendance:

**Barbara Noyes Pulling, Rutland Regional Planning Commission
Elizabeth Gibson, Pawlet
Tim Hughes-Muse, Pawlet**

The purpose of this meeting was to continue the revision of the Town Plan, which needs to be completed by August 24, 2015. The following sections were discussed: Land Use, Flood Resilience, Agriculture, Transportation, Utilities and Facilities.

Barbara reviewed the revision schedule:

- August 24, Finalize Town Plan (For copies to go out 30 days before PC hearing.)
- September 28, PPC Hearing (30 days before SB hearing)
- November 20, SB Hearing (regularly scheduled meeting night)
- November 17, RRPC (regularly scheduled meeting night)

Public needs to be warned 15 days before hearings. Public comments need to be addressed within this timeline.

Note that renewal for village center designation is due December 1.

Land Use Section

This section should include both agriculture and forest industries. Agriculture should also appear in the natural resources and economic development sections.

Resources

Water – need to include mention of uses in addition to residential use, such as irrigation, commercial, etc.

The population discussion should mention village center designation for both Pawlet and West Pawlet; Barbara has language for village center designations that she will send us.

Flood Resilience Section

Eric gave Wayne new information from Hilary Solomon on flood resilience. Barbara will also send river corridor language which has been updated since the unified bylaws. Note that bylaws will also need to be modified. Flood plain overlay and river corridor overlay need to be added to Town Plan

Agriculture

Regarding the agriculture section, Fred reported on a meeting attended July 10 by himself, John Malcolm, Tim Hughes-Muse, with written input from Don Campbell of the VT Land Trust and Philip Ackerman-Leist. Fred will compile everything for the next meeting; Lenny will scan Fred's documents.

Fred emphasized that the present zoning regulations are too strict, given how agriculture is developing in terms of value-added products such as cheese-making. We need to think about processing plants, etc. Changes are coming, and unforeseen developments require more flexibility in the zoning. The main point is the need for flexibility in zoning to decide what we are going to do with different types of lands. What is marginal land, for instance? Should it be designated for housing? Lands need to be kept open so farms can expand – are those lands considered agricultural? It makes a difference if a meadow can be accessed or not – is the adjacent land open, is it marginal?

Another issue is the size of Vermont Land Trust conserved land and the impact on town acreage. Don Campbell would like guidance in the Town Plan as to how much land should be conserved. Do we want to encourage land trust activities or not? TP should encourage land trust to come forward when they first start working on a project, preserving confidentiality, to avoid last-minute requests for approval from the PPC.

How do we accommodate industrial agriculture functions, such as breweries? We need a category for these activities. What about agriculture-related industries such as processing plants, slaughterhouses – should we expand conditional agricultural uses to other zones?

Gary: we also need room for expansion of residential use.

We also need to emphasize forest-related activities.

Solar panels should go in industrial zones and not agricultural lands. The public survey shows that the Town supports open land and agriculture.

Transportation Section

Gary pointed out that the suggestions from the previous Town Plan still have not been carried out, such as cross-walks in Pawlet. We need to address those items that were recommended but not acted on. We should delete the recommendation for a traffic light at the intersection of Route 30 and Route 133.

Barbara said that Susan Schreiberman of the RRPC could help with transportation chapters. We should also mention the pedestrian safety audit that was conducted in October 2014. We should do the study that Susan Schreiberman recommended and we also need an enforcement piece for transportation.

Utilities and Facilities Section

Paul will forward draft to Lenny. Includes emergency management input from Bob Morlino.

Should mention availability of 3-phase power and also include statement about siting of solar development.

Should address the issue of emergency power in cases of long-term power failures.

We should add the Library as one of the facilities in the town or maybe under education, along with the Pawlet Scholarship Fund, Mettawee Community School, and childcare. But the Library should at least be mentioned in the utilities section.

Natural, Scenic and Historic Resources Section

Not much change since last Town Plan except VLT conservation of agricultural land.

Meeting concluded around 9:00 p.m. Next meeting is the regular monthly meeting on July 27 at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Elizabeth Gibson, Acting Clerk