



**Minutes for Town of Pawlet Planning Commission
Pawlet Town Office
Pawlet, VT
Monday, April 25, 2016
7:30 p.m.**

Members Attending:

**Paul Elsholz
Mark Frost
Melissa LaCount
Eric Mach
Harry Van Meter**

Members Absent:

**Gary Baierlein
Wayne Clarke**

Others Attending:

**John Broker-Campbell, State of Vermont, Agency of Natural Resources
Scott Jensen, State of Vermont, Agency of Natural Resources
Frank Nelson, West Pawlet
Barabara Noyes-Pulling, Rutland Regional Planning Commission**

Eric called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

Item 1: Meeting Agenda

Harry made a motion to approve the meeting agenda; Mark seconded; motion passed.

Item 2: Minutes of March 28, 2016 Meeting

A type-o and an incorrect date were found in the draft. Paul made a motion to approve the corrected minutes; Melissa seconded; motion passed.

Item 3: John Broker-Campbell Presents Planning for River Corridors and Flood Areas

Some of the main points of the presentation and discussion are shown below.

Flooding is the most common natural disaster in Vermont. While inundation flooding is perceived to cause the most damage, losses due to fluvial erosion from flood events actually cost more. Communities in the state of Vermont need to plan for more flood events.

Flood insurance should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. However, it is required to hold a mortgage for any structure built in the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). We should be aware that there are actually 2 sets of standards: one for river corridors and one for SFHA's. Flood insurance may be expensive in a SFHA but is generally quite affordable outside the SFHA. It is possible for a structure to be within a river corridor without being in the SFHA. It would be advisable for anyone owning such a structure to consider purchasing flood insurance. In Pawlet, there are 30 structures in the SFHA and 80 structures in the river corridor.

To mitigate the costs of damage from flooding, the state of Vermont has a 3-prong strategy.

- 1) Identify hazard areas.
- 2) Provide municipalities with models of flood events.
- 3) Give incentives to towns to build in such a way as to minimize risk.

By adhering to state guidelines, the town is liable for less money in the event of flood damages.

The state guidelines involve maintaining:

- 1) Bridge Standards
- 2) Local Emergency Operations
- 3) Local Hazard Mitigation Plan
- 4) River Corridor Protection Plan
- 5) National Flood Insurance Program

Pawlet is up-to-date with these guidelines.

The building that was Mach's General Store is a unique case. It is protected by the dam upstream and the bedrock upon which it is built will not erode easily.

Pawlet's regulations are unusual in that the flood plain regulations are separate from the river corridor regulation. It may be worthwhile to combine the regulations for administrative purposes.

Eric said that he will ask the select board about getting help from the Rutland Regional Planning Commission (RRPC) to update the bylaws for river corridors and flood hazard regulations.

John will email examples of model language to Eric.

For more information, see the following websites.

www.msc.fema.gov

<http://anrmaps.vermont.gov/websites/anra/>

floodyready.vermont.gov

Item 4: Public Comments

Barbara distributed information to promote an event on August 28th sponsored by the Poultney Mettowee Resources Conservation District and the Rutland Regional Planning Commission. "Weathering the Storm" is a program designed to implement flood resiliency projects in Pawlet, Danby and Tinmouth. Contact Hilary (hilary@pmnrpd.org) or Elysa at (elysa@rutlandrpc.org) for details.

Frank said he was concerned that a parking issue in West Pawlet village may be affecting safety. He asked if we could increase housing density in the sewer district. He suggested that this would take advantage of underutilized wastewater treatment plant and allow for additional parking. Eric said that the current minimum (1/4 acre) is needed for living space. Melissa confirmed that she has seen unsafe parking conditions just above the firehouse. Paul said he has seen similar conditions just south of Pawlet Village. Parking was added to the agenda for the next meeting.

Item 5: Zoning Administrator's Report

Eric has been working on village standard designations deadlines that are fast approaching. Tax credits are available for income-producing properties to do projects such as lead abatement and historic reconstruction.

New building permits have been issued to Mandy Hulett (Briar Hill Road) and to John McCarthy (Andrus Drive).

Item 6: Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for May 23, 2016. The agenda is: 1) approve agenda 2) approve the minutes 3) public comments 4) Zoning Administrator's Report and 5) Unified Bylaws --with a focus on parking safety and options for park and ride.

Paul moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 PM; meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Paul Elsholz