



**Minutes for Town of Pawlet Planning Commission
Pawlet Town Office
Pawlet, VT
Monday, June 22, 2015
7:30 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
Hilary Solomon, Poultney Mettowee Natural Resources Conservation District
Elizabeth Gibson, Pawlet
Frank Nelson, West Pawlet**

Eric called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Item 1: Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Eric moved to approve the minutes of the May 25, 2015 meeting; motion passed. The minutes from the special working meeting on June 15, 2015 were also reviewed and discussed; Fred moved to acknowledge that the PPC had read those minutes; motion seconded by Paul and passed.

Item 2. Election of Paul Elsholz as Vice Chair

Eric nominated Paul Elsholz for Vice Chair of the Pawlet Planning Commission; Lenny seconded, motion passed

Item 3. Audience

Hilary Solomon talked about the flood resilience projects that she is working on as part of the storm water grant that is focusing on Flower Brook. She wants to set up a meeting to discuss some of the project ideas and is hoping for input from the Pawlet community, including the PPC, Select Board and others. She suggested having this at the August PPC meeting, but the PPC needs that time to focus on the Town Plan. Hilary said in that case she would set up a separate meeting to discuss ideas for flood resilience projects.

Item 4. Zoning Administrator Report

Paul took over as Chair while Eric, as Zoning Administrator, reported that the past month had been unusually busy. With regard to violations, he had been working on three issues: an ongoing tag sale in West Pawlet (now resolved), a shooting range at the West Pawlet Fish and Game Club property (Eric is keeping an eye on that), and an operation of a rock crushing operation (permit process is now underway). Eric also reported that he had issued permits for several projects: a concrete slab for a sugar house in West Pawlet, an unheated garage/storage area addition to a house, a renewed permit the Smiths, a variance for a shed/garage project, a deck addition to a house on Route 30, and a pole barn for storage on Route 133. Eric also reported that Keith Mason, acting as Zoning Administrator, had issued Eric a permit for a new home and garage on Three Sister's Drive.

Item 5. Pawlet Town Plan

Overall Approach: Lenny suggested that we use the historical format for the Town Plan and incorporate the new elements that are required, such as the flood resilience section. Eric made a motion to use the historical format, Gary seconded, motion passed. Lenny will send the format outline to Barbara in the next few days.

Barbara will pull together all the sections and be sure that the format is consistent. She also has a checklist for all the town plan elements that are required by state statute. The PPC agreed that the document should be done in color to be more readable, with photos as appropriate. Barbara suggested we include survey results as sidebars to help break up the text. Lenny will work on incorporating the survey results as sidebars.

Barbara reminded everybody that the Town Plan goals are very important; beyond just updating the previous Town Plan, we must identify specific goals and activities for the next five years, including who is responsible for those activities/goals, and what the start/completion dates are for each.

Schedule: We need to be done with the Town Plan draft by early August in order to be ready for the first public hearing in September.

Energy Section: Elizabeth reported that Barbara had drafted this section based on the outline forwarded to her by the Pawlet Energy Group. The energy group is now going through Barbara's draft and will have the completed section to the Pawlet Planning Commission by its next monthly meeting.

Economic Development Section: Barbara has given Eric samples of that section that similar towns have put together. It now combines two previous sections: (1) Population and (2) Age Structure, Employment and Income. We also need to tie the village center designation into this section.

Natural Resources Section: Eric said he will draft this section; Hilary offered to review this section once it has been drafted. Fred will convene a working meeting on July 10 with and seek

public input for drafting the agriculture portion of this section. He will try to get Tim Hughes-Muse and Philip Ackerman-Leist to participate.

Flood Resilience Section: Barbara presented this section to the group and said she needs input on a few problem areas: What are the critical public structures in the flood plain? Lenny said we need to consider the 1953 flood. The basic theme, Barbara explained, is that Pawlet has experienced more flooding in recent decades and this trend is expected to continue. Lenny said that an important goal for this section is to urge the Town to seek federal buyouts for flood-damaged property wherever possible. Eric agreed and said a related goal should be to remove some of the structures that are in flood-damaged properties. Lenny noted that we also should assess some of the post-Irene recovery work. For instance, was the retaining wall that was constructed by the Mill Pond and post office engineered properly? Or will it send more water over Mach's Store next time? Eric agreed that downstream effects of mitigation measures should be considered.

Barbara mentioned that the river corridor maps need to be updated, and those updates should be incorporated into the unified bylaws to meet state requirements. Paul mentioned that he had procured maps of insurance requirements with regard to flood plains; these are FEMA maps. Eric commented that the local hazard mitigation plan, a FEMA plan, should also be updated and included.

Eric said that an important goal of this section should be to protect that section of Flower Brook between the Gould Farm and Clark's Trucking because affords water calming and helps protect the village center. Hilary noted that the confluence of Beaver Brook and Flower Brook is an especially sensitive part of that area and is conserved under the Vermont Land Trust.

Hilary commented that a lot of the projects that she is involved in this summer address the recommendations in the flood resilience section.

Item 6. Open Meeting Law Requirements

The PPC should review these requirements, especially as they pertain to "working meetings" that take place in addition to the regular monthly meetings, as well as any email correspondence between members of the PPC. Paul will investigate.

Item 7: Working Meeting and Agenda for July 13, 7 PM – 9 PM

Eric suggested a special working meeting be held on July 13 which would be a public meeting. He will ask Deb Hawkins to warn it as a working session to continue drafting the Town Plan.

Item 8. Set Agenda for Next Monthly Meeting – July 27, 2015.

Approve agenda with any changes; approve minutes of June meeting; zoning administrator report; ongoing draft of Town Plan, based on results from July 13 meeting.

Lenny moved to adjourn at 9:10 p.m., Wayne seconded, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Elizabeth Gibson, Acting Clerk