

**Minutes for Town of Pawlet Planning Commission
Pawlet Town Office
Pawlet, VT**

**Monday, March 25, 2013
7:30 p.m.**

Members in Attendance:

Fred Stone	John Thrasher
Tom Nelson	Gary Baierlein
Karl Eberth	Harry van Meter
Wayne Clark	

Others in Attendance:

Eric Mach, Zoning Admin.	Jaime Lee, RRPC
Lenny Gibson	Kathy Doyle, Clerk
Frank Nelson	

Minutes

Item 1: Review Minutes

Minutes of meeting on February 25, 2013 approved as submitted.

Item 2: Organizational Meeting to Elect Officers

Officers were nominated, approved and accepted as follows:

Chairman: John Thrasher; Vice Chair: Harry van Meter; Secretary: Karl Eberth.

Item 3: Zoning Administrator Report.

Eric Mach discussed a proposal to construct a small deck and wheel chair ramp attached to a home in West Pawlet. Eric Mach explained that the proposed deck is closer to property line than regulations stipulate and the project does not meet criteria to grant a waiver. Eric will talk to the property owners.

Item 4: Comments from Audience

Lenny Gibson asked if the board was aware that a proposed solar project in North Pawlet is considering tripling in size. He asked if the planning commission would investigate the matter and respond to the Public Service Board. John Thrasher suggested that this issue be discussed under new business.

Lenny Gibson also requested that the Planning Commission post the meeting agenda and minutes on the town website, preferably as a pdf. John Thrasher asked Clerk to include Elizabeth Gibson (egib@vermontel.net) on the email list.

Mr. Gibson also asked whether the Planning Commission might share drafts of town plan on the town website. It was decided that it was not appropriate to post drafts on the website.

Item 5: Jamie Lee -- Continued Review of Unified Bylaws

Jamie Lee provided an update on revisions to date. She handed out a correction to page 7 and asked for any suggested changes to the Unified bylaws.

There was an extensive discussion about what should be permitted versus conditional use in the Industrial zone. It was determined that items 6 - 16 on page 8 be moved from conditional to permitted use.

There was a discussion about the Village/ Commercial district. One area designated as Village/Commercial in the upper northwest corner, close to Granville was deemed designated as such as it is hooked to village water. Trucking terminal was previously a permitted use and was revised to be a conditional use. There was a discussion about whether it should be allowed at all in Village /Commercial district. It was decided that trucking terminal should not be allowed, but existing establishments would be allowed to exist (grandfather clause).

On page 71: the word 'enclosed' should be deleted for retail store.

Language should be added restricting 'yard sales' to a certain length of time.

Jamie Lee provided handouts with sample language and information on stream setbacks, Fluvial Erosion Hazard Areas and flood damage mitigation incentives for the board to consider. She mentioned that the state has completed a geomorphic assessment of rivers in Pawlet and will have these maps available at the next meeting. She proposes that language be adopted to stipulate no new buildings close to stream to protect water quality and mitigate potential flood damage. She indicated that if language was adopted to establish set backs, development already within the buffer zone would be grandfathered. The set back could be established from high water mark or middle of center of stream. Jaime suggests someone come to next meeting to discuss fluvial erosion hazard. The Board agreed to invite Ned Swanberg.

Item 6: Old Business

Harry van Meter reported that the town GIS data does not include the overlay district. He will work with Cartographics to make sure these maps are provided and Jaime will help facilitate.

Item 7: New Business

John Thrasher referred to an article in the Rutland Herald regarding the proposed expansion of the solar park from 150 KW to 500 KW in North Pawlet. He stated that the planning commission received a letter last June and responded that the board wanted more information, but they have not received further information from NE Community Solar. It was determined that as Secretary of the Board, Karl Eberth will write a letter asking Northeast Community Solar for more details. The letter will also be copied to the Public Service Board, the Select Board, John Malcolm and the Energy Committee.

Wayne Clark expressed concerns about the potential environmental impacts of the proposed solar park.

John Thrasher outlined the roll of the Planning Commission: 1) enacting rules and regulations governing activity within town, and 2) developing and renewing a town plan. He asserted that the Planning Commission does not enforce rules or review applications, but the Planning Commission can comment as to whether or not a proposal confirms to town plan. If the Planning Commission has a concern they can ask the Select Board to expend funds to advocate on behalf of town. If a proposal does not conform to town plan then they can also present this information to the Public Service Board. Mr. Gibson indicated that he was happy to see the board taking an interest in the issue.

Fred Stone asked for an item to be put on the agenda for a future meeting. In a conversation with the Select Board, it was determined that the Planning Commission should come up with rules regarding how new members are appointed to the Planning Commission and the Development Review Board. John Thrasher also noted that he would like to see terms be more staggered. It was agreed that this item could be discussed later in the summer.

Item 8: Request from Vermont Land Trust.

A motion was made to table the request from the Vermont Land Trust until the next meeting. The motion passed with John Thrasher abstaining. Tim Hughes-Muse and Donald Campbell and a representative from The Nature Conservancy will be invited to next meeting to discuss the issue.

Item 9: Set Agenda for Next Meeting, April 22 at 7:30 p.m.

Approval of minutes; Zoning Administrator's Report; Comments from audience; Fluvial Erosion Hazard discussion with Ned Swanburg; Old Business; New Business; Set Agenda for Next Meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kathy Doyle, Clerk.