

**Town of Pawlet Planning Commission  
Pawlet Town Hall  
Pawlet, VT**

**Minutes of Meeting  
For Monday, March 25, 2019**

**Members Attending:**

Harry Van Meter, Chairman  
Eric Mach, Vice Chairman  
Gary Beierlain  
Wayne Clarke  
Mark Frost  
Melissa LaCount

**Members Absent:**

Rik Sassa, Secretary/Clerk

**Others in Attendance:**

Frank Nelson  
Amanda O'Connor  
Michael O'Connor  
John Davis  
Valerie Davis  
Paul Tilander  
Michelle Tillander  
John Sabotka  
Ken Norman  
Eli Norman

**Residence**

West Pawlet  
Pawlet  
Pawlet  
West Pawlet

Chairman, Harry Van Meter called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m.

**Item 1: Approval of Meeting Agenda**

Mark Frost made a motion to approve the agenda with no exceptions, the motion was seconded by Melissa LaCount and unanimously approved.

**Item 2: Approval of Minutes of February 25, 2019 Meeting**

Melissa LaCount asked that the minutes of the meeting be amended to show that the meeting was adjourned at 8:48pm. Gary Beierlain moved that the minutes be approved, as amended, Melissa LaCount seconded the motion and the minutes were approved by a majority of those present.

**Item 3: Public Comments**

Harry Van Meter introduced Amanda O'Connor, a new community planner at the Rutland Regional Planning Commission, currently residing in Pawlet. Amanda stated that she would be a resource for the Town of Pawlet, she will try to help provide assistance to the PPC on issues of planning and development and will try to attend future meetings of the PPC.

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Frank Nelson introduced 3 articles from the Rutland Herald, which reported on the proposed expansion of Act 250 provisions that may threaten the slate industry in the Stone Valley region. Hal Wilkins stated that DEC Wetlands recommended mitigation, which Newmont, specifically, was given one week in which to comply. Hal said he believed they have complied with the requirements. Gary asked Hal how, specifically, this relates to Act 250. Hal said that the quarries have to comply with Act 250 in regards to buildings, expansion and wetlands provisions. Hal also said that most of the quarry operators are complying with the rules, but the expansion of the current law would mean more time and money to comply with extended provisions of the law. He said that several slate companies have protested the expansion. Gary pointed out that the expansion of the regulations threatens one of the few economically viable industries in the region.

**Item 4: Zoning Administrator's Report**

Hal submitted a written summary of current activities relating to boundary line adjustments, 911 address corrections, Anthony Trafficanti's hemp facility in West Pawlet, an addition of a shed on a property, which may mean a contractor's yard and would require DRB acceptance of a conditional use, and a subdivision on the Tarbel property is waiting on an agreement document from John Thrasher. Hal Wilkins said he would like some input from the PPC on waivers, specifically on limits to discretionary actions of the Zoning Administrator to grant a waiver without a property owner having to appeal to the DRB. Hal gave an example of a 50 foot setback requirement that may need 5 or 10% "wiggle room" for some valid reason. Harry Van Meter expressed concern with the ZA having the power to decide what is right for a neighborhood, which should be the jurisdiction of the DRB. The Commissioners present agreed.

Hal said that there has been no actions on the Slate Ridge permits, as the Counsel for the Natural Resources Board and the Burlington and Boston offices of the ATF have gotten involved and will need to inspect the site, tentatively scheduled for next week. Hal sent applications and other documentation last week to the property owner that need to be signed and returned. He has had no response from the property owner. A DRB hearing date will not be set until the application is received, which will be denied that same day and sent to the DRB.

**Item 5: Economic Development and Infrastructure Improvements**

Harry Van Meter said that he has drafted an outline for the 2020 Town Plan table of contents, which he will send to the Commissioners for their comments. He said that this is a suggestion to separate out the Energy Plan and the Economic Development Plan to be appended to the Town Plan as stand-alone documents, rather than incorporated as chapters, as had been done in the past. The basis of this change is to comply with State mandates for towns to prepare a Comprehensive Energy Plan and an Economic Development Plan. Eric Mach said that these reports and how they are incorporated into the Town Plan have to be in accordance with the Regional Plan.

There was a brief discussion of Act 171 and the need to understand how the law applies to Pawlet. Detailed discussion was deferred to a future meeting. Hal Wilkins recommended reviewing how the requirements affect Pawlet with the ANR. He also said that the community mapping project that we will discuss at the April meeting addresses the Act 171 requirements. Harry asked all Commissioners to look up the law online and read through it so we can discuss at the April meeting.

**Item 6. New Business**

There was no new business. Bylaw updates discussion was deferred to a later meeting.

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**Item 7. Adjournment**

Harry asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting early to allow extra time for everyone to get home due to the poor road conditions. Gary Beierlain made the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm.

**Next Meeting**

The next regular meeting of the Pawlet Planning Commission will be held on April 22, 2019 at 7:30pm at the Pawlet Town Hall.

The agenda for the next meeting will generally follow the usual format:

- 1) Additions/deletions/approval of the agenda; 2) Approval of minutes of previous meeting; 3) Public comments; 4) Zoning Administrator's report; 5) Topic for discussion by the Commissioners or presentation; 6) New business; 7) Adjournment.

Respectfully submitted: Harry Van Meter