

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

**Minutes of Meeting  
For Monday, April 22, 2019**

**Members Attending:**

Harry Van Meter, Chairman  
Eric Mach, Vice Chairman  
Wayne Clarke  
Mark Frost

**Members Absent:**

Rik Sassa, Secretary/Clerk  
Gary Beierlain  
Melissa LaCount

**Others in Attendance:**

Ed Bove  
Amanda O'Connor  
Katie Barcellos  
Frank Nelson  
Amanda O'Connor  
John Davis  
Valerie Davis  
Paul Tilander  
Michelle Tillander  
Dolores Luebke  
Jay Luebke  
Eli Norman

**Residence**

Executive Director, RRPC  
Community Planner, RRPC  
Rutland Herald  
West Pawlet  
Pawlet  
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West Pawlet

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

**Item 1: Approval of Meeting Agenda**

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

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

Eric Mach moved that the minutes be approved with no exceptions, Mark Frost seconded the motion and the minutes were approved by commissioners present.

**Item 3: Public Comments**

Harry Van Meter asked Ed Bove to introduce himself and to state the reason for his attending tonight's meeting. Ed introduced Amanda O'Connor and said that they were here to offer the RRPC's assistance in updating the Pawlet Town Plan and in our community planning development. He said that they would

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like to answer any questions the PPC may have on these and other issues. Ed also said that the Act 250 issues will probably not be resolved in the current legislative session, particularly as it relates to the expanded restrictions on the slate industry. He said that Act 171 is still being discussed in legislative session and will probably not result in any sweeping changes this session. Harry said that he had asked the Commissioners at last month's meeting to read the Act 171 Guidelines online and to be prepared to discuss the bill as it affects Pawlet's Town planning and land use. Dolores Luebke stated that the slate industry is vital to the economic survival of the region and that the industry had organized 50 years ago when Act 250 first threatened the viability of the industry. She said that the industry is ready to organize again, if the changes proposed to the regulations in the Act repeat the threat to the economic viability. Hal Wilkins stated that there is a 9:00am meeting on Wednesday April 24<sup>th</sup> to discuss the "grandfathered" nature of the industry as written in the original Act. Hal said that he will attend that meeting on behalf of the Town. Harry asked if there was a market for the tailings that are piled in West Pawlet and if anyone has looked into finding buyers.

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

Hal Wilkins distributed copies of his April 22, 2019 Zoning Administrator's Report to the Planning Commission, which was then reviewed by the Commissioners.

Hal said that the hemp processing facility on the Leslie property in West Pawlet is still being reviewed by the Act 250 Commission. Ed Bove said that the Commission was treating the application as a "minor" and if there are objections to the application filed, there will be a hearing on May 4<sup>th</sup>. He said that if there are no objections, the Commission will approve the application. Hal said that the Select Board will sign the Municipal Impact questionnaire tomorrow night and it will be sent up to Bill Burke in Rutland on Wednesday. Hal said that the Select Board has sent a letter saying that the sewage treatment plant will accept the waste stream from the new facility, which should clear the way for quick approval.

Hal indicated that the Planning Commission or the Select Board needs to send a letter to the PUC that the Town has no objections to the Warren Switch Road 500 kW Solar power facility. (At the SB meeting the following evening Harry pointed out that the letter submitted to the Town and several other interested parties was a letter of intent to file an application with the PUC. Hal was unable to answer the question of when or if the application was actually filed.) Eric Mach said that this type of facility is permitted in the Industrial District by our Town Plan and that no zoning permit is required unless there are buildings over 100 sq ft proposed for the site. Harry asked Hal to ask MHG Solar to come to the next PPC meeting in May to present their plans for the project, so the PPC and the community can be informed.

Hal stated that Jason Day of Star Wind Turbines on Rt 7A in East Dorset would like to come to the PPC to present small scale wind generation as a potential project for Pawlet. Harry asked Hal to schedule Jason to come and make a presentation. Hal said that SWT has installations along Rt 7.

Hal stated that the DRB meeting on Slate Ridge scheduled for May 2<sup>nd</sup> will be a closed executive session.

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

Harry asked if the Commissioners had reviewed the guidelines for Act 171 online and if they, or any member of the community, had any comments about the law. Harry stated that the Act is basically a land use plan. Ed Bove said that the intent of the law is to maintain forest blocks and habitat connectors by requiring towns to map the areas that need this protection in future land development. Ed said that Monica Przyperhart can assist in updating maps already prepared by the RRPC along with the community values mapping program. Ed said that the RRPC planning is complete and that the Pawlet Town maps have been updated, but that the Town will need to further update based on the Town's desired future land uses. Harry asked Hal to request that Monica make a mock-up presentation at the

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May meeting to explain the process. Harry said that the library has completed a strategic planning study, which probably covers many of the community values issues. Harry said that there will be a potluck dinner at the library on Sunday at 5:00pm to present their final report. Ed said that there is no deadline for the Act 171 mapping, but at the time the Town Plan is updated the revised maps will have to be included. He said that the RRPC can assist the Town in applying for grant money to hire a wildlife consultant who can help, but the deadline for making application is the end of August for a Municipal Planning Grant. Ed said that there is also opportunity for infrastructure study grants, which can be applied to highways in Town and may be helpful as Pawlet studies the intersection of Rts 30, 133 and School Street. He also said that the PPC would be the governing body that would be responsible for parking plans that would be implemented by the Town.

Harry asked the Commissioners present and the community members attending the meeting if they have any suggestions on how the infrastructure of the Town needs to be improved to foster economic development. Reliable high-speed internet and mobile telecommunications, better roads, cross-walks, sidewalks and parking in village centers, and more sewer connections in West Pawlet were some of the suggestions that were made. Eric said that rain water runoff as it affects water quality is of major concern throughout the Town, especially in the Village of Pawlet.

**Item 6. New Business**

Ed Bove said that the RRPC would also like to help in the Town's efforts to update its energy planning and policies. Harry said that, as Town Energy Coordinator, he meets separately with an energy advisory group and invited Amanda to attend the next meeting in May. Ed stated that there is a tight timeline with a deadline of early December to complete the Enhanced Energy Plan, to have a public hearing on the draft plan and be ready to present it to the Select Board. Ed agreed that the enhanced energy plan can be a separate report on its own timeline that could then be appended to the Town plan. Amanda O'Connor said that Barbara Noyes Pulling has a template that the PPC can use to prepare the Town's Enhanced Energy Plan.

**Item 7. Adjournment**

Harry asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00pm. Mark Frost made the motion and the meeting was adjourned.

**Next Meeting**

The next regular meeting of the Pawlet Planning Commission will be held on May 20, 2019 at 7:30pm at the Pawlet Town Hall. This is a week earlier due to Monday May 27<sup>th</sup> being Memorial Day. Harry will see that Deb is informed to warn the public of the change.

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