

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

**Final Minutes of Meeting  
For Monday, Jan 27th, 2020**

**Members Attending:**

Harry Van Meter, Chairman (via computer)  
Eric Mach, Vice Chairman  
Rik Sassa, Secretary  
Mark Frost  
Tome Collard  
Wayne Clarke (alternate)  
Gary Baierlein

**Members Absent:**

Melissa LaCount

**Others in Attendance:**

Frank Nelson

**From**

West Pawlet

**Item 1: Call to Order**

Vice Chairman, Eric Mach called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**Item 2: Approval of Meeting Agenda**

Gary Baierlein motioned that the Agenda be approved. Rik Sassa seconded, the motion passed.

**Item 3: Approval of Minutes of August 26, 2019 Meeting**

A few corrections to last minutes: change “committee members” to commissioners, change “listers” to assessors. Harry Van Meter moved to approve minutes, Mark Frost seconded. Motion passed unopposed.

**Item 4: Report from Regional Planning Commission**

Eric explained that there is an effort to incorporate the smaller regional Act 250 commissions into one regional Act 250 commission in an effort to create uniformity. He and the other Planning Commission members present were not keen on this new plan. The plan has not passed the legislature yet. Tom Collard, who also sat in on some of the meetings, thought that the Selectboard should look into one of the issues involving getting an agreement with the state for FEMA reimbursement.

**Item 5: Topics of Discussion**

By-laws and their conditional uses were discussed.

Harry brought up the issue of view corridor (or view shed). “Screening” was discussed as a condition. Gary brought up the issue of right of way and who maintains the screen, also, who is liable if the screening creates a traffic danger. Harry was wondering if it couldn’t be put into the zoning requirements that maintenance be included. Gary thought that a stipulation of no invasive species be

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used, but he thought it would be difficult to put a requirement in that forced a homeowner to maintain a screen planting. Rik Sassa clarified that the view shed protection is a matter of maintaining the view for the population of the town in general rather than individual townspeople's views. Eric commented on putting solar farms in the industrial zone so that it is not in a critical view corridor. Frank Nelson noted in regard to solar installations, that power lines are ugly, but now everyone is used to seeing them. The commissioners agreed that some view shed protection language should be in future by-laws.

Telecommunications was another area with a number of points that could have conditions included in future by-laws. Eric said that there was likely to be some state changes coming involving telecommunications.

Gary made an argument for having common sense decision making to accommodate diverse situations that a single condition or requirement would not be realistic in enforcing. Eric agreed that a certain amount of flexibility should be baked into the by-laws. Frank interjected that Jonas Rosenthal (the temporary zoning administrator) said that it was important for the DRB to have some guidance written in to the by-laws so that decisions in conditional use could be more easily and consistently made.

Waste water permits were discussed. If the waste water permit was needed first before a building permit could be acquired, it would eliminate misuse of poor septic situations.

Restaurants currently don't have any conditional use in the by-laws. Tom thought that the current two acre requirement was too big a criteria for a restaurant. Eric noted that you would still have to get a waste water permit for a restaurant. He thought that the acreage restriction should be more about the parking space and not on the restaurant itself. Gary thought that restaurants should be written up in the same way that a contractor's yard is written. Primarily, that both can exist without an adjoining residence.

**Item 6. Public Comments**

Frank wanted to know if any of the Commissioners looked at the Calais, VT by-laws that he had handed out. Tom did not see any thing glaring that stood out to adopt for our town. Frank emphasized that putting the DRB to use more was an advantage since it is a court situation rather than decisions falling upon the ZA. Eric clarified that the DRB is a quasi legal body.

**Item 7. Zoning Administrator's report.**

Interim zoning administrator, Jonas Rosenthal was not able to make it to the meeting.

**8. Old Business**

Tom met with Pawlet Community Aspirations, which is a Pawlet connect meeting, connecting the different groups and boards in town to exchange information. Sara Young is leading the group. Tom thought that it was a good idea. Wayne Clarke asked what the emphasis was behind the group. Tom explained that networking between the various groups would allow the town to function more effectively.

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**Item 9. New Business**

Harry said that Rik had written the yearly Planning Commission's report that will be going into the upcoming town report. Eric wanted to make sure that the information from the community mapping exercise got out to the townspeople.

**Item 10. Set Agenda for the next meeting**

**Item 11. Adjournment**

Harry moved to adjourn and Tom seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm

**Item 12: Next Meeting Date and Agenda**

The next regular meeting of the Pawlet Planning Commission will be held on Feb. 24th, 2020 at 7:30 pm at the Pawlet Town Hall.

The agenda for the next meeting will generally follow the usual format with noted additional speakers: Additions to/deletions/approval of the agenda; Approval of minutes of previous meeting; Public comments; Zoning Administrator's report; Topic for discussion by the Commissioners or presenter; New business; Old business; Adjournment.

Respectfully submitted: Rik Sassa, Secretary.