

Final Minutes
Town of Pawlet Planning Commission Meeting
Monday, November 23, 2020, 7:30 pm
Meeting via Zoom platform

Members present:

Jessica Van Oort, Chairperson
John Sabotka, Vice Chairperson
Rik Sassa, Clerk/Secretary
Frank Nelson
Mark Frost
Tom Collard
Wayne Clark (alternate member)
Jonas Rosenthal, Pawlet Zoning Administrator
Hillary Solomon, Poultney-Mettowee Natural Resource Conservation District

Members absent:

Mark Frost
Gary Baierlein

Item 1. Call to Order: Jessica Van Oort called the meeting to order at 7:32pm

Item 2. Approval of Agenda Items- Review/Add/Delete: John moved to approve agenda, Tom Collard seconded the motion, all approved.

Item 3. Approval of minutes of previous meeting: John moved to approve minutes, Rik Sassa seconded the motion, all approved.

Item 4. Zoning Administrator's Report- Jonas Rosenthal: Jonas Rosenthal went through recent information on zoning ordinances that he had sent to the commissioners. John Sabotka had a question on subdivision in town addressing the Briar Hill. Jonas gave a brief description of what is involved to apply for a subdivision. If it is a minor subdivision the zoning administrator can approve it, if it is more than one then it needs to go before the DRB, various flood maps, waste water considerations, etc are taken into account. *Article 6: subdivision standards* address subdivisions in the by-laws. John asked more about Briar Hill and Jonas clarified that the matter was not a matter of subdivision it was one of code enforcement. Frank Nelson thought that we should not comment on the Briar Hill matter since it is currently under litigation.

Item 5. Rutland Regional Commission Report- Tom Collard: Tom Collard spoke about some activity in the region regarding solar generation facilities. No actions were taken at the meeting, it was simply a notification report. Grants were also spoken about at the Rutland Regional meeting. Pawlet Village was awarded a grant for a scoping study, involving rt 30 and intersection with rt 133. Frank attended a budget meeting of the selectboard and commented that a signal (or sign) around that troubled area had already been budgeted. Jonas added that there was a request from Pawlet to lower the speed limit on rt 30 in that area, but the state denied it. Jonas hoped that the selectboard would wait until after the scoping study has been concluded before spending money on signs since the study may come up with a different outcome.

Item 6. Discussion of Topics and On-going Business:

Hillary Solomon with the Poultney-Mettowee Natural Resource Conservation District made a presentation on the Flower Brook water shed. She has been working with neighboring towns connected to this water shed over the years. She was hoping that someone from the Pawlet Planning Commission would be willing to join the group. Hillary used a map to indicate several projects in the area that her group has accomplished over the last few years. She would like to have an advisory group to help with climate change planning. People from the various local towns would be on that board. It would involve two or three meetings a year. She also provided a survey for the commissioners to fill out. Frank, John and Wayne were all interested in perhaps joining Hillary's group.

Item 7. Public Comments: No public was present

Item 8. Old Business: Old business was discussed in terms of what directions the board should take in the coming months, hence old business is now new business.

Item 9. New Business:

Jessica made a list of topics that the group might want to discuss regarding the by-laws. Flood resilience, economic development, the importance of agriculture, transportation (parking), solar sites, affordable housing were the items she had on her list. Tom wondered about the energy plan that was previously drafted. Jessica thought that it was approved by the Selectboard but needed one further approval. She would check on that at the next Selectboard meeting. Tom was concerned that we might be missing out on some solar projects, not having the plan in place. Wayne reminded the board of past discussions where placement of large solar sites should not be on prime agricultural land, and that one area that it would do well would be in the industrial district. Jessica was wondering whether the town has any say to where a solar site should be. Jonas said that the town has no say unless there is an energy plan in place. Jessica will report back about the status of the energy plan.

Jessica felt that the document that Jonas sent out about housing in the village center could connect well with the affordable housing topic on the list.

Item 10. Set Agenda for next meeting:

Call to Order 7:30 2. Approval of Agenda Items - Review/Add/Delete 7:31 3. Approval of minutes of previous meeting 7:33 4. Zoning Administrator's Report – Jonas Rosenthal 7:45 6. Rutland Regional Planning Commission Report – Tom Collard 8:00 7. Discussion of Topics & On-going Business 8:05 8. Public Comments 8:25 9. Old Business 8:35 10. New business 8: 45 11. Set Agenda for the next meeting 8:55 12. Adjournment 9:00

Item 11. Adjournment: Rik moved to adjourn, Tom seconded the motion, all approved. Meet adjourned at 9:02pm

Respectfully submitted, Rik Sassa, Secretary