

Town of Pawlet
Planning Commission Meeting
Monday, April 25, 2022 7:30pm
Meeting at townhall and
via Zoom platform

Members present:

Jessica Van Oort, Chairperson

John Sabotka, Vice Chairperson

Rik Sassa, Clerk/Secretary

Frank Nelson

Gary Baierlein

Mark Frost

Harley Cudney

Wayne Clark (alternate member)

Jonas Rosenthal (Pawlet zoning administrator)

Ed Bove (Rutland Regional Commission)

Members absent:

Item 1. Call to Order:

Jessica Van Oort called the meeting together at 7:34pm.

Item 2. Approval of Agenda Items- Review/Add/Delete:

There were no changes to the agenda.

Item 3. Approval of minutes of previous meeting:

John Sabotka motioned to approve prior minutes, Gary Baierlein seconded, all approved.

Item 4. Zoning Administrator's Report- Jonas Rosenthal:

Jonas gave his report on current zoning permits.

Item 5. Rutland Regional Commission Report:

The committee met and discussed the stone mill solar project. John said that the Castleton board was against it. No action was taken on Ira tower or Castleton project. Harley Cudney talked about Bull Frog Solar project. He said that it was all information and since it was in the Industrial zone there were no problems. He said there was an interesting matter with the Stone Mill solar in Castleton which had some portion of the project in agricultural land. Jonas spoke about the Stone Mill project since he is the Zoning administrator in Castleton as well. He said the planning commission was given a letter of agreement (taxes, agricultural soils, screening, and decommissioning). Castleton does not have an enhanced energy plan, so they didn't have as much control over the situation. Harley also mentioned the issue of decommissioning. Frank Nelson said that his recollection of whenever the Utility comes up against the town the town has no say, that's why the enhanced energy plan is important. Ed Bove said that even without a specific enhanced energy plan, if the town has an energy chapter in their town plan with specific language, it may still provide some leverage. Ed said that this issue will be tested soon in Castleton. Ed said that there is a fairly standard decommissioning plan that all the companies have to provide that ensure the proper decommissioning of a site if the company goes under.

Jessica said that the Otter Creek Union District has a new member, Shrewsbury. The town is looking for an internet contractor. ISP internet service provider. The deadline has been extended into May. OCUD (Otter Creek Union District) is looking to have the towns put in about 10% of the ARPA funds so there will not be such a large debt to service later on. Harley questioned whether the ARPA funds would even approach the cost of the service. Jessica said that the ARPA funds were meant to stimulate matching funds.

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

Ed Bove passed around some maps of Pawlet and West Pawlet Village. He spoke about the by-law modernization grant. Ed noted sections in the current by-laws that he thought might need some attention since they locked up or hindered economic development in the town. He guided the commission through a series of hypothetical situations to help illuminate the areas that might need attention. The first one he noted was the 40 foot set-back which makes almost all the existing buildings in the town center non-conforming. 30% of lot coverage with all the set-backs makes it very impractical. Conditional uses on multi-family dwelling, parking minimums could be more like one per unit rather than the amount currently listed. Ed reminded the commission that the grant is to encourage more housing. In an Industrial district 60 foot setbacks (as listed) might be too much. Jessica said that the town does own the old Dutchies lot and if a centralized parking area was needed it could be part of the municipal planning grant. Restaurants: strange setback requirements. Major development: 100 foot front side and rear. As it is, the town can't extend the non-conformity allowance which would be good for empowering the DRB. Parking requirements: multi-family units, restaurant ratio of parking for patron vs. business parking seems like too many spaces. Mobil home parks: have

an awful lot of spreading factored in. Duplicate set backs on flood zone areas. 3 or 4 lot Subdivision standards: ease of use issues (the applicant for that type of permit has to come in 4 times). He said the PUD section is good. River corridors and flood hazard zone: language has no building allowed, but with current building/engineering techniques there are methods to utilize these areas. Frank suggested that the height parameters on all buildings (except agricultural) could be raised to encourage more housing. Jonas also added that deeded right-of-way requirements should be looked at since some non-conforming properties would not be allowed to build.

A walk through of the two village centers was discussed to help clarify by-law alterations that might be needed.

Item 7. Public Comments:

There were no public comments

Item 8. Old Business:

No old business was discussed.

Item 9. New Business:

There was no new business discussed.

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 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:

Gary motioned to adjourn, John seconded, all approved. Meeting concluded at 8:59pm.

Respectfully submitted by Rik Sassa, Secretary/Clerk