

Town of Pawlet
Planning Commission Meeting
Monday, December 22, 2025 7:30pm

Members present:

Ed Evans, Chairperson
Annie Nash, Vice Chairperson
Rik Sassa, Secretary/Clerk
Frank Nelson
Gary Baierlein
Linda Lynton
Nancy Morlino, Pawlet Zoning Administrator

Members absent:

Leon Corey (alternate member)
Mark Frost

1. Call to Order 7:36

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

● Gary Baierlein moved to approve the agenda, Linda Lynton seconded, all agreed.

3. Approval of minutes of previous meeting:

Gary moved to approve previous minutes, Frank Nelson seconded , all approved.

4. Organizational:

● Ed Evans spoke a few words about being honored to serve the town as Chairman, and that he and his wife would be moving down south in the coming months. Annie Nash asked all in favor of the motion to honor Ed's resignation, all approved. Gary made a motion to nominate Annie Nash as interim Chairperson. Frank seconded, all approved. Linda nominated Gary as interim Vice Chairman, Annie seconded, all approved. Frank nominated Leon to move from alternate to permanent member. Rik seconded, all approved.

● Nancy Morlino reported 45 permits to date. She spoke to Chris Pritchard about drafting a bill for speed zoning and he said nothing could be worked on until 2026. Gary said that this issue has gone around and around for years. He thought part of the problem was that the intersection in Pawlet was bad, also that there has been less of a problem lately with a Constable that is more attentive. His point was if the speed is not going to be enforced, then what is the difference what the actual number is. There was a discussion about extending the reduced speed approach to town so people aren't having to drop their speed suddenly, as noted in other towns. Annie was excited to know that Chris Prichard (the town's representative) could draft a bill and actually get something done, rather than being put off

by Vtrans. The board thought it would be a good idea to invite Chris Pritchard to a future meeting to discuss in more detail.

- Railtrail report by Frank Nelson: He said there was not much to report. He noted that in Rupert a parking area was built out and the town wanted Vtrans to maintain it, but Vtrans wants a bunch of criteria met in order to take it under their maintenance.
- Poultney Mettowee Conservation District report from Hillary Solomon: Hillary spoke about the Mettowee watershed and the effects downstream (in the town centers). After Irene there were lots of tree snags etc.. Since then the state rivers program has gotten involved. She had a map showing the rivers (Beaver brook, Flower brook, Purchase brook) . The problem is the streams have become too stream-lined and erosion has been occurring due to the lack of obstacles that slow water down and force water flow to use flood plains as a defuser. If up-stream the rivers are not impeded in smaller natural ways then the stream beds deepen by eroding gravel and dirt by faster moving water. They also widen because of added speed and force which leads to further bank erosion. The problem compounds upon itself. Hillary said the difficulty with getting grant money for very small projects is that they don't meet desirable criteria for the state, so much of the stream work would have to be done via the help of the individual land owners. Hillary thought that if Trout Unlimited and other conservation groups got involved then perhaps workshops could be created regarding the proper use of felled trees in the stream to help slow storm waters and water in general, diverting some into flood plain zones thus reducing the impact of accumulated water down stream in the town centers.

5. Public Comments:

- Frank commented on two months of missing PPC minutes on the Pawlet website. Rik said he would check with Mark who took minutes while he was away one of those months. Frank also spoke about the MERP grant and how one possible direction might be to do geothermal wells to heat the town offices and library which would eat up all the grant money.

6. Set Agenda for the next meeting:

Gary moved to approve the next month's agenda, Rik seconded, all approved

- Ongoing business.
- Public comment.
- All else remains the same.

11. Adjournment

- Gary moved to adjourn, Rik seconded and all approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:18

Respectfully submitted, Rik Sassa, Secretary/Clerk