

**SWANTON PLANNING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES
Thursday February 20, 2025
Town Office Building & ZOOM
1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT
11:00 am**

Present: Ross Lavoie-Chair, Oliver Manning, Jim Pratt, Andy LaRocque-Members,
Christina Candels-Assistant Town Administrator

Absent: Heather Buczkowski

Zoom: Corey Parent

1. Call to Order

Mr. Lavoie called the meeting to order at 11:04 am.

2. Agenda Review

Mr. Lavoie reviewed the agenda.

Ms. Candels requested to add discussion from an email request from Heidi Britch-Valenta for a motion/signature of support for a municipal planning grant.

3. Review and Approve Minutes

a) January 28, 2025

Mr. Pratt made a motion to approve the minutes from January 28, 2025, Special Planning Commission meeting minutes as written, seconded by Mr. LaRocque. Motion carried.

b) Swanton Village

Ms. Candels & Mr. Lavoie received an email from Heidi Britch-Valenta requesting support from the Planning Commission for Swanton Village to apply for a Municipal Planning Grant to use for a Benefit Cost Analysis for Swanton Electric to relocate cross country power lines from Campagna Rd to Route 7. The grant amount is \$20,000.

Mr. Lavoie called Ms. Britch-Valenta to clarify what support she was looking for from the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission needs to approve any Municipal Planning grants they apply for. Ms. Britch-Valenta said this project has no footprint in Swanton. This power line is not easily accessible. The grant will be used to study the best way to move/relocate the line for accessibility.

Mr. Manning made a motion to approve Ross Lavoie as chair to sign in support of Swanton Village applying for a Municipal Planning grant, seconded by Mr. LaRocque. Motion carried.

4. Land Use & Development Regulations Review

Mr. Parent discussed the changes discussed at the January 28, 2025, meeting.

Ms. Candels will send an email request to Northwest Regional Planning for updated maps.

Mr. Lavoie shared a request to add housing to industrial area from a property owner. The group discussed reclassifying the parcels to Commercial Light vs. adding Industrial as a conditional use to an industrial district. This will be tabled for now, until more discussions with the landowners.

Mr. Pratt discussed changing all the RC/Recreation Conservation to R1/Residential. The board already agreed to change RC/Recreation Conservation on French Hill. Mr. Pratt is discussing RC/Recreation Conservation on Hog Island. A large portion of Hog Island is either in the land trust or wildlife refuge land. The board came to the decision everything on Lakewood Drive along the water will be SR/Shoreland Recreation and R1/Residential on the other side of the road.

Mr. Manning made a motion to change the RC/Recreation Conservation on the west side of Lakewood Dr to SR/Shoreland and the east side to R1/Residential district. Seconded by Mr. LaRocque. Motion carried.

Mr. Pratt discussed adding Home Occupation, Cottage Industry & Mixed Use to all residential districts as Conditional Use as well as clarifying the definitions.

Mr. Parent at the request of the Selectboard, Mr. Parent added HOA/Stormwater permit follow up to Subdivisions. Mr. Parent could not find a municipality in Vermont that regulates HOA's for stormwater permitting. The Planning Commission suggested this be added to Zoning, the Selectboard can decide how it is enforced.

Mr. Parent reviewed Mr. Joel Clark's list of suggestions again. Noting the addition of regulations for art walls. Mr. Lavoie suggested limiting sizes to 8'x12', no more than 10' off the ground, must have the same setbacks as structures in the district. No words or advertising on art walls will be allowed.

Mr. Parent added reference to the Town Road takeover policy for developers. The board discussed when/how to enforce roads to be built to standards for new developments.

Mr. Pratt discussed allowing rights-of-way through lots when they are already reducing road frontage requirements.

The board discussed defining agriculture and adding it to the definitions.

5. Set next Planning Commission Meeting date.

March 6, 2025, at 5:30 pm.

6. Public Comment

None

7. Any Other Necessary Business

None

8. Adjournment

Mr. Pratt made a motion to adjourn at 1:20 pm, seconded by Mr. LaRocque. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted by

Christina Candels-Assistant Town Administrator