

Any questions, comments or concerns about the minutes should be addressed to Amy Giroux, Zoning Administrator at (802) 868-3325

**MINUTES**  
**SWANTON PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**  
**Town Office Building**  
**1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488**  
**Wednesday, January 19, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m.**

Present: Ed Daniel, Andy Larocque, Ross Lavoie, Heather Buczkowski, Members; Amy Giroux, Zoning Administrator; Joseph Cava, Administrative Assistant; Michelle Nordberg; Oliver Manning; Judy Paxman; Molly Lambert; Priscilla Connelly; George Connelly

\*All motions carried unanimously unless specified otherwise.

1. Call to Order – Mr. Daniel called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Agenda Review
3. Nominate Brian Savage for Deputy Zoning Administrator

Mr. Lavoie made a motion to appoint Brian Savage as Deputy Zoning Administrator, seconded by Mr. LaRocque. Motion carried.

4. Interview any interested applicants for the open seat on the Planning Commission

Mr. Manning stepped forward to present himself to the Planning Commission for the vacant position.

Mr. Daniels has been on the PC since 1985 and this will be his last five-year run. He expressed a need for more people coming to the table and getting involved. Mr. Manning's goal as a PC member is to expand the demographic of board members to reflect the multigenerational makeup of Swanton. He would also like to improve communication and the image of members who hold a position in public office.

Mr. Lavoie asked if Mr. Manning would be interested in attending public meetings throughout the State of Vermont. Mr. Manning responded yes if it does not conflict with my work schedule. Ms. Giroux added that these meetings are usually conducted over ZOOM, so the options are flexible.

Ms. Buczkowski made a motion to approve the nomination of Oliver Manning for a five-year term on the Planning Commission, seconded by Mr. Lavoie. Motion carried.

5. Northwest Regional Planning to attend and discuss going forward with update to the Swanton Municipal Plan without Municipal Planning Grant funds.

\*Northwest Regional Planning was not present at the meeting.

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Mr. Daniel said I have a plan. Ms. Giroux interjected reminding members of the board and the public that Swanton did not receive funds from the Municipal Planning Grant. Mr. Lavoie recommended passing along the ideas to Northwest Regional Planning so that their office can fine tune the language.

Mr. Daniel then led into passing out handouts about groups that should come to the PC meetings including the Selectboard, Village Trustees, etc. He then expanded on the value of multi-community input from these boards and other community organizations.

Mr. Lavoie added that his biggest focus for Swanton is the implementation of infrastructure/improvements to existing infrastructure. This opens the door for partnerships like one with St. Albans Town who also have similar goals for infrastructure expansion/improvement.

## 6. Public Comment

Public comment opened with a discussion regarding opportunities in the Southern Growth District. Mr. Manning responded that there needs to be an anchor store in the area. Ms. Paxman suggested inviting the following groups to PC meetings including the Swanton Public Library, Teen Leadership Group, Friends of the Missisquoi Valley Wildlife Refuge, and the Swanton Arts Council.

Mr. Lavoie responded that it is obvious people want to be involved after receiving emails earlier last week. The goal is not to feel excluded, but there is mutual respect needed from both sides to act in an orderly conduct. Ms. Lambert responded as a representative from the Swanton Enhancement Project (SEP) to applaud the PC for their community vision and speak about moving forward jointly. Your work is a gift of public service, and we need to get a lot more people involved.

Ms. Nordberg reiterated this theme of communication stating that the PC's methods are overall ineffective and inefficient, and the PC needs to encompass more social media platforms to get the word out. Ms. Nordberg also cited more local partnerships with individuals like Tim Smith to maximize Swanton's growth efforts. Planning and Zoning are obstacles to developers and need to be re-evaluated.

Mr. Lavoie responded saying the PC is happy to have the community's help and support, but sending a letter of intent citing state statutes comes across as more of a threat than an offer of help. Ms. Nordberg apologized that their response came off this way citing reasons from the previous PC meeting including wanting to be involved and receiving information from a variety of sources.

## 7. Review the minutes of November 17, 2021

Mr. Lavoie made a motion to approve the Draft Minutes from the November 17, 2021 as written, seconded by Mr. LaRocque. Motion carried.

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8. Public Comment (Reprise)

Ms. Nordberg, for the record, would like a ZOOM option for Planning Commission meetings in the future citing reasons like rises in COVID-19 variants, work schedules and other obligations.

9. Any Other Necessary Business (None)

10. Executive Session (Personnel)

Mr. Lavoie made a motion to enter Executive Session at 8:25 p.m., seconded by Ms. Buczkowski. Motion carried.

Mr. Lavoie made a motion to exit from Executive Session at 9:07 p.m., seconded by Mr. LaRocque. Motion carried.

No action taken.

11. Adjournment – Ms. Buczkowski made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 p.m., seconded by Mr. Lavoie. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joseph Cava  
Administrative Assistant

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Ed Daniel

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Andy LaRocque

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Ross Lavoie

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Heather Buczkowski