

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

**MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION (PC) MEETING
Town Office Building
1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488
Wednesday, February 16, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m.**

Present: Oliver Manning, Ed Daniel, Andy LaRocque, Ross Lavoie, Heather Buczkowski, Members; Amy Giroux, Zoning Administrator; James Guilmette, Selectboard Chairman; Joseph Cava, Administrative Assistant; Greta Brunswick, Northwest Regional Planning; Kathy Lavoie; Michelle Nordberg; Shawn Cheney

*All motions carried unanimously unless specified otherwise.

1. Call to Order – Mr. Daniel called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.
2. Agenda Review
3. Northwest Regional Planning to attend and discuss going forward with update to the Swanton Municipal Plan without Municipal Grant funds.

Ms. Brunswick said that the Municipal Plan is a vision for the future. She stressed the importance of housing, municipal services, energy availability, transportation, and vitality to support the town on a whole. To summarize, Swanton’s existing Municipal Plan is not concise and needs data to back up the vision. Part of this data according to Ms. Brunswick is the results derived from public input/assessment. This community data should be collected during Summer 2022, so the Planning Commission can hit the ground running in the fall of 2022.

Ms. Brunswick reiterated that Swanton did not receive the grant funding, but it is important for Swanton to move forward. She mentioned that there is around \$250,000.00 in funding approved by the Vermont State Legislature that could be divided among Vermont towns that did not receive Municipal Grant funding. In addition, Ms. Brunswick recommended establishing a Planning fund through the town, to be used as a nest egg for matching grant funds/unforeseen circumstances.

She also recommended using this meeting to collaborate on the revised scope of work for preparing the Municipal Plan revisions. Ms. Brunswick asked the Planning Commission what they thought community outreach would look like? Mr. Lavoie added that community members have expressed interest in the community outreach portion of the Municipal Plan revision.

Between the three goals of senior housing, recreation, and infrastructure in the Southern Growth District, Ms. Brunswick recommended the infrastructure goal be Swanton’s priority. This will help meet the development needs of the community with an emphasis

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on smart goal implementation to achieve it. Mr. Manning expressed the need for water and sewer infrastructure to spur all types of development.

4. Public Comment

Ms. Nordberg talked about the vision for Swanton and how the existing plan should be rewritten to reflect a vision, rather than a plan. Discussions should not be directly targeting people or groups but should be a controlled vision that relates to central themes like beautification and walkability. Ms. Brunswick added that the budget is not large enough for a rewrite otherwise suggested by Ms. Nordberg.

5. Review minutes of January 19, 2022

Mr. Lavoie made a motion to approve the Draft Minutes from the January 19, 2022, Planning Commission meeting, seconded by Mr. LaRocque. Motion carried.

6. Set next Planning Commission meeting date

Wednesday, March 16, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m.

7. Public Comment (Reprise)

Mr. Cheney raised the challenges of business owners to expand because of existing zoning regulations. Ms. Giroux explained to Mr. Cheney that these issues don't stem from the Town but are building restrictions set by the State of Vermont. Ms. Nordberg added that the restrictions are costing the Town and are not creating a balance between commercial and residential goals.

Mr. Lavoie recommended delineating between building coverage and impervious surfaces when reevaluating the zoning bylaws. Ms. Giroux added that revitalizing existing infrastructure is beneficial in areas where new development would not be possible.

8. Any Other Necessary Business

Ms. Giroux asked if Mr. Daniel would still like an administrator's report summarizing the number of building permits, certificates of occupancy, and certificates of compliance? Mr. Daniel responded yes.

9. Adjournment – Mr. Lavoie made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 p.m., seconded by Mr. LaRocque. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joseph Cava
Administrative Assistant

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