

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

**MINUTES  
TOWN OF SWANTON  
SWANTON PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
Town Office Building  
1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488  
*Wednesday, August 17, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.***

Present: Ed Daniel, Chair; Ross Lavoie, Vice Chair; Andy LaRocque, Oliver Manning, Heather Buczkowski, Members; Amy Giroux, Zoning Administrator; Joseph Cava, Administrative Assistant; Corey Parent

\*All motions carried unanimously unless specified otherwise.

1. Call to Order – Mr. Daniel called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.
2. Agenda Review
3. Review of minutes of July 18, 2022 and July 20, 2022

Mr. LaRocque made a motion to approve the draft minutes from the 7/18/22 and 7/20/22 Planning Commission meeting, seconded by Mr. Lavoie. Motion carried.

4. Zoning Administrator's Report

Ms. Giroux gave a report of issuances for the month of July including 13 building permits, 11 certificates of compliance, and 4 certificates of occupancy.

5. Municipal Plan Audit

Mr. Parent spoke about updates of the data tables being at 80% capacity with prep in place for future meetings. Expanding, Mr. Parent recommended gathering community input in October before the primary in November. Contingently, half the Municipal Plan should be reviewed by December, and the other half by January, so it can all be put together with final revisions in February. Mr. Parent elaborated saying that the reasoning behind this proposed timeline is so it can be brought before the Selectboard in March and April. Ms. Giroux reminded members of the Planning Commission that the warnings for these municipal plan meetings with the Selectboard would need to be warned 30 days in advance.

Mr. Daniel passed a revised letter around the table regarding the proposed revisions to the Municipal Plan and expanded upon related news agencies and public participants that should be involved to get the word out. Ms. Buczkowski added revisions to the language and recommended having two Planning Commission meetings a month between now and the final draft. Ms. Giroux asked Mr. Parent if this would fit with the existing contract?

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Mr. Parent responded that he envisioned this in the scope during initial contract deliberation.

Mr. Daniel added that committees and subcommittees should get involved to serve with the Municipal Plan. Mr. Parent added that if this was the goal then the Municipal Plan edits wouldn't be done until Spring 2024. Expanding, Mr. Parent recommended utilizing a survey to gather data, because too much individual involvement delays the process and makes it too much to handle. Ms. Giroux supported Mr. Parent's points adding that there is not enough time to keep adding beyond the top three priorities of the community. Mr. Parent continued adding that the Municipal Plan is a goal for the future that needs to be focused on larger themes than smaller individual goals.

Mr. Parent said one of the broader focuses was on education, and asked members of the Planning Commission how they intended to engage with school leadership? Mr. Lavoie recommended reaching out to the principal of Swanton Elementary School who's been very engaging. Mr. Daniel recommended running off questionnaires to distribute. Mr. Parent added that beyond development and engagement, the Municipal Plan still needed to address specific state guidelines that all municipal plans contain. Smaller specific goals help achieve larger goals, but without muscle, then the smaller goals are just another form of spit balling.

Continuing, Mr. Parent shifted the conversation to community statistics including population, breaking it down by age groups within the US census. Odd factors for consideration included economic recessions caused by mounting inflation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ms. Giroux added that other factors from a zoning perspective include the conversion of seasonal dwellings like lakeside camps to full-time residential use. Mr. Parent added that there are other discrepancies/anomalies in the data when comparing a small residential community like Swanton to a county seat like St. Albans.

Other factors of consideration include occupational status of a farm vs. single-family residences. Ms. Buczkowski raised a discrepancy in the census data including people who live and work within the same community. This is in response to major employers like the businesses in the St. Albans Town Industrial Park which employs a large percentage of Franklin County residents. Mr. Lavoie raised the point that Swanton is a bedroom community where many of its residents live and reside, but frequently work outside Swanton in neighboring towns and counties.

Taking these factors into consideration, Mr. Parent recommended putting together the census data in a way that is coherent to Swanton and portrays an accurate picture of the community. In regard to reaching out to the local educational institutions, Mr. Lavoie recommended putting forth policy condensed on a spreadsheet and gathering priority focus points through the survey to gather community input.

#### 6. Set Next Planning Commission Meeting Date

Wednesday, September 21, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

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7. Public Comment - None
8. Any Other Necessary Business - None
9. Adjournment

Mr. Lavoie made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:13 p.m., seconded by Mr. Manning. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joseph Cava  
Administrative Assistant

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Ed Daniel, Chair

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Ross Lavoie, Vice Chair

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Andy LaRocque

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Oliver Manning

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Heather Buczkowski