

SWANTON PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes

Wednesday, August 14, 2024

Town Office Building

1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT

6:30 p.m.

Present: Ross Lavoie-Chair, Ed Daniel, Heather Buczkowski, Amy Giroux-Zoning Administrator, Christina Candels-Administrative Assistant, Corey Parent, Daniel Chevalier-Swanton Fire Chief

Zoom: No attendance

Absent: Oliver Manning, Andy LaRocque

1. Call to Order

Mr. Lavoie called the meeting to order at 6:37 pm.

2. Agenda Review

Mr. Lavoie reviewed the agenda. Mr. Lavoie would like to move the Public Comment up on the agenda.

3. Review minutes of August 7, 2024

Mr. Daniel made a motion to approve August 7, 2024, draft minutes as written, seconded by Ms. Buczkowski. Motion carried.

4. Public Comment

Chief Chevalier came to the meeting at the request of the Planning Commission to discuss the fire trucks height capabilities.

Mr. Lavoie said at the last meeting they discussed height changes in the bylaws, but they want to ensure the ladder truck can accommodate. Mr. Parent said the State of Vermont allows for one additional floor above higher than municipalities allow if they are building affordable housing. That is why they requested Chief Chevalier to come so they can discuss the height abilities of Swanton Village ladder fire truck. Chief Chevalier said they have an 85' ariel fire truck. Mr. Lavoie said they should stick to 3 floors or 65' because the State can approve the additional floor.

Ms. Buczkowski asked hypothetically if there is the ability to get a larger truck if someone wanted to build several 5-floor apartment buildings in the Southern Growth District? Chief Chevalier said when its appropriate. Mr. Lavoie said these trucks are also used for access & fire protection. Multiple points of entrance and egress.

Chief Chevalier said St. Albans City currently has 100'. St. Albans Town is comparable to Swanton. Chief Chevalier said they can also enter into agreements with other Towns that they would respond in the event of emergencies at these locations for height.

Mr. Lavoie said they are looking to spur growth.

Mr. Daniel asked what they do for the grain elevators now? Chief Chevalier said they can reach the platform, but that is also not occupied space.

Mr. Lavoie asked Chief Chevalier about private roads/driveways and the ability to turn trucks around. This does create problems with access. Chief Chevalier asked what the State of Vermont determines a private road? Mr. Parent said 800' or longer must go through Act 250. Ms. Buczkowski asked Chief Chevalier about concerns for building being built close together? Chief Chevalier said he has seen the wind push 40'-50' to buildings. Mr. Lavoie said the current requirement is for 15' to be fire rated walls.

Mr. Lavoie asked about response time to Southern Growth District? Chief Chevalier said it is typically 7-8 minutes because they are so close to the interstate, he will ask what St. Albans Town response time is. Mr. Lavoie asked if there would be a need in the future in the area for additional service/buildings in that area. If down the road there was extensive development, this could also be paid for by impact fees. Mr. Parent said impact fees can only be charged on residential, not industrial, or commercial. This is because it is based on the number of residents you are adding to the community.

Mr. Daniel said he remembers discussions about joint partnerships in the area. Mr. Parent said this is what will require "fire districts" in the future. Ms. Giroux asked Chief Chevalier to please let them know any other recommendations he has for them.

5. Land Use & Development Regulations Review

Mr. Parent reviewed article 3 in Land Use & Development.

The group discussed rebuilding after a fire changing time requirements from 18 months to 3 years.

Mr. Parent reviewed 3.1 abandoned structures. 3.2 access requirements: required road frontage, highway access, private roads & driveway. They reviewed what E-911 triggered to create a street name.


6. Set next Planning Commission Meeting date
September 10, 2024, 5pm-8pm.

7. Any Other Necessary Business
None

8. Adjournment

Mr. Daniel made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 pm, seconded by Ms. Buczkowski. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted by
Christina Candels-Administrative Assistant




Ross Layole-Chair



Oliver Manning-Vice Chair

Andy LaRocque



Ed Daniel

Heather Buczkowski

