

## SWANTON PLANNING COMMISSION

One Academy St., P.O. Box 711

Swanton, Vermont 05488-0711

Tel. (802) 868-3325, Fax. (802) 868-4957

Email: [swanza@swantonvermont.org](mailto:swanza@swantonvermont.org)

### 2/27/13 PUBLIC HEARING SWANTON PLANNING COMMISSION

The Swanton Planning Commission held a public hearing on Wednesday, February 27, 2013 at the Swanton Town Offices, 1 Academy Street, at 7:00 P.M. to receive public comment and to consider for approval, proposed changes to the Swanton Zoning Bylaws and Subdivision Regulations pursuant to Chapter 117 of Title 24, Section 4441 and 4442, Vermont Statutes Annotated.

The regulations affect the entire Town and Village of Swanton. The purposes of the zoning and subdivision regulations are to provide for orderly community growth, to further the purposes established in Section 4302 of the Act, and to implement the “*Swanton Town and Village Municipal Plan*” adopted by the Joint Legislative Body on August 31, 2010.

The Swanton Planning Commission has proposed the update and revision of a limited number of provisions of the “*Land Use & Development Regulations for the Town & Village of Swanton, Zoning Bylaw Subdivision Regulations*” which were first adopted on July 18, 2001 and last amended on March 4, 2008. The amended provisions address some of the matters omitted from the original and others which address concerns raised by members of the Swanton community during public meetings conducted by the Planning Commission throughout this past year.

Following this scheduled hearing, any proposed changes that are approved by the Planning Commission will be forwarded to the Joint Legislative Body for their consideration and adoption at a duly noticed public hearing in the near future.

Present:

Jim Hubbard

Ed Daniel

Ross Lavoie

Ron Kilburn, Zoning Administrator

Yaasha Wheeler, clerk

Also present:

Alan Larocque, Rene Fournier, & David Jescavage

Hubbard opened the hearing at 7:11 p.m. It was noted that Alan Larocque was present to view the proceedings as a prospective candidate for the vacant Planning Commission position. If, after being interviewed, he was recommended to and accepted by the Joint Legislative Body, he would be approved a one-year term, to start in 2013. Jescavage stated that the other candidate for the position was Dolores Nichols, who was unable to attend the current meeting. Larocque introduced himself as a life-long Swanton resident, who felt that it was time to be involved in the community. Hubbard asked him to put together a brief resume to be considered.

Kilburn introduced Rene Fournier, stating that he had an interest in adding auto sales to the industrial district, which were currently not allowed but which he had already been doing without knowledge of violation. He had ceased until the matter could be resolved. Fournier said that he would also like to add manufacturing and selling wholesale to the district. The Planning Commission determined that Fournier's commercial lot was at the end of the industrial park, right on the edge of the Neighborhood Commercial Light district. Daniel said that he felt it was important to distinguish between auto sales and auto service, for the sake of the neighbors. Fournier asked if he could have anything for sale out front for the time being and Hubbard said that Fournier would have to sell from within the building.

Hubbard explained that the current bylaw changes were being presented to the Joint Legislative Body for immediate use, but the rest of the bylaws would be reviewed and updated, with the help of the Regional Planning Commission, over the next 12 to 15 months. Kilburn suggested addressing Fournier's request concerning auto sales now, and then addressing his other requests in the later review.

Kilburn asked which dates the Planning Commission was available to work with the Regional Planning Commission on the review. The Planning Commission agreed to set the meeting for Wednesday, March 27, 2013 at 7 p.m. The Regional Planning Commission had provided a spreadsheet with a certain number of personnel hours and grant money available to the Swanton Planning Commission for the bylaw revision. Lavoie noted that Swanton was expected to kick in a little bit of money as well. Daniel pointed out that 100 hours of personnel time from the Regional Planning Commission would not cover the full review, and Hubbard suggested that the Swanton Planning Commission could ask the RPC for direction, and take things from there. He reminded the Planning Commission members to consider questions they would want to ask the representatives from RPC.

Kilburn said that the past project on Penny Lane had been withdrawn by Michael Gervais. He noted that a developer on Lakewood Drive (with whom the Planning Commission had had dealings in the past) was planning to redraw the lot lines on his subdivision in order to avoid long, thin lots; the new plan would create a big lot out back.

The Planning Commission resumed discussion of Fournier's request. Daniel stated that he felt better about having Fournier's business in the industrial district than in a residential neighborhood. The Planning Commission voted unanimously to move forward with adding auto sales as a conditional use in the Industrial District, to be presented as part of the packet as soon as possible to the Joint Legislative Body.

Fournier discussed the district lines with the Planning Commission, and Hubbard explained the importance of having a “buffer” for the quiet neighborhood between the retail area and the industrial park. Fournier pointed out that his location was ideal for retail. Jescavage suggested allowing retail sales so many feet back from the center line of the road in the Industrial District. Since most of the area was wetland, there would be few lots, aside from Fournier’s, that would be capable of doing retail anyway. That would be one way to allow retail without changing the entire Industrial District. Hubbard asked Fournier to clearly outline and communicate his vision to the Planning Commission in a future bylaw meeting.

The Planning Commission decided to meet with the Joint Legislative Body at the JLB meeting on Monday, March 25, 2013.

Kilburn stated that the “Swanton Bylaw Amendment Report” and the “Proposed Changes to Swanton Bylaws and Regulations” had been published and sent to adjoining municipalities, as well as to the Agency of Commerce and Development and the Regional Planning Commission on 2/5/13.

Hubbard made a motion, seconded by Daniel, to approve the packet, with the inclusion of auto sales under conditional use in the Industrial District. Motion carried.

Jescavage gave out samples of interview questions, to be modified for use in interviewing candidates for the Planning Commission. Hubbard felt that the sample questions might be useful in creating a template for interviewing candidates in the future. Hubbard explained the planning process and the importance of the town plan to Larocque.

Lavoie made a motion, seconded by Daniel, to adjourn at 8:05 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yaasha Wheeler  
Planning Commission Secretary

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Jim Hubbard

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Ed Daniel

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Ross Lavoie