

**SWANTON PLANNING COMMISSION &
SWANTON DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD JOINT MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES**

Wednesday, October 24, 2018

Town Office Building

1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT

7:00 p.m.

Present: Jim Hubbard, Chair; Ed Daniel, Andrew LaRocque, Sara Luneau-Swan, Ross Lavoie, Members, Planning Commission; Karen Drennen, Reg Beliveau, Members, Development Review Board; Amy Giroux, Zoning Administrator; Elisabeth Nance, Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order – Chair Hubbard called the meeting to order.
2. Agenda Review – Chair Hubbard reviewed the agenda and asked for any corrections or additions.
3. Discussion on The Town & Village of Swanton Land Use & Development Regulations

Ms. Giroux opened the discussion by reminding those present that the main purpose of the joint meeting was to clarify any questions the Development Review Board members have regarding the zoning bylaws. In his absence, Ms. Giroux attempted to relay questions that DRB Chair LaBarge had, however, it was difficult to determine the exact nature of the questions, specifically that relating to Conditional Use less 30% as described in Section 3.7 (K). Chair Hubbard stated reducing setbacks is a variance “every single time.”

Ms. Drennen said some of her concerns center on definitions. Chair Hubbard stated the DRB needs to be fair and consistent, and let the applicant challenge the decision.

There was discussion regarding campers (Section 4.6), specifically whether 400 sq. ft. was appropriate. It was determined 400 sq. ft. is fairly large and, therefore, an appropriate limitation for a camper or temporary shelter. Ms. Drennen asked for the distinction between mobile home and campers. Mr. Lavoie read the definition of each.

4. Discussion on ARTICLE 10: DEFINITIONS of the Town & Village of Swanton Land Use & Development Regulations

Ms. Giroux listed several definitions that are either missing or need clarification:

Missing

Service Industry

Automobile Sales and Service

Pier

Wireless Communication Facility

Patio – The boards discussed the definition of a patio and determined it meets the definition of structure as an “assembly of materials on the land for occupancy or use, including but not limited to a building, mobile home or trailer, sign, wall, or fence.” Chair Hubbard stated impervious surface is included in lot coverage. Chair Hubbard also clarified an access road is a driveway if it is a privately-owned road in a PUD.

The boards discussed whether solar panels met the definition of an impervious surface. Mr. Lavoie noted large-scale solar farms need Regional Planning approval and must have a decommissioning plan.

There was discussion about how to address development projects that do not conform to an approved DRB application. Mr. Lavoie stated the town has jurisdiction to involve state authorities.

Needing Clarification

Structure – The definition of “mobile home” needs to be revised to incorporate HUD regulations.

Alteration – what is considered an addition to a building?

Lighting – what are “internally lit overhead canopies?” The Planning Commission stated this references to gas station-type lighting. A pergola would also qualify under this definition.

Both boards will continue to identify concerns with an eye toward a late spring bylaws update. In the meantime, Ms. Giroux will work on verbiage to define those terms needing definitions and those needing clarification.

5. Discussion on The Energy Committee – There was a review of the VCRD visit and a preview of the Button Up Vermont program. Mr. Daniel will write a letter to the editor for people to join the Energy Committee. Ms.

Luneau-Swan is stepping down at the end of the year. The Energy Committee will not meet until January 2019.

6. Public Comment – None

7. Any Other Necessary Business

- a) Chair Hubbard received a notice that VT Gas Systems intends to construct a substation on Beebe Rd.
- b) Chair Hubbard asked to have a multi-board meeting again.
- c) Ms. Nance suggested putting aside money for the 2023 Municipal Plan update. The Commission thought it appropriate to ask the Selectboard for a small yearly allotment for the next few years.
- d) Mr. Daniel asked about adding an enforcement mechanism for public health and safety issues.

8. Adjournment – Mr. Beliveau made a motion at 8:38 p.m., seconded by Ms. Luneau-Swan, to adjourn. Motion carried.