



# MILTON PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Type:..... Regular  
Date:..... Tuesday, December 1, 2015  
Time:..... 6:00 p.m.  
Place:..... Municipal Building Listers' Conference Room  
Address:..... 43 Bombardier Road, Milton, Vermont 05468-3205  
Contact:..... (802) 893-1186  
Website:..... miltonvt.org

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1 **1. CALL TO ORDER**

2 The Vice-Chair called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.  
3

4 **2. ATTENDANCE**

5 **Members Present:** Julie Rutz, Vice-Chair; John Lindsay, Clerk; Henry Bonges; Lori Donna, Chair arrived  
6 at 6:15 p.m.

7 **Members Absent:** Tony Micklus

8 **Staff Present:** Jacob Hemmerick, Planning Director; Brandy Saxton, PlaceSense consultant (by telephone).

9 **Public Present:** David White  
10

11 **3. AGENDA REVIEW**

- 12 • Staff advised that Saxton would be participating via telephone, due to unsafe road conditions.  
13

14 **4. PUBLIC FORUM**

- 15 • None.  
16

17 **5. BUSINESS**

- 18 • **5(A). Interim Zoning Conditional Use Comment**

19 Staff recapped the Interim Zoning Conditional Use proposal that is currently being heard by the  
20 Selectboard, and for which Selectboard had asked for comment from the Planning Commission.  
21 The Commissioner's reviewed their statement for the Selectboard and discussed additions and  
22 deletions.  
23

24 David White asked to address the Commission to provide comment, introducing himself as a  
25 representative for the Conditional Use applicant, William Sawyer. Mr. Sawyer sent his regrets that  
26 he could not personally be present. White gave his background and explained that while he  
27 understands the Town's desire to develop commercial properties, the economy is the true driving  
28 force of demand for commercial, which he said is not strong. White explained that while his client  
29 would like to build the entire project right away, he would build it in phases and as the market  
30 demands: if there is higher demand for residential, the residential would be built first; if there is  
31 higher demand for commercial, the commercial would be built first. Tax Increment Financing  
32 (TIF), and the effect this project would have on the District, was explained by White. The  
33 Commission and White discussed the proposal and the Interim bylaw.  
34

35 MOTION by Lindsay to APPROVE the Planning Commission's response to the Selectboard with  
36 the minor additions that were previously discussed. SECOND by Rutz. Discussion: none.  
37 Unanimously APPROVED.  
38

39 *Commissioner Bonges had to leave at 7:00 p.m. and exited the meeting.*  
40

1 • **5(B). 2016 Bylaw Amendment Downtown Business District Standards**

2 Due to time constraints, Staff advised and it was agreed upon that the Commission should pass  
3 over this item and move forward to item 5(C) on the Agenda. The Commission plans to return to  
4 this discussion at their next meeting.  
5

6 • **5(C). 2016 Bylaw Amendment Site Plan Standards**

7 The Commissioners, joined now by Saxton via telephone, began discussion of Site Plan Standards  
8 language. Topics included:  
9

10 ○ **GENERAL BUILDING DESIGN**

11 Four main elements were discussed: 1) shallow setbacks, 2) buildings arranged in related  
12 groups, 3) pedestrian connectivity, and 4) cross-lot connectivity. The possibility of adding a  
13 purpose statement to this section was considered. Saxton commented that dimensional  
14 standards will help achieve the desired results.  
15

16 ○ **FORM & MASSING**

17 The benefits of form & mass requirements were discussed. Details such as breaking up the  
18 mass of a building, changes in the wall plane, and having windows recessed in to the  
19 building, for example, can make a dramatic difference in aesthetics and feel.  
20

21 Donna and Rutz mentioned that they'd traveled to Hinesburg to view some of the examples  
22 noted by Saxton in previous meetings. They gathered information, and were impressed  
23 with what they saw. Donna liked the idea of 6-8 units in a building, with the buildings  
24 being separated by narrow alleyways, versus a huge, solid row of a building.  
25

26 ○ **MATERIALS & COLORS**

27 The feasibility of color requirements was briefly discussed. Staff recommended that color  
28 requirements be removed from the language being considered. The Commission generally  
29 agreed that color restrictions or requirements would not be a good fit for Milton at this time.  
30

31 Materials were also considered, as they are a real determining factor in the level of quality of  
32 any given building. The Commission felt that quality of materials and quality of  
33 construction is what they should be concerned with long-term.  
34

35 ○ **WINDOWS & ENTRIES**

36 Saxton started the discussion, emphasizing how important windows and entryways are to  
37 good development. The Commissioners agreed that a definition for window is needed to  
38 avoid mock windows. This led to a brief discussion of windows that you can't see in and  
39 out of due to large displays or decals, which Milton already has several instances of. Saxton  
40 advised that window displays are to be expected and can positively contribute to the  
41 character of a downtown, but ideally they would not completely block the line of sight into  
42 the building. Saxton recommended that the definition of "window" be included. There was  
43 some discussion about the relationship between road frontage and the number of windows.  
44

45 ○ **ENERGY**

46 The Vermont Residential Building Energy Standards (RBES) and Commercial Building  
47 Energy Standards (CBES) were discussed. Questions were asked and answered about the

Stretch Code. Structural standards to support solar panels were also brought up. After some discussion on how these could be applied, the topic was tabled.

o OPEN SPACE & SEMI-PRIVATE OPEN SPACE

Saxton stressed the importance of balance with this topic, especially in the context of creating a downtown. While open space is certainly desirable in any setting, a traditional downtown setting is by nature tightly knit, and not every parcel or building has open space. Saxton felt that the current PUD open space requirements were a bit high, and recommended going no higher than 400 feet per unit. Various scenarios in which open space might be required were discussed, as were scenarios that might require a waiver.

On the topic of semi-private open space (such as a balcony or patio for a residential unit), the Commissioners and Staff all agreed that these spaces are desirable and expressed support for the proposed language.

o SERVICE AREAS & UTILITIES

In general, this topic focused on screening of service and utility areas, such as dumpsters and meters (water, power, etc.). The language on service areas was well-received. Staff advised that some of it would need to be reviewed by the Department of Public Works.

o LANDSCAPING

Discussion was brief on this topic, and was dominated by compliance with, and connectivity to, State regulations on stormwater management. Invasive species were brought up, as were legal mechanisms used to ensure survival of plantings, such as a surety or escrow.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

7(A). Minutes of November 17, 2015

MOTION by Rutz to APPROVE the Minutes as written; SECOND by Lindsay. Unanimously APPROVED.

7. ADJOURNED

MOTION by Rutz to adjourn at 7:55 p.m., SECOND by Micklus. Discussion: none. Unanimously APPROVED.

Minutes approved by the Commission this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lori Donna, Chair

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Draft Filed by Staff with the Town Clerk this 4th day of December, 2015

Final Filed with the Town Clerk this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015