



MILTON PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Type:.....Regular
Date:.....Tuesday, January 5, 2016
Time:.....6:00 p.m.
Place:.....Municipal Building Community Room
Address:.....43 Bombardier Road, Milton, Vermont 05468-3205
Contact:.....(802) 893-1186
Website:.....miltonvt.org

1 **1. CALL TO ORDER**

2 The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.
3

4 **2. ATTENDANCE**

5 **Members Present:** Lori Donna, Chair; Julie Rutz, Vice-Chair; Tony Micklus, Clerk; John Lindsay (via
6 Skype); Henry Bonges.

7 **Members Absent:** None.

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

9 **Public Present:** None.
10

11 **3. AGENDA REVIEW**

- 12 • Staff suggested moving Item 6(B) to the first item of new Business, and this was agreed upon.
13

14 **4. PUBLIC FORUM**

- 15 • None.
16

17 **5. STAFF UPDATE**

- 18 • Staff gave an update of recent activities and projects being worked on, including Fee Schedule
19 review, preparation of the Annual Report, Fiscal Year 2017 Budget, workflow reporting, and
20 Violations. A recap of recent Development Review Board (DRB) activity and upcoming hearings
21 was also given. Budgeting was a large part of the discussion. A recent DRB decision in an Appeal
22 hearing was briefly discussed, with Commissioners expressing varying points of view.
23

24 **6. BUSINESS**

- 25 • **6(A). 2016 Bylaw Amendment: Site Plan Standards**

26 Discussion began on the subject of landscaping. Saxton commented that upcoming stormwater
27 regulations put some emphasis on existing landscaping. Brief discussion was held regarding these
28 upcoming regulations, landscaping in general and the pros and cons of various plantings.
29 Landscaping sureties were discussed as a useful and necessary tool to ensure successful plantings.
30 The length of time that plantings be required to survive was brought up, and the language for this
31 topic was analyzed. Donna supported the more specific language that was presented. It was
32 generally agreed upon that landscaping should be required to survive in perpetuity, for any given
33 Site Plan.
34

35 Stormwater runoff was addressed. Upcoming state regulations were again a guiding factor in the
36 discussion. The relationship between landscaping and stormwater management was discussed.
37 Bonges questioned how the specific language being discussed could be enforced; Saxton replied
38 that a separate stormwater section or ordinance would likely be necessary. This led to a discussion
39 of enforcement, and Bonges asked whether or not guidelines could be separated out from
40 requirements. The use of "shall" vs. "should" was discussed, as was adding a Purpose statement to

1 sections of the regulations. The idea of a Purpose statement was well received, as it would
2 communicate the intent of the regulations to the reader. Saxton advised the Board on what she's
3 seen in other Vermont communities and made recommendations based on the discussion
4 occurring. Donna commented that illustrations would be helpful, and Saxton agreed. Various
5 changes to the language and the general layout of the regulations were discussed at length.
6

7 Parking standards were the next topic of discussion. Planting islands were discussed and Saxton
8 expressed her preference for larger, fewer islands that provide enough green space for the plantings
9 to survive; Micklus expressed his preference for uncluttered, uncomplicated parking lots. Staff
10 reviewed existing regulations regarding this topic. The number of required parking spots was
11 discussed, with Bonges commenting that some existing parking lots are too big, and likely will
12 never be fully utilized. It was agreed that the term "parking lot" must be defined moving forward,
13 as the lack of a definition has been problematic in the past.
14

15 Fences and walls were discussed briefly, especially in terms of screening. Sample language
16 included a restriction on chain link fencing; therefore attractive alternatives to chain link fencing
17 were discussed. Donna expressed hesitation at this type of restriction for various reasons. The
18 topic was tabled for further consideration.
19

20 The next set of standards related to vehicular circulation. These standards address interconnection,
21 safety, accessibility, and connectivity to pedestrian and bike paths. Streetscaping was discussed at
22 length, with a focus on the number, size and diversity of trees that could be needed to accomplish
23 the desired outcome. Bonges remarked that the "Milton: Defining Downtown from the Diner to
24 the Dam" (M4D) project that is currently being worked on by the Town incorporates a lot of the
25 same things being discussed. It was agreed that the M4D plan should be reviewed in relation to the
26 proposed bylaw changes to ensure cohesion.
27

28 Previously developed sites -and how to bring them up to current standards- were discussed. This
29 will be a difficult element that needs to be carefully analyzed, to ensure reasonable expectations are
30 set. The Commissioners agreed that items in this context need to be prioritized and that balance
31 would be crucial. Lighting, landscaping and signage were prioritized.
32

33 The following topics were briefly discussed:

- 34 ○ pedestrian and bicycle access between parcels
- 35 ○ transit structures (for example, a sheltered waiting area for a bus stop)
- 36 ○ parking to the side or rear
- 37 ○ highway accesses to the side
- 38 ○ screening of parking areas, via either landscaping or grading
- 39 ○ walkways and landscaping between parking areas and buildings
40

41 Wrapping up the discussion, the Commission then reviewed their timeline and discussed topics for
42 upcoming meetings.
43

- 44 • **6(B). 2016 Bylaw Amendment Downtown Business District (DB1) Standards**
45 Due to time constraints, this Agenda item was not discussed.
46

47 7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

48 7(A). Minutes of December 1, 2015

1 MOTION by Rutz to APPROVE the Minutes as written; SECOND by Bonges. Micklus abstained.
2 Discussion: none. Motion APPROVED.
3

4 **8. ADJOURNED**

5 MOTION by Micklus to adjourn at 8:13 p.m., SECOND by Rutz. Discussion: none. Unanimously
6 APPROVED.
7

8 Minutes approved by the Commission this _____ day of _____, 2016.
9

10
11 _____
12 Lori Donna, Chair

/kt

13
14 Draft Filed by Staff with the Town Clerk this 8th day of January, 2016

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16 Final Filed with the Town Clerk this _____ day of _____, 2016