



PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 10, 2026

Members: Etienne Hancock, Joshua Goldstein, John Meyer, James Morris, Wally Reeve

Absent:

ADMINISTRATION and STAFF: Tyler Machia Zoning and Planning Administrator

PARTICIPANTS/GUESTS: Gary Nolan, Donald Blake Jr, Jerry Throne, Ron Stancliff, Kristen Fogdall

CALL TO ORDER

Etienne Hancock called the Planning Commission to order at 5:00 PM at the Tegu Building.

AGENDA CHANGES/ADDITIONS

None

APPROVE PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

1. Approve minutes from 2/24/26.

Motion made by John Meyer to approve the minutes of 2/24/26. Motion seconded by Wally Reeve. Motion carried. (5/0)

NEW BUSINESS

1. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair for 2026.

Motion made by Wally Reeve to appoint Joshua Goldstein as Chair of the Planning Commission and to appoint John Meyers as Vice Chair. Motion seconded by Etienne Hancock. Motion carried (5/0).

Joshua Goldstien asked Etienne Hancock to continue to chair this meeting. Joshua will preside at the next Commission meeting. Wally Reeve thanked Etienne Hancock for his years of service as the outgoing Chair of the Planning Commission.

2. Review of draft community survey designed by intern Gabriella Coutts.

The commission reviewed a draft of the community survey designed by intern Gabriella Coutts, which aims to assess residents' views on the current town plan and gather input for the upcoming 2030 town plan update. The survey will be distributed digitally through the town website and QR codes posted around town, with plans for additional outreach at the library and on Front Porch Forum to ensure broad community participation. Joshua questioned the wording in the survey, "Large Commercial Development", as having a negative connotation and asked for a language review. Tyler suggested sending the survey next week to keep within the intern's schedule, with an April summation of the results.

3. Discussion with Gary Nolan and Donald Blake Jr about a letter submitted by the Morrystown Development Review Board requesting that the Planning Commission consider changing the bylaw to allow for major submissions that are not automatically conservation submissions that require 50% of the land associated with a project to be conserved.

Gary Nolan, Chair, and Donnie Blake, Vice Chair, from the Development Review Board, attended the Planning Commission to discuss a bylaw change request regarding mandatory conservation subdivisions. Gary Nolan expressed concerns that the current requirement limits housing development potential and should be optional for developers. Currently, the bylaw requires major subdivisions to put 50% of the land into conservation. The discussion revealed

uncertainty about the original rationale for making conservation subdivisions mandatory, particularly regarding any potential agreement with the Act 250 Commission. The board discussed potential requirements related to conservation subdivisions and major subdivisions based on an Act 250 permit for the sewer plant. Jerry Throne, Chair of the Conservation Committee, weighed in on the discussion. Wally suggested that Tyler contact the Act 250 Commission to request a copy of the permit to clarify if there are specific requirements or a rider mentioning conservation. Joshua reminded the Commission of the importance of the current bylaws progressing towards the Selectboard's approval as planned. The majority agreed that this issue required a thorough analysis of the information.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Discussion with Gary Nolan and Donald Blake Jr about their experience with earth extraction.

The Planning Commission, with Gary Nolan and Donnie Blake's input, discussed defining "incidental" earth extraction in the zoning bylaw, particularly in relation to the airport industrial park project. A resident added that the airport project was not incidental, as the removal of soil and particulate matter was planned for 10 years, and the rationale for extracting the hill from its development would only affect 3 of 26 buildings. However, as Tyler pointed out the word incidental is not defined in the bylaws. He went on to note that based on a literal interpretation of the bylaws, as required in state statute, one could interpret that 10 years of extraction as incidental as the industrial park use runs with the land and exists in perpetuity. The Commission agreed to move away from defining "incidental" and instead focus on specific parameters for earth extraction, particularly for commercial and larger residential projects. The discussion included consideration of single-family homes for exclusion from the ruling. The group discussed parameters, including blasting, the sale of materials for profit, quantities, and the length of time to remove soil. Etienne asked Tyler to research language appropriate for defining the parameters of earth extraction. They also discussed the impact of the projects on community health. Tyler reported that the commission also received guidance that municipalities cannot co-regulate with the state on air pollution and particulate matter, limiting their authority in certain areas.

2. Discussion on Legal Feedback from VLCT regarding questions related to earth extraction.

Tyler reported that the commission received guidance from VLCT that municipalities cannot co-regulate with the state on air pollution and particulate matter, limiting their authority in certain areas. Act 250 regulates air pollutants and particulate matter. Also, Tyler's role as Health Officer does not offer him any authority in this area.

3. Discuss feedback from the town attorney on the proposed 2026 bylaws and make additional edits.

Feedback from the lawyer's review of Tyler's final edits of the bylaws was received with no significant issues. The commission reviewed the information and instructed Tyler to amend the bylaws with a unanimous vote, and Tyler outlined a timeline for presenting the changes to village trustees and preparing for a possible public hearing in May. ***Motion made by Joshua Goldstein to include all the final edits into the bylaws. Motion seconded by Wally Reeve. Motion carried (5/0).***

FUTURE PLANNING AGENDA TOPICS

Tyler and Joshua will meet to discuss these topics. Tyler will send a memo to the Village Trustees regarding the status of the Bylaws. He will be at their April 1st committee meeting. Tyler hopes that if all goes well he will be able to warn the public hearing for May.

CORRESPONDENCE/NOTICES

None.

ADJOURN

Motion made by John Meyers to adjourn. Motion seconded by Joshua Goldstein. Motion carried. (5/0)

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm
Submitted and filed this 3/11/26.

Bonnie McDermott, Scribe

Please note all minutes are in Draft form and are subject to approval at the next Planning Commission meeting.