Danville Planning Commission September Minutes September 25, 2025 - 7:30PM

PC Members in Attendance: Alison Despathy (Chair), Judy Corso (Vice Chair), Vince Foy, Dawn Brittian, David Kyle, Greg Prior (Interim Secretary), **PC Members Absent -** Kate Whitehead (Secretary)
Public in Attendance: None

Meeting Opened 7:37pm

1. Changes to the Agenda

No changes were made to the publicly warned agenda.

2. Review and acceptance of minutes from August Planning Commission minutes

August minutes were accepted and unanimously approved as offered during the meeting.

3. Public Comment – Beginning Meet

None

4. Chair Update and Administrative Check In

- **Flood Zoning Bylaw Compliance** – Alison Despathy had worked with the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to complete August's meeting effort to bring Danville Zoning Bylaws up to date with new state flood zone regulations. The work identified three remaining sections requiring commission approval:
    - 305.7 - (Add) Any variance issued in the flood variance area shall not increase flood heights
    - 532.21F - (Add) Any variance issued in the flood variance area shall not increase flood heights
    - 532.14F - (Modify) Section 1 – define acceptable use. (Modify) Section 2 - be designed definition (Modify) Section 3 - must meet or exceed the following minimum enclosure specifications" and (Modify) Section 4 - "to finish".

  These completed modifications vary from simple additional wording (1 and 2) to lengthy detailed additions and can be found in their entirety within the updated Zoning Bylaws at the above location(s). They were granted final Planning

Commission approval and David Kyle moved to approve the amended Danville Zoning Bylaws as described. Unanimous approval was granted to the motion.

- **Membership Recruitment** – Brief conversation was held regarding David Kyle's upcoming membership retirement and the potential future status of Kate Whitehead's membership. Conversations including processes for evaluating desired candidate skillsets, proactive versus reactive membership outreach, current standard membership recruitment processes, etc.

5. Danville DRB decision for the Rural Edge Housing Project
https://danvillevt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/DRB-2025-43-Rural-Edge-Danville-Senior-Housing-Decision.pdf

After a lengthy discussion, a full PC consensus was reached to uphold the DRBs decision regarding the rural edge project and not adjust zoning for this specific project. As pointed out in the DRB decision, an appeal to the environmental court would be action to consider if rural edge chose to do so.

This resolution was recognized as a notable positive result. The permit had been brought to the Planning Commission's attention earlier in the year for potential "single/spot request policy modification" following a failure to be granted a larger number of expansion units. The final DRB solution appears to have delivered improved current zoning compliance at the facility while providing a 4-unit expansion that the developer appears to find acceptable. The Planning Commission compliments the Development Review Board's work to find proper and acceptable resolution.

The Planning Commission recognized the following content within the decision and is aware that footprint logic is outstanding in future scheduled bylaw consideration: *"This 4000 square foot limitation does not make sense to the Board in that someone can develop a one-acre lot in this zone and divide it into 4 individual house lots and have four individual structures of 4000 square feet each for a total of 16,000 square feet of footprint. The subject parcel of land is almost 2 acres. The Board, therefore, from the perspective of footprint size, waives the footprint limitation and will allow the project to move forward as proposed"*

This square footage topic has been flagged as an outstanding action item and is scheduled for the 2026 Bylaw revision effort that will include evaluation of building footprint logic versus impermeable surfaces logic.

6. Review of memo to NVDA regarding FLU Mapping

Judy Corso had authored a memo to NVDA for closure of the Danville PC's multiple month effort with NVDA's Future Land Use mapping for Act 181. The commission walked thru the wording and logic of the memo and provided feedback for fine tuning. The approved memo is pending Judy's final update and is available in the below correspondence index.*

7. Planning Commission Liaison to Selectboard

This topic was explored as to how best to identify future Selectboard project and committee lines of communication with the Planning Commission. At the same time, it was recognized the Planning Commission has content value to provide Selectboard projects and committees. Conversations included a possible "Selectboard Checklist" for standing up future committees to identify if Planning Commission would be appropriately engaged was mentioned. Conversation included the potential commitment of a dedicated PC resource to track Selectboard activity to flag topics where PC may be of value in Town Plan translation.

It was noted that (currently) Glenn Herrin's experience with Planning Commission likely limits the Selectboard's Town Plan translation need but that variable will not always be true for the Selectboard and that does not address the commission's need to understand SB committee direction and decisions. The topic was tabled until next (October) meeting for additional consideration.

8. Train Station Update

The success of the recent Train Station open house was recognized. The weather, public attendance and the Train Station product was recognized as excellent. It was understood that final construction handoff had not occurred at the date of the event but that it was imminent.

Construction funding outstanding challenges, operational funding path forward, and challenges in the construction process were recognized. Lessons were learned, but the building is restored. The Planning Commision's attempt to extend congratulations was recognized.

7. Economic Planning/Town Plan Discussion

- **Conservation Commission Town Forest Plans** – Town Plan update content opportunity recognized due to Conservation efforts. Planning Conservation and Conservation Commission relationship and engagement opportunity discussed through the Town Plan effort. Potential availability of the County Forester (AJ) for possible FLU map questioning through the Conservation's scheduled agenda was noted.
    - "Your town's municipal plan must include strategies for managing areas vital for forest connectivity and minimizing fragmentation, according to the requirements of Act 171."
- **Economic Planning and Action Items** – Topic was tabled for an additional month for Town Plan study and preparation by Greg Prior, alignment with Recommended Action Items presentation by Alison Despathy, and in hopes of time within next meet versus September's crowded agenda.

10. Old/New Business:

David Kyle expressed strong interest in making progress with the following topics before his membership departure at the end of the year:

- **Route 2 Solar Field** - Tree buffer per zoning requirement and vendor presentation
    - PUC 22-4918-PET Route 2 Danville Solar Field "tree line / visibility"
- **Road Designation Modifications –** Recommended Action Item
- **Newsletter** - Planning Commission contribution to September Newsletter:
    - https://danvillevt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Danville-Town-Newsletter-Sept-2025.pdf
- **Membership Recruitment -** Membership status of Kate Whitehead and David Kyle
    - What recruitment process? DVHS Bylaw evaluation?
    - Enhanced energy specialist role?
- **Village Core Parking** – Planning was redirected from committee level engagement and was advised to follow public events. (August Audio Recording @ 19 Minute)
- **Contacts and Zoning Handout** – Feedback, status, where is it published?
- **FLU Mapping** - Final publication date? Preview?
- **FLU Mapping –** Nature and future of Gravel Pit pending future deep dive.
- **Town Plan Recommended Actions –** Town Plan actions tracking file.
    - Provided by Glen Herrin – states it is periodically visited by SB and are goals, not deadlines. *Correspondence
    - How is Planning Commission tracking / updating their action items?
        - Train Station congratulations – item #? Summarize & date?

    - Flood Plains zoning – item #? Summarize & date?
- **Joe's Pond Shoreline** - speaker & conversations remains a parked topic.

11. Public Comment – End of Meet

None

Meeting Closed 9:11 pm

Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, October 23, 2025 at 7:30pm

CORRESPONDENCE INDEX

*Planning Commission engagement/liaison to Village Core Parking modifications:

Thursday, September 4, 2025 at 08:39:32 PM EDT, Alison Despathy wrote:

<extract>.....I wanted to let you know that Janice was in touch about the opportunities for the planning commission and any of the public to engage and share input on the parking lot and Hill Street projects. At this time, those groups have been convened and are just working on some organization and hearing back about details to then share with the public and have that conversation.

The following was shared by Janice to clarify what is in play and next steps including public feedback and discussion.....

"The parking lot and Hill Street parking are two separate work groups. The parking lot work group meets once a month and has been at work for a few months. These work group meetings are not public meetings as we have a limited time to get lots of work done. We met on Thursday morning with Emily Lewis from DuBois and King to work on details for the design charrette that is planned for October 6th. That will be a public event where participants will be broken into smaller groups and have an opportunity to weigh in on the design of the parking lot. I believe there will be graphic display of the results of the intercept surveys that were done, specifically about why people come into the village and what their priorities for the parking lot are.

The Hill Street parking group consisted of Eric, Keith, and I and was formed at a selectboard meeting out of the need to change the parking pattern. This is on the agenda for Thursday night. We will be discussing the justification for the change as well as available alternatives for parking. We will be reaching out to merchants after that meeting to make them aware. All are welcome to attend and be part of the discussion. This ties into the larger infrastructure project of the Shared Pathway and Hill Street Sidewalk. There is a public meeting planned for 9/25 to share the conceptual plans and meet the Municipal Project Manager from Du Bois and King as well as the VHB design team. That would be a good event for the whole Planning Commission to attend!"