



TOWN OF STOWE PLANNING COMMISSION Meeting Minutes February 2, 2026

The Town of Stowe Planning Commission held a regular meeting on **Monday February 2, 2026** starting at 5:30 PM. The meeting was held at the Stowe Town Office with remote participation via Zoom. Voting members included Bob Davison, Brian Hamor, Mila Lonetto, Jill Anne, and Heather Snyder. Members John Muldoon and Neil Percy had notified the group of their planned absence. Non-voting member(s) present included Jeff Sereni. Municipal staff Sarah McShane was present. Community member Amina Rank also attended.

Chair B.Hamor called the meeting to order at approximately 5:30 p.m.

Review Prior Meeting Minutes [01/05/2026]

H.Snyder moved to approve the January 5th meeting minutes as presented. J.Anne & B.Davison seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Adjustments to the Agenda & Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items

There were no adjustments to the agenda or public comments.

Work Session: Review Draft Elements of Stowe Town Plan (Cont.)

Review Housing Goal, Policies, & Action Tasks.

Staff explained that since the last meeting she consolidated the housing policies and tasks, however, because each was fairly distinct, there were limited opportunities to significantly reduce length or further combine content. She noted that at the previous meeting the group refined the housing goal to reflect a total of 580 housing units, including 100 units of permanent community housing defined by income restrictions and local residency. Since then, she and M. Lonetto met to develop additional refinements for discussion at this meeting, with the intent of more clearly emphasizing the 100 additional units of permanent community housing rather than the overall housing target. M. Lonetto read the revised goal, members provided comments, and the group agreed on the following goal language:

Pursue policies that balance the transition of existing units with the creation of new units, to achieve at least 100 additional units for permanent residents over the next ten years, as defined by income restrictions and local residency.

Staff will incorporate the agreed-upon revisions and update the housing goal in the draft plan. She highlighted the changes made since the last meeting and requested additional feedback from the Commission; members offered several suggestions, including incorporating different images, which staff will address. Staff also asked members to review the plan over the next month and consider whether the draft provides sufficient guidance on housing goals, policies, and tasks to inform development of a housing reserve fund policy, should voters approve establishment of the fund on Town Meeting Day. Members discussed adding a policy to annually appropriate increases in the local option tax or other new revenues to support housing programs, including directing additional local option tax revenue to the housing reserve fund; staff will review the existing plan and make revisions as appropriate.

Inclusion of Community Art in the Town Plan.

Staff explained that the Stowe Arts & Culture Council has offered to assist by organizing an open call for community members to submit original artwork for possible inclusion in the Town Plan. The intent is to incorporate local art to enhance the plan's visual character and community connection. M. Lonetto suggested a potential theme of "community," while B. Hamor recommended keeping the call open-ended to allow creativity.

Staff noted the call could be launched alongside the public hearing announcement. Members agreed that the Arts & Culture Council should curate the submissions and provide recommendations on what pieces to include. Once the Planning Commission formally transmits the plan to the Selectboard, staff suggested including the selected artwork in the final draft.

Review Recent Revisions & Next Steps.

Staff circulated a schedule of upcoming meetings and noted that the next regular meeting falls on a holiday. She encouraged Commissioners to use the coming month to review the draft plan, either in full or focus on specific sections. Staff explained that at the March 2nd meeting she hopes the Commission will vote to warn a public hearing for April and reviewed the associated statutory notice requirements. She also shared that she has discussed with the Town Manager possibly holding a joint meeting with the Selectboard prior to formally transmitting the plan, which the Commission supported, and noted that the time between March and April could be used to present the draft to other boards and commissions for feedback, with a goal of officially delivering the plan to the Selectboard by May 13th. M. Lonetto suggested for the Commission to hold an informational meeting before the public hearing. Members discussed presenting the draft to the Selectboard in advance so their feedback could be incorporated earlier. B. Davison recommended structuring the joint meeting as a work session so that the Commission can hear directly from the Selectboard. Members also discussed making an announcement at Town Meeting and then transitioning later in the year to work on inclusionary zoning regulations. The Commission agreed to cancel the next regular meeting and meet again on March 2nd.

M. Lonetto shared information about the Vermont Geothermal Energy Network and the possibility of scheduling a presentation to the Commission; members discussed timing. Staff noted that once the plan is formally transmitted to the Selectboard, her workload could shift toward assisting with inclusionary zoning in the latter half of the year, including preparing an RFQ, interviewing, and hiring a consultant. She highlighted key policy questions that will need to be addressed, including when inclusionary zoning should apply and how to structure payment-in-lieu fees.

Staff then summarized revisions made since the last meeting, including language updates suggested by the Town Manager related to social services, transportation, and the Memorial Park Master Plan timeline. She noted a suggested edit to add “when reasonably feasible” to a communication policy, which the Commission declined in favor of retaining the original language. Additional updates included emphasizing the “Bold Moves” in the executive summary, references to Act 47 and Act 181 in the land use section, and consolidation of housing policies. Remaining items identified for addition or refinement included a brief description of the importance of gravel as a local resource, the need for municipal storage facilities, and policies related to coordination among utility providers. Staff also noted that the utilities section continues to reference “desired housing” and asked whether the term should be revised; members agreed the term should not be used until it is defined, and staff will update the language accordingly.

Updates/Correspondence/Other Business

Members then gathered for a photograph. B. Hamor noted receipt of the Town of Underhill’s public hearing notice regarding zoning amendments. Members were encouraged to review the draft plan over the coming month. The Commission briefly discussed preparing an announcement for Town Meeting Day; staff will compile engagement statistics to include in the announcement. Members agreed to skip the next meeting and meet on March 2nd. The next meeting agenda should also include discussion of the inclusionary zoning timeline.

The meeting was adjourned shortly after 6:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah McShane, Planning & Zoning Director

Parking Lot Ideas/Topics for Further Discussion

Identify example other town plans that identify and map scenic viewsheds.

Reserve meeting time to discuss PUD/PRD

Map of town-owned properties (done)

Review plans of adjacent communities and regional plan (done)

~~Review zoning districts, purposes, overlay districts~~

Develop map showing residential development activity (in progress)

Develop map showing location of homestead properties

Review requested zoning amendment/ADU's for duplexes.

Stormwater Utility District – Bob's list of recommendations

Joint meeting with the DRB & Selectboard (?)

~~Schedule joint meeting with Energy Committee~~