



# **TOWN OF STOWE PLANNING COMMISSION Meeting Minutes August 4, 2025**

The Town of Stowe Planning Commission held a regular meeting on **Monday August 4, 2025** starting at 5:30 PM. The meeting was held at the Stowe Town Office with remote participation via Zoom. Voting members present included Brian Hamor, John Muldoon, Mila Lonetto, Bob Davison, Jill Anne, and Heather Snyder. Non-voting members present included Jeff Sereni and Hannah Mitrani. Municipal staff Sarah McShane was present. Guests included Liz (last name unknown), Jo Sabel Courtney, Rob Levy, Mary Skeleton, and Elizabeth (last name unknown).

Chair B. Hamor called the meeting to order at approximately 5:33 p.m. He explained that, to remain on schedule, the Commission will begin the Town Plan review with the anticipated easier sections before addressing more complex topics such as housing and transportation.

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

None

## **Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes (7/21/25)**

M. Lonetto moved to approve the minutes of the prior meeting, H. Snyder seconded. The motion passed.

## **Subcommittee Update -Present Draft Letter of Recommendations.**

J. Muldoon provided an update on behalf of the subcommittee, sharing two draft letters for the Commission's consideration. One version was a longer, more detailed letter explaining the rationale behind the subcommittee's recommendations, while the other offered a more concise summary. The recommendations focused on three main areas: capping the number of short-term rentals (STRs) through either ordinance or zoning; allocating budget funds for additional staff support; and securing funding to hire a consultant or attorney to help develop an inclusionary zoning ordinance. M. Lonetto expressed support for the longer letter and offered a few suggested edits. Members then engaged in a broader discussion on the topics of STR caps and inclusionary zoning, including how caps could be implemented, either through ordinance or zoning mechanisms. J. Muldoon noted the importance of identifying which parties or entities would be responsible for each of the recommended tasks. Staff provided clarification on regulating STRs through zoning. B. Davison highlighted potential regulatory options. Members discussed short-term strategies for placing a temporary cap on STRs while the community works toward a longer-term solution. Next steps include J. Muldoon to incorporate the recommended edits into the draft letter, provide staff time to review, and circulating a final version for the Commission to consider and act on during their next regular meeting. Members also discussed timelines and coordination for possible inclusionary zoning or interim zoning amendments, how these align with the Town Plan, and additional steps moving forward.

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

### **Recreation**

B. Davison proposed adding language encouraging the exploration of municipal lands for potential housing use. Staff recommended referencing "public or municipal lands" rather than "conserved lands" to avoid conflict with land protection goals. H. Snyder raised a question about whether proposals to expand the Rec Path should appear in the Education or Recreation sections, or both. Staff offered high-level comments, suggesting the Town Plan emphasize the role of recreational assets in attracting families and supporting a year-round community. She also mentioned the ongoing constraints related to athletic facilities and field availability. M. Lonetto questioned the necessity of including draft Policy #8 and whether Policy #12 should instead be framed as a task. She

recommended making both items more specific to improve clarity and usefulness. Members discussed the distinction between policies and tasks and how each will be formatted in the final plan.

## **Economic Development**

Staff presented an overview of the draft Economic Development element. J. Muldoon suggested amending Task #10 to include “identify, understand, and address workforce housing.” H. Snyder recommended retaining Policy #5 from the existing plan, while M. Lonetto observed that the current plan is too heavily focused on the village and lacks support for infill opportunities in other parts of town. Members discussed the local option tax and recent legislative changes allowing the municipality to retain a greater share. They discussed whether the plan should continue to highlight the tax or simply state that the Town supports its continued use. Staff noted that it’s been many years since the last full plan update.

## **Education**

Staff summarized the updated Education element, which incorporates feedback from the Stowe 2050 community engagement process, the education subcommittee, and a recent school board retreat. Members discussed the evolving topic of statewide school district consolidation. B. Davison suggested including a transportation-related task focused on identifying potential cost savings through shared school and public transit services. J. Muldoon supported incorporating this idea, aligning it with similar language in Task #5 of the Economic Development section. He also proposed repurposing existing facility space to accommodate satellite technical training, adult education, or children’s programs. Members noted the importance of Act 73, which requires redistricting maps to be submitted by January. These maps must consider student numbers, equalized grand list values, and community connections. If the group fails to meet the deadline, the default system remains in place. M. Lonetto emphasized the importance of preserving local schools and making this a clear policy goal, especially in light of declining enrollment. H. Snyder recommended maintaining the designation of local schools as emergency shelters. H. Mitrani suggested adding childcare to Policy #3, and J. Muldoon proposed language to support the use of municipal facilities for childcare purposes. There was also discussion around the future of community facilities, including the potential transfer of ownership to the Town to support broader community use. Members discussed whether Policy #6 should use language like “affordable” or “accessible,” noting that “accessible” may currently be interpreted too narrowly as ADA-related. H. Mitrani also raised a question about how Policy #2 balances senior and seasonal housing priorities.

## **Public Safety & Emergency Services**

Staff reported that this section remains largely unchanged, with the exception of updates to reflect the newly consolidated Stowe Fire & Rescue Department. H. Snyder asked about the Town’s seasonal population increase and whether there are any trends in volunteer recruitment. Staff confirmed that all fire and rescue members are now compensated. H. Snyder also inquired about the proportion of emergency calls to non-resident or secondary homes and the strain those calls may place on local resources. B. Hamor asked if she was referencing false alarms, which remain an ongoing challenge for the fire department. H. Snyder asked about communication methods for emergency management. Staff agreed to include information on 411 and VT-ALERT in the updated section and to revise language regarding driveway standards and emergency vehicle access. Staff noted that the next elements likely to be reviewed are Flood Resiliency and Arts and Culture, and she will assess which sections are ready to share at an upcoming meeting. H. Snyder encouraged members to begin reviewing the Housing Task Force Report individually in preparation for future discussions. B. Hamor supported allowing additional time for members to become more informed before delving deeper into those topics.

## **Updates/Correspondence/Other Business**

None

The next PC meeting is scheduled for August 18<sup>th</sup>. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah McShane, Planning & Zoning

**Parking Lot Ideas/Topics for Further Discussion**

Map of town-owned properties (done)

Review plans of adjacent communities and regional plan

~~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~~