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3 **Town of Charlotte**
4 **PLANNING COMMISSION**
5 **Meeting Conducted at Town Hall and via Teleconference**
6 **June 5, 2025**

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8 ***DRAFT – subject to approval by the Planning Commission***

9 **Planning Commission:** Matt Krasnow (Chair), Robert Bloch (Vice Chair), Bill Stuono, Ashley Berliner (virtual), Ken Smith, Linda Radimer, Carrie Spear.

10 **Staff:** Nate Bareham, Town Administrator, Nicole Burnell, Recording Secretary.

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12 **OTHERS:** Paul Plante, Frank Tenney, Charles Russell, Lee Krohn, Claudia Mucklow, Sharon Mount, Alexa Lewis.

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14
15 ***Posted Agenda:***

16 7:00 PM Call to Order
17 7:01 PM Changes to Agenda (if any); Public Comment (for items not on the agenda)
18 7:02 PM Review & amend 2025 Annual Planning Commission Meeting Dates
19 7:15 PM Review & readopt Planning Commission’s Rules of Procedure
20 7:30 PM Review & approve draft PC meeting minutes: May 15 meeting
21 7:35 PM Discussion of Next Steps following conclusion of CCRPC’s work with the PC
22 8:00 PM Charlotte Conservation Commission Presentation to the PC
23 8:50 PM Nomination of a Zoning Administrator - Executive session possible
24 8:55 PM Updates from around Town
25 9:00 PM Adjourn

26
27 **Call to Order:**

28 Matt Krasnow called the meeting to order at 7:04p.m.

29
30 **Changes to Agenda (if any); Public Comment (for items not on the agenda):**

31 Charles Russell suggested that the next Joint Meeting between the Planning Commission,
32 Development Review Board (DRB), and Charlotte Conservation Commission (CCC), include a case
33 study with the Planning Commission acting as the DRB. The Planning Commission agreed to do so.
34 Subsequent discussion of whether to use conserved land or a closed application.

35
36 **Review & amend 2025 Annual Planning Commission Meeting Dates:**

37 Matt reviewed that the Planning Commission had previously amended June meeting dates to
38 June 5th and 19th. Matt said he would not be available to participate in person on June 19th, but suggested
39 the meeting be held because the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) is
40 planning to present and they cannot move the meeting to June 26th.

41 Matt noted that in July the Planning Commission would deviate from the 1st and 3rd Thursdays
42 due to the 4th of July holiday. Meeting dates for July will be July 10th and 24th. The same for October
43 due to Yom Kippur extending through the 1st Thursday. Meeting dates for October will be October 9th
44 and 23rd.

45 In December, the 3rd Thursday presented a scheduling conflict for various members, consensus
46 to hold one meeting in December, December 4th.

47 Ashley Berliner and Ken Smith each noted three planned absences. Ashley asked about the
48 Planning Commission’s attendance policy and whether her planned absences would present an issue. In
49 response, Bill Stuono mentioned meetings for public hearings. Robert Bloch pointed out that the policy

50 outlines an 80% attendance rate. Bill added that the policy was enacted as the Planning Commission was
51 experiencing quorum issues.

52

53 **Review & readopt Planning Commission's Rules of Procedure:**

54 Linda Radimer opened the discussion with reference to site visits in Section V: Regular and
55 Special Meetings. Linda suggested removal as the Development Review Board has taken over this duty.
56 Matt recommended that site visits remain so the option to hold one is available.

57 Bill moved to Section VI: Member Attendance. Bill proposed that the quarterly Joint Meetings
58 held with the DRB and CCC be factored into regularly scheduled meetings. Matt questioned if Joint
59 Meetings should be included as they are not Planning Commission driven work.

60 Frank Tenney said that the attendance policy is to prevent absenteeism without warning. Robert
61 suggested that Planning Commission members review the meeting materials in advance of any meeting
62 and if there is a planned absence, provide feedback on those materials. Matt added that a planned
63 absentee providing feedback would be helpful so that their opinion is captured and cautioned that
64 comments must be one way to avoid ex-parte communication.

65 Ashley moved to the second item listed in Section VI, which outlines the outcome when there is
66 a lack of 80% attendance. Ashley felt is does not consider extenuating circumstances, or participation
67 between meetings. Matt noted that the outcome is a recommendation for that member to resign, and the
68 third item in the section allows a member to request an extended leave of absence.

69 Charles suggested a review of item B in Section X: Conformance with the Open Meeting Law;
70 Electronic Communication and Minutes of PC Meetings. Charles did not feel that this would be a
71 qualifying instance for the use of electronic communication. Matt agreed and proposed striking. Bill
72 asked about the original intent for adding the item. Linda questioned if it might be regarding
73 communication with the CCRPC. Matt did not feel that was the case. Bill provided an example (solar) of
74 when such electronic communication could be used. Matt said deliberations should not occur
75 electronically, rather during a public hearing with the use of Executive session if necessary. Bill stated
76 preference for the item to remain as an option if the need should arise. Matt spoke about the potential
77 legal ramifications for the use of electronic communication. Bill pointed out that the item states that
78 before taking advantage of electronic communication, the topic must be discussed during a public
79 meeting.

80 **MOTION by Robert Bloch; seconded by Matt Krasnow, to strike item B from Section X in**
81 **the Planning Commission's Rules of Procedures. VOTE: 6 ayes, 1 nay, motion carried.**

82 **MOTION by Matt Krasnow; seconded by Robert Bloch, to readopt the Planning**
83 **Commission's Rules of Procedures, with the Section X amendment. VOTE: 7 ayes, motion**
84 **carried.**

85

86 **Review & approve draft PC meeting minutes: May 15 meeting:**

87 **MOTION by Robert Bloch; seconded by Linda Radimer, to approve the PC meeting**
88 **minutes for May 15, 2025, as written. VOTE: 7 ayes, motion carried.**

89

90 **Discussion of Next Steps following conclusion of CCRPC's work with the PC:**

91 Agenda item tabled due to time constraints.

92

93 **Charlotte Conservation Commission Presentation to the PC:**

94 Claudia Mucklow, Co-Chair of the CCC, opened the discussion by stating that the CCC's goal is
95 to protect critical wildlife habitat. The CCC would prefer increased density in the villages versus rural
96 development. Claudia spoke to housing targets that were recently released by the CCRPC and how to
97 achieve while maintaining a rural feel to Charlotte. Claudia advocated for increasing minimum lot size
98 in the rural district, eliminating certain areas from density calculations, such as wetlands, steep slopes,

99 streams and flat plains, and clustering and open space subdivision, otherwise known as Planned
100 Residential Development (PRD).

101 Claudia then presented on Land Use Regulations (LURs) for Shelburne which exclude certain
102 wetlands, steep slopes, and flat plains from calculations for developable land. In addition, their PRDs
103 require 60% of the land to be conserved for open space.

104 Claudia moved to Burlington, where LURs also exclude wetlands and steep slopes from
105 buildable area calculations in certain districts.

106 Claudia then spoke to Williston's open space development. Claudia explained an open space
107 development is a residential subdivision in which a specified area of open space is protected; 75% for
108 any parcel 10 acres or more.

109 Claudia said that Colchester has 22 districts with various lot sizes. Hinesburg too has various lot
110 sizes depending on which road the lot is located on.

111 Westford has a water overlay resource district to protect bodies of water. Underlay district
112 regulations still apply, and the stricter of the two is enforced. Underhill has a soil and water conservation
113 district.

114 Claudia pointed out that neighboring towns take different approaches, and the appropriate means
115 for Charlotte need to be determined. Claudia said one approach would be creating overlay districts.
116 Another, excluding wetland and steep slopes from density calculations.

117 Claudia then began discussing limiting driveway lengths as access roads and driveways are the
118 leading cause of forest fragmentation. Claudia spoke about the ramifications of fragmentation on
119 wildlife. Claudia provided examples of how driveway length is controlled by other towns in Vermont.
120 Claudia suggested limiting driveway length to 800 feet.

121 Claudia moved to separating density from lot size. Claudia used farming families dividing 5 acre
122 lots for their children as an example. If lots were 1 acre, more land would be conserved.

123 Claudia concluded by proposing building envelopes for all development. This would avoid
124 fragmentation, maintain structure, and minimize impact on the environment. Claudia acknowledged the
125 landowner would be involved in establishing the building envelope.

126 Robert asked Claudia which of her recommendations would be of highest importance. Claudia
127 response was limiting driveway length. Robert then asked how large a wildlife track needs to be to be
128 considered substantial. Claudia said Robert's question points to the need for updated mapping.

129 Matt spoke to previous conservation efforts in Charlotte, including voluntary increased property
130 taxes, which ultimately led to increased property value. Matt asked Claudia about revitalizing the
131 conservation program. Subsequent discussion of how the program was established and continues to
132 operate with decreased funding. Matt said incentivizing and restriction are both means for conservation;
133 reenergizing incentivizing might be considered.

134 Claudia discussed her collaboration with the Champlain Valley Conservation Partnership and
135 how Charlotte may not qualify for any Act 250 Tier 3 areas, which are critical natural resource areas
136 with increased Act 250 jurisdiction. To this point, Sharon Mount elaborated on the importance of
137 updated mapping. Robert suggested the CCC work to identify critical areas.

138 Bill asked Claudia to provide additional information on buildable area calculations.
139

140 **Nomination of a Zoning Administrator - Executive session possible:**

141 Matt reviewed that the current Zoning Administrator is resigning from the position. The
142 Selectboard ran an advertisement to fill the vacancy. The Planning Commission is responsible for
143 nominating candidates. Bill and Matt were nominated to serve on the Preselection Committee to vet
144 candidates. One qualified candidate was screened and interviewed. Bill sat in on the interview as well.
145 The Preselection Committee would like the Planning Commission to consider the vetted candidate.
146 Personnel matters are exempt from Open Meeting Law by 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a) (3), after a majority vote to

147 enter Executive session. Matt suggested the Executive session also includes other members of the
148 Prescreening Committee.

149 **MOTION by Matt Krasnow; seconded by Bill Stuono, to enter Executive session to discuss**
150 **the possible appointment of a public employee pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a) (3), and to further**
151 **invite Nate Bareham, and Preselection Committee members Lee Krohn, Charles Russell, and**
152 **Frank Tenney into the session. VOTE: 7 ayes, motion carried.**

153 **MOTION by Matt Krasnow; seconded by Robert Bloch, to exit Executive session. VOTE: 7**
154 **ayes, motion carried.**

155 **MOTION by Matt Krasnow; seconded by Linda Radimer, for the Planning Commission to**
156 **recommend to the Charlotte Selectboard their nomination of Daryl Arminius for appointment as**
157 **the Town Zoning Administrator pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 4448 (b). VOTE: 6 ayes, 1 nay, motion**
158 **carried.**

159

160 **Updates from around Town:**

161 None.

162

163 **Adjournment:**

164 **MOTION by Ashley Berliner; seconded by Robert Bloch, to adjourn the meeting. VOTE: 7**
165 **ayes, motion carried.** The meeting was adjourned at 9:50p.m.

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167 Minutes respectfully submitted:

168 Nicole Burnell, Recording Secretary, with edits by Rebecca Kaplan, Planning and Zoning Assistant.