MONKTON PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
October 6, 2026
Approved: October 20, 2026

Members Present: Wendy Sue Harper (Co-Chair), Adam Miller (Clerk), Sam Burr, Ivor Hughes, Stephen Pilcher

Members Absent: Marilyn Cargill (Co-Chair), Debra Sprague

The meeting was called to order by Wendy Sue Harper at 7:00 pm.

Stephen Pilcher moved to review the minutes of the September 15th meeting, seconded by Sam Burr. The minutes were amended to remove references to contacting Hannah Andrew at Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC). The amended minutes passed 5-0.

The following items were received in the mail:

- An email from Monkton resident Tom Learmonth expressing concern about the town's current ability to protect itself from undesirable data center construction.
- Notice from the Town of Charlotte of the meeting scheduled on October 15th to discuss changes to their Land Use Regulations.
- Notice from the Town of Starksboro of the meeting scheduled on October 15th to discuss a Zoning Bylaw amendment.
- An email from Hannah Andrew at ACRPC regarding delays in mapping tool development.

There was brief discussion around a conversation Stephen Pilcher had with one of his neighbors regarding the Monarch Meadows development on Spear St. Of concern to the neighbor was that, by moving the houses out from the woods and into the meadow, the town sacrificed some of the town's rural visual character to ensure minimal forest fragmentation. There may be better ways to balance these sometimes competing interests by encouraging clustered housing.

The Commission reviewed the outcomes of the Development Review Board (DRB) meeting attended by the Planning Commission on September 28th, also attended by Town Lister Lisa Burns and Zoning Administrator Susan Gulrajani. Overall, the DRB seemed to receive the majority of proposed changes to Article II positively. Particular items that came to the fore were:

- The gap between regulation and enforcement that exists due to practical resource restrictions on the Town of Monkton. To more clearly codify the tools available to the town, Sam Burr will be updating language in the proposed Unified Planning Document (UPD) that will incorporate items from Title 24 of the Vermont Statutes, Chapter 117, §4449 and §4451.

- The potential for guidance from the DRB not being properly memorialized in the deed for the property, and the impacts of this shortfall on future development.
- Possibilities for minimizing the amount of work duplication the current zoning approval process requires of the DRB.

There was discussion around the process by which the Planning Commission will undertake revisions of the UPD beyond the revisions already proposed for Article II. It was decided that the Articles will be addressed in order beginning at the next meeting on October 20th.

The Commission discussed the table layouts of permitted and conditional uses in each Zoning District in the proposed version of Article II of the UPD. There was consensus that the layout can be improved by splitting the current single table into two tables, one each for permitted and conditional uses. Additionally, the tables at the end of Article II laying out all defined uses' classification as permitted or conditional is lacking acknowledgement of categories 5-8 outlined in section 290 of the Town's UPD. Stephen Pilcher will be updating the table to include reference to those categories.

The Planning Commission has not yet received sample management plans from the Monkton Conservation Commission. Ivor Hughes will be reaching out to them to obtain a progress update.

Stephen Pilcher and Wendy Sue Harper were unable to connect with Adam Lougee at ACRPC to further understand his position on the potential for a grant aiding in rolling out the proposed UPD revisions to the town. They still plan to talk to him as soon as possible as the grant application deadline is approaching.

There was discussion around the mapping tool, which, while not yet complete, has a somewhat confusing interface. Stephen Pilcher and Adam Miller will be reaching out to Hannah Andrew to discuss ways that the layout can be simplified and clarified for users.

Stephen Pilcher moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Adam Miller. The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 pm.

Minutes submitted by Adam Miller, Clerk