

**TOWN OF JACKSON
PLANNING BOARD MEETING
January 3, 2023**

The Town of Jackson Planning Board met on January 3, 2023 at 6:30 pm at the Town of Jackson Town Hall. The following people were in attendance-

Board Members:

- Amy Maxwell
- Kelly Donahue
- Erik VandenBerg
- Tim Thomas

Others Present:

- Supervisor Jay Skellie
- Washington County Planner Pamela Landi

Absent: Irene Headwell, Mark Mahoney and Steve Chuhta

OPEN MEETING AT 6:30 PM

PAMELA LANDI PRESENTATION

Washington County Planner Pamela Landi was in attendance to give a roughly 40-minute presentation on the many resources the County can provide to local Planning Boards. She presented to the Board several resourceful documents and went through a power point synopsis of helpful tools. As of now, the County Planning Department consists of her and Economic Development Director Laura Oswald. Ms. Landi's duty in the Dept. is to provide support to all 17 towns in the County, as well as be a designated liaison to many local projects and committees. The Dept. also assists in writing up many grants for the towns, supporting the Board of Supervisors with information and training, and reviewing land use regulations. They have done a lot of solar mapping as well as GIS mapping through the state website. Currently, they are creating trail maps in the GIS system.

Ms. Landi said the goal of the Planning Department is to provide expertise to the towns within the County. She presently sits on 2 committees focused around comprehensive planning and advised that while a Comprehensive Plan is not a legal document, it provides a well thought out objective of the future for the Town. She wishes to someday facilitate a meeting for local towns to share information and communicate about common issues. Ms. Landi said that while not every town has the same mission, communication can help to provide support. Her and Ms. Oswald are working on providing broadband access throughout the County and urge any residents of the Town without access to reach out.

MINUTES

A **motion** was made by Kelly Donahue and seconded by Tim Thomas to approve the December 6, 2022 meeting minutes as written. Motion carried in favor 4-0.

SUPERVISOR SKELLIE – SOLAR LAW DISCUSSION

Supervisor Skellie presented to the Board some ideas and suggestions he has come across while researching solar law development:

- Referencing the Solar Law Draft, Section Five: Application Requirements under (12) d) Grading Plan, Supervisor Skellie asked to remove the part prohibiting tree clear-cutting in a single contiguous area exceeding 20,000 square feet. He added that while it is important to protect the character of the Town, we still need to protect land owner rights.
- Sup. Skellie questioned the 60% lot coverage limit as stated in Section Six: Standards for USSEFS in the current Solar Law draft. He asked the Board why we would want 40% of land that stays idle. He cautioned against anything that comes off as discriminatory against solar companies, that we would not require for any other projects in site plan review. Chair Maxwell said the intent of this is to make agriculture the priority throughout the Town. Board Member Kelly Donahue pointed out that this number came specifically from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, as stated in their regulations. Supervisor Skellie advised to change the paragraph in the law to reference NYSERDA in accordance with the percentage.
- Supervisor Skellie asked the Board if they had looked into the possibility of charging a fee for prime agriculture soil land being used for projects. He added that we could charge 100% of the going rate the land is valued at according to NYS Agriculture and Markets. He also stated that if this was included in the Solar Law, it would need to be included in site plan review across the board for any projects interested in using prime ag. soil. Board Member Erik VandenBerg said this would help support the rural plan they are trying to protect. Sup. Skellie will run this by Town Attorney Alan Wrigley.

Board Member Donahue will make proper revisions and rewrite sections of the Solar Law draft based off of Supervisor Skellie's recommendations. This will be reviewed at the February Planning Board meeting.

SUBDIVISION CHECKLIST

Planning Board Member Kelly Donahue has been taking time to work on the Town's current subdivision checklist. At this point, she is about halfway through revising the document and comparing it with the subdivision regulations. The process is more complicated than she had originally expected as there are several things that need to be adjusted or revised. Kelly said that she will add notes to the original document so the Board can review and decide which points should be added or left out. The Board will review the checklist and Kelly's notes at the February Planning Board meeting.

A **motion** was made by Kelly Donahue and seconded by Tim Thomas to adjourn the meeting at 8:49 pm.

Motion carried in favor 4-0.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 7, 2023 @ 6:30 pm

Adjourned: @ 8:49 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Molly Dixon, Town of Jackson