

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

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

Board Members:

- Kelly Donahue
- Amy Maxwell
- Erik Vandenberg
- Mark Mahoney
- Steve Chuhta [Enters at 6:31 pm]
- Tim Thomas
- Irene Headwell

Others Present:

- Lou Steele
- Nancy Krauss

SEPTEMBER 5TH MINUTES

A **motion** was made by Mark Mahoney and seconded by Irene Headwell to approve the September 5, 2023 meeting minutes as written. Motion carried in favor 6-0.

[Steve Chuhta enters at 6:31 pm]

SEPTEMBER 19TH MINUTES

A **motion** was made by Erik Vandenberg and seconded by Irene Headwell to approve the September 19, 2023 special meeting minutes as written. Motion carried in favor 6-0 with Mark Mahoney abstaining.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chair Donahue thanked all Board members and members of the public who attended the September 19th working meeting on the Comprehensive Plan with County Planner Pamela Landi. Following the meeting, Ms. Landi provided the Clerk with links to several of the resources and helpful documents discussed that Chair Donahue invited Board members to review. Chair Donahue opened the floor to Board members for thoughts on the meeting. Board member Chuhta questioned why the plan was deemed necessary if not an enforceable document. Board member Mahoney answered this by stating the Town can receive a favorable rate from insurance

companies if the Town has a solid plan for the future. It can also be a powerful tool for grant opportunities. While it does not have legal bearing, it shows direction and what is important to the Town. Board member Maxwell stated that any business typically needs to know where it has been, where it is and where it is going. Towns should be similar in that sense. Board member Mahoney pointed out that having a subcommittee for the purpose of devising a comprehensive plan would make the process less clumsy. Board members agreed that having a subcommittee with members from the Town Board, Planning Board and public may be beneficial. Board member Chuhta stated that creating a list of needs for the Town that could be included in the Plan may help to create a clear vision. Board member Mahoney stated the Town has a need for a designated grant writer to prepare applications for grant opportunities. Another need would be rebuilding the Town Highway Barn, which could possibly be done with grant money. Board member VandenBerg stated that maintaining our local rivers, lakes and parks is a need, as well as focusing on more recreational prospects. Board member Maxwell agreed that the main attractions of Jackson are the agriculture, the scenery and the wildlife, as there are few businesses. This is something the Town values that should be included in the plan. Board members agreed that the plan should include a vision and a list of needs. Priorities could be added as well.

The Board discussed the many types of plans mentioned at the working meeting with Pamela Landi. Board member Maxwell stated that she liked the Recreational Economy for Rural Communities Plan, which seemed to check a lot of boxes relative to the Town. Board member Chuhta asked if the solar law should or would tie into the plan. Board member VandenBerg stated that there is a need to include renewable energy sources and he is not convinced it is a bad thing. Board member Chuhta expressed that he is concerned about battery toxins and there's not enough known about it yet. Chair Donahue added that the plan can serve as another way the Town can show intent to solar companies trying to get a sense of a community before considering to build there.

The Board discussed criteria for applying for the Hudson Valley River Greenway grant, which has a prerequisite to become a 'Greenway Community'. The grant could be used towards creating a comprehensive plan. The Board agreed that they would need more information about the 5 basic criteria points listed on the HVRG website before considering to apply. Board member Headwell stated there is a plethora of grants the Town could be applying for, not just for devising the plan. Chair Donahue stated that this could be included in the plan's 'needs' list, so the Town can be sure we are applying for the right grants for the right needs. Chair Donahue stated that the Planning Board needs to consider what the next step is. The 2014 draft of the plan was never approved by the Town Board and Ms. Landi thought more needed to be added. Board member Maxwell agreed that a town vision and goals should be included. Chair Donahue stated that more examples of plans from other towns should be reviewed. Board member Mahoney stated that he believes the next step should be creating a subcommittee with members of the Planning Board, Town Board and local residents to tackle the comprehensive plan. Other Board members agreed. The committee can gather research about grants for the comp. plan to bring to the Town Board, stated Board member Mahoney. Board member VandenBerg asked how big the committee

should be. Board member Maxwell stated she thought 7 at most. Chair Donahue asked for Board members to volunteer if they wish to be on the committee. Board member Vandenberg volunteered. Board member Mahoney stated he is a possibility. Chair Donahue stated she will try to attend some committee meetings. Board member Vandenberg stated that having Town Board members involved will help to get a solid plan that will be passed. Chair Donahue agreed and opted to ask the TB for volunteers. Chair Donahue asked the Board if they are comfortable with bringing the idea of a subcommittee to the Town Board. Board members said yes.

New Business:

- Board member Maxwell pointed out that the next monthly Planning Board meeting falls on election day, November 7th. Board members agreed to change the date of the meeting to the following Tuesday, November 14th at 6:30 pm. Notice will be posted in the Eagle.
- Board member Thomas advised the Board that he may need to leave his position on the Planning Board. He will keep the Board updated when he knows anything more.
- The Planning Board discussed what comes next for the Board if a subcommittee takes on the comp. plan. Clerk Dixson will add this for discussion on the November PB agenda.

At this time, Planning Board Chair Donahue asked the Board to invite the residents in attendance to speak. Board members agreed to this. Resident Lou Steele brought forth a concern of his regarding the site plan approval for the Preserve on the Battenkill, the campground located on State Route 313. Approval for this project was issued in 2022. He stated the site plan for the project has expired due to the State Department of Health Certificate that was issued to the owners of the grounds. Board members expressed confusion over what Mr. Steele meant by this as approval was already issued and the project has since begun. Mr. Steele stated that the project has changed significantly since approval was issued and that the certificate issued by NYSDOH was given for a different plan. Board member Mahoney advised that the Board does not issue building requirements, those are handled through Washington County Code Enforcement. Board member Maxwell added that the Board issues approval based on the preliminary process and does not reapprove following that. The Board agreed to look into the site plan again.

A **motion** was made by Tim Thomas and seconded by Steve Chuhta to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 pm.

Motion carried in favor 7-0.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 14th, 2023 @ 6:30 pm

Adjourned: @ 7:26 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Molly Dixson, Town of Jackson