

# Town of Constantia Planning Board

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## Meeting Minutes – July 25, 2023

### Attendees

Planning Board members in attendance included:

- Chair James Peck
- Sandra Williams
- Martin Godzwon
- Sandra Tuori-Bell
- Sandra Retajczyk
- Dan Poné
- Dave Antos
- Joe Markham (Alternate)
- Randall West (Alternate)

Others in attendance included: Frank Tomaino (Town Supervisor), Ron Chapman (Town Councilman), William Hamacher, Paul Baxter, Heidi Tompkins, Brien Connolly, Dan Marticello, and Amy Connolly (Secretary).

### Call to Order

The public hearing was closed and the regular meeting called to order by Mr. Peck at 7:00pm.

### Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous June 27, 2023 meeting was made by Martin Godzwon and seconded by Sandra Retajczyk. Motion passed unanimously.

### Code Enforcement

Mr. Peck asked Code Enforcement Officer Hamacher, since the Town will be starting the process of creating Zoning Laws, what the proper flow of paperwork typically is in other towns. Mr. Hamacher stated that in most towns, applications for site plans go directly to the Planning Board, the Planning Board then reviews the applications, once approved, the paperwork is given to the Codes office. If an application is submitted to Codes but needs Planning Board Approval, the Code Enforcement Officer (CEO) would call the applicant and instruct them to go online and to the correct application process. Mr. Peck stated that he would like to see the Town's application process be streamlined by going digital and asks if the previously discussed Williamson software would accomplish this goal. Mr. Hamacher stated that it would. Mr. Marticello, in the audience, stated that he disagreed with making the application process completely digital as many residents do not have access to this method due to broadband access or computer skills. He believes that a paper application should always remain an option. Mr. Peck agreed with Mr. Marticello's point. Discussion then followed regarding the best way to utilize both digital and paper application formats. The conclusion was that digital materials are much faster to disseminate for Planning Board members. Code Enforcement will be able to digitize applications received at Town Hall and send to the Planning Board Chair.

Mr. Peck notified Mr. Hamacher that the Zoning Commission would be asking for input from the Codes Office once the Zoning process has begun.

## Zoning Commission

Mr. Markham, with authorization from the Town Board, has begun compiling a list of businesses operating in the Town. The Planning Board can then work with Codes to determine which properties have Site Plans, and which do not. This process will help contribute to the Zoning commission so that members will have an idea of what businesses work well, or don't, in different areas of Town. Businesses without Site Plans will then be contacted to complete one. Mr. Peck stated that he would like to have better communication between the Planning Board and Codes in future.

Mr. Tomaino asked Mr. Peck, as Chair of the Zoning Commission, when he expected to have Zoning Commission meetings, would they be on the same night as Planning Board meetings? Mr. Tomaino asked Mr. Baxter if members of the Zoning Commission should be paid. Mr. Baxter stated that members are not typically paid in his experience but he could look into it further. Mr. Tomaino stated that he felt members should be compensated for their work and would like to look at the budget. Mr. PEck asked the Planning Board members if they would like to meet at 6PM on Planning Board meeting nights. Members responded positively. Mr. Markham stated that each meeting should have a set agenda in order to keep the meeting to one hour.

Mr. Peck asked Planning Board members if they are interested in being on the Commission, the recommendation from Tug Hill was to keep membership under 10 as more members tend to make the work cumbersome. Can the commission have alternates? Mr. Baxter will find out about alternate members. Mr. Chapman stated that the Commission could set time limits for discussion on each subject for the meetings in order to keep on task, he has seen this strategy used effectively.

A legal notice will be published in multiple papers and around town in order to recruit interested parties. Letters of interest to be submitted to the Chair.

Mr. Peck was notified that County Planning has new people on staff and new committees have been formed that are looking for new members. Having a member from the Town would be beneficial and he encourages anyone with time available to apply.

Members of the Zoning Commission will need to be determined before the Town Board can officially appoint them. Meetings will require legal notice. Mr. Peck stated that there is a need to ensure that all members joining the commission will actively contribute and participate.

What is the criteria for membership? Members must be Town residents, Mr. Baxter will confirm. Business owners in the Town who are not residents will still be welcomed at meetings to voice their opinions. All Planning Board members and alternates (9) express interest in being members. Mr. Poné states that he will need to resign in January but would like to participate until that time. Mr. Marticello asks if only the Planning Board will be selected or if public notice will still go out? Mr. Peck stated that typical practice throughout towns is for the commission to be composed of the Planning Board and sometimes additional people are added. Notice will be published to find additional applicants for Commission membership.

## Other Business

A Site Plan checklist is in the works for a needed update, led by Sandra Retajczyk. Ms. Retajczyk distributed documents regarding this, including a sample flowchart. Mr. Peck stated that he would like to have a document that makes things easier in normal processes as well as in the event of the Chair's absence. Members were requested to review the distributed flow chart and make comparisons to the Land Development Law and Site Plan Application, then make suggestions on what should be included. Ms. Retajczyk thanked Mr. Baxter for sending resources from the Hug Hill Commission, she plans to compare and contrast with the LDL.

Mr. Peck states that the work being done now is important to prepare the community for the potential development coming due to Micron.

### **Tug Hill Commission- Paul Baxter**

Mr. Baxter distributed some resources to members including copies of a new map of soils developed by the Planners at Tug Hill. Highlighted areas on the map of high agricultural value which should be avoided when considering solar projects.

Heidi Tompkins was introduced as a new Associate Circuit Rider with the Tug Hill Commission.

### **Adjournment**

Martin Gozwon moved that the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Dave Antos. Members voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:52pm.

Amy Connolly

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Secretary

Town of Constantia Planning Board

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Date of Approval