

Town of Constantia Zoning Commission

Meeting Minutes – August 25, 2026

Call to Order

Chair Peck opened the meeting at 6:02 PM

Attendees

Voting members in attendance included:

- Chair James Peck
- Sandra Retajczyk
- Sandra Touri-Bell
- Dave Antos
- Martin Godzwon
- Randall West
- Brien Connolly
- Terri John
- Brenda Mosher, Secretary

Guests in attendance included: Ron Chapman, Town Supervisor; Matt Johnson, Tug Hill Commission

Members not in attendance included: Joseph Markham, Jeff Rumble

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous July 28, 2026 meeting was made by Mr. Godzwon and seconded by Mr. West. Motion passed unanimously by members at the last meeting.

Draft of Zoning Law

Appreciation was expressed to Mr. Johnson and staff as well as Ms. John for extensive preparation of materials and documentation. Attendees were thanked for their participation and for bringing diverse expertise in engineering, operations, management, financial compliance, and related fields. The group acknowledged steady progress on the draft Land Development Law update.

Review of Draft Land Development Law (Editor's Draft with Proposed Changes)

The Board continued detailed review of the redlined editor's draft of the Town of Constantia Land Development Law (originally Local Law 2-2013, as updated through December 31, 2022) to Zoning law. Changes highlighted in red or via comments from board members/consultants (including Sandy, Brian, Jim, and others) were reviewed section by section.

Key discussion points and consensus actions included:

- Section 130 – Intent and Purpose: Replaced the prior language with a shorter, less repetitive statement focusing on promoting health, safety, and general welfare; supporting a clean, attractive environment; protecting natural and community resources; establishing uniform standards for

development density; and regulating land use activity without prohibiting any land use. Language accepted.

- **Supersession of Prior Laws:** Confirmed that the law should reference the latest version (2013 Land Development Law as amended through December 31, 2022). Subdivision law remains a separate instrument and is not superseded.
- **Nonconforming Lots, Uses, and Structures:** Discussion of effective date references and continuation/grandfathering. Existing nonconforming lots remain nonconforming under the new law; the update (primarily setback adjustments) does not render previously nonconforming lots buildable solely by its adoption. Changes in use would be subject to the new standards. Board comfortable with the approach for the moment; related wording may be revisited later.
- **Definitions (cleanup and refinements):**
 - **Accessory building / accessory structure:** Combine concepts; retain the slightly longer “accessory structure” language. Structure covers the needed ground.
 - **Accessory facility related to telecommunications:** Deleted (not referenced in the telecommunications article or matrix as a standalone item).
 - **Various grammar, spacing, and clarity improvements** (e.g., “which” to “that,” shorter phrasing for enforcement officer, animal shelter excluding livestock, etc.).
 - **Agricultural land and related terms:** Minor wording additions/clarifications.
 - **Data center:** Amended definition accepted (“An industrial facility primarily used for the storage, management, processing and transmission of digital data that houses computer networking equipment as a principal land use on a lot”). Detailed operational limitations (screening, etc.) remain elsewhere in the document.
 - **Long-term storage:** Refined to “storing or warehousing goods, equipment, parts and materials for a period exceeding 6 months.” Redundant “extended period of time” language removed. Clarified application to shipping containers / sea vans used for long-term storage.
 - **Manufactured homes:** No need to separately define single-wide vs. double-wide; existing matrix treatment sufficient.
 - **Marina:** Retained prior language covering docking, mooring, storing, launching, servicing, or fueling of boats/watercraft, plus customary accessory retail, repairs, storage, and related services. Incidental restaurants viewed as appropriate given the nature of marina use.
 - **Stormwater:** Added explicit reference to New York State SPDES Permit for Stormwater Discharge or Stormwater Management where applicable (contribution noted from Sandy T.).
 - **Portable storage container:** Confirmed as temporary use of limited duration (determined with flexibility by the Code Enforcement Officer to accommodate construction timelines, etc.). Distinguished from permanent/long-term storage containers. Existing language retained after discussion.

- Reconstruction / rebuilding: Consistent with existing law (same footprint and general use/shape). Examples of past applications discussed for context.
- Home-Based Business (around Section 520): Employee limit provision (previously referencing a maximum of 3 people / full-time equivalents) struck. Consensus that the limit was problematic for a home-based business context focused on activity on the property; removal preferred to avoid unintended restrictions or enforcement issues.
- Long-Term Storage Prohibitions: Affirmed that conversion of shipping containers, semi-trailers, etc., to uses other than their original intended use is prohibited without variance. Existing language retained; variance process available.
- Undersized Lots (around Section 640): Lawfully created lots prior to the effective date that meet the listed conditions (including no more than one single-family dwelling) may be developed accordingly.
- Commencement of Construction: Discussion of whether a definition is needed (commonly understood as having footings in the ground). Flagged for possible addition to reduce ambiguity.
- Sketch Plan Conference (Section 730): Changed “shall be held” to “may be held” for consistency with practice (sketch plans are not always received or required).
- Signs (around Sections 1040–1050): One sign per road frontage; language cleanup. Prohibited signs (flashing, moving, rotating, intermittent lights, etc., with limited exceptions for time/temperature) discussed. Town, fire department

Next Zoning Commission Meeting to be held 9/8/26 @ 6:00 PM

Adjournment

Mr. Godzwon moved that the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Mr. Connolly. Members voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:00 pm

Brenda Mosher

Brenda Mosher
Secretary
Town of Constantia Planning Board, Zoning
Board, and Appeals Board

Date of Approval