

Town of Danby Planning Board
Minutes of Special Meeting
November 6, 2018
(Extra Meeting)

PRESENT:

Ed Bergman
Scott Davis
Joel Gagnon
Bruce Richards
Jody Scriber
Jim Rundle (Chair)

ABSENT:

Naomi Strichartz

OTHER ATTENDEES:

Town Board liaison	Leslie Connors
Town Planner	C.J. Randall
Recording Secretary	Alyssa de Villiers

The meeting was opened at 7:22pm.

(1) CALL TO ORDER / AGENDA REVIEW

No changes were made to the agenda.

(2) PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

No comments were made during privilege of the floor.

(3) DISCUSSION ITEMS

Rundle pointed out that some points that need to be addressed are easy, straightforward, and non-controversial, whereas others are larger, messier issues. The Board asked Randall to address these simple administrative items that are currently missing from the zoning.

In response to a question from Davis about the process of rewriting the zoning, Randall explained her general timeline for the comprehensive plan. Currently the Comprehensive Plan is on an update cycle of every ten years. If the Town applies in 2019 for money for consultants to help execute a comprehensive plan update, this would put the Town in a good position to have it done by 2021. By doing the zoning audit, showing work the Planning Board has done, and applying to be a Climate Smart Community, the Town will be in a better position to ask for funding. Courts see a comprehensive plan as an amalgam of planning documents including studies and mapping that have been done. Some modifications would be made to the zoning now rather than post-comprehensive plan. If a full-blown rewrite of the zoning is going to be done, she suggested that a zoning update steering committee would be a good way to undertake it. She also asked the Board to consider if the Land Use section of the Comprehensive Plan still represents what the Board members think is the way the Town should move forward.

Rather than going over individual questions and answers in the zoning audit review, focus was put on recommendations for the 2018 Joint Scoping Meeting and priorities for the coming year. The following list of priorities was developed (not listed in any particular order):

1. Review and differentiate zones
2. Create environmental protection overlays
3. Develop a future land use map
4. Address specially permitted uses
5. Clarify and expand agricultural uses and protections
6. Do an inventory of all uses, including definitions
7. Consider undertaking a water and wastewater feasibility study

General discussion included wanting to make it easier for residents to do what is in line with the Town's vision for land use and comprehensive planning in locations that make sense with the Town's social and environmental geography. It was felt that more zones would help allow development where it may be desired, such as in the hamlet, and preserve the rural character of other areas. Currently Low Residential acts as a default zone and covers large portions of the Town; this can currently be developed into two-acre parcels. Envisioning what types of development the Town would like to see in somewhere like the hamlet is important, and also thinking of exactly where it could go. Regarding special permits, it was felt that having clearly defined uses in the zoning would reduce how often specially permitted uses arise. There was talk of how to protect existing farmers and farmland and also foster the types of agriculture the Town would like to see, as opposed to something like a CAFO (concentrated animal feeding operation), while remaining in line with NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets as well as Danby's right-to-farm law.

Randall had mounted maps of the Town, which members of the Board looked at and discussed. No one was ready to mark any suggested zones at this time. Discussion included where the densest areas are currently, whether those areas are environmentally suitable for further development, where the best farming land is, and what constraints may limit different areas of the Town. For example, flood-prone areas may be a good place for conservation and trails; in the north part of Town, there could be future discussion of

whether connecting with a municipal water supply is feasible or desirable; some soils are better suited for certain types of agriculture. Having environmental protection overlay maps would help illuminate what areas are vulnerable to environmental damage, say because they are very steep. To help with zoning brainstorming, Randall said she could flip existing conservation maps to show where areas are that are not sensitive.

(4) ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:56pm.

Alyssa de Villiers – Recording Secretary