

**Orange County Planning Board
Meeting Minutes
July 6, 2021**

Board Member Participants: In person: E. McClung, E. Hart; Remote: C. Best, D. Niemotko

Guest: Remote: T. Faggione, OC Legislator

Staff Participants: In person: A. Sorensen, J. Richmond, M. Tennermann, Z. Coleman, E. Barrett, E. Russell; Remote: A. Long, J. MacLeod, K. Schmidt

Meeting was called to order at 4:30 PM.

The minutes for the June 1, 2021 meeting were accepted as circulated. Since there is not a quorum, board members will be able to comment on these minutes at the September meeting.

Review of General Municipal Law Planning and Zoning Permit Reviews – M. Tennermann gave a summary of the GML 239 referrals from June, 2021. There were 48 mandatory GML 239 referrals sent to the Department by municipalities throughout the County. A total of 199 dwelling units and 908,865 sq. ft. of non-residential development were proposed, as well as conversion of an existing residential building to a 12-room hotel. There were three significant referrals: 1) Goshen (V) - Royal Wine Corp: Lead Agency for site plan amendment to construct 589,950 sq. ft. building; 2) Newburgh (T) – Site Plan for Farrell Industrial Park including construction of two warehouse buildings onsite totaling 290,000 sq. ft.; and 3) Walden (V) – Walden Glen LLC redevelopment of existing 12-unit mobile home park to 43 unit manufactured home community.

Presentation: Warehouses and Distribution Centers

M. Tennermann gave a presentation on the growth trends of warehouses in the County. The transportation network and land availability makes this growth feasible. From 2011-2018 there has been a 3.1% increase in the number of distribution facilities, which is approximately 100 new facilities, which also create employment growth. High cube warehouses are being proposed in Lehigh Valley, which is similar to our area. They are proposing 200,000 gross sq. ft. of floor area with a ceiling height of 24 ft. or more. Most municipalities in the County have height restrictions, so variances would be required. High cube warehouses are mostly automated which will decrease non-technical jobs significantly. If these came into the County, they would be some of the tallest structures in the County. Height issues could cause problems for air traffic and negatively impact scenic viewsheds. Planning Department will continue to monitor warehouse growth, work towards creating design best practices toolkit and create model language to share with municipalities. This will be suggested to the Planning Federation for educational session in the Fall.

Department Updates:

County Comprehensive Plan Updates – Open Space Plan

Due to the technical difficulties with today's meeting, this topic will be discussed briefly today and again in September. Part of the survey was the Draft Vision Statement. We wanted feedback from stakeholders if they had any additions or recommendations for the vision statement. The statement is still a work in progress and will still need to be tweaked. The survey asks stakeholders to rank themes in order of importance to them: Quality of Life; Preservation; Economic Opportunity; Connectivity; Climate Change; Planning for Growth; Equity/environmental justice; Accessibility. So far, 20 stakeholders have responded. The survey will remain open and we will keep encouraging stakeholders to complete it. Z.

Coleman is working on the inventory of maps for the Open Space Plan. The final deliverable is going to be an online story map. You will be able to click on something and descriptions will pop up. People will be able to share photos. He has made some of the initial maps: Protected Open Space map, parks, conservation easements, and nature preserves, which were developed working with the Orange County Land Trust. The Agriculture Soils map was developed using the NRI study which was just completed two years ago. Planning Board members should review the maps and give feedback. They will be studying recommended actions from the old plan. There will be a recommendations section consisting of policy recommendations and financial recommendations for funding strategy. There will be a focus on implementation. We want to form an implementation committee. It will be set up as tech memos that can be printed. They will be posted on the Hub and things can be changed and updated continuously. We have a lot of groundwork to do before we reach out to the public. We plan to have three public meetings. There will be a survey released to the general public before each meeting.

The August meeting of the Planning board is cancelled. The next meeting of the Planning Board is scheduled for September 7, 2021. The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 PM.