

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

March 14, 2019

Public Safety Complex, 2nd Floor Conference Room, 49 ½ Court Street, Canton, NY

I. Call to Order

- a. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum.** K. Bellor called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Members Present: K. Bellor, K. Bisonette, J. Cameron, D. Chambers, D. Fay, M. Gazin, S. Maine, M. McCluskey, D. Mullaney, B. Murray and K. O’Neil. **Members Absent:** W. Davis, D. Duff and R. Hotte. **Staff Present:** M. Larson and J. Pfothenhauer.

- b. Adoption of the Agenda.** Pfothenhauer listed a number of projects that would be added to the agenda under MOU or as full review projects. The modified agenda was unanimously adopted (Mullaney/Murray).
- c. Approval of the Meeting Minutes.** The February 14th meeting minutes were unanimously adopted (Fay/O’Neil).

II. Public Forum None.

III. Project Reviews

a. Projects Returned for Local Action.

- i. Potsdam (V): Rezone from R1 to R3 at 74 Lawrence Avenue. Pfothenhauer described the property location and explained the intent to accommodate a solar array at the site. Larson indicated the Board previously reviewed a solar project at this location and noted a rezone would be required. Bisonette said he was not in favor of the project as the site was previously considered for the Town of Potsdam’s municipal building, but it was opposed by the Village of Potsdam. *The Board concurred with staff recommendation to return the project for local action.*
- ii. Rossie (T): Two into single lot waterfront subdivision at 49 South Woods Road. Pfothenhauer described the project location and proposed subdivision to combine two lots into one, and to provide 100’ of road frontage. *The Board concurred with staff recommendation to return the project for local action.*

c. Full Reviews.

i. Gouverneur (V): Special Use Permit for Parking Lot Renovations to Northern Federal Credit Union in the B-1 District at 145 East Main Street. Larson described the project location and showed aerial and streetview imagery of the area. Larson described the proposed layout of the expanded parking lot with drive thru teller service, the renovated building façade and business sign. Larson explained the Village’s existing code does not define lot coverage to indicate whether or not the 50% maximum threshold applies to parking lots. Larson said the Village Zoning Board of Appeals would need to conduct an interpretation. Depending on the ZBA’s interpretation, an area variance to exceed to 50% maximum would be required, and the business sign with electronic readerboard would require a use variance. Larson said she would defer to the County Planning Board as to whether the project should be returned for location action, or take action and impose conditions of approval. *The County Planning Board agreed to return the project for local action with non-binding comments.*

ii. Gouverneur (V): Interpretation for Auto Repair business in the B-1 zone at 19 Johnstown Street. Pfothenhauer described the project’s location, surrounding land uses, and the B-1 zoning district boundaries. Pfothenhauer said the project was originally referred as a Special Use Permit, but said the zoning code’s current language needed to be clarified to determine whether auto repair is a permitted use in the B-1 zone. Pfothenhauer explained the Village’s code lists certain uses that are prohibited, including “auto sales as an accessory business, excepting auto repair.” Pfothenhauer said if the Village ZBA interprets auto repair as a permitted use, it may proceed under special use permit. If the ZBA interprets it is a prohibited use, the applicant would need to seek a use variance.

Pfothenhauer said the impacts caused by an auto repair shop at this location would be significant, but it is questionable as to whether they are of countywide significance. Those impacts include noise and visibility, and buffering would be necessary. McClusky recommended limiting the total number of vehicles allowed on the property. Cameron recommended no outside storage. Maine suggested the applicant contact the Small Business Development Center at SUNY Canton to identify more suitable locations for this type of business. Pfothenhauer recommended the Board also encourage the Village to adopt zoning revisions that were recently drafted and finalized which would eliminate the confusing text in its current regulations. *The Board agreed to return the project for local action with non-binding comments.*

iii. Gouverneur (V): Informal Review for Renovations to McDonald’s restaurant in the B-1 zone at 114 East Main Street. Pfothenhauer described the property’s location and explained the proposed renovations which include updating the façade, reducing the number of parking spaces on site, and new sign installation. Gazin said there is a right of way alongside a bank where the restaurant is proposing off site signage. Pfothenhauer said two parking spaces along the western lot line closest to Main Street should be eliminated to prevent vehicles from backing up onto Route 11. *The Board concurred with staff recommendation to return the project for local action with non-binding comments.*

IV. Reports

- a. **Executive Committee.** Bellor said the Executive Committee met on February 28th to set tonight's agenda and discussed some of tonight's projects.
- b. **Board of Legislators.** Fay said the County recently voted to add staff to the Department of Social Services, and said there are a higher number of children in custody due to drug abuse. Fay said Empire State Mining is seeking new minerals after laying off half of the company's employees. Fay also said the university campuses are an economic engine in the county, and said SUNY Canton's student athletes are unable to compete in SUNY's Athletics League, and in some instances travel as far as Maine to play baseball rather than play against other SUNY campuses in northern New York.
- c. **Highway Department.** Chambers said the Department is in the design phase for upcoming construction projects, and is hoping for the restoration of \$544,000 that is proposed to be cut in the Governor's budget. Chambers also said there are a lot of frozen culverts due to moisture and up and down temperatures.
- d. **State of the County.** A comment was made that the layoffs at the zinc mine affect persons who gave up jobs elsewhere in the county, moved here for better wages, and now the new job is lost.
- e. **Staff Report.** Maine said she participated in an Environmental Management Committee meeting to discuss plastics in the environment, and a film showing will be held at the UU Church in Canton on March 26th at 6 pm. The movie will be followed with two guest speakers who will talk about changing lifestyle habits to omit plastics from the waste stream. A local news reporter will be invited to the event, and the plan is to distribute educational information to area restaurants about omitting the use of plastic straws.

Pfotenhauer reviewed the status and sources of funds for the County Septic Repair and Replacement Program, and said the Lead Abatement award is anticipated to assist 52 households whose children have elevated levels of lead in their blood. Larson said a public hearing will be held on the 21st for the County's draft Coordinated Transportation Plan. Maine asked about outreach efforts with Amish riders. Larson said the County's Mobility Manager regularly rides the County's buses to get feedback about the bus system.

V. Other Items

- a. **Correspondence.** Pfotenhauer said the Office received subdivision notices from the Adirondack Park Agency.
- b. **Next Meeting Dates.** The Executive Committee will meet on Thursday, March 28th at 4:15 pm in the Planning Office. The Planning Board will meet on April 11th at 7:00 p.m. in the 2nd floor conference room of the County Public Safety Complex, located at 49 ½

Court Street in Canton. Pfothenauer said the meeting will include a land use training presentation by Carrie Tuttle from the Development Authority of the North Country about the municipal dissolution process.

Pfothenauer said the County Planning Board may review the Village of Gouverneur's zoning revisions. Larson said next month's meeting may also include three solar array projects in the Town of DeKalb. The spring land use training session is also scheduled for Tuesday, April 30th in the County Public Safety Complex.

VI. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned by consensus at 8:25 pm (Fay/Bisonette).

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Renee Hotte".

Renee Hotte, Secretary

Minutes prepared by M. Larson

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