

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

7:00 p.m., Thursday, May 14th, 2026

2nd Floor Conference Room, Human Services Center, 80 Sate Highway 310, Canton and on Zoom

I. Call to Order

- a. **Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum.** J. Rose called the meeting to order at 6:59 pm. A roll call was held; a quorum was established.

	NAME	ABSENT	PRESENT		NAME	ABSENT	PRESENT
1.	Ken Bellor		X		Staff:		
2.	Kim Bisonette		X		Jason Pfothenhauer		X
3.					Preston Santimaw		X
4.	Priscilla Darling		X		Guests:	AFFILIATION	
5.					James Eller	Applicant (subdivision)	
6.					Chad Rivers	Engineer	
7.	Brian Murray		X		Josh Brandt	Applicant (data center)	
8.					Lindsey Haubenreich	Applicant (data center)	
9.	Andy Gilbert (Vice-Chair)		X		Raul Carvalho	Applicant (data center)	
10.	Dan Huntley		X		Daniel Krupa	Applicant (data center)	
11.	Margaret Mauch		X		Eric Kana	Applicant (data center)	
12.	Robin McClellan (Secretary)		X		Bob Beckstead	Watertown Daily Times	
13.	Kitty O'Neil		X		Vance Fleury	Massena (T) Planning Board	
14.	Julia Rose (Chair)		X		David Grant	Massena (T) Planning Board	
15.	Cherie Shatraw	X			Karontawakon R	Akwasasne	
	Total		10/15		Angie Barnes	Akwasasne	
					Marina Johnson-Zafiris	Akwasasne	
					Abraham Francis	Akwasasne	
					Ronnie Sunday	Akwasasne	
					Trish Wilson	NYPA	

- b. **Adoption of the Agenda.** Rose asked if there were changes to the agenda. Staff said that there were no suggested changes The agenda was unanimously adopted (McClellan/Gilbert).

- c. **Adoption of the April 9th Meeting Minutes.**

The April 9th minutes were unanimously adopted (Huntley/Mauch).

II. Public Forum

Public Comments were addressed during the full reviews as stated in the agenda.

III. Project Reviews

- a. **Referrals Returned Pursuant to MOU.** None.

b. Full Reviews.

Potsdam (T): 19-lot **Subdivision** Santimaw presented the full review. Board members, staff, and the applicant discussed:

- McClellan: It seems to make more sense to make lot 14 wider.
- Rivers: The road frontage requirement and topography make it difficult to expand the lot. The first four lots are proposed at less than the minimum required lot size, they await an area variance approval. They are also working with the NYS DOH and the NYS DOT and waiting for the Town Planning Board to apply for SEQR lead agency. They are also connected with the NYS DEC and the US Army Corps of Engineers.
- McClellan: Did the applicant consider a Planned Unit Development for this project?
- Rivers: Because the applicant is not developing near the wetlands, it makes the proposed lots smaller for development; a subdivision application was easier.
- Bisonette: Have the lots been surveyed?
- Rivers: Yes.
- Eller: The applicant will own the lots until sale, but the Town will hopefully take over road ownership.
- McClellan: What is the space between the lots indicated in the site plan?
- Rivers: Setback lines.
- Bisonette: Will this subdivision be recorded with the County?
- Rivers: Yes.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the project with the staff recommended conditions (Gilbert/O'Neil).

Massena (T): **Site Plan Review** for a data center Pfotenhauer and Santimaw presented the project review. Board members, staff, the applicant, and members of the public discussed:

- Huntley: Want to make sure there are no power supply issues with agricultural operations.
- Rose: The applicant should consider leak mitigation for the cooling system.
- Huntley: Add a condition for safety considerations for diesel fuel storage. The applicant should also consider solar panels on the proposed buildings and parking lots.
- O'Neil: Will the proposed 63 parking spaces be enough to accommodate the proposed 200 employees?
- Pfotenhauer: The employees will not be working all at one time; in shifts.
- Bellor: Add a condition for the applicant to detail how the system will operate in the event of energy curtailment.
- Rose: Has the applicant proposed any cybersecurity measures?

- Murray: The proposed 635 MW power draw is greater than any municipality along I-90, it will be the second largest user of power in NYS behind New York City. The State has limited power generation already and does not have the capacity for this project. This will affect the whole State, not just the County.
- O'Neil: How will NYPA prioritize power delivery in the event of an emergency?
- McClellan: Add a condition for an engineering study to determine the availability and cost of extra power.
- Huntley: Increased power demand can lead to more solar competing with agricultural land.
- O'Neil: Is the 635 MW allocated from NYPA?
- Wilson: There is no power purchase agreement for power from the dam with NYPA, the power needs to come from the grid. The power purchase agreement needs to come from NYISO.
- Rose: The applicant needs a plan in place in the event of a cooling system failure.
- Murray: There may be concerns with runoff to the St. Lawrence River.
- McClellan: The applicant should submit a heat impact study.
- Bellor: Is there information on the diesel fuel system for the generators?
- Pfothner: No, the applicant only specified the type of generator, they may be able to address the fuel.
- Gilbert: Each generator will likely have around 2MW of energy generation.
- McClellan: Add a condition to consider replacing the backup generators with battery storage to reduce emissions.
- Rose: There may be concerns with sound and noise greater than three miles away from the site.
- Mauch: Despite the generators being proposed in sound attenuated structures, the fact that they will be located outside may still generate noise.
- Bellor: Has soil excavation been addressed by the applicant? If not, a soil contamination remediation study should be done prior to construction.
- Rose: The Town's waterfront revitalization district in which this project is located requires trees over 8" in diameter to be undisturbed. Will the applicant be able to meet this requirement during site clearing?
- Brandt: NCCS has been operating in Massena since 2017. They are moving the already allocated power to the new proposed use. The facility will offer 200 full-time jobs post construction and ~2,000 construction jobs. This facility will be the largest taxpayer in the County. They also listened to community feedback and will be changing to a closed-loop system and cutting the number of generators in half.
- O'Neil: Will the new cooling system change the energy requirement?
- Brandt: No.
- McClellan: How will heat be removed with the new cooling system?
- Brandt: The applicant has an escrow account with the Town for technical assistance.
- Murray: Where will the water come from?
- Brandt: It will be imported from out of Town.
- McClellan: How much water will be imported?
- Brandt: No estimate of that yet.

- Rose: It may be better to send the conditions to the Town and then have them resubmit the project when the applicant provides additional information.
- Fleury: This project was submitted prematurely to the County.
- Pfothner: This project will require re-referral to this board if there is a significant change to the application.
- O'Neil: It may be best to ask the applicant for an extension on the County Planning Board's decision.
- Lindsey: This project is at the beginning stages of review but it is not an incomplete application. The applicant is conducting stakeholder outreach and actively making changes based on feedback.

At this point, the Board opened the floor for public comment. Members of the public in attendance in person and over Zoom discussed the following points:

- There is value in giving the County Planning Board the first look at this project
 - The Town has had conversations with the applicant about sourcing their own power.
 - This project will contain Artificial Intelligence generation.
 - There are no long-term studies on sound impacts for these types of facilities.
 - The applicant should receive a permit for water use.
 - The location of this project close to Akwesasne is not ideal.
 - This project will have impacts to flora, fauna, and the environment in general.
 - There was no mention of natural gas for power generation.
 - The applicant should include a Haudenosaunee perspective in the environmental review process.
 - There may be a possibility for the applicant to source power from Canada.
 - Reviews from both the Town and County planning boards should acknowledge Akwesasne.
 - This review will set a precedent for other similar facilities.
 - There has already been a decline in Sturgeon spawning in local waterways.
 - The applicant should share the environmental and economic impact studies and power studies with the public.
- O'Neil: The top concerns for this project are the electricity draw, the cooling system, and the diesel generators.
 - Brandt: This project is still viable without the 200 MW allocation.
 - Fleury: The conditions help out the local planning board more than non-binding recommendations.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the project with the staff recommended conditions and additional conditions (O'Neil/Huntley).

IV. Reports

- a. **Executive Committee.** Rose stated that the Executive Committee met for one and a half hours to discuss the projects on the agenda.

- b. **Board of Legislators.** The BOL seat on the CPB is currently vacant.
- c. **Highway Department.** The Highway Superintendent seat on the CPB is currently vacant.
- d. **State of the County Roundtable.** None.
- e. **Staff Report.** None.

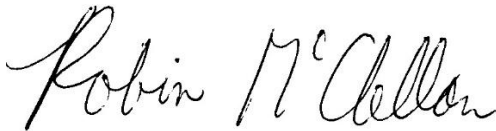
V. Other Items

- a. **Correspondence.** None.
- b. **Announcements.** None.
- c. **Next meeting dates.**
 - i. Executive Committee: Wednesday, May 27th at 3:30 pm over Zoom.
 - ii. Planning Board: Thursday, June 11th at 7:00 pm in the Second Floor Conference Room located in the HSC building, 80 State Highway 310, Canton NY.

VI. Adjourn

- a. The meeting adjourned at 10:32 pm (Darling/Bisonette).

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robin McClellan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robin McClellan, Secretary

Minutes prepared by P. Santimaw