

Village of Cayuga Heights Planning Board  
Meeting #123  
Monday, October 28, 2024  
Marcham Hall – 7:00 pm  
Minutes

Present: Planning Board Members Chair F. Cowett, J. Leijonhufvud, M. McMurry, E. Quaroni, R. Segelken  
Deputy Clerk A. Jacot, Alternate Member M. Johnston, Mayor L. Woodard  
Members of the Public

Item 1 – Meeting called to order

- Chair F. Cowett opened the meeting at 7:07 pm.
- Chair F. Cowett stated that all Board members are in attendance; Alternate Member M. Johnston is welcome to participate in the meeting, but cannot take part in any Board votes.
- Chair F. Cowett further stated that Code Enforcement Officer B. Cross and Attorneys R. Marcus and R. Kawecki will not be attending the meeting.
- Chair F. Cowett welcomed to the meeting two students from Ithaca High School who are attending the meeting as a requirement for a class.

Item 2 – September 23, 2024 Minutes

- The Board reviewed the minutes of the September 23, 2024 meeting.

**Motion:** M. McMurry

**Second:** R. Segelken

**RESOLUTION No. 414**  
**APPROVING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 23, 2024**

**RESOLVED**, that the written, reviewed and revised minutes of the September 23, 2024 meeting are hereby approved.

**Aye votes** – Chair F. Cowett, J. Leijonhufvud, M. McMurry, E. Quaroni, R. Segelken

**Opposed** – None

### Item 3 – Public Comment

- H. Lee, Warren Real Estate, introduced herself to the Board; she stated that she would be appearing before the Board next month and wished to get a sense of how the Board conducted its meeting.
- G. Tierney, 408 Highland Rd, stated that she is interested in the Board's updating of the Village's Comprehensive Plan; she commended the Board for taking it on and for emphasizing the importance of public input; she is particularly interested in issues related to environmental sustainability.
- W. Friedlander, 10 Spruce Ln, stated concern about the possibility that the field adjacent to Kendal be developed; he stated that he and his neighbors living on Spruce Lane want the field to remain as green space; he is opposed to condominiums there or any commercial development; he asked at what stage the Board is at in updating the Comprehensive Plan given that the update has been discussed for more than a year.
- Chair F. Cowett replied that he is unaware of any interest by Board members to develop the field adjacent to Kendal; he stated that the Board is just beginning the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan; the Board's discussions in the past year pertaining to the Comprehensive Plan were in response to a question posed to the Planning Board by the Board of Trustees as to whether the Comprehensive Plan should be updated.
- M. Johnston stated that over the course of the past year the Board went through the 2014 Comprehensive Plan and discussed section by section as to whether it should be updated, then recommended to the Board of Trustees that, yes, an update was needed; the Board is at square one in the update process.
- R. Segelken stated that he lives on Texas Ln; he is well aware that the field adjacent to Kendal functions as a community resource and is opposed to it being developed.
- W. Friedlander stated that he was aware that an update to the Comprehensive Plan was being considered, but that it had been difficult for him to ascertain at what stage the update was at.
- Deputy Clerk A. Jacot stated that the best way for residents to keep informed about the status of the Comprehensive Plan update is to subscribe to and read the bi-weekly Village email newsletter; she urged Board members to emphasize subscribing to the newsletter in future discussions with Village residents.

### Item 4 – Comprehensive Plan Discussion

- Chair F. Cowett stated that the Board will resume its work on the update of the Village's Comprehensive Plan; since the Board's last meeting, he worked with Mayor L. Woodard to develop text for her newsletter article informing residents about the Plan update; additionally, he worked with Village staff to highlight the update in the Village's biweekly email newsletter and the update has been publicized in the last two newsletters.

- Chair F. Cowett further stated that at the Board’s September meeting he asked Board members to research changes that have occurred in the Village since 2014 specific to their areas of interest so that the Comprehensive Plan update will be as data driven as possible; he has provided Board members with an analysis of changes to Village residential parcels since 2014 related to housing and the question as to whether the Village is built-out, leaving little room for new residential development; additionally, E. Quaroni has provided a comparison of US Census data between 2010 and 2020 on housing unit types; he asked Board members if how they wished to proceed.
- M. McMurry replied that the Board should replicate its process when it evaluated if the Comprehensive Plan should be updated; it should go through each Goals and Objectives section one at a time, while at the same time keeping the public informed via the bi-weekly newsletter as to the section being worked on.
- M. Johnston agreed with M. McMurry; he stated that the Board should divvy up sections among Board members and establish a monthly schedule.
- J. Leijonhufvud and E. Quaroni stated that they would be unable to attend the Board meeting scheduled for December 23.
- Chair F. Cowett asked J. Leijonhufvud and E. Quaroni if they would be able to attend a Board meeting on Monday December 16.
- J. Leijonhufvud and E. Quaroni replied that they would.
- Chair F. Cowett stated that the Board will reschedule its December meeting to Monday December 16 and pass a resolution doing so at its November 25 meeting.
- The Board discussed divvying up the Goals and Objectives sections among Board members; the Board’s next meeting will begin the process of updating the Quality of Life and Community Character sections; the Board had previously recommended to the Board of Trustees that an update of these sections should entail their being combined into one section.
- The Board discussed how to update the Inventory section of the Comprehensive Plan which precedes the Goals and Objectives sections.
- Some Board members proposed finding a Cornell student to revise the Inventory section.
- Chair F. Cowett stated that Cornell students compiled the 2014 version of the Inventory section; he wasn’t satisfied with the result and isn’t in favor of having a Cornell student take a crack at revising it; an Inventory section update can evolve as the Board works through the Goals and Objectives sections.
- A brief discussion followed about the 2010 US Census data contained in the Inventory section; that data will need to be updated with more current data, but the most recent data will come from the American Community Survey which is less precise than the Census and contains somewhat different data categories.
- R. Segelken stated that the Goals and Objectives section dealing with Economy should focus on why we are concerned with keeping a vibrant commercial center; we owe it to Village residents and taxpayers that the Community Corners area should be

a good place to do business, and having a walkable commercial center contributes to the quality of life in the Village.

- M. McMurry stated that the commercial parts of the Community Corners area are privately owned and the Village doesn't control them; however, the Village can impact the density of and transportation connections to Community Corners.
- The Board asked H. Lee about real estate trends in Cayuga Heights.
- H. Lee replied that clients looking to buy focus on Cayuga Heights or Belle Sherman, but the turnover of family residences in Cayuga Heights is very low; many property owners are aging in place rather than moving, in part because there are limited options to downsize and move.
- R. Segelken stated that he has witnessed grandchildren moving in with their grandparents in order to attend schools in specific districts; this is another way for grandparents to afford aging in place.
- Board members briefly discussed the increasing number of vacancies in fraternities located in Cayuga Heights; addressing the change in use of fraternities is another topic to be considered in the Comprehensive Plan update.
- Board members discussed how to best involve members of the Cayuga Heights community in the Comprehensive Plan update process.
- Mayor L. Woodard stated that one way to encourage community involvement is via an online survey; the Village recently conducted an online survey via SurveyMonkey about leaf blowers which received more than 200 responses; the Village entered into a one year subscription with Survey Monkey so that the Planning Board could conduct its own online surveys asking for the opinions and comments of Village residents regarding the Comprehensive Plan update.
- Board members discussed perceptions by Village residents about the Comprehensive Plan update process; it is vital to communicate to Village residents that the update is an iterative process; nothing has been decided yet, and there is an opportunity for resident comments at Board meetings either in person or via Zoom; the update process will eventually lead to a draft with resident input.

#### Item 5 – New Business

- Chair F. Cowett stated that the next meeting of the Planning Board is scheduled for Monday November 25 at 7:00 pm.

#### Item 6 – Adjourn

- Meeting adjourned at 8:37 pm.