

Parks & Open Spaces Committee

Town of Jay

Meeting Minutes (Virtual)

December 19, 2024

Present: Olivia Dwyer, Tim Rowland, Grace Potthast

Absent: Knut Sauer, Chris Sorrell, Paul Benway

2025 logistics planning

- 7 p.m. on weekdays in person at Community Center is a good meeting time/place
- All members comfortable using Google Docs to share work and communicate

Next meeting: First week of February, time/day TBD

Discussion: 2024 in review

- Reviewed committee writeup in Town of Jay winter newsletter

Discussion: 2025 goals

Fourth Annual Spring Volunteer Cleanup Day

- April 2025, date/time TBD
 - Do all three sites on the same day (instead of different days as in past years)
 - Committee agrees volunteer appreciation event at JEMS after cleanup would be a nice way to finish the day
- Sites:
 - Wells Memorial Library in Upper Jay
 - Douglas Memorial Park in Jay
 - The Grove / Community Gard in Au Sable Forks
- Planning discussion:
 - Ask for preliminary volunteer sign ups to help with planning (no binding commitment to help)
 - Targeted recruitment to get more volunteers on site in Au Sable Forks

Four Peaks community outreach with BETA

- Olivia to connect with Glenn Glover, BETA executive director, on planning community outreach to get feedback on needs and interests for Four Peaks outdoor recreation projects.
- Committee discussed importance of a trailhead and parking with safe and permanent access to Four Peaks on the Jay side of the property, even if the primary trailhead is on the Wilmington side.
- Interest in co-leading a BETA and Town of Jay outing from the Jay side this spring/summer to get community members involved.
- Possibility of windshield tour through parks and open spaces too.

- Tim has talked to Martin Schwalbaum's relative with property at the top of Stone House Road and notes that the relative is aware the Four Peaks property is now owned by New York State.
- There have been concerns from residents on Stone House Road about increased traffic and faster travel on the road since Four Peaks opened to the public this spring. Olivia to check in with Highway Superintendent Chris Sorrell about additional traffic signs.
- Door knocking and letters; be proactive to let residents and community members know what's going on.

EPA Recreation Economies for Rural Communities grant

- Olivia to check in with EPA on updated timeline of grant announcement
- Comprehensive plan outreach surfaced idea of a pedestrian bridge in Au Sable Forks below the confluence of East and West Branches of the Ausable River to complete a walking loop that passes through both towns and hamlet center. Could be moved along with RERC technical assistance.
- Prioritize signage: in town parks to direct people to playground and other key amenities; DEC signage at Four Peaks.
- Need to map county properties in Town of Jay.

Comprehensive Planning

- More information to come in early 2025 about how this committee will act as working group.
- Interest in seeing that working group identify critical areas for parks & open spaces committee, then setting concrete goals and actions to achieve those goals.
- Funnel those outputs to the comprehensive plan, then have the committee continue working on actions and goals after the comprehensive plan process is completed to ensure ideas don't sit on a shelf and continue to implementation

New member recruitment

- Looking for people with relevant land management and outdoor recreation experience. Suggestions of Tyler Eaton; Michael Rose; Sugar House Creamery owners; others who are active and outdoor oriented.
- Post on social media and Jay Community News.

Supporting town parks and staff

- Tim volunteered to help with chainsaw or maintenance needs in parks.
- Planning to put trash cans in parks in 2025.
- Look at abike tool bench for Jay Village Green.
- Grace interested in coordinating with Parks staff and Highway Superintendent to formulate needs list for Children's Playground site and equipment.
 - Replacement bowl for water table; follow up on previous discussions to order and install.
 - Grace noted there are two motion sensor lights at the playground: one is broken and was on all night but is now out.

- Discussion of how the committee can best communicate and coordinate with town departments on what we see in parks—how to help out as extra eyes in various sites. Consensus that a shared Google Doc could be a useful tool