

Town of Jay Comprehensive Plan Special Board

February 17, 2025 16th Meeting

Present: Wally Walters (Chair), Adam DeSantis, Olivia Dwyer, Madelyn Savage

Via Go-To-Meeting: Dr. Ann Ruzow Holland (Principal Consultant from AES Northeast), Scott Allen (Managing Consultant with AES), Matt Gillman, Tim Rowland, Robin Licari

Advanced Material: Agenda, Draft Minutes of Meeting #15 (20 Jan 2025), Initial Focal Topics List (17 Feb 2025), Issue Analysis—Topics Climate & Infrastructure 03 Jan 2025, 20250120 Housing and Planning Working Group Gillman draft, 2502 Parks & Open Spaces – Comprehensive Plan Community Inputs (16 Feb 2025), 2502 Parks & Open Spaces – Comprehensive Plan Focal Topics (16 Feb 2025), Thoughts for Working Group Chairs on Framing Focal Topics (17 Feb 2025), Draft Stakeholder Interview List (As of 17 Jan 2025).

Other references: Jay Comp Plan Community Survey Raw Results Dec 2024, Jay CPSB Community Survey Results Report Draft 1, Jay CPSB Oct 2024 Open House Report Draft 1, AAPOA presentation inputs 13 Oct 2024, ARVBA presentation inputs 30 May 2024.

1. Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM

Motion to approve January 20, 2024 meeting minutes. All in favor and none opposed.

Wally Walters noted membership changes in the CPSB: Melinda Beuf resigned as Vice Chair due to her heavy volunteering load and a desire to be an advocate on some of the Comprehensive Plan's issues. Matt Stanley and Wally Walters recommended Tim Rowland as the new Vice Chair. All were in favor, none opposed. Christine Bush decided not to pursue board membership after her first meeting attendance, due to her perception of the significant workload each member carries.

Wally Walters discussed his reports about the CPSB's work to the Jay Town Board on 13 Feb, and his informal report to the Essex County grant administrator. Both were pleased with the CPSB's progress and its intended agenda for the coming months. Wally will be presenting a list of the working group's focal topics at the Jay town board meeting on 13 March.

2. Reports from the Working Group Chairs on Focal Topic Identification:

- Climate & Infrastructure Working Group Chair: Wally Walters. The group met on 28 January and discussed draft focal topics, with a general consensus. The discussion also revealed a number of overlapping interests among different working groups.

- Housing and Planning Working Group Chair: Matt Gillman. The planning board met as a working group on 12 February. The focal topics were on housing and planning and a good

discussion was held. Short-term-rentals got much discussion. The board approved the proposed general areas of focal topics, with the intent to shape them further in March. Wally: Many topics are expected to be controversial, so it is important to approach them by exploring the range of alternatives rather than trying to define a preferred alternative at this point in the process. There will be tradeoffs to consider in all significant focal topics. Matt also highlighted Olivia's idea of incorporating local self-governance in STRs where possible, as in Ausable Acres.

- Parks and Open Spaces Working Group Chair: Olivia Dwyer. The WG will meet on Friday 21 February. Olivia has developed proposed topics for consideration, including the idea of a recreational master plan. Community outreach and engagement will also be important. Survey results show the town needs to communicate better. Some big changes could be coming, especially for the Four Peaks property. The Barkeater Trails Alliance may be assisting in developing a master plan. Rotary groups in Lake Placid and Saranac Lake help with parks and infrastructure. Olivia plans to explore if our Rotary can do similar things. Having accessibility of trails and other recreation will be an important consideration also. Ann Ruzow-Holland recommended consideration of all public lands in Jay, to include State and town lands.

- Human Services Working Group Chair: Robin Licari. Robin reported on the first HS WG meeting on 6 February, which included an initial discussion of focal topics. Interests included affordable housing, childcare, health services and substance abuse. Members of the group are exploring Mercy Care programs and interviewing seniors this month. There is lots of opportunity for the town to take better advantage of social programs run by the county or various non-profits.

- Economic Development Working Group Chair: Adam DeSantis. No meeting was held in February due to member absences, but focal topics proposed by Adam will be discussed in March. The list is based on feedback from the survey and open house. It includes main street revitalization, outdoor recreation, workforce attraction and development, business recruitment and retention. Olivia expressed concern to also consider needs in Upper Jay. Discussion also focused on land bank opportunities and working with the North Country Rural Development Coalition led by Nicole Justice Green who is being employed the town to assist with initiatives. Adam also discussed the likelihood of climate refugees being attracted to Jay in the coming decades. The CPSB members discussed other related topics including town branding, the unique characteristics of Jay and potential for the 'creative economy' (arts).

- General discussion on focal topics. Ann noted the three purposes of comprehensive plans in New York, a legal basis for regulatory work, as a basis for grant applications, and for educating and engaging the public to build a culture of involvement in the community. The group also discussed some overlapping coverage on topics among working groups such as for senior transportation and affordable housing. The group informally decided for working groups to continue exploring topics as they see fit, and for overlapping coverage to be discussed among group chairs. Scott Allen raised the issue of getting information on working group activities and storage of information more generally.

3. Next Steps for Working Groups: Initial Focal Topic Analysis: Wally discussed his recommendations for working groups to proceed on focal topics: defining the topics, characterizing existing conditions, goals and concerns, identifying the range of alternatives

available to the town and tradeoffs to be considered. Each working group is asked to identify what information is needed. WGs should take advantage of existing reports. It is recommended each WG consider adding members for expertise as needed and identify individuals for stakeholder interviews, as well as subjects to ask. Working Group Chairs can add more members or participants at their discretion.

4. Public Information and Information Management:

- Wally noted the need to expand the information available on PlanJay.com, and will provide a flashdrive with appropriate documents.
- The town website also needs updating, and Wally will discuss this with Matt Stanley.
- The group discussed where to locate board files and items from working groups. It was decided to use a Google drive, to be coordinated by Adam.
- Wally noted the need to provide a steady amount of information for public interest, primarily using Jay Community News.

5. Schedule of Next Meetings: (All to be held at the Community Center from 6:30-8 pm, and available for on-line participation)

- Monday 17 March 2025
- Monday 21 April 2025
- Monday 19 May 2025
- Possible Visioning Workshop and other public engagements: TBD

6. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Wally Walters, Board Chair

A machine-based meeting transcript and AI summary by AES Northeast was used to assist in preparing these draft minutes.