

Town of Jay Comprehensive Plan Special Board  
March 17, 2025 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting

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Present: Wally Walters (Chair), Olivia Dwyer, Matt Stanley, Madelyn Savage

Via Go-To-Meeting: Dr. Ann Ruzow Holland (Principal Consultant from AES Northeast), Scott Allen (Managing Consultant with AES), Adam DeSantis

Advanced Material: Agenda, Jay CPSB meeting #16 (17 Feb 2025) draft minutes, CPSB meeting transcript (17 Feb 2025), CPSB meeting AI summary (17 Feb 2025), Focal Topics List as of 13 Mar 2025, Analysis Memos on Climate & Infrastructure Focal Topics (5) (4 Mar 2025), Updated Way Ahead Memo for 2025 (17 Mar 2025), Memo for AES NE Planjay Improvements (25 Feb 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, Thoughts for Working Group Chairs on Framing Focal Topics (17 Feb 2025), Draft Stakeholder Interview List (As of 17 Jan 2025), Way Ahead Memo for 2025 (10 Dec 2024).

1. Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM

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

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

- Parks and Open Spaces Working Group Chair: Olivia Dwyer. The WG met on Friday 21 February, with a focus on raising awareness, signage and an open spaces plan. The community values more than just nature; need to look beyond just parks at what contributes to community well-being, including private lands, the river and its riparian buffers. Discussion:

- public/private partnership opportunities such as Champlain Area Trails System
- ARH: maybe distinguish interpretive and way signage; need both
- WW: town Upper Jay entrance sign opportunity still for interpretation; other signs
- ARH: opportunities for mapping of parks and recreation include easements on public and other lands

- Economic Development Working Group Chair: Adam DeSantis.

- opportunities of low-hanging fruit to be acted upon before the plan is complete; to be born out of the process

- no meeting yet on focal topics due to schedules; will address at next meeting (upcoming)

- five focal topics identified: main street revitalization, outdoor recreation/tourism economy, workforce/remote work attraction, infrastructure for economic growth, and business recruitment/retention and expansion activities; sub-items shared in document

- discussion on how to address 'creative economy' within these topics or separately; RAH: "people don't spend money by throwing it out of their cars as they drive by"

- main street just Au Sable Forks? Need to be broader to include Jay & Upper Jay
- how ROOST looks at tourism: all promotional activities to leverage local residents/economy
- MS: town has lots of creative economy opportunities: theaters, artisans, arts community; we want build for our residents and for tourists; what we can afford in parks & 'arts space'
- RAH: Americans for the Arts study: economic impact, tying together arts, child care, restaurants; all contributing collectively; not just tourists and residents
- MS: comp plan can tie things together; and go after grants; all this will cross several working groups

- Housing and Planning Working Group Chair: Matt Gillman (Wally reporting). Last planning meeting considered Matt G's proposed focal topics and way ahead. (Matt was absent due to family funeral.)

- Human Services Working Group Chair: Robin Licari (Wally reporting). Recent meeting looked at wide variety of issues and interviews of seniors. Low participation by Jay seniors in activities due to lack of awareness of opportunities and difficulties of intake. No central clearing house within town to help people access services. Discussed other issues including affordable housing, child care, health services and substance abuse, Mercy Care.

- RAH: Vermont has a "Front Porch Forum"; also town website could have directory/link
- OD: Jay Community News isn't the same, as it is one-way communication
- AD: upcoming Mercy Care seminar for seniors highly recommended; should target adult children of seniors too

- Climate & Infrastructure Working Group Chair: Wally Walters. Good discussion on comp plan focal topics, looking at range of alternatives to town, tradeoffs and research questions.

- limits on what town can accomplish; tradeoffs involved such as money, limitations, time
- various examples highlighted: roads and water systems in the Acres, pharmacy
- RAH: are there ways for the Acres to pursue possible tax increment financing for business improvement district so the Acres pays for what they fund, as grant financing may be unlikely
- WW: having discussion/education with community re tradeoffs may be significant too
- RAH: capital plan for town water/sewer? MS: we're working on it
- WW: maybe need for future residents/development to contribute to town infrastructure
- MS: county just completed draft Hazard Mitigation study

### 3. Way Ahead Memo:

- trying to expand on December memo, start detailing visioning workshop and alternatives; while each focal topic provides opportunities on each issue; bigger outcomes direction from alternative future visions; after visioning workshop, focus on getting feedback through the summer, another survey? Open houses, posting results looking for comments; soliciting ideas how to do this

- discussion:

- OD: what do other communities do for vision workshops? Any standard templates?
- RAH: in one project (Indian Lake/Newcomb) we tried something different, doing storytelling and theater; I'll follow-up after this meeting; for Jay, maybe multiple workshops, looking at solutions rather than concerns; possible strawman; perhaps combination of invitations/general public

- WW: goal of getting town board direction in late summer; not necessarily decisions on all issues but direction to allow writing draft comp plan over fall and winter; narrowing the scope
- MS: I see the visioning workshop similar to open house, looking at alternatives/outcomes, creating discussion about the future we want; what concrete things do we want the town to invest in? "What do you want our leadership to do? What inspires you to stay in the town?"
- RAH: "We want you to do everything but raise our taxes."
- WW: hence, the importance of including tradeoffs; not all things will be controversial; if we tee it up correctly we can have good public discussion
- OD: (logistics/roles and responsibilities): who will prepare materials? WW: contract identifies AES-NE lead logistics, facilitation, preps materials; RAH: town would arrange venues, outreach/invitations/marketing; a lot of preparing materials is collaborative; event choreography might be similar to Open House; can't possibly have well running workshop in April
- RAH: in past workshops, we've used smaller group work for more rich discussions
- OD: public event? WW: yes
- MS: do we have separate tables? Five tables? OD: we'll need to bring people up to speed
- WW: educational component as well as feedback component
- AD: we also have to be mindful of public availability; WW: distinction between open house and survey
- RAH: maybe do information on show such as Mountain Lake Journal? MS: have not yet, but did channel 5 interview; could do press releases and do story out there; RAH: maybe get an update out on plan soon; visioning workshop would be only "a strand in the braid, not be-all, end all"

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

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

5. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Wally Walters, Board Chair

A video recording of the session assisted in preparation of these notes