

Parks & Open Space Committee
Meeting AGENDA
Town of Jay Community Center
Thursday, October 30, 2025, at 7 p.m.

GoTo Meeting Link: <https://meet.goto.com/628356765>

ATTENDANCE

Olivia Dwyer, Chair
Sarach Ducharme
Larry Hartson
Brooke Paries, Town of Jay Parks
Tim Rowland (virtual)
Andrew Hamlin (virtual)

MINUTES

Town Parks Updates

Upper Jay Parking Lot: Info sign installed with solar light. Brooke has brushhogged the surrounding FEMA parcels and cleaned up trees to open up the area.

Trash cans: Still out. Will be pulled out of parks for storage in November.

Port-a-Potties: Still out in some locations (Children's Playground; The Grove sports fields). Will be pulled out when Youth Commission schedules are done.

New Member Introduction

Frank Krueger: After retiring as a lawyer in Washington, D.C., Frank moved to the Ausable Acres 25 years ago. He has spent that time volunteering with the Adirondack Mountain Club, where he was on the board of directors, chair of the trails committee, and a volunteer Summit Steward for 13 years. He also served on the board of the Adirondack Ski Touring Council, which is now the Barkeater Trails Alliance.

Dog Park Updates

- Larry is still talking to Wendy at North Country SPCA about fiscal sponsorship. Larry and Sarah do not want to create a 501(c)(3). Sarah will reach out to AdkAction and Adirondack Community Foundation to see if they are able to provide fiscal sponsorship. They did raise \$105 in donations at Jay Day.
- At the suggestion of the Town Board, Sarah and Larry are canvassing neighbors of the proposed dog park site at 23 Grove Road. They knocked on 5 doors, spoke to 3 neighbors (all positive about a dog park) and left notes for the other 2

with no responses. The committee noted that the triplex neighboring 23 Grove Road is owned by Adam Coolidge, who rents to occupants, and suggested reaching out to him as the property owner.

- Sarah spoke to the Au Sable Forks Volunteer Fire Department. They did not have any concerns about a dog park impacting their use of the property. Olivia suggested requesting a letter of support.
- Larry talked to the Christmas in the Forks committee. They did not have any concerns about a dog park impacting their use of the property. Olivia suggested requesting a letter of support.
- The committee discussed Town Board concerns about dog waste creating more work for Parks employees. Brooke recommended a single unit with bag dispenser and trash unit in one, saying that it worked really well in Wilmington. Sarah shared plans to fundraise for the maintenance, trash pickup, and infrastructure. Larry is committed to volunteering and checking in 3 to 4 times a week. Olivia suggested checking in with the Highway Department to see if dog waste could be put in their dumpster to eliminate cost of an additional pickup spot.
- Olivia will draft a letter that Larry and Sarah could send to nearby landowners to ensure they are fully informed about progress so far.

Comprehensive Plan

Community Survey #2 report available here:

<https://aesnortheast.my.canva.site/a-comprehensive-plan-documents>

Committee discussed tension between interest in more trails and resistance to more outdoor recreation development. Mirrors similar tension between “yes” to more tourism for the purposes of economic development and “no” to more tourism because people want the town to invest in what serves residents, not visitors.

Frank suggested the Town explore a public access easement to trails in Ausable Acres to allow all residents of Jay to use this system.

Discussion of how to fully represent that scope of Parks & Open Space in comprehensive plan. Suggested focal topics:

1. **Parks & Facilities** — Existing town owned and operated spaces for the purpose of public enjoyment and recreation.
 - a. Au Sable Forks
 - i. Riverside Park
 - ii. The Grove

- 1. Francis M. Pattno & John F. Gale Memorial Park (sports fields, pavilion, picnic areas)
 - 2. Community Garden
 - 3. Henry's Trail
- iii. Community Center (gym, classrooms)
- iv. Veterans Memorial
- v. Dog Park — work in progress
- b. Jay
 - i. Village Green
 - ii. Douglas Memorial Park & Covered Bridge
 - iii. Children's Playground
- c. Upper Jay
 - i. Park at Springfield Road and Route 9N

2. Open Space

- a. State land
 - i. Wilmington Wild Forest — Four Peaks, Hamlin Mountain Tract, Clements Pond
 - ii. Jay Mountain Wilderness
 - iii. Sentinel Mountain Wilderness
- b. County land
 - i. Lincoln Hill reforestation lands
- c. Private land
 - i. Outdoor recreation — Ausable Acres trail network; NewVida Preserve trail network
 - ii. Conservation easements — as a potential tool to protect scenic viewsheds, open spaces, agricultural land, wildlife habitat, wetlands, drinking water, river shoreline

3. Outdoor Recreation

- a. summary of existing opportunities (formal and informal infrastructure);
- b. summary of community survey (2022);
- c. summary of comments in CPSB surveys (Some/most of this may be covered in the "What We Learned From Working Groups" section)
- d. Overview of potential/existing partners:
 - i. Barkeater Trails Alliance
 - ii. NYS DEC
 - iii. Adirondack Mountain Club
 - iv. Champlain Area Trails
 - v. Adirondack Land Trust
 - vi. Rotary Club of Au Sable Valley

4. Community Programs: Capture community interest/demand for programs in public spaces.

- a. Summary of existing annual calendar:
 - i. Town of Jay/Black Brook Youth Commission (soccer, softball/baseball, basketball)
 - ii. Parks & Trails Day — annual volunteer event in April
 - iii. Missing Children's Tournament
 - iv. Senior activities at the Community Center
- b. Summary of informal adult activities
 - i. Pickleball (case study?)
- c. Partners operating programming in Town of Jay
 - i. Ausable Freshwater Center
 - ii. JEMS — Concert Series
 - iii. Rotary Club of Au Sable Valley — Jay Day
 - iv. Sugar House Creamery — Green Grass Get Down

Committee members recommended a dynamic report out process to the community at the end of the Comprehensive Plan process: suggestions included a “highlight reel”, events, physical and digital summaries available.

Recreation Economy for Rural Communities Program

As of Oct. 9, EPA employees are furloughed due to federal shutdown. This has delayed the launch of the RERC program.

Other notes:

- 1) The Steering Committee has been finalized.
- 2) Olivia spoke to people in Poultney, VT that participated in RERC; will share this plan with the group for reference.
- 3) Olivia will resend RERC links to committee as a reference.

2026 Parks & Trails Day

Save the Date: **April 25, 2026** (Earth Day tie in)

Relate to Comprehensive Plan framework by having one volunteer project in each category:

- 1) Parks & Facilities — Douglas Memorial
- 2) Open Space — Jay Mountain trailhead
- 3) Outdoor Recreation — Henry's Trail
- 4) Community Programs — engage school in students doing a trash pickup

Use locations and projects to help guide partners and sponsorships selections

Other ideas:

- 1) Look to Vermont Green Up Day for inspiration: <https://greenupvermont.org/>
- 2) More community engagement: Connect with teachers/advisors in local schools, especially for clubs like National Honor Society that have a community service requirement, and elementary school given Au Sable Forks location.
- 3) Future considerations as outdoor recreation infrastructure expands and more volunteer help is needed:
 - a) Coordinate another project with National Trails Day in June.
 - i) Good time to collaborate with DEC on Jay trailhead and trail.
 - b) Plan for a fall trail day too, as trail work is needed to clean out drainage ditches and clear blowdown this time of year.

NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2025 at 7 p.m. in Community Center.