

Town of Jay Economic Development Committee

Date: May 26, 2026

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Town of Jay Community Center / Hybrid

Attendance

- Matt Stanley
- Nicole Justice Green
- Jody Olcott
- Wally Walters
- Beth Rowland
- Tim Rowland

Welcome and Introductions

- Committee Chair Matt Stanley called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM, noting an agenda was prepared by Michelle.
- Matt turned the floor over to Nicole to begin program updates.

Main Street Revitalization & Housing Updates

- New York Main Street (NYMS) Program: Applications are currently being received and reviewed, with the first round of awards anticipated during the second week of June. Nicole noted that several technical assistance pre-applicants still need to formally reapply. NRDC staff will have an informational table at next Friday's mural celebration to engage prospective applicants.
There was a concern that paper applications would help since online applications time out and cannot be saved. Nicole will double-check for an application checklist to help applicants compile materials beforehand.
- VRP: The Vacant Property Rehabilitation (VRP) program contract is being refunded by the state and expanded to unserved areas in Hamilton. There is roughly \$400,000 in funding still available, and the waitlist will be reopened to new applicants. The committee discussed routing prospective applicants from neighboring hamlets like Black Brook and Chesterfield to this program to support local affordable housing needs in the AVCS School District.
- Pilot Repair Programs: NRDC is running a \$100,000 occupied apartment repair pilot prioritizing long-term rental units with lead deficiencies or energy efficiency needs. Additionally, a new state-funded homeowner repair pilot through the land bank allows housing rehabilitation assistance for owner-occupied homes up to 120% AMI, bypassing stricter federal CDBG income limits (capped at 80% AMI).
- Land Bank Property Management: The 39 Burt Lane House is scheduled for raccoon/bird abatement over the next two weeks. The property will be completely gutted to the studs before exterior renovations begin in the summer/early fall.
- Contractor Shortage: The committee discussed the difficulty of finding local contractors, resulting in excessive project bids.. A suggestion was made to table at local contractor appreciation events (e.g., Ward Lumber or Hazelton) to recruit

builders. Nicole noted the Land Bank hosts a free, annual lead renovation training course which also helps reduce contractor insurance costs.

- CDBG Housing Rehabilitation: One housing unit is near completion, a second is about to start, and final bids are pending for a third. Environmental/lead abatements continue to drive high project costs, averaging \$40,000 to \$70,000 per unit before basic structural repairs are addressed.

CDBG Microenterprise Program Update

- Jody Olcott reported on Round 3 of the Microenterprise training class held two weeks prior. Of the seven attendees, three were deemed ineligible due to ongoing active construction in their facilities, one withdrew citing excessive paperwork, and two fell off the radar. One applicant is expected to submit next week.
- Round 1 awarded roughly \$29,000 across two businesses. The program remains significantly short of its \$175,000 allocation. Strict CDBG requirements regarding construction restrictions and low-to-moderate income (LMI) job creation make the grant a difficult sell.
- Funding remains open until mid-2027. Jody confirmed that the only clawback provision applies if a business closes within one year of receiving funds. If funds remain uncommitted by the closeout deadline, CDBG may reclaim the money, though the town could petition for an extension or a change of use for a special project.

Comprehensive Plan Update

- Workgroups are reviewing the community profile portion of the report, with final recommendations due by the end of the week. The goal is a public release in late summer or early fall.
- Matt requested cell phone coverage maps from the LCLGRP to incorporate into the comprehensive plan.
- Wally noted that insights on short-term rentals (STRs), housing, and zoning from a recent APA conference will be integrated into the ongoing plan developments.

Business Recruitment, Retention & Expansion

- The Town Visitor Center hosted a well-attended grand opening on May 21. Eleri will be staffing the location.
- Matt is contacting the State DOT to request directional signage pointing toward the municipal parking lot to capture visitor traffic.
- An updated town map designed by ROOST will be installed on the center's wall and used as hand-outs. The committee aims to secure large printed versions for the Visitor Center and the Jay Village Green by the end of July.
- The Visitor Center is exploring a consignment program to allow local artisans to sell goods in the space.

Infrastructure Updates

- EV Chargers: Installation is complete for two chargers in Upper Jay and one at the Jay Village Green. The chargers are powered but currently offline due to cell provider connectivity issues with internal SIM cards. Free charging will be provided via the EVOKE app/QR code until grant funds (\$7,000 for the Jay Village

Green, \$5,000 for Upper Jay) are exhausted. The town is looking into cell boosters or Wi-Fi to fix the connection issues.

- **Au Sable Forks Cell Service Deficiencies:** Matt reported a recent fatal medical event in Au Sable Forks where emergency 911 calls failed due to zero cell signal. Matt raised this critical infrastructure failure with Essex County Emergency Services, the NYS Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, and county engineers to explore routing emergency cell traffic through the county's new radio tower system. The committee agreed that federal and state representatives (including the Attorney General) should be notified to hold utility providers accountable.

Key Community Priorities & Next Steps

- **New York Forward / DRI Grants:** The committee discussed targeting the upcoming November application cycle. The grant offers a \$4.5 million reward but requires the identification of roughly \$13 million in viable projects. Nicole shared lessons from Ticonderoga, emphasizing that projects must have strong, verified private development partners lined up prior to submitting the application. Next month's meeting will focus on brainstorming potential projects and identifying private investors.
- **Short-Term Rental (STR) Regulation:** Due to information brought back from the APA conference, the committee will dedicate time next month to discuss STR regulations and consider forming an STR Task Force to draft policy recommendations for the town board.

Open Discussion

- **History Group:** Beth reported that the history group is very active; a website has launched, and an event is scheduled for June 16, with details to follow.
- **Upcoming Community Events:**
 - June 1: Artist talk with Erica Ms. Teal at the Community Center.
 - June 5: Mural Celebration from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM featuring a live band and food trucks.

Closing Remarks & Adjournment

- Matt thanked the attendees for their time, and the meeting adjourned at approximately 2:03 PM.