

Washington County Planning Department

2016 Annual Report

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Introduction

The Washington County Planning Department strives to be a resource and an asset to the local municipalities throughout the County. This is done through extensive efforts to provide local boards opportunities for training, researching grant funding, as well as providing technical assistance as needed.

In 2016 the department said farewell to Planner, Chris DeBolt, as he transitioned into the position of County Administrator. With his departure the County reviewed several applicants to fill his position, ultimately choosing to hire Layne Darfler as Jr. Planner.

Planning updates and general information can be found on the Washington County Planning Website.

Training

In an effort to provide municipal planning and zoning boards with a variety of training opportunities, the Department hosts, sponsors or participates in several seminars per year. Members attended conferences and opportunities extending to other Counties as well as in-house training.



On January 27th, 2016 six board members attended the all-day annual Saratoga County Planning and Zoning Conference. There, they gained valuable insight from professionals throughout New York State. They also had the opportunity to meet and discuss issues with planning and zoning board members from surrounding municipalities.

On October 6th, 2016 Warren County and the Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board hosted the 4th annual Southern ADK Planning and Zoning Forum. Planning Board staff and board members had the opportunity to gain valuable insight on important and timely topics such as: Hamlet Revitalization, Zoning and Planning Connection to Economic Development, Working with APA, Zoning within the ADK's, Smart Growth, Advanced SEQRA, Finding the Right Niche, and more.

With the conversation surrounding solar development in the County gaining interest, the Planning Department hosted a training course presented by NY-Sun PV Trainers Network titled: "Planning and Zoning for Solar PV". This event was held at the Hudson Falls High School on April 19th, 2016. Over 50 participants from within the County attended this seminar.



Because of this training opportunity our annual New York State Department of State Training had been postponed until early 2017. To ensure maximum relevance the planning department has taken the opportunity to send out a brief survey to better assess what land use training courses the local municipalities would like to attend and benefit more from.

Throughout the year New York State Department of State and New York Planning Federation also provided opportunities to earn more in-service credit hours as they held conferences, seminars, and online webinars. The topics covered in these events included: Financial Implications of Shared Service, Sign Regulation, Land Use Moratoria, Planning Board Overview and Zoning Board of Appeals.

Department Services

Washington County Planning Department provides informational services to county departments, municipalities, consulting firms, not-for-profits and the general public.

Informational Services

The Planning Department houses public flood hazard and wetland information for Washington County. The Department also keeps records of existing town and village comprehensive plans, land use controls, subdivision law, and zoning law if they have been provided by the local municipalities.

Coordination Services: Planning

The office also provides assistance to local municipalities regarding the Washington County Planning Board's referral process and acts as an informational center for General Municipal Law §239-M.

The Planning Department coordinates with continuing education administrators, including the Department of State, New York Municipal Insurance Reciprocal (NYMIR) to provide local board members and municipalities the opportunity to gain required continuing education credits as well as familiarize themselves with current planning knowledge.

Grant Services

The Planning Department is continuously identifying and communicating grant opportunities that may be constructive to the planning, growth and improvement of our County. In 2016 the Planning Department assisted with grants and applications including: Salem Greenway, Local Government Efficiency regarding Shared Regional Highway Operation Centers, Community Development Block Grant for The Cambridge; an assisted living facility, Granville's D&H Rail Trail, and the County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan. Assistance was also provided to many infrastructure and economic development opportunities as well.

Planning Board Report

The Washington County Planning Department is responsible for staff support and a conduit for technical assistance to the Washington County Planning Board. The Department is a medium to distribute meeting materials and information to appropriate bodies to gain and compile input for a greater exploration and understanding of projects for review by the Washington County Planning Board.

Pursuant to General Municipal Law Section 239-C and accordance with Washington County Planning Board Bylaws, an annual report consisting of a summary of the actions taken by the County Planning Board accompanied by a bound and certified copy of the "Minutes of the Washington County Planning Board for the Year 2016" shall be presented to the Chair of the Board of Supervisors.

Meetings

The Washington County Planning Board met on the second Tuesday of each month. The Planning Board By-Laws require that any regularly scheduled meeting that falls on a holiday observed by the county will be moved ahead by one (1) business day.

2016 Planning Board Membership

<i>Member Name</i>	<i>Municipality</i>	<i>Term Expiration</i>
Ted Bigelow	Town of Kingsbury	1/1/12 - 12/31/19
Lee Comar	Town of Granville	1/1/11 - 12/31/17
Robert Liebig	Town of Hartford	1/1/16 - 12/31/22
Thomas Jarrett	Town of Fort Ann	1/1/11 - 12/31/17
Howard Hunt	Town of Whitehall	1/1/14 - 12/31/20
John Pedersen	Town of Jackson	1/1/14 - 12/31/20
Robert Somers	Town of White Creek	2/17/12 - 12/31/15 Resigned
Peter Beyer	Town of Granville	2/1/14 - 12/31/20
Ethan Allen	Town of Easton	6/15/12 - 12/31/14 *
Dave Ripley	Town of Argyle	1/1/14 - 12/31/20*

*Changes in Membership for 2017:

Due to a lack of participation as well as known vacancies on the Washington County Planning Board membership, the Board made a motion to amend the Washington County Planning Board By-Laws to reduce the number of membership from 11 members to 7 members, effectively reducing quorum from 6 members to 4 members. With Resolution #296, passed by the Agriculture, Planning, and Tourism & Community Development Committee at the November meeting, two inactive members as well as the two vacant spots have been removed from the Board membership.

Officers

At the Annual Meeting of the Washington County Planning Board on February 9th, 2016 the Board moved to nominate John Pederson as Chairman, followed by Peter Beyer as Vice Chairman and Howard Hunt as Secretary.

Professional Advisement and Services

The Washington County Planning Department Staff offers staffing services to the County Planning Board. In accordance with the Washington County Planning Board By-Laws the Planning Department acts as secretary to the planning board and with the assistance of the planning board staff, performs the following secretarial duties:

- General meeting preparation
 - Public Notice
 - Notice to board members (packet includes agenda, previous minutes, review materials and additional informational materials).
 - Reviews and prepares materials of proposed actions referred for review
 - Logistical arrangements
- Records and prepares minutes
- Notice to referring bodies of board decisions regarding reviews
- Conducts all general correspondence
- Maintains records of board activities including general correspondence, informational materials, agendas, minutes, memorandums, GML review materials, notifications of decisions and the municipal boards' "notification of final actions".
- Maintains board membership records, including attendance, mileage, appointments, terms and contact information.
- Prepares annual report.

2016 General Municipal Law §239M Reviews

The following is a listing, by date, of the referrals reviewed by the County Planning Board for the year 2016.

Washington County Planning Board 2016 Action Summary

Meeting Date	Municipality	Project Type	WCPB Action
No January Meeting due to Weather			
January 12th, 2016	T/O Kingsbury	Approval of a Site Plan	N/A-Canceled due to weather
January 12th, 2016	V/O Hudson Falls	Approval of a Site Plan	N/A-Canceled due to weather
February 9th, 2016	T/O Kingsbury	Approval of a Site Plan	Local Concern with Comments
February 9th, 2016	T/O Greenwich	Approval of a Site Plan	Local Concern
February 9th, 2016	T/O Fort Ann	Approval of a Site Plan	Local Concern with Comments
March 8th, 2016	T/O Whitehall	Approval of a Site Plan	Local Concern
March 8th, 2016	T/O Salem	Zoning Ordinance	Approved
No April Meeting- Lack of Quorum			
May 10th, 2016	T/O Hampton	Approval of a Site Plan	Approved with Comments
June 14th, 2016	T/O Fort Edward	Granting a Special Use Permit/ SitePlan	Approved
June 14th, 2016	V/O Hudson Falls	Approval of a Site Plan	Approved
June 14th, 2016	T/O Fort Ann	Approval of a Site Plan	Local Concern with Comments
June 14th, 2016	T/O Fort Edward	Approval of a Site Plan	Local Concern
June 14th, 2016	V/O Fort Edward	Approval of a Site Plan	Local Concern
June 14th, 2016	T/O Jackson	Zoning Ordinance	Local Concern with Comments
June 14th, 2016	T/O Kingsbury	Zoning Ordinance	Local Concern
June 14th, 2016	T/O Whitehall	Zoning Ordinance	Local Concern
June 14th, 2016	T/O Whitehall	Approval of a Site Plan	NO Quorum
June 14th, 2016	T/O Whitehall	Approval of a Site Plan	NO Quorum
No July Meeting-Lack of Quorum			
July 12th 2016	T/O Kingsbury	Approval of a Site Plan	NO Quorum
July 12th 2016	T/O Fort Edward	Approval of a Site Plan	NO Quorum
July 12th 2016	T/O Fort Edward	Approval of a Site Plan	NO Quorum
August 9th, 2016	T/O Greenwich	Granting Area Variance	Local Concern
August 9th, 2016	T/O Kingsbury	Approval of a Site Plan	Local Concern with Comments
August 9th, 2016	T/O Kingsbury	Approval of a Site Plan	Local Concern
August 9th, 2016	T/O Salem	Approval of a Site Plan/ Granting AV	Local Concern with Comments
September 13th, 2016	T/O Fort Edward	Zoning Ordinance or Local Law	Local Concern with Comments
September 13th, 2016	T/O Kingsbury	Granting Area Variance	Local Concern
October 11th, 2016	T/O Kingsbury	Approval of a Site Plan	Local Concern
October 11th, 2016	T/O Fort Edward	Approval of a Site Plan	Approve with Conditions
October 11th, 2016	T/O Kingsbury	Granting Area Variance	Local Concern
November 8th, 2016	V/O Fort Edward	Zoning Ordinance or Local Law	
November 8th, 2016	T/O Kingsbury	Approval of Site Plan	Local Concern with Comments
December 13th, 2016	V/O Fort Edward	Approval of a Site Plan	Approved
December 13th, 2016	T/O Greenwich	Zoning Ordinance or Local Law	Matter of Local Concern with Recommendation
December 13th, 2016	T/O Fort Ann	Approval of a Site Plan	Matter of Local Concern with Recommendation
December 13th, 2016	T/O Kingsbury	Approval of Site Plan	Matter of Local Concern
December 13th, 2016	V/O Fort Edward	Granting (2) Area Variance(s)	Matter of Local Concern
December 13th, 2016	V/O Fort Edward	Granting a use variance/area variance	Matter of Local Concern