

Village of Cayuga Heights Planning Board  
Meeting #113  
Monday, June 26, 2023  
Marcham Hall – 7:00 pm  
Minutes

Present: Planning Board Members Chair F. Cowett, J. Leijonhufvud, M. McMurry, E. Quaroni, R. Segelken  
Code Enforcement Officer B. Cross, Attorney R. Marcus, Deputy Clerk A. Jacot, Alternate Member M. Johnston, Mayor L. Woodard  
R. Kawecki, Bousquet Holstein PLLC

Item 1 – Meeting called to order

- Chair F. Cowett opened the meeting at 7:03 pm.
- Chair F. Cowett stated that all Planning Board members are in attendance; Alternate M. Johnston is welcome to sit with the Board and participate in the meeting, but cannot take part in any votes.
- Chair F. Cowett further stated that R. Kawecki, Bousquet Holstein PLLC, is observing the meeting via Zoom.

Item 2 – May 22, 2023 Minutes

- The Board reviewed the minutes of the May 22, 2023 meeting.

**Motion:** J. Leijonhufvud

**Second:** R. Segelken

**RESOLUTION No. 384**  
**APPROVING MINUTES OF MAY 22, 2023**

**RESOLVED**, that the written, reviewed and revised minutes of the May 22, 2023 meeting are hereby approved.

**Aye votes** – Chair F. Cowett, J. Leijonhufvud, E. Quaroni, R. Segelken

**Abstain** – M. McMurry

**Opposed** – None

Item 3 – Public Comment

- No members of the public wished to speak.

Item 4 – Special Use Permit – Adam’s Corners Café, Corners Community Shopping Center

- Chair F. Cowett stated that, at its May 22 meeting, pursuant to § 305-35.H of the Village’s Zoning Law, the Board accepted for review an application for a special use permit for Adam’s Corners Café, Corners Community Shopping Center; A. Ciaschi, the café owner, is proposing to expand his existing dining area into an adjacent space formerly occupied by the Aikido Kokikai karate studio and increase dining capacity by 20 seats; at its May 22 meeting, the Board scheduled a public hearing regarding that proposed increase and the special use permit review; unfortunately, the notice for the public hearing did not go out in a timely fashion and the public hearing needs to be rescheduled.
- The Board discussed when to reschedule the public hearing for the special use permit for Adam’s Corners Café and whether to schedule a special meeting.
- The Board decided to hold a special meeting on Monday July 10, 2023 and to schedule for that meeting a public hearing for the special use permit for Adam’s Corners Café.

**Motion:** R. Segelken

**Second:** E. Quaroni

**RESOLUTION No. 385**  
**TO SCHEDULE A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PLANNING BOARD**

**RESOLVED**, that the Planning Board schedule a special meeting on  
Monday, July 10, 2023, at 7:00 pm at Marcham Hall.

**Aye votes** – Chair F. Cowett, J. Leijonhufvud, M. McMurry, E. Quaroni, R. Segelken  
**Opposed** – None

**Motion:** J. Leijonhufvud

**Second:** E. Quaroni

**RESOLUTION No. 386**  
**TO HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING FOR ADAM’S CORNERS CAFÉ AT CORNERS**  
**COMMUNITY SHOPPING CENTER**

**RESOLVED**, that a public hearing will be held on July 10, 2023 at 7:10 p.m. regarding Special Use Permit review for Adam’s Corners Café at Corners Community Shopping Center.

**Aye votes** – Chair F. Cowett, J. Leijonhufvud, M. McMurry, E. Quaroni, R. Segelken  
**Opposed** – None

## Item 5 – Comprehensive Plan Discussion

- The Board resumed its discussion as to whether the Village’s Comprehensive Plan should be updated.
- E. Quaroni discussed the Ecology and Scenic Assets section; many of the section’s recommendations have been accomplished by zoning or local law; however, an active management plan to control and eliminate invasive plants has not been developed; Village residents need to be more aware of invasive plants; there needs to be more sense of community as to what is going on in the Village.
- M. McMurry stated that the Village website could be used to inform Village residents about invasive plants; links could be provided to invasive plant control measures.
- M. Johnston agreed that the Village website could be a resource for informing Village residents about invasive plants and their removal.
- Mayor L. Woodward stated that the Village has tried in the past to alert Village residents about invasive plants via the website and newsletter; however, it isn’t clear how many residents visit the website or read the Village’s bi-weekly newsletter.
- E. Quaroni stated concern about stormwater management; rain gardens should be encouraged; impervious surfaces such as paved driveways are not currently limited by zoning in any way.
- Code Enforcement Officer B. Cross stated that zoning could require that as part of a site plan review invasive plants be identified at a property along with a requirement to remove or control them; current zoning does not limit impervious surface; the Village’s lot coverage limit of 12% for residential property serves to discourage large paved parking areas; some municipal zoning limits combined lot coverage and paved parking to 50% of a site; however, these are more policy and zoning issues than comprehensive plan ones.
- The Board agreed that the specifics of impervious surface regulation are more zoning issues that comprehensive plan ones, but permitting combined lot coverage and paved parking to comprise 50% of a site would be too much, especially since stormwater runoff is an increasing problem in the Village.
- M. McMurry stated that the comprehensive plan could recommend the regulation of impervious surface as a means to limiting stormwater runoff; a subsequent zoning revision could then implement regulation.
- J. Leijonhufvud agreed that the comprehensive plan needs to identify stormwater runoff as problem in the Village so that subsequent zoning regulation can regulate impervious surface in the site plan review process.
- M. Johnston stated that examples of impervious surface regulation could be included in the comprehensive plan’s implementation section.

- R. Segelken asked Code Enforcement Officer B. Cross if gravel driveways are more drainage friendly than asphalt ones.
- Code Enforcement Officer B. Cross replied that gravel is less impervious than asphalt, but DEC calculations do not distinguish between the two.
- E. Quaroni stated that the current comprehensive plan recommends creating and publishing a map showing undeveloped open space, including Unique Natural Areas; there are three UNAs in the Village; should they be included in such a map since they have no legal force and most Village residents do not know why they are unique.
- R. Segelken stated that the UNAs are unique mostly due to their flora and sometimes due to their geology; they are intended to inform municipal zoning decisions.
- The meeting paused at 7:37 pm due to the storm outside and resumed at 7:38 pm.
- M. McMurry stated that maps of natural areas including the UNAs would be of educational value to Village residents and contribute to their sense of community as to what they have in the Village.
- Code Enforcement Officer B. Cross stated that Tompkins County identified the UNAs and would like Planning Boards to acknowledge them, but does not want them to be interpreted via a map as the County taking property by means of an overlay district.
- M. McMurry stated that the UNAs are not zoning districts, but a means of sharing information with local communities about natural resources.
- Attorney R. Marcus stated that the UNAs have no zoning authority, but provide accessible information.
- M. Johnston stated that the UNAs celebrate ecological assets of value to the Village.
- Deputy Clerk A. Jacot stated that the UNAs do not function any differently than maps celebrating historic homes.
- E. Quaroni stated that the current comprehensive plan recommends working with Kendal at Ithaca to develop a framework for permanently protecting open spaces adjacent to Renwick Brook and maintaining public access to them; more emphasis should be given to protecting all riparian areas.
- Chair F. Cowett asked E. Quaroni about her thoughts for the overall section.
- E. Quaroni replied that some things should be kept and some things reconsidered; recommendations that have been met could be deleted.
- M. Johnston stated that in some cases recommendations could be revised rather than deleted in order to preserve “forever issues.”
- Code Enforcement Officer B. Cross stated his concern about challenges to property maintenance, such as unmanaged lawns, in the name of ecological value.
- M. McMurry stated that meadowland zoning goes beyond traditional lawn maintenance regimes and plays into ecological values; this issue relates to community character; it is important to distinguish between neglect and meadow.
- Chair F. Cowett stated that intentionality of care should be demonstrated, but to define this for zoning purposes would be difficult.
- The meeting paused at 8:02 pm due to the storm outside and resumed at 8:06 pm.

- J. Leijonhufvud stated that greater emphasis should be given in this section to recreational opportunities; are there new ways in which we can maximize these opportunities and make the Village more connected and walkable.
- The Board discussed the open field and trail adjacent to Kendal and the path mowed by Cornell from Triphammer Road leading to Palmer Woods.
- M. Johnston stated that these are recreational amenities that should be promoted and improved signage would encourage accessibility.
- The Board discussed whether the open field and trail adjacent to Kendal should be considered public space.
- R. Segelken stated that Village residents living nearby consider the open field and trail to be accessible by the public.
- M. Johnston stated that Kendal officials welcome use of the field and trail by nearby residents because they provide eyes on the street and a deterrent to petty crime.

#### Item 6– New Business

- The Board’s next meeting is the special meeting scheduled for Monday, July 10, 2023 at 7:00 pm.
- The Board decided to tentatively cancel the next regularly scheduled meeting on July 24, 2023 unless there is business other than the comprehensive plan update to discuss at that meeting.
- M. Johnston stated that he noticed work being done at 893 Highland Road and asked Chair F. Cowett to check with Code Enforcement Officer B. Cross as to whether the conditions of site plan approval have been met by the applicant.

#### Item 7 – Adjourn

- Meeting adjourned at 8:26 pm.