

Village of Cayuga Heights Planning Board
Meeting #122
Monday, September 23, 2024
Marcham Hall – 7:00 pm

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

Item 1 – Meeting called to order

- Chair F. Cowett opened the meeting at 7:02 pm.
- Chair F. Cowett stated that all Board members are in attendance; Alternate Member M. Johnston is welcome to participate in the meeting, but cannot take part in any Board votes.
- Chair F. Cowett further stated that Attorney R. Marcus will not be attending the meeting, but Attorney R. Kawecki is attending the meeting via Zoom and is able to provide the Board with legal advice if needed.
- Chair F. Cowett further stated that Code Enforcement Officer B. Cross, attending the meeting via Zoom, is not needed by the Board at the meeting and may be excused; Code Enforcement Officer B. Cross exited the meeting.
- Chair F. Cowett welcomed to the meeting four seniors from Ithaca High School who are attending the meeting as a requirement for a class.

Item 2 – April 22, 2024 Minutes

- The Board reviewed the minutes of the April 22, 2024 meeting.

Motion: R. Segelken

Second: J. Leijonhufvud

**RESOLUTION No. 413
APPROVING MINUTES OF APRIL 22, 2024**

RESOLVED, that the written, reviewed and revised minutes of the April 22, 2024 meeting are hereby approved.

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

Item 3 – Public Comment

- No members of the public wished to speak.

Item 4 – Comprehensive Plan Discussion

- Chair F. Cowett stated that the Village’s Board of Trustees at its August meeting accepted the Planning Board’s recommendation that the Village’s Comprehensive Plan be updated and tasked the Planning Board with conducting that update; the question now is how to proceed.
- Chair F. Cowett further stated that the update should be just that, an update of the current plan rather than a complete rewrite; it should focus on the changes that have occurred in the Village since 2014 when the current plan was adopted; it should also focus more on the future and less on the past; finally, the update should be supported where possible by data documenting those changes and trends that have occurred since 2014 both within and external to the Village.
- Chair F. Cowett asked Mayor L. Woodard if she agreed with his assessment of the expectations by the Board of Trustees for the Planning Board’s updating of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Mayor L. Woodard replied that she agreed in general with Chair F. Cowett’s assessment; she stated however that two issues in particular should be addressed by the Planning Board; the first issue involves housing and whether current regulations supporting single family residences are unfairly limiting new housing opportunities; the comp plan update should assess how many residences can be added in the Village and whether there should be additional mixed housing development in some areas; the second issue involves stormwater drainage; stormwater infiltration and inflow (I&I) into sewer pipes creates problems for Village wastewater treatment; current Village zoning does not place limits on a parcel’s amount of impermeable surfaces or the amount of land that can be devoted to driveways, nor does it encourage usage of permeable surfaces.
- Chair F. Cowett agreed with Mayor L. Woodard and stated that the Planning Board’s recommendation to the Board of Trustees that the Comprehensive Plan be updated did include stormwater and housing as two areas of focus for any update.
- M. McMurry stated that public input is vital for the comp plan update; the Planning Board needs to hear from Village residents; she mentioned the possibility of a survey similar to the Village’s recent survey about leaf blowers.

- M. Johnston agreed with M. McMurry and stated that the public should be engaged from the start of the comp plan updating process; transparency is important and he suggested a letter to Village residents as a precursor to a survey.
- J. Leijonhufvud agreed with the importance of transparency and that updating the comp plan shouldn't be perceived as secretive.
- M. McMurry stated that, at this beginning stage in the comp plan update, Village residents should be informed about the updating process and told that no decisions have been made about any updates to the plan.
- M. Johnston stated that it is also important to define for Village residents what a comp plan is and to explain how it impacts zoning.
- Mayor L. Woodard stated that the Village is in the process of drafting the annual newsletter for Village residents; she can include in her newsletter article information about the comp plan update and stress the importance of resident input.
- J. Leijonhufvud stated that, in addition to the Mayor's article, the newsletter should also announce separately, perhaps in a highlighted box, that the comp plan updating process is beginning and that the Planning Board wants resident input.
- Deputy Clerk A. Jacot stated that the Village's bi-weekly E-Blast can also be utilized to get out the word about the comp plan update; the newsletter can say that future news about the update will be publicized in the E-Blast; this would serve the additional purpose of encouraging more residents to subscribe to it.
- M. Johnston asked Mayor L. Woodard if the Board of Trustees had discussed other issues of interest pertaining to the comp plan update.
- Mayor L. Woodard replied that the Board of Trustees did not discuss too much in terms of specifics regarding the update.
- R. Segelken asked the four Ithaca High School seniors if they had any questions for the Planning Board about the comprehensive plan.
- A wide-ranging discussion then ensued between Planning Board members and the four seniors about the purpose of a comprehensive plan, the role and responsibilities of the Planning Board in Village government, the interests of Board members in land use planning, etc.
- R. Segelken thanked the Ithaca High School Seniors for their questions and their participation in the meeting which underline the importance of public engagement.
- M. Johnston asked Chair F. Cowett about next steps in the comp plan process.
- Chair F. Cowett stated that he will work with Mayor L. Woodard to develop text for her newsletter article informing residents about the comp plan update; in addition, he will work with Village staff to highlight the update separately in the newsletter while also emphasizing to Village residents the importance of their engagement in the update process.
- Chair F. Cowett further stated that for the Board's next meeting in October Planning Board members should research changes that have occurred in the Village since 2014

that are specific to their areas of interest; given that some updates to the comp plan recommended by the Board may not be popular with all Village residents, it would be helpful to have data available supporting those updates; he would like the comp plan update to be as data driven as possible.

Item 5 – New Business

- Chair F. Cowett stated that the next meeting of the Planning Board is scheduled for Monday October 28 at 7:00 pm.

Item 6 – Adjourn

- Meeting adjourned at 8:38 pm.