

MEETING MINUTES

JEFFERSON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

**Jefferson County Office Building, 175 Arsenal St.
2nd Floor Conference Room**

April 29, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Prosser, Chairman; Lisa L'Huillier, Vice-Chair; Richard Nuijens; John Stinson; John Stano; Neil Katzman; Randy Lake; Jean Waterbury; Jon Storms; Donna Dutton

STAFF PRESENT: Andy Nevin, Senior Planner
Sam Wilson, Community Development Coordinator
Emerald Macilvennie, Typist

PUBLIC PRESENT: Byron Deluke- Montante Group Representative
Craig Fox- Watertown Daily Times Reporter
Jennifer White- Patriot Trailer Solutions

CALL TO ORDER AND ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM: Chairman David Prosser opened the meeting at 4:00 p.m. and stated that a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF THE March 25, 2025 MEETING MINUTES: The motion was made by David Prosser, seconded by John Stano and carried unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS: Chairman David Prosser asked if there were any communications. Andy Nevin said no.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (OTHER THAN AGENDA ITEMS): Chairman David Prosser asked if there were any public comments (other than on agenda items). There were none.

NEW BUSINESS: Andy Nevin reports that there is no new business to share.

A. **General Municipal Law, Section 239m Referrals:**

1. Pamela (T) Montante Group, Site Plan Review, Warehouse and distribution center with office space, T Pa 2 – 25

Andy presented this project to the Board displaying the locator map, site photos, and site plan. He shared that this project is being reviewed because of its proximity to Interstate 81. The applicant proposes to construct a warehouse and distribution center with office space. He mentioned the traffic study was also submitted and generally explained level of service regarding intersection efficiency in terms of potential traffic impacts. He also reviewed the employee and delivery van parking as well as the tractor trailer truck and van loading areas. Lastly, Andy stated the number of year-round employees would be up to 150, with up to 200 employees during the holiday season.

He discussed County/State related matters:

The applicant should contact the NYS Department of Transportation to ensure potential traffic impacts on the state road system are addressed and minimized with identified improvements in the traffic study. Similarly, any potential drainage impacts should be minimized on NY 12 and I 81. The submitted Traffic Study identifies a future need for traffic signal improvement on NYS Route 12 at Lucas Road.

A building permit will be required from the Jefferson County Building Code Department.

A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) is required pursuant to New York State Department of Conservation requirements.

The local board should notify the City of Watertown of the public hearing as required by General Municipal Law Section 239nn.

Locally related issues discussed:

The local board should consider the potential need to install electronic vehicle charging stations onsite as New York State EV use is expected to continue to increase in the future.

All proposed lighting should be dark sky compliant to minimize potential glare on neighboring properties and public highways.

The local board should request that snow storage areas be shown on the site plan.

Neil Katsman asked what business it is, Andy said he didn't receive that information.

Chair David Prosser acknowledged the presence of Montante Group representative Byron Deluke and allow him to educate members about the project as well. Deluke explained the traffic study that has been completed in corroboration with some New York State DOT requests and that the building is projected to be completed in 2026. Lisa L'Huillier asked if this is a 24 hour / 7 day a week operation, Byron Deluke answered yes and that the vast majority of business would be from about 9 am - 3 pm.

Randy Lake asked about adequate water flow for fire protection and Byron Deluke said that a full fire analysis had been completed.

Motion: To recommend approval of this project with cooperation by the applicant in concert with the New York State Department of Transportation regarding traffic mitigation, made by David Prosser, seconded by Richard Nuijens, and carried unanimously.

2. Brownville (T) Patriot Trailer Solutions, Site Plan Review T Br 1 – 25

Sam presented this project to the board displaying the locator map, aerial photos, site photos, and site plan. The applicant proposes to operate a small trailer and UTV retail business.

He discussed County/State related matters:

A New York State Department of Highway work permit will be required for a change in use.

The New York State DOT right-of-way should be identified on the site plan and no vehicles or trailers should be parked or displayed within this right-of-way.

Locally related issues discussed:

The local board should ensure that any proposed signage meets the Town of Brownville's sign regulations.

The local board should ensure that any outside lighting shall be located, directed, or shielded in a manner that will prevent glare from impacting adjacent swellings and public roads.

The project is within 500 feet of a New York State Certified Agricultural District, therefore an Agricultural Data Statement is required.

Rick Nuijens asked if the tanks had been removed, the property owner said yes, and the paperwork demonstrating that was submitted.

Motion: To accept staff recommendation to pass a motion of local concern only with comments stated above, was made by Richard Nuijens, seconded by David Prosser, and carried unanimously.

3. LeRay (T) Town of LeRay Comprehensive Land Use Plan update/rewrite, T Le 2 – 25

Andy presented this project to the board. He shared the "Town Vision" statement with the board along with graphs containing data on housing unit status and population increases. He also displayed maps detailing future land use and mentioned the handout that had the Town goals and strategies that was sent to the members in their mailing.

He discussed County/State related matters:

The County Planning Department worked with the Town Plan Committee to develop a Comprehensive plan update. The Committee used a community survey and public meetings to gather input. Land use, transportation, community facilities, housing and natural resource goals and strategies were identified. Agricultural, renewable energy, airport, and Fort Drum priorities and compatibilities were addressed. The next step is for the Town to consider potential zoning amendments and grant requests to implement the plan recommendations and potential improvements prioritized during the process.

The Plan includes demographic, housing and business trends, transportation, community facilities, natural resources, and land use chapters. It also includes a Town Vision Statement and a series of short, medium, and long term actions for the Town to consider.

Locally related issues discussed:

The Town board should ensure implementation of the goals and strategies continue to be a priority during respective local board reviews. Specific zoning amendments should be pursued by a committee or local board for further implementation steps to be taken.

Positive community impacts will occur by guiding and enhancing future development through the implementation of the vision, goals, and strategies, pursuing any needed public facility projects,

and developing appropriate zoning tools to foster compatible growth in key areas and preservation in others.

Chairman David Prosser asked if there have been any public hearings on this project. Andy stated that there were multiple public meetings, and the committee held a public hearing, and a community survey that garnered 265 responses.

Motion: To accept staff recommendation to pass a motion of approval based on positive impacts that sound planning practices will have on the future of development in the Town and adjacent municipalities, was made by David Prosser, seconded by John Stano, and carried unanimously with the exception of Richard Nuijens who recused himself from voting on this matter.

4. Clayton (T) Boathouse Marine LLC, Site Plan Review, marina building replacement, T CI 2 – 25

Andy presented this project to the Board displaying the locator map, site photos, and site plan. He shared that this project is being reviewed because of its proximity to NYS Route 12. The applicant is proposing to demolish and replace a boathouse and cover over the docks as part of an active marina in the Marine Development Zoning District. He said the owner intends to keep the new building the same height as the building to be removed.

There were no discussed County/State related matters.

There were no locally related issues discussed.

5. Clayton (T) Mason Coughlin, Site Plan Review, auto repair shop, T CI 3 – 25

Andy presented this project to the Board displaying the locator map, site photos, and site plan. He shared that this project is being reviewed because of its proximity to County Road 181. The applicant proposes to construct an automobile repair shop in the Agricultural Residential Zoning District.

He discussed County/State related matters:

A Jefferson County Highway access permit has been granted.

Locally related issues discussed:

The local board should ensure the Town's following automobile service and repair garage criteria are met:

- The outdoor storage of vehicles being worked on is for a maximum of two weeks.
- Used waste products, parts, or unused cars may not be stored outside unless screened or enclosed within fencing so they are not visible from the off-site properties.
- Whether the proposed four pine trees will be an adequate screen/ buffer for the new repair garage.

The proposed garage, private septic system, and well have adequate separation of 100 feet. However, the site plan should show the existing house's well and septic system to ensure adequate separation exists from the proposed septic leach field.

Richard Nuijens asked if there are drains in the floor and or an oil/ water separator in the garage,

and asked about septic system details. Andy Nevin didn't see floor drains on the plan but shared the septic drawings with the members which displayed details regarding the septic design.

6. Dexter (V) JoCinda Evans Special Use Permit, gift shop, V Dex 1 – 25

Sam presented this project to the board displaying the locator map, aerial photos, site photos, and site plan. The applicant proposes relocating a gift shop to an existing building. The reason for the review is proximity to New York State Route 180, and it is in the commercial zoning district.

There were no County/State related matters.

There were no locally related issues identified.

7. Pamela (T) Benjamin Essig, Site Plan Review, self-storage, T Pa 1 – 25

Sam presented this project to the board displaying the locator map, aerial photos, site photos, and site plan. The applicant proposed to construct two new self-storage buildings.

He discussed County/State related matters:

A Jefferson County Building Permit is required.

Locally related issues discussed:

The Town's zoning law allows for the expansion of nonconforming uses if the Planning Board finds that the expansion will not have an adverse impact on the surrounding neighborhood. The criteria to review such expansions include traffic, parking spaces, noise, dust, air pollution, glare, percent lot coverage, and amount of outside storage or display.

The Town of Pamela's zoning law requires adequate screening when a non-residential use is adjacent to a residential use. The local board should consider having the applicant plant adequate screening in the front where the Norwegian spruce trees are shown previously and the proposed site plan. They have not been planted.

8. Philadelphia (T) Tarpon Towers III LLC, Site Plan Review, cellular communication tower, T Ph 1 – 25

Sam presented this project to the board displaying the locator map, aerial photos, site photos, and site plan. The applicant proposed to construct a 180-foot cell tower with a four foot lightning rod.

He discussed County/State related matters:

An FAA Form 7460-1 (Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration) is required to ensure the height of the communication tower and any construction cranes do not impact Wheeler-Sack Army Airfield's Part 77 imaginary surfaces.

The applicant should also coordinate with the Fort Drum Plans, Analysis & Integration Office regarding the height and location relative to the Wheeler Sack Army Airfield proximity and training flight paths for Range 48. The Fort Drum Joint Land Use Study identifies several low-

level military training flights directly in the vicinity of the tower location. Due to multiple low-level military training flights (100 feet, 300 feet, and 500 feet) above ground level (AGL) in the vicinity of the tower site, daytime and nighttime tower lighting should be required. Night vision goggle lighting should also be considered.

Locally related issues discussed:

According to the Town of Philadelphia's Zoning Law, the local board should ensure that there are at least two co-location spaces on the site plan for future wireless service providers pursuant to Article 8, Section 805, Paragraph D, (1)(a).

The local board should require that the applicant provide photo simulations or pictorial representations of the proposed cell tower from the key viewpoints both inside and outside of the town pursuant to Article 8, Section 805, Paragraph D, (3)(c).

The local board should ensure that the required setbacks shall be measured from the lease lines as identified on the site plan pursuant to Article 8, Section 805, Paragraph D, (2)(e). Therefore, the lease area should be enlarged so that the required 110% setback from the tower can be met.

If the proposed version wireless battery cabinet contains lithium-based batteries, the local board should ensure that the local fire department receives annual training in safe fire-fighting techniques.

9. Watertown (T) Charles Marshall, Special Use Permit, convenience store replacement, C 5 - 25

Andy presented this project to the Board displaying the locator map, site photos, and site plan. The review is necessary due to the proximity of the Jefferson County Department of Social Services (DSS) property. The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing convenience store gas station and build a larger one with additional gas pumps within the Urban Mixed Use Zoning District.

There were no County/State related matters.

Locally related issues discussed:

The local board should request the snow storage areas be shown on the site plan.

Pursuant to Article X, Section 310-107, paragraph C. of the City Zoning Ordinance, the local board should consider requesting a pedestrian connection to be incorporated at the Coffeen or Massey Street public sidewalk at the corner of the site coinciding with one of the crosswalks.

Motion: To accept staff recommendation to pass a motion of local concern only for projects 2 - 9 was made by Dave Prosser, seconded by Neil Katzman and unanimously carried.

10. Watertown (C) Serianni Signs Area Variance, C 4 – 25

Sam presented this project to the board displaying the locator map, aerial photos, site photos,

and site plan. The applicant proposes to install a sign larger than the maximum permitted in a commercial district.

He discussed County/State related matters:

The local board should consider the benefit to the applicant as weighed against the detriment to the health, safety, and welfare of the community using the five factors for an area variance as stated in NYS General City Law.

Locally related issues discussed:

The local board should consider the necessity to exceed the maximum allowable signage by 33%.

Motion: To recommend approval of this project with the conditions stated above, made by Lisa L'Huillier, seconded by David Prosser, and carried unanimously with the exception of Neil Katzman who abstained from voting on this matter.

11. Watertown (T) Mirabito Holdings Site Plan Review, retail propane, T Wa 2 – 25

Sam presented this project to the board displaying the locator map, aerial photos, site photos, and site plan. The applicant proposes a retail propane sales establishment.

He discussed County/State related matters:

A Jefferson County Building Permit is required.

NYS Health Department review of the proposed septic systems is required.

Since the total disturbance is equal to or greater than one acre, a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will need to be completed and submitted to the Town engineer consistent with MS4 requirements.

Locally related issues discussed:

The square footage for the proposed vehicle garage is miscalculated on the site plan and in the description of the SEQR document. The local board should require the applicant to indicate the correct measurement of 4,200 square feet for the proposed vehicle garage on the site plan and the SEQR description.

The local board should have the applicant indicate the location of the well on the site plan to ensure there is an adequate distance between the well and the septic system.

According to Article IV, Section 107-19, the local board should consider requiring the applicant to install a ten-foot planting strip of thick evergreens at least eight feet in height on the southwest side of the parcel near the residential use.

The project is within 500 feet of a NYS Certified Agricultural District; therefore, an Agricultural Data Statement is required.

Motion: To recommend approval of this project with the with the conditions stated above, made by Richard Nuijens, seconded by Lisa L'Huillier, and carried unanimously with the exception of Jean Waterbury, who abstained from voting on this matter.

OTHER BUSINESS: There was no other business discussed.

Adjournment: Vice Chair Lisa L'Huillier made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:47 pm, seconded by Richard Nuijens.