

Town of Columbia
Regular Planning Board Meeting

January 18, 2023

The Town of Columbia Planning Board held its regular monthly meeting on January 18, 2023 at the Town Building.

Members Present: R. Bayzon, R. Fagan, P. Kidder; D. Rubin; B. Warner-Davis; alt. J. Hotaling

Absent: None

Others Present: Clinton Carroll, Nathan Seamon, John Sweetman

Meeting called to order at 7:50 p.m. by Chairman R. Bayzon following the Board's 7:00pm Annual Meeting.

Chairman's Report:

1. Chairman Bayzon noted an email exchange Columbia resident T. Burke had with EDF representative Josh Bennett. The EDF response to the citizen inquiry was timely, comprehensive and responded forthrightly to the questions asked.
2. Chairman Bayzon noted the Adirondack Land Trust and their preservation goals are broad and include all of Herkimer County.

Communications and Reports:

1. Minutes of the Town Board's January 2 Organizational Meeting and the January 12 Regular Meeting were routed. Of note from the Annual Meeting the Times Telegram is still the Official Newspaper for the Town.
2. P. Kidder noted lawn signs have been appearing in the Towns of Litchfield and Paris put up by a group "NoBigWind.com". The group's web site states "Enel Energy is seeking to lease property in the Towns of Paris and Litchfield, and possibly other towns, to build a massive, 20,000 acre Snowy Knoll Wind Project".
3. The web site Morning Ag Clips posted an article on December 29 "Hinchey/Lupardo bill to protect NY farmland and food security signed into law". The bill creates the Agricultural and

Farmland Viability Protection Fund, which will bolster efforts to protect prime agricultural land from being permanently removed to make way for solar development.

4. P. Kidder noted the Herkimer Soil and Water District latest newsletter advertising their GIS Mapping Services. He routed a copy of a map he had made of his property showing overlaid State and Federal wetlands, noting other depictions could be requested showing soil data, water resource information, etc.

Old Business:

1. EDF Columbia Solar Project: It was noted that since the Board last met in December the Weiss Farm in Columbia had signed a lease contract with EDF, as had the “Hansel” Farm in West Winfield.
2. Town-wide Solar Proposal Survey: R. Fagan presented a completed draft of the survey to the Town Board at their January 12 meeting for their review and approval. Comments or approval is not expected until their February meeting allowing time to investigate setting up a Town postage paid account. A general discussion/review of the survey wording, anticipated results and procedure for compiling return results followed.
3. Drone use and regulations: Nothing new to report.
4. Understanding the PILOT Program and the alternate NYSERDA Solar/Wind (tax) Assessment Model: Nothing new to report.

New Business:

1. The Board discussed how to proceed with the Annual meeting’s goal of having the Board’s monthly meeting minutes put on the Columbia Town’s web site,
2. The Town of Columbia Comprehensive Plan was last revised and published in 2018, and a five year review is due. Board members agreed to re-read the Plan and discuss what might be done to update the plan at the February meeting.

Board and Public Discussion:

Chairman Bayzon adjourned the meeting at 9:27 p.m.

Next meeting: February 15 2023

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Kidder
Secretary

Copy: Town Clerk, Planning Board Members and alternate, ZBA Chairman, Codes Enforcement Officer.