

Minutes of the Zoning Commission of the Town of Caroline
Meeting on Monday, December 6, 2021
7:15 p.m.–9:15 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 p.m. by Jean McPheeters via Zoom.

Attendees:

Zoning Commission Members: Michele Brown, Jean McPheeters, Ernie Bayles, Evie Weinstein, Bruce Murray, Bill Podulka, Barbara Knuth, Wil Lawrence, Tim Murray (Town Board Liaison)

Others: Consultants Nan Stolzenburg, Town Supervisor Mark Witmer

Excused: Val Warke

Attendees: Ken Hargraves, Paul Vidorich, Susan Larkin, Lois Lounsbery, iPad, PL Rus, Colette

- 1) Privilege of the Floor: No speakers.
- 2) The minutes of the 11-30-21 ZC meeting were approved unanimously. (Bayles, Weinstein)
- 3) Town Board Liaison Report: Tim Murray thanked everyone for their hard work on the public meetings. Thanks to Mark and Bill for putting up the signs and removing them so quickly; to Michele for getting the boxes out to the community; and to the Town Clerk and Velvet Lyke for getting the mailing out so quickly.
- 4) Planning Board liaison report: No report.
- 5) Jean asked all the board members to comment on the public meetings: what they learned; what issues came up; what questions the meetings sparked. She also reported that we had 67 people at the Thursday meeting and 36 at the Sunday meeting. Here are some of the comments:
 - a. 2000 to 2010 saw the fastest population growth in Caroline {From JM: 2000—pop. 2910; 2010—pop. 3282, which is a 14.4% increase; 2020 census: pop. 3334—a 1.58% increase. N.B. All of the other towns in Tompkins had a decrease except for Lansing and Danby, which both saw higher growth than Caroline. See the [figures](#). Note that 2020 was a particularly difficult census year because of the pandemic.) Caroline also had over 20 housing starts in 2021 so far.
 - b. We need to consider renewable energy siting; this can only be done through zoning.
 - c. Dark Sky Status
 - d. Our job is to come up with a plan and bring it to the board. This is our chance to see if the comp plan works.
 - e. Excellent presentation by Nan. Attendees' questions were answered.
 - f. So glad that the Sunday meeting could be in person—there is a different dynamic than on Zoom. Need to sift this information carefully. People who want to develop their land or some land or use land in other ways have different perspectives. Good to hear those voices.
 - g. The plan should be available at least 2 weeks before the next public meeting. Then we can have that meeting; make adjustments to the plan if needed; and schedule the public hearing.
 - h. Some discussion about CAFOs (Certified Animal Feed Operations)—Ann will check on this.
 - i. Many people felt the hamlets needed to be bigger.
 - j. Perhaps we need a farming perspective on the ZC or to hear more from farmers. There is an Ag Committee in the Town.
 - k. No real consensus at the meeting.
 - l. What about light commercial—is that what hamlets should be called?
 - m. Should have a commercial zone on Rte. 79.
 - n. People (attendees) weren't happy.

- o. Residents will become more vocal as this process gets closer to a conclusion and there are more facts available to people. Feels that this process has been transparency and opportunities for public comment. We need in this process to be future oriented. Not just about today.
 - p. Why do we think we need farmers' perspectives and not others—such as developers or home businesses or those who are providing open space by not farming—forests, fields, etc.?
- 6) We agreed to send out the survey quickly to others as individuals and through local list serves. Everything will be on the website.
- 7) Jean then reviewed what was left for us to do including: Boundaries of hamlets, one or two kinds of hamlets, commercial zone or not, definitions (Nan), formula businesses, billboards, junk ordinance.
 - a. Ernie Bayles made a motion that we use the December 14 meeting to review the map of hamlets and set boundaries. Seconded by Evie. Discussion. Unanimous.
 - b. Nan said that she would use the time between our December 14 meeting and January 11 to write a draft for us. She will take the information we had presented so far, our reactions to the uses in districts, and what we've discussed about dimensions. We agreed that we want to have formula businesses adhere to design recommendations. Motion by Bayles, Knuth; unanimous.
- 8) We will decide on December 11 whether to schedule a meeting for Jan. 17.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean McPheeters