

PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD
Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2024
FINAL MEETING MINUTES

Members Attending

Name		Representation	Name		Representation
Liddy Bargar	P	Human Services	Gay Nicholson	P	At-Large
Joe Bowes	P	Housing	Christine O'Malley	P	Cultural/Historic Preservation
Fernando de Aragón	P	Transportation	C.J. Randall	P	Local Planning (non-urban)
Jordan Decker	P	Energy	Leslie Schill	P	Education #2
Yamila Fournier	P	Built Environment	Andy Zepp	P	Land Preserv./Public Land Mgmt.
George Frantz		Agriculture			
David Herrick	P	Facilities/Infrastructure	Others Present		
David Kay		Local Planning (urban)	Katie Borgella	P	Commissioner
Thomas Knipe	E	Business	Abigail Conner	P	Associate Planner
Anne Koreman	P	County Legislature	Megan McDonald	P	Deputy Commissioner
Ernie McClatchie	P	Education #1	Kristin McCarthy	P	County Staff
Heather McDaniel		Economic Development			

Guests: Greg Hutnik

Call to Order/Agenda Review and Changes/Privilege of the Floor: Chair C.J. Randall called the meeting to order at 4:03pm. No changes to agenda or privilege of the floor.

Action: Approval of Draft Minutes (November 2023): The draft November 2023 minutes were approved (moved by Fernando de Aragón, seconded by Christine O'Malley) as submitted.

Action: Nominating and Electing 2024 Slate of Officers – Nominating Committee

Fernando de Aragón, on behalf of the Nominating Committee (Fernando de Aragón, Jordan Decker, and David Herrick), presented the 2024 slate of officers for consideration. Nominations were solicited from the floor, but none were offered.

Action: Fernando de Aragón made a motion, which Jordan Decker seconded, to elect C.J. Randall the 2024 chair and Leslie Schill the 2024 vice chair of the Planning Advisory Board. Motion carried.

Report/Discussion: Highlights of the 2024 Department Work Program & 2023 Accomplishments – Katie Borgella

Katie Borgella gave an overview of the Department of Planning and Sustainability Work Program for 2024. She highlighted key initiatives, emphasizing the department's expanding scope, including its new oversight role in transportation funding for mobility issues and transit. Katie discussed the Municipal Planner Housing Partnership, aimed at facilitating conversations among municipal planners to support housing development more efficiently. Updates were provided on projects such as the potential Six Mile Creek Corridor Analysis and Flood Risk Assessment grant-funded study, the Electricity Emergency Response Plan, and broadband expansion to unserved areas. Future plans include a visitor profile study, exploring geothermal heating for the Center of Government, and a mobility management summit. Board members expressed support and inquired about departmental hiring plans and support for smaller villages in housing initiatives. Borgella welcomed suggestions for future initiatives, acknowledging the board's role in shaping priorities.

Report/Action: NYS Open Space Plan Update – *Katie Borgella & Andy Zepp*

Katie and Andy Zepp reported on the NYS Open Space Plan Update, highlighting their involvement on the Regional Advisory Committee. Katie emphasized the significant effort to update the plan, which hasn't been revised since 2016. She explained that historically the plan has focused on specific parcels for protection but now takes a broader approach due to land availability uncertainty. Andy Zepp elaborated on the plan's categories, emphasizing its political nature and the need for inclusion to access funding. He discussed the mandate for the Department of Environmental Conservation to conserve 30% of the state's land mass by 2030, acknowledging the challenges involved. An interesting wrinkle highlighted was the tension between solar farm development and habitat corridors. The group discussed the need to balance agricultural sustainability with large-scale solar projects. Property tax issues related to land acquisition were also mentioned, along with the state's outstanding debt to a land trust. Potential solutions explored included developing a regional best practices guide for solar farms to minimize impact on wildlife habitat, researching co-location of crops and solar panels (agrovoltatics) as a potential new land use, and exploring alternative income sources for farmers, such as nut crops (e.g., hazelnuts).

Report: Re-Establishing 2024 Natural Infrastructure Committee – *Abigail Conner*

Abigail Conner addressed the board regarding the annual re-establishment of the Natural Infrastructure Committee. She mentioned that previous members (Jordan Decker, Dave Herrick, and Gay Nicholson) found it a low-commitment role. Gay Nicholson and David Herrick agreed to continue. Abigail noted she would follow up with Jordan Decker (who departed the meeting early) and encouraged anyone else interested to contact her.

Member Items

Leslie shared a positive review of the Cornell State of Sustainability presentation, encouraging others to watch it for updates on campus sustainability and carbon neutrality efforts. Fernando announced the upcoming restart of the Ithaca Car Share program and provided updates on active transportation project funding applications. Gay inquired about the County's involvement in addressing traffic concerns raised by Dryden residents about the Ezra Village apartment complex development. Fernando confirmed that TCAT representatives met with the village and highlighted the importance of infrastructure planning. He also provided an update on the Long Range Transportation Plan and the Transportation Equity Needs Assessment, encouraging community feedback.

Adjournment: Chair C.J. Randall adjourned the meeting at 4:40pm.