

**VILLAGE OF RENSSELAER FALLS & TOWN OF CANTON
PUBLIC HEARING
CANTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

September 16, 2019

6:00 P.M.

Minutes

Present: Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley, Council members Bob Washo, James Smith and Tim Danehy, Mayor Michael Hammond, Trustees Charles Fifield, Jolene LaSiege and Stacy Gushea, Village Attorney Henry Leader

Also, in Attendance: Town and Village Clerk/Tax Collector Lisa Hammond

Absent: Council member Phil LaMarche and Trustee Connie McAllister

1. Pledge of Allegiance:

Pledge was said by those in attendance.

2. Comprehensive Plan Public Hearing:

Mayor Michael Hammond welcomed everyone and stated that the SEQR has been received from the Town declaring that they are lead agency and stating that the Comprehensive Plan will not have any environmental impact.

Approval of finding by Trustee Jolene LaSiege, seconded by Trustee Charles Fifield, all voted in favor. Motion carries.

Mayor Hammond stated that the Comprehensive Plan is a blueprint for the future and a vision for change and thanked Co-Chairs Jim Smith and Carol Pynchon for their dedication and time. A thank you was also extended to committee members including Karin Blackburn for her website assistance and everyone involved in the process.

Mayor Hammond gave a brief update on the procedure and progress of the meetings that have been held also noting that the County Planning Board met the week before and highlighted their recommendation regarding the overlay district.

Charles Fifield made a motion for the Village of Rensselaer Falls to open the Public Hearing, seconded by Trustee Jolene LaSiege. All voted in favor. Motion carries

Council member Jim Smith made a motion for the Town of Canton to open the Public Hearing, seconded by Council member Bob Washo. All voted in favor. Motion carries

John Danis West Front Street expressed his concerns on ethical and legal questions of spot zoning on a piece of property owned by Steven and Lisa Hammond, Mayor Michael Hammonds parents. Danis presented the Village Board with a handout. Danis expressed his concerns over the portion of the Comprehensive Plan that talks about the Overlay District specifically. Mr. Danis implored the boards to remove the entire district from the plan or to rewrite the overlay portion of the plan, referring to the 2015 Village Code of Rensselaer Falls.

Jason Planty of West Front Street asked for a description of the plan. Mayor Hammond explained that it is not about one parcel, it's about all parcels. Hammond added that the Comprehensive Plan process has been in motion for two years, with municipal public input sessions. Mayor Hammond reminded Planty that the plan is in the Village Library and online.

Phil Burnett, of West Front Street outside the Village, asked if only one piece of property is being looked at in the Village. Trustee Charles Fifield replied "no" to the question. Mayor Hammond added that waterfront overlays are customized and tailored to their communities and if the Village desires to work with the recommendations that come out of the comprehensive plan that would be a whole other set of public meetings. Burnett stated "O.K. I understand better now". Burnett stated he wants to speak now at this time because of living outside the Village limits.

Mrs. and Mr. LaMere, West Front Street expressed their concerns about the property controversy in the overlay district that has been proposed. Mayor Hammond reminded the LaMeres that this is a recommendation or more simply put a suggestion to look into the possibilities of an overlay district.

Bonnie Danis, of West Front Street expressed concerns of Rensselaer Falls having an overlay district on a residential street. Danis talked about a single spot zone on West Front Street that is surrounded by residential homes. Danis stated she is not against the Comprehensive Plan but just the portion that puts an overlay district inside a residential zone.

Mary Lou Burgess, of County Route 14 stated that she was confused. It was her understanding that the meeting was about the Comprehensive Plan not about concerns of what people may do with their land.

Casey Bill, King Street asked if the Comp Plan is adopted will the Hammond's property be Commercial? Mayor Hammond answered no not necessarily, adding that this plan has a lot more to it than just a water overlay in it. How the overlay district looks in the end depends on how the process turns out to create it.

Council member Bob Washo asked how many parcels were in the overlay portion? Mayor Hammond stated that the map bubbles are vague for a reason. Mayor Hammond did not have an exact number as to how many "parcels" were tentatively in the district.

Council member Tim Danehy stated there is not a set number.

Ron Stiles property owner in the Village stated that back in 2015 he was rezoned to recreation. Stiles asked about grants tied to the Plan. Mayor Hammond replied yes. Stiles stated he wished he had more plans for his property and he would have challenged the board back then.

6:45 p.m. Trustee Charles Fifield made a motion to close the Public Hearing for the Village of Rensselaer Falls, seconded by Trustee Stacy Gushea, all voted in favor. Motion carries.

6:46 p.m. Council member Jim Smith made a motion to close the Public Hearing for the Town of Canton, seconded by Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley, all voted in favor. Motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Hammond
Town Clerk of Canton
Village Clerk of Rensselaer Falls