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 OTSEGO COUNTY PLANNING & ZONING NEWSLETTER

 2025

Hello Townships!

Another year is underway and Land Use is gearing up for another busy one. Zoning permits reviewed last year surpassed the 500 mark – a record high since my time with Land Use and almost 375 properties were visited for enforcements, many of them multiple times for compliance. The winter weather has slowed things down somewhat concerning permits and enforcements but we’re sure with the rising temperatures, things will pick up soon. The Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals cases also reached a high in 2024 – 17 PC cases and 8 ZBA. This year is already off to a good start – we have 5 PC cases scheduled for March’s meeting.

The following items are still being addressed by committee volunteers and Land Use:

* The Noise Ordinance language is ready to go before the BOC – a public hearing has been held and the Ordinance was also discussed at the Township Association meeting;
* Language for Short-Term Rentals continues to be discussed at the committee level; the Long-Term Rental language has been sent out to townships for input – the Short-Term language will follow sometime later this year;
* Articles 4 – 15 of the Zoning Ordinance were discussed by the PC concerning current district uses last year and will continue to be discussed further by committee this year;
* The PC discussed the Objective List last November and December and committees were formed; meetings have been scheduled for discussion on the zoning districts as well as other objective list items such as minimum square footage, recreational equipment/vehicles, EV charging stations and food trucks;
* The committee is proposing language for recreational equipment/vehicles and will be sent out to townships after the PC reviews it at their next meeting.

The Planning Commission has added many new members this past year and after a very short retirement, Paul Hartmann has stepped back in as representative until Elmira Township can find a replacement. The following items have been reviewed to date with additional items pending:

* In November the PC approved a site plan review for a retail business in Otsego Lake Township and recommended the CIP – Capital Improvement Plan for 2025-2030 – in December they approved with conditions a special use permit for an auto repair facility in Livingston Township;
* A special use permit for a recreational vehicle repair facility in Hayes Township was approved with conditions at their January meeting along with a recommendation to the BOC for the Noise Ordinance following the public hearing;
* A special use permit for the large-scale solar energy project in Hayes Township was approved with conditions in February; and
* There are 4 rezone cases scheduled for March’s meeting along with a text amendment to the MUZ Zoning District and 5 special use cases pending so far this year.

The Zoning Board of Appeals met in November and granted the setback variance request in Elmira Township and made a recommendation to the Planning Commission concerning the auto repair facility in Livingston Township – another recommendation to the PC for the sign variance request in Bagley Township was made at their December meeting also.

Please feel free to reach out to the Planning and Zoning Department with any questions or concerns regarding the Otsego County Zoning Ordinance. We will do our best to answer your questions or direct you to the appropriate person or source.

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