

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

2017 NEWSLETTER

2017 MEETING DATES

The County Planning Board meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM in the 2nd Floor Conference Room of the County Public Safety Complex, located at 49 ½ Court Street in Canton. Unless noted below, the Executive Committee meets on the last Thursday of every month at 4:15 PM in the Planning Office.

Executive Committee Meeting

December 29, 2016
January 26, 2017
February 23, 2017
March 30, 2017
April 27, 2017
May 25, 2017
June 29, 2017
July 27, 2017
August 31, 2017
September 28, 2017
October 26, 2017
November 30, 2017

CPB Meeting

January 12, 2017
February 9, 2017
March 9, 2017
April 13, 2017
May 11, 2017
June 8, 2017
July 13, 2017
August 10, 2017
September 14, 2017
October 12, 2017
November 9, 2017
December 14, 2017

Please save this schedule for future reference.

PROJECT REFERRALS

Sections 239-m and 239-n of New York State's General Municipal Law require that **comprehensive plans, rezonings, sign permits, site plans, special permits, variances, and subdivisions** be referred to the County Planning Board for review before a local board takes its final action.

A referral is required if the property lines of a project is within **500 feet** of a:

- 1) municipal boundary
- 2) state or county highway right-of-way
- 3) state or county park or recreation area
- 4) county or state land with a public facility, or
- 5) the boundary of a farm operation in an agricultural district.

Local boards must also refer the following projects:

- ❖ **Town, village and city governing boards** must refer new or amended zoning text and maps (including Planned Unit Developments) and comprehensive plans.
- ❖ **Planning boards** must refer site plans, special use permits and subdivisions when they require local board action. This includes sign permits that are subject to local board approval.

- ❖ For **zoning boards of appeal**, use and area variances must be referred. Some zoning boards have purview over special use permits and these too must be referred.

Project Fee

A fee is charged for reviewing projects and the fee schedule is attached to the Project Referral Form.

Referral Timeline

Project referrals can be faxed to 379-2252, or emailed to drussell@stlawco.org, although we ask that you send hard copies of larger and more complex site plans.

The last day to refer a project is twelve days prior to the meeting to allow staff time to research projects that are presented to the County Planning Board.

As soon as your board's complete referral is delivered to the County Planning Office, a 30-day review period begins. The Planning Office evaluates each project to determine if it presents any countywide or inter-municipal impacts. If needed, the 30-day review period may be extended by mutual agreement between your board and the County Planning Board.

Local boards may not take action until a response has been received from the County. The County and local review process can be streamlined by referring projects as soon as possible so that the County and local reviews can take place simultaneously.

Projects Returned for Local Action

The County Planning Board fully realizes the burden of the State requirement on local boards to refer projects. **Please be assured that the County Planning Board sees that its chief responsibility is to address county-wide and intermunicipal considerations in its reviews.**

Projects that do not present county-wide or intermunicipal impacts are returned soon after they are submitted per the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Planning Board and your municipality.

This means the County neither approves nor denies, but considers the project's impacts to be primarily of local importance. The staff often sends technical comments for the local board to consider. **If you have any questions, or if we can be of assistance, please call the Office at 379-2292.**

Full Reviews

The County Planning Board has determined the following project characteristics warrant a full review:

- Commercial projects in excess of 5,000 square feet
- Structures in excess of 10,000 square feet
- Projects that are large in size or scope (e.g. big box retail, renewable energy systems, etc.)
- Commercial rezoning
- Contaminated sites monitored by the DEC
- Alterations to a significant viewshed
- A Type 1 Action under SEQR

If a project appears to present countywide or intermunicipal characteristics such as these, staff will consult with the Executive Committee and hold the project for full review at the County Planning Board's monthly meeting.

Effect of CPB Decision

The local board always has final jurisdiction to approve or deny applications. A denial by a local board is always possible with a simple majority vote. Should the County Planning Board disapprove or approve with conditions, the local board may vote to override the County Planning Board, *but only with a majority plus one of its full membership.*

Referral Follow Up Procedure

Please note General Municipal Law § 239 requires that the **County Planning Board be notified of a local board's final action** within 30 days of a decision. We keep a copy of the project review and the action on file, or on microfilm, for reference.

What If a Project Is Not Referred?

Failure to make these § 239-m and § 239-n referrals can invalidate any local action taken on them, even if the local board voted unanimously on the matter. There is no statute of limitations on § 239 referrals.

PROJECT REFERRAL FORM

Please use the attached referral form as a cover sheet for project referrals. This form helps the Planning Office to determine both the nature and completeness of a project. The referral form is also available online at <http://www.stlawco.org/data/files/departments/Planning/Referral%20Info%20Sheet%202017.pdf> You can also email drussell@stlawco.org for a digital copy.

INTERNET MAPPING APPLICATION

DANC's Internet Mapping Application depicts parcel boundaries, state and federal wetlands, soil information, aerial imagery, zoning, agricultural districts, and project referral boundaries.

Visit: <http://new.dancgis.org/ima/>

You are encouraged to use this site to help your local board make informed decisions on a project.

AGRICULTURAL DATA STATEMENTS

For projects that are within 500' of a farm operation in an agricultural district, project applicants must complete an Agricultural Data Statement to help local boards make informed decisions about potential impacts to agricultural lands and operations. Information contained in these statements can help local boards: protect prime and productive agricultural soils; minimize the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses; and minimize conflicts between agricultural operations and surrounding land uses. **The Ag Data Statement is attached.**

OTHER GOOD STUFF

The County Planning Office offers a variety of services to local governments and agencies; they include:

- ❖ **Planning Board and ZBA Training.** The State requires Planning and Zoning Board members receive 4 hours of training per year. The Planning Office offers training sessions in Canton in April or May; and again in November or December. Additional information on dates and times will be forthcoming. **Please note: The Planning Office charges \$25 per individual for each training session.**
- ❖ **Grant Writing.** Information on grants, funding trends and other opportunities is available via e-mail; any individual or organization can be added to this distribution list by sending a request to hames@stlawco.org. The Office can assist with identifying appropriate sources of funds for projects; grant writing services tend to focus on major housing and infrastructure projects, but assistance can also be provided on smaller, targeted grants.
- ❖ **Local Planning Assistance.** The Office can assist local governments with everything from a particular project review or training needs to working on the development of a new land use regulation or zoning map. Staff also have recent experience writing Comprehensive and Community Development Plans for several towns in the County. We would be happy to talk to any municipality about updating its planning and development resources.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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