

Town of Jay Parks & Open Space Committee Meeting

Tuesday, September 17, 4 p.m.

Community Center

Present: Olivia Dwyer, Paul Benway, Knut Sauer, Tim Rowland, Grace Potthast (phone)

MINUTES

Personnel Updates:

- 1) Paul shared he will go out for shoulder surgery on 10/18/24. Will provide update on return to work post surgery; anticipated to be anywhere between 4 to 12 months out.
- 2) The Town of Jay has hired Brooke Paries, who will start 9/30/24. She most recently worked for the Town of Wilmington in their Parks department and also worked for Lake Placid/North Elba in water and sewer. Paul will train Brooke before his surgery.
- 3) With Brooke on the job, the Town of Jay has included a full-time Parks position in the 2025 budget.
- 4) Tim Rowland has joined the Parks & Open Space Committee. Tim is a journalist whose work focuses on outdoor recreation. Trails are a big interest for Tim.
 - a) Tim provided more information to committee on forested county property off Lincoln Hill Road that holds an overlook accessible on foot. Trailhead access would require an easement with Ward Lumber.

Summer/fall review:

- 1) Many successful summer events, including JEMS concerts, Jay Day, and the inaugural Sustainability & Energy Fair, all at the Jay Village Green.
- 2) Youth Commission soccer season has started and there has been great feedback on the condition of the fields following repair work by Paul and Matt Stanley after the circus tore up the fields in early summer.
- 3) Paul updated the committee on improvements at Henry's Trial, including new planking on bridges and repeated removal of blow down as weather events moved through this summer.
- 4) Picnic tables will be brought indoors when the snow falls.

2025 budget discussion:

- 1) Paul requested budget for picnic table that need to be replaced in spring 2025. Estimates 6-8 needed for 2025 at cost of \$129 each from Lowe's (2024 price). Paul is happy with the quality of picnic tables bought from Lowe's this year and estimates they will last 10 years.
- 2) Paul and Matt discussed a new zero-turn mower to be included in the 2025 budget on the equipment line.
- 3) With Brooke joining as a full-time employee, Parks will have the capacity to do daily checks on trash cans at town parks in 2025. Paul recommended trash cans with small openings for rubbish to minimize dumping.
- 4) Paul provided options for a new water table at the Children's Playground. Knut to look at costs of examples provided and contact Nature Play for a quote.

Project updates:

- 1) Upper Jay parking lot/EV chargers
 - a) Highway crew will begin cleaning up the site in the next few weeks.
 - b) Wally Walters is completing the info sign build for October install at site.
 - c) Received approval from FEMA to place EV chargers at sight.
 - d) When Knut receives documentation of FEMA approval from Matt, Knut will seek approval from DEC to move EV chargers from originally proposed site at the cafe to the new location at the parking lot.
 - e) Discussion of opportunity to add nature walk trail in surrounding area, as well as concerns about safety related to people parking at new site and crossing the road to access the river.
- 2) Four Peaks
 - a) Olivia summarized transfer of 595 acres in Jay from the Adirondack Land Trust to New York State, which expands the constitutionally protected New York State Forest Preserve and means this land in the Town of Jay is now owned by New York State.
 - b) Next steps: APA land classification (anticipated to be Wild Forest) then DEC Unit Management Plan amendment to describe conservation and recreation goals for this land.
 - c) Olivia asked committee members to help share information what is and is not public land in this area; specifically, the area is known as Four Peaks but Rattlesnake Knob is the only one of the surrounding peaks on public land and the rest are on private property.
 - d) Knut suggested request to DEC to change the name of the parcel to reflect what's accessible and available to users at this parcel.
 - e) Olivia summarized presentation by Barkeater Trails Alliance (BETA) Executive Director Glenn Glover at the September Town Board meeting. BETA offered their services and support on engaging community to develop summary of community needs and interests for Four Peaks planning.
 - f) Parking for public access to Four Peaks is a concern at Stone House Road is single lane and travels through a residential area.
 - g) There may be an opportunity to work with NewVida Preserve to connect their private trail network to public trails, and perhaps resolve parking challenges in partnership with them.
- 3) Village Green — installation of new light posts
 - a) Two posts have fallen over
 - b) New plugs/outlets were installed before the Sustainability & Energy Fair
 - c) Installation of new light posts did not receive any bids in first round, will go out to bid again.
- 4) Comprehensive Plan
 - a) Olivia will be tabling for Parks & Open Space at the Open House event on Thursday, October 17, from 5:30 to 8 p.m.
- 5) Recreation Economy for Rural Communities (RERC)

- a) A grant program through the Northern Boardern Regional Commission and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that provides recipients with planning assistance to help communities to identify strategies to grow their outdoor recreation economy and revitalize their main streets.
- b) Committee undecided on whether or not to apply by the deadline of October 16, 2024. Olivia to follow up to see if there is funding provided through the grant and when it is next available. If only technical assistance for planning, may be best to wait until after comprehensive plan is complete as majority of Parks committee members are committed to this process.