

**Dutchess County Planning Board
MINUTES – March 10, 2026**

Present

Joseph Amendola
David Barr
Dale Culver
Edie Greenwood
Hans Klingzahn

J. Patrick Lambert
Ken Migliorelli
James Nelson
Jill Way
J. Randall Williams

Amanda Bergen, *Staff*
Jennifer Coccozza, *Staff*
Tara Dillon, *Staff*
Clayton Gurnett, *Staff*
Nina Leonard, *Staff*
Devin Rigolino, *Staff*
Ian Wickstead, *Staff*
Eoin Wrafter, *Staff*

Craig Brendli

Absent

Gary Baright
Norma Drummond
Trevor Redl
James Fedorchak
Ronald Hicks
Linda Fakhoury

Hans Klingzahn called meeting to order.

Nomination and Election of Officers

Eoin Wrafter announced that one nomination was received for the slate of Hans Klingzahn as Chairman and James Nelson as Vice-Chairman of the Planning Board. Dale Culver made a motion to approve the nominations. David Barr second the motion. With no opposition or abstentions, the motion passed.

Review/Consider Adoption of Revised By-Laws:

There were no proposed changes to the by-laws by Planning Department staff or Planning Board members.

Approve Minutes of September 10, 2025, Meeting

A motion to approve the minutes from September 10, 2025, was made by Edie Greenwood and seconded by Dale Culver. With no opposition, the motion passed, and minutes were adopted.

2026 Planning Department Priorities:

Updating Center and Green Spaces map and Greenway Connections is going to be one of the main priorities for the department

First- Time Homebuyer Payment Programs:

As part of the Housing Trust fund and our housing program, we are launching a first-time home buyer down payment assistance program. Which is currently available on the website. We're partnering with Community Housing Innovations (CHI) on the program. They have available funding for first time home buyers that are income qualified. It can provide up to \$50,000 towards the purchase of a home. It's a sliding scale based on your income. CHI is administering and doing all the work for the program. We pass you through to them and they go through the administration of the program.

We are also doing a duplex first-time home buyer program. This is for purchase or rehab. Income qualified buyers can either purchase or rehab existing duplex units. The qualified buyer will live in one unit for a minimum of 10 years and rent the second unit at market rate. It does two things; it brings two housing units back into the market and it creates generational wealth for the homeowner. We deliberately decided that the second unit would be market rate and not income restricted because we wanted to make sure that the homeowner had enough income to support payment of taxes, mortgage, upkeep and all those things associated with it. As part of the program, it's going to have several training and assistance programs for the buyers. Not only are they going to get credit counseling, first-time home buyers mortgage credit, and they will go through landlord training. If you've never been a landlord, it's different. It's not just your heat being out it's your tenants' heat being out. It's the 2:00 am call for the leaky faucet. It's understanding how to budget for replacement of the roof for yours and theirs. Part of this program we will do an RFP for a consultant that's going to provide the training and do the outreach. We're looking to do a fall announcement, where people will be able to apply for that program.

Traditional Housing Creation Preservation Program - The target is for housing units of 10 or less. Where we have previously funded programs like Locust Hill in Rhinebeck, which was about 80 total units. The next round we're focused on is 10 units or less. We are hoping for something like the Amenia duplex project that we funded. We thought that was a great project, we are hoping to get more developers like that. Small local developers that are looking to do 10 units or less. Primarily we think this is going to be in areas where there are no water and sewer because it's easier to build those types of projects.

Water and Sewer Inventory Project – We have given an overview of this in the past. We are going to do a pilot program this year.

These are three of the big priorities that the staff will be working on this year.

Board members inquired about program specifics, anticipated start up time and discussed past housing programs.

Comprehensive Plan and Greenway Connections -Jenn Coccozza gave an update on Greenway Connections. The compact book is 25 years old, and the department will focus more on doing Greenway. The Greenway Compact is like our land use, our recommendations and what will fit into the comprehensive plan. We want to get a better handle on how we want to update Greenway Connections, then move into the comprehensive plan.

There was discussion regarding misconceptions that people have about the comprehensive plan. Some people think that we did the comprehensive plan; it was accepted, now we are done. What they don't think about is now we have to change the zoning.

On the Greenway several municipalities incorporate wholesale copies in their codes. This requires shopping and maybe some sales. Shopping and sales because the original adoption of Greenway Connections book and the compact book is what all municipalities adopted into their code. If we change that book, then all municipalities will have to readopt it. We've been going out to the municipalities regarding the Greenway guide updates. The guides are the things in the back, sometimes the things that you refer to the most when we are doing the 239 reviews. We'll say lighting is recommended or we suggest that the applicant provide lighting that is evenly distributed across the site and it's 3000 Kelvin or less and has a very low bug rating. We incorporate those things that are contained in the guide. I've gone out a few times and said we have new guides to the municipalities; do you want to adopt them? And they have. If we redo the entire greenway compact there's a question as to whether we will have to go back out to 30 municipalities and get everybody to readopt it again. If we didn't change anything that is direct, if we said change the lighting recommendation from 3000 to 10,000 that might be something substantial. If we were to update pictures and things like that, we might be OK. Looking at what is missing, times have changed, things are different, and what else do we want to say. That will take more effort, and we've been working on it. We're going to dedicate looking into that more which means going back out again.

What is the timeline for the greenway updates? We are actively discussing our centers and green spaces plan, which is concentrate growth in the centers and preserve your outlying areas. We've been looking at it because we've realized that some of the centers that municipalities think are centers, we might disagree, or we might not have them all the same. Or some of them are historic. The historic ones we don't want to send more development too and how we recognize that. How can we change that? Maybe call it historic centers instead of centers that are going to be developed into something. Some of them are just crossroads that might have four buildings on the corner. In the beginning it was to recognize those places because they're meaningful at the municipal level. Do we want to direct development to them, that's a whole different question. They might not have the capacity for that. Part of updating Greenway is also the water line project or pilot project that Tara and Devin have been working on. We realized that not all the places we have said are supposed to be centers can handle the type of density or development that we would recommend. We want to look at where the water and sewers are so that we can say that makes sense for a center and this one doesn't. This will also help all the municipalities in saying the same thing when it comes to zoning. We have had some of these draft discussions. We have looked through our guides to see what must be updated and right now we're going to begin to look at the actual book part and see what else must be updated. I can see us at one point doing both at the same time.

Partnership for Manageable Growth (PMG) Updates: – Clayton Gurnett gave updates on PMG projects. Last year we closed on one farm, Primrose Hill Farm, a 106-acre Christmas tree farm and agroforestry operation in Clinton. Two projects rescinded their awards, Plan Bee Brewery and Sinon Farm. Plan Bee Brewery were denied their SPIG award. They had to withdraw and may pursue a USDA agricultural land easement in the future. They are no longer in the running for this grant assistance.

Sinon Farms withdrew their project. New York State would not accept an application that allowed for the subdivision of a 115-acre parcel. They wanted to set aside a house for their heirs. Due to the lack of that flexibility, they did not want to move forward with the project.

We have three pending farmland projects and one infrastructure project.

Infrastructure Project – Hyde Park central sewer project, we have not received any recent updates on the project. The County Wastewater authority has done their items. The ball is in the Towns court to move forward.

Farmland Projects - We are hoping to close this year on three pending projects.

- Domin Farms, a 201-acre dairy and cow farm with rotating combination of corn, hay, alfalfa, and other oats in LaGrange. The project is sponsored by Dutchess Land Conservancy (DLC), and they are pursuing funds from USDA and RCS and Wetland Trust. This is the DLC's first time applying for Federal grants through the USDA. They have run into issues such as Workers Comp., which have now been resolved and are able to move forward. They were notified on the 5th that they are ready to go into the final stages. We are hoping to close mid-April. This project was awarded in 2023.
- Hahn Farm is a 100-acre livestock hay, corn and vegetable farm in Pleasant Valley. DLC sponsored project they are partnering with New York State Agriculture and Market for farmland protection implementation grant. This project was awarded in 2022. There have been several issues with the estate, multiple heirs are involved. They have requested that 1-acre be removed that has a single-family home on the lot. The state may have an issue with a subdivision of a larger parcel. It may cause issues in the future if there is a new owner. Their attorneys are addressing the matter with the State. Best case scenario, closing by the end of this year. 2027 is more likely the timeframe.
- Heritage Acres, which is an expansion of Fishkill Farms a 105-acre vegetable and apple operation in East Fishkill. Scenic Hudson is the primary sponsor for this project with USDA and ICS grant funds. This was awarded in 2022. They have been dealing with extensive survey issues with neighboring property owners. There are conflicting surveys. They have identified a way forward with the property owners. They are now waiting for NRCS to sign off. They are hoping to close by November.

Future of PMG – Eoin Wrafter

Once the three pending projects are completed, we will then solicit other projects.

There was discussion regarding the appraisal process for farmland projects, property surveys, timeframe for project completion and the State's application process for farmland projects.

Commissioner's Update:

As of 12/31/2025 the department has responded to 383 referrals, 96% of the expected annual reviews. Average days to respond is 12.5 compared to the statutory limit of 30 days.

County Executive Serino has designated Eoin Wrafter, Commissioner of Planning and Development, to support project facilitation and other Assistant County Executive responsibilities, with Deputy Commissioner Jennifer Cocozza assuming expanded oversight of the Planning Department's day-to-day operations.

Correspondence

The Planning Board received no correspondence.

Announcements

Future Planning Board meetings:

June 10, 2026

September 9, 2026

November 18, 2026

Adjournment

Hans Klingzahn made a motion to adjourn; J. Patrick Lambert seconded, the motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia B.-Lloyd