

## Village of Lansing

MINUTES of the Board of Trustees Meeting held on Monday, October 6, 2025, in person at 2405 N. Triphammer Rd. and via Zoom Videoconferencing/Teleconferencing.

PRESENT: Mayor Ronny Hardaway; Trustees, Susan Ainslie, Pat Gillespie, Carolyn Greenwald, Kathleen Yen; Clerk/Treasurer, Jodi Dake; Attorney Natalie French; Terry Carroll

Zoom: Kevin Kelvington

Hardaway called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:30pm.

Hardaway opened the public comment period. There were no comments.

Motion - To Close the Public Comment Period

Hardaway made a motion to close the public comment period. Gillespie seconded the motion. A vote was taken:

Mayor Ronny Hardaway-Aye  
Trustee Pat Gillespie-Aye  
Trustee Kathleen Yen-Aye

Trustee Susan Ainslie-Aye  
Trustee Carolyn Greenwald-Aye

### **Approve Minutes**

The next item on the agenda was to approve the draft minutes from September 11 & 15, 2025. Suggested changes have been incorporated. They needed to be done separately since Gillespie and Greenwald were at NYCOM on September 15.

Motion - To Approve the Minutes of September 11, 2025

Hardaway moved that the draft meeting notes, as reviewed and revised by the Board, are hereby adopted as the official minutes. Trustee Ainslie seconded the motion. A vote was taken:

Mayor Ronny Hardaway-Aye  
Trustee Pat Gillespie-Aye  
Trustee Kathleen Yen-Aye

Trustee Susan Ainslie-Aye  
Trustee Carolyn Greenwald-Aye

Motion - To Approve the Minutes of September 15, 2025

Hardaway moved that the draft meeting notes, as reviewed and revised by the Board, are hereby adopted as the official minutes. Trustee Ainslie seconded the motion. A vote was taken:

Mayor Ronny Hardaway-Aye  
Trustee Pat Gillespie-Abstain  
Trustee Kathleen Yen-Aye

Trustee Susan Ainslie-Aye  
Trustee Carolyn Greenwald-Abstain

### **Public Hearing Proposed Local Law G (2025)**

French emailed the Trustees earlier today to explain that at the Planning Board meeting of 9/30, the Planning Board reviewed the additional conditions for High Traffic Food and Beverage in Commercial Medium Traffic (CMT). In considering their vision for CMT and how best to effectuate that, they recommended the following additional conditions attach:

- (i) There shall be no more than one drive-thru permitted on any single parcel in the Commercial Medium Traffic District; and
- (ii) Any establishment with a drive-thru must have a minimum calculated occupancy load of sixty (60); and
- (iii) Establishments with drive-thrus shall not be located on contiguous parcels. For purposes of this subsection, parcels separated by a public or private road shall not be considered contiguous, even if the property line extends to the centerline of the roadway.

There is a public hearing tonight for Local Law G- which currently only has sub (i) as an additional condition. The Board may proceed with the public hearing as scheduled and adopt Local Law G as currently drafted with only sub (i) or if they would like to incorporate the Planning Boards changes to the proposed law the Trustees would have to cancel the current public hearing and re-set a public hearing on Version 2.

French also attached Alterative #3- which omits the addition of High Traffic Food and Beverage to Commercial Medium Traffic (CMT) in the local law. If the Board wanted to consider this version, you would cancel the current public hearing and reset a public hearing on Version 3 with the code changes which have been agreed upon. We would then do a separate local law on the High Traffic Food & Beverage in CMT once there can be more discussion and consensus amongst the boards.

Greenwald stated that she attended the Planning Board meeting, and their concern is the aesthetics in the village that does not include a lot of consecutive drive thru's. They came up with a series of safeguards to protect the village. Greenwald suggested that we amend the law as necessary and renotice the public hearing.

Hardaway stated that that would be version 2 that Attorney French previously sent to the Trustees. On page 4, paragraph R lists the three additional changes.

Yen asked for version clarification. French read Version 2 that has 3 additional conditions recommended by the Planning Board. Version 3 that was shared with the Trustees, omits any reference to adding high traffic food and beverage to CMT and would just proceed with the agreed upon Business and Technology (B&T) changes as well as the change to the administrative banking offices. Version 3 is an alternative just in case the board wants more time to debate the CMT high traffic food and beverage but still proceed with agreed upon changes. French reiterated that it only adds additional conditions to CMT.

Yen asked about the update of definitions. French stated that there will be a separate law for updating the definitions. French stated that due to the specific situation in the B&T district due to Cornell, we are moving ahead with those changes. The Planning Board is working on the overall chart of uses and it is going to take quite a bit of time.

Yen wondered if not having updated definitions will have any impact. French stated that any special permit application that is put in prior to the definitions being changed will go under the current Code. Yen stated that there are eleven additional uses for B&T and fourteen additional uses in the Health and Human Services to provide more flexibility. Yen prefers Version 2 because it incorporates the recommendations from the Planning Board. Greenwald, Gillespie and Ainslie all agreed.

Hardaway stated that tonight the Trustees would be canceling the public hearing for the current version and set a public hearing for version 2.

Before that vote, Mayor Hardaway read the following statement and asked that it be inserted into the minutes:

*For several years, I've heard from board members, Village staff, and constituents about the eyesore at the Asian Kitchen property on 11 Graham Road West. That nearly three-acre lot has sat vacant for too long – resulting in a zombie business that is a magnet for graffiti.*

*When a developer expressed interest in revitalizing the site with multiple restaurants, I was hopeful. It seemed like we had a chance to replace blight with activity and a stronger tax base. Unfortunately, the developer soon discovered that many national chains are no longer pursuing full sit-down restaurants. The COVID-19 pandemic changed their business models: drive-through service has become the cornerstone of success, while formal, dine-in restaurants face shorter lifespans – often only three to five years – unless they constantly adapt.*

*That brings me to my concern. The Planning Board's newly added conditions to tonight's proposed law – "Paragraph Q. High Traffic Food and Beverage in Commercial Medium Traffic District" – risk making the "perfect the enemy of the good." By tightening restrictions, we might block a viable development proposal while waiting indefinitely for some "ideal" project that might never come.*

*The truth is, many possible uses are allowed in this commercial medium traffic zoning district, and not all of those uses would be popular with the Village government or our residents. Why turn away a real opportunity to improve the property, increase activity, strengthen our tax base, and address an eyesore?*

*I appreciate the Planning Board's willingness to consider high-traffic food and beverage uses in this district. But because of the additional conditions, I cannot support, and I will vote "no" for, the proposed additional conditions within the local law.*

**Resolution #7211-To Cancel the Public Hearing Tonight for Proposed Local Law G (2025) Amendment to Village of Lansing Code-Zoning Law**

Hardaway moved to cancel the public hearing and Greenwald seconded the motion.

Mayor Ronny Hardaway-Aye  
Trustee Pat Gillespie-Aye  
Trustee Kathleen Yen-Aye

Trustee Susan Ainslie-Aye  
Trustee Carolyn Greenwald-Aye

**Motion**-To Set a Public Hearing for Proposed Local Law G (2025) (Version 2)  
Amendment to Village of Lansing Code-Zoning Law for Oct 20, 2025, at 7:35pm

Ainslie moved to set the public hearing and Greenwald seconded the motion.

Mayor Ronny Hardaway-Nay  
Trustee Pat Gillespie-Aye  
Trustee Kathleen Yen-Aye

Trustee Susan Ainslie-Aye  
Trustee Carolyn Greenwald-Aye

Greenwald said to Hardaway that we could have discussed it rather than you reading a statement. Greenwald stated that she has been at Planning Board meetings where people have presented their ideas in constructive ways and had discussions and people come to conclusions in different ways. It may have had to go back to the Planning Board to share concerns with them. They may have still had the same recommendation but collaboratively we could have had a discussion about it if he thought it was not in the best interest of the village. Greenwald would have rather seen a conversation instead of this way. French stated that is why she created version 3 in case the board wanted to continue their discussions on the additional conditions. Greenwald stated that the Planning Board is concerned. In the future Greenwald would like to hear everyone's thoughts if they are different than what the group wants to see.

Yen stated that there are still concerns with delivery vehicles. Greenwald stated that those concerns will still come up. It could be a productive conversation as a group. Hardaway stated that some of the discussion was had at our last meeting, so he didn't see any point in covering the same area. Greenwald pointed out that some things were new since they were added at the last Planning Board meeting.

Ainslie has been at the Planning Board meetings and an underlying concern for her is it seems to be a developer interested in a particular parcel and she gets mixed messages. We need a clear sit-down discussion because we do not want to lose an opportunity to have something developed there.

French reiterated that we are legislating for the zone not for a particular parcel. The board needs to think of other parcels in that zone that could potentially be redeveloped. The Planning Board had issues with appearance, traffic congestion, idling vehicles and multiple drive thru's very close together. The Planning Board feels that decisions have been made quickly before and have had a negative impact on the village. The general sentiment at the Planning Board was that they want to be thorough in their recommendations.

Greenwald feels that if we had design guidelines for the N. Triphammer corridor it would have swayed a lot of people's concerns.

Kelvington stated that there are a lot of concerns. There is no one good answer. A lot of good ideas were brought up at the last meeting that the Planning Board hadn't really thought about.

Yen stated that we want to make sure there is no appearance of spot zoning. Greenwald agreed that we are zoning for the zone.

### **Tompkins County Solar Canopy Proposal**

Next was a slide presentation by Terry Carroll-Chief Sustainability Officer for Tompkins County (TC). Carroll stated that he has a TC solar canopy proposal for the County Health Department parking lot at 55 Brown Road. It would be a parking canopy over the northern part of the parking lot. This is where they park most of the county vehicles and is also over their ev charging stations. The array will be in front of the meter, which means it sells directly to the grid to offset the county bills. It will not go to the ev charging. It will be 225 panels, and you will not be able to see it from the road. It will have a 5-degree slope so the height will be from 16'11"-19'5".

Hardaway stated that we have a 15-foot height limit in our code. Hardaway asked why they went over this height restriction. They are 16'11' feet to allow plows to get under them. Hardaway feels this is good information to know because the village never thought about that. Greenwald added that we didn't think about this, we were thinking about people's front yards.

Stormwater management concerns will also be addressed for runoff from the panels. The cost of the project is \$1.1 million. Funding is coming from Clean Energy Communities Grant (\$825,000) with the remainder from County Facilities Capital account. They hope to recoup the difference with IRS Clean Energy Tax Credits. They have to start construction this year so they can get additional federal grants.

Cornell requires TC to get a letter from the village accepting that the county will self-permit and inspect the project without village approvals. TC will utilize Monroe Balancing Test (MBT) which is a method for determining whether the actions of a governmental units are "exempt" from local zoning regulations using the "balancing of public interests" analytic approach. The county does not own the land, only the building. They have a ground lease with Cornell, and the letter is one of their conditions.

TC has big green goals which is why they are doing this. They are trying to be more energy independent. They want a letter so they can start construction this year. Hardaway would like a sample letter to have the village attorney look at. The MBT will be done at the next legislative meeting on October 21<sup>st</sup>. Hardaway would like to sit in on that meeting. He would also like a copy of the documentation relating to the MBT.

Greenwald thinks it is a terrific project, and her only concern is she would like the letter to include the specific information of the decommissioning. Not just a big promise. TC does not have that information yet, but it will be part of the lease agreement. Greenwald stated that there is no visibility issues for this. French stated that in her research it is the use of the property that dictates the application of the MBT, not the ownership.

Yen clarified with Carol that Cornell owns the land and TC owns the building. They can make changes to the interior changes but must go to CU for changes to outside the building.

MBT would show that they fit the criteria and don't have to follow village law because they are a government entity. It has always been TC policy not to seek permits. That is what the TC legislature directs.

Hardaway asked if we should go forward with a final letter. All Trustees agreed that we should proceed. Hardaway wants progress reports on the project and letter.

Carroll stated that the plan is to get the MBT completed before the 10/24 legislature meeting. Then letters will go to CU. They have design guidelines and plan to start construction in November. Their goal was to have this functional by the end of the year, though it is highly unlikely.

Hardaway suggested they contact Mike Scott regarding stormwater.

Terry left the meeting

### **Design Guidelines**

Greenwald stated that the design guidelines need to be updated. She stated that there are two options. She reached out to the CU design team, and they may be interested in taking on this project. It's a big project that needs updating. An architecture student project would be free of charge.

Yen suggested we have a committee made up of one representative from each board to help them. Hardaway asked who would want to lead that subgroup. Greenwald stated that she is just finishing the Comprehensive Plan and now doing a master plan for trails and parks which could take a year. Greenwald will follow up with Michael A. Tomlin to see if this project is feasible. Yen would be happy to work with the faculty advisor. Greenwald was not happy with the last project they did for us because it was not tethered to what the village could actually accomplish.

Hardaway stated that we will definitely need to be involved with the student group. We will wait until we hear back from CU before we form a group. Our current design guidelines are pretty good, but they apply to a zone that no longer exists.

French asked if the CLT design guidelines were available online. They are referenced in the code. French stated that CMT references the CLT design guidelines. Greenwald noted it is in an appendix of the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Greenway Committee Proposals**

Greenwald stated that the Greenway Committee has a lot of ideas on how to reconfigure the parks on a master plan. They are looking at things they can do without our new trail master plan. They have a new proposed trail that goes from Coventry Walk. The Board agreed that we should contact homeowners for an easement. The one-mile loop connects East Point. Hardaway will approach the property owners. We had started to do a trail on our land, and this would be an extension of that.

Greenwald stated that she called about the grant. (The Village Climate Smart Communities/Clean Energy Communities (CSC/CEC) Taskforce completed actions which enabled the village to receive two awards (\$5,000 each; total \$10,000.) for village energy reduction/GHG emissions reduction - "Clean Energy Fund" projects.)

The Greenway Committee has decided that they would like to see a pollinator garden in Shannon Park and this trail loop which are both fundable projects. The trustees were all onboard with the proposed trail as long as it is not a burden for our DPW staff. Courtney will be consulted on the trail placement. Hardaway feels this meets our long-term goals.

One of the Greenway Committee goals is to get a quote to remove trees in the Blackchin overlook which is completely overgrown. Leopold is looking into what it will cost to top the trees to rehabilitate that park.

Another recommendation is to reduce the mowing in the spring in Ned Hickey and Hartill Parks. Gillespie added that the Ned Hickey field doesn't get used. Greenwald will talk to Courtney about decreasing the area we are mowing.

Another long-term plan of the Greenway Committee is trees. They would like to add three dedication trees to Don & Marian Hartill Park for Don and Marian Hartill and Ann Furry. Trees would be approved through the grant, but we would have to buy the plaques.

Greenwald spoke with Jerry Sheng and the use of the CECF grant to do pollinator garden is appropriate. However, we would have to write a justification. Greenwald is trying to spend the CEC grant money. Hardaway stated that doing the pollinator garden and planting trees would be the projects to go forward with. We are already approved for two \$5,000 grants.

Greenwald questioned whether we should do a resolution for doing the pollinator garden in Shannon Park and Ned Hickey Park and tree planting. Greenwald will reach out to Plantsman for an estimate. Dake reminded them that we have to follow procurement policy.

Greenwald received a bill for the bulbs which is \$1,537.25 for 6 cases of bulbs. Bulbs will arrive before Oct 20<sup>th</sup>. We will be planting 2,000 hyacinth bulbs in two village parks.

### **Discuss Request for Clean Energy Projects Template and Process**

Yen asked for feedback. We have 2-\$5,000 grants to use. There is no deadline on the use.

Yen stated that there are extra benches out back we could incorporate. Yen asked if we want bike racks. Greenwald stated that she would but would first like a master park plan. Greenwald will contact Courtney about the cost of a little portion of a trail from Coventry Walk.

Gillespie likes the pollinator garden. Hardaway and Yen are fans of trees, and a pollinator garden. Yen also likes bike racks. Yen stated that we will need resolutions for everything.



For clean energy, Hardaway asked if we want to have a template for residents to respond to. Ainslie suggested putting it on the website. Yen thinks it does help to get input from the community. Yen would be the contact via email. Hardaway will do the form.

### **Signature Cards**

Dake stated that we need to decide who will be on the bank signature card.

**Resolution #7212-** To Authorize the Following Three People to be Signers on the Village of Lansing Bank Accounts at Tompkins Bank:

Jodi Dake, Clerk/Treasurer (Primary)  
Ronny Hardaway, Mayor  
Carolyn Greenwald, Deputy Mayor

Mayor Hardaway moved this resolution and Trustee Yen seconded the motion. A vote was taken:

Mayor Ronny Hardaway-Aye  
Trustee Pat Gillespie-Aye  
Trustee Kathleen Yen-Aye

Trustee Susan Ainslie-Aye  
Trustee Carolyn Greenwald-Aye

Dake gave Hardaway and Greenwald the forms to fill out for the bank. After that the bank will create the appropriate signature paperwork.

### **General Comments**

*Yen submitted the following on meetings she attended:*

***Cayuga Lake Watershed Intermunicipal Organization (CWIO) – September 24, 2025, 7 PM***

- Presentation: Beth Gilles, Executive Director for the Lake Champlain – Lake George Regional Planning Board provided information on the development of the Lake Champlain Implementation Plan and status*
- Next meeting: October 22, 2025, 3-5 PM, in-person, at Bolton Point (information on the Drinking Water Source Protection Plan (DWSP2))*

***Climate Smart Communities (CSC) Taskforce - October 2, 2025, 1-2 PM, Village of Lansing office:***

- Working group members followed up on previous discussions regarding outreach and communications, and eligible uses for the two \$5,000 awards available in the clean energy fund (projects that would decrease energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, and/or a community request for proposals (RFP). [RFP template example sent previously]*
- Next meeting: October 30, 2025, 1-2 PM, Village of Lansing NY office. The taskforce will be meeting with Ashley Seyfried, Director of Sustainability, Southern Tier 8 Regional Board and new advisor for the Climate Smart Communities Program and Jerry Sheng from Cornell Cooperative Extension Tompkins County.*

***Town of Lansing Conservation Advisory Council (CAC) October 1, 2025, Wed., 6:30 PM***



- Ashley Seyfried, Director of Sustainability, Southern Tier 8 Regional Board and new advisor for the Climate Smart Communities Program, discussed potential action items the town may have already completed, and the groups focus for the year.
- Ed Dubovi, Chair, provided an update on the meeting with the Town of Ithaca Conservation Board and the group's direction in 2026.
- Meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month, 6:30 PM, at the Town of Lansing.

***Tompkins County Environmental Management Council (TC EMC)***

- The September 11, 2025 TC EMC meeting included information on biosolids and PFAS presented by Claire Walsh Winsler, Director of Food, Agriculture, and Land Use Policy, Environmental Advocates NY. The biosolids working group has been meeting with area experts in the interim.
- Next meeting: October 9, 2025, 4 PM.

***Tompkins County Water Resources Council: – September 15, 2025 4:15 PM***

*Lydia Brinkley, Riparian Buffer Coordinator, Upper Susquehanna Coalition gave a presentation and provided information on riparian buffers, riparian buffer restoration and reforestation efforts the coalition has been involved in and case study examples.*

Yen stated that TCCOG passed a resolution regarding biosolids.

Ainslie stated that the Youth Services Board met, and they are waiting on funding decisions by the County. Ithaca Youth Bureau services, there is a need for more one-on-one support for youth. The schools don't have the workforce to do one-on-ones, the 504's or IAP's. There is no support for that. Teresa Albert is leaving.

Bolton Point is having a budget meeting this week.

Greenwald stated that at the NYCOM Conference she attended the open meetings presentation. At the presentation they said very clearly that once you have a quorum in the room then anyone online can vote. If you notice your location, you can be part of the quorum. French stated they just extended the law. Greenwald would like to see us be a little more inclusive in our online participation. Hardaway stated that if French confirms this, we will need to change our policies and procedures.

Greenwald and Gillespie met with NYS Department of State Department of Buildings about revitalizing eyesores in the village. They think we should be more aggressively pursuing violation. We may even want to eventually increase our code penalties. Greenwald is looking for support for the idea that we are going to be a little more aggressive. She would like the Village to issue violations for currently abandon buildings. Greenwald thinks this is how Scott should spend his time. She thinks we have been too lax with the graffiti.

Yen thinks violation letters are definitely in order for the old Friendly's restaurant and Trip Hotel that have been ongoing. Scott did the friendly approach and heard nothing. All abandon buildings on N. Triphammer Road need to be maintained to commercial standards. The Board agreed.

Yen definitely thinks the Trip Hotel & Friendly's Restaurant should be sent code violations. Scott has a standard code violation form letter. French stated that with enforcement there will be attorney

fees. Greenwald wants to start with an extensive violation letter. It hasn't been a priority in the past, but Scott has the support of the board to be more aggressive and let him know it is a priority. French stated that knowing a summons may be coming could be more persuasive.

Hardaway has an issue with adding an inspection workload on Scott. We need to monitor Scott to make sure he is not overwhelmed. If it is overwhelming, we may have to hire another person. Hardaway agreed that we need to be more aggressive with this.

French will reach out informally to Eric's council to discuss the graffiti issue on N. Triphammer Road.

Greenwald stated that she has talked to Scott, and he likes to do what the Trustees want him to do. He just needs direction.

Hardaway stated that he has concerns with the apartments on Graham Road, Imperial Kitchen, Friendly's and Trip Hotel. Hardaway will have Scott go look to make sure there are not any issues with these properties. If Scott has concerns, he can let us know at the next staff meeting.

Greenwald attended a NYCOM session on ethics. She wants to update our policy based on examples given at that presentation. Our current ethics policy is older and doesn't hit all the talking points that NYCOM likes to see in an ethics policy. Disclose of economic interest is important. Greenwald will get a proposed policy to French and have her update before sending it to the trustees.

Another session that Greenwald attended was on fund balance. We currently do not have a fund balance policy, but Greenwald feels we should. It is not required but is recommended. Greenwald feels that having these policies will help us transition from our very experienced staff to less experienced staff. After ethics, Greenwald has a sample that we can start on a fund balance policy.

Next is spoils. Spoils are the material from grinding roads or trees that come down are all worth something. We do not have a written spoils policy. Vehicle use policy should also be added. Also, a social media policy. She would also like a checklist for onboarding procedures for trustees/staff/planning board. Dake already has a hire checklist. The Board can also look at these procedures.

Greenwald stated that at the Planning Board meeting they are going through uses, definitions and code changes. The Planning Board also interviewed a potential Planning Board candidate.

Gillespie stated that the Town of Lansing had a meeting a couple of weeks ago that lasted three hours. The main discussion was on the TeraWulf building which is the old Milliken station building. The plan is to put an AI data center there. Many of the people that submitted comments and were at the meeting were in support of a one-year moratorium, but most were not town residents. Town people are not in support of a moratorium. Town people are concerned that a moratorium would stop increasing the tax base and stop creating jobs. Hardaway stated that typically places like that create maybe 10 jobs. Gillespie stated that TeraWulf claims that it will

create 100 jobs and 300 construction jobs. Hardaway doubted that. The Town board has not yet voted on it.

Gillespie stated that the Joint Youth Commission meeting is scheduled for next week.

At NYCOM most of the sessions Gillespie attended were on cyber security and social media. There is a lot of bad stuff in the state with cyber security. Hardaway stated that we use wordfence which he feels is a good company. They constantly monitor our site. Hardaway gets a daily list of all the international IP addresses that try to access our site. A vast majority of them come from within the USA. Our minutes are not part of our database. Hardaway keeps them external to WordPress within the server space. They are audited daily, and we have never had a problem.

Gillespie stated that he has a colleague that designs logos. He will have him get us a proposal for the new Village logo.

Hardaway stated that we will have an 18% health care increase in 2026. It has not been a good couple of years for the consortium. There may potentially be another increase next year. This is an obvious example of waiting too long to increase premiums. It would be better to do it in smaller increments.

### **Adjournment**

Motion – To Adjourn

Hardaway motioned to adjourn. Ainslie seconded the motion. A vote was taken:

Mayor Ronny Hardaway-Aye  
Trustee Pat Gillespie-Aye  
Trustee Kathleen Yen-Aye

Trustee Susan Ainslie-Aye  
Trustee Carolyn Greenwald-Aye

The meeting was adjourned at 9:41pm.

Jodi Dake, Clerk/Treasurer