**Caroline Town Board Public Hearing Minutes of March 20, 2024**

**Zoning Local Law**

The Town Board Public Hearing related to the Zoning Law was held hybrid on March 20, 2024, at the Caroline Town Hall, and was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Supervisor Witmer.

**Attendance:**

Supervisor Mark Witmer

Councilmember Cal Snow

Councilmember Tim Murray

Councilmember Kate Kelley-Mackenzie

Councilmember Michele Brown

**Recording Secretary:**

Velvet Lyke, Assistant to the Supervisor

**Public Attendance: 7 in-person, and 7 via zoom**

Sup. Witmer mentioned that the Board changed one district to ag rural and some adjustments to the use table along with minor editorial changes.

Matt Mix – feels that some changes in the future may have to be made. He feels that the law should have been done small and not so large. He suggested that the board listen to the public and when he asked questions, he received no good answers. No to zoning in this form.

No further comments made by the public.

Sup. Witmer adjourned the public meeting at 7:10 p.m.

**Caroline Town Board Meeting Minutes of March 20, 2024**

The Town Board Business Meeting was held hybrid on March 20, 2024, at the Caroline Town Hall, and was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Supervisor Witmer

**Attendance:**

Supervisor Mark Witmer

Councilmember Cal Snow

Councilmember Tim Murray

Councilmember Kate Kelley-Mackenzie

Councilmember Michele Brown

**Recording Secretary:**

Velvet Lyke, Assistant to the Supervisor

**Public Attendance: 7 in-person, and 11 via zoom**

Supr. Witmer opened with the Pledge to the Flag.

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*None*

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**Review Board Interviews:**

Sup. Witmer explained that the review board will administer the site review and the zoning laws.

***Jack O’Reilley***

Jack has lived in Caroline for three years. He obtained a master’s in education from Ithaca College. He is excited to help structure the community. He has read the majority of the comprehensive plan and feels it makes sense. He feels like he knows less than he would like about zoning but agrees with the concept. Clm. Brown asked if there were other committees he might like to join if the review board had enough members and he indicated he wants to help and has the energy to do so.

***George Schillenback***

George has lived in Caroline since 1995, is married with children and does construction and repair in the area. He is interested in the way the town will go forward in the planning process and has read the first one hundred pages of the Zoning Law and was appreciative of how carefully the zoning was put together. He has not yet read the Comprehensive Plan but is appreciative of the way that it is the vision of the town.

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**Committee Reports**

**Supr. Mark Witmer –** Supr. Witmer provided the following:

*Supervisor’s Notes:*

* Joint application by Hunt Engineering for Dryden and Caroline submitted to ConnectALL Municipal Infrastructure Program for buildout of municipal broadband project.
* Countywide Rapid Emergency Medical Response is on track to roll out April 1.
* Met with USGS, City of Ithaca, and Tompkins County Soil & Water on March 18. This was our second meeting to consider whether to continue operation of the Brooktondale Stream Gauge. Received feedback from Todd Miller that the original goals of the Tompkins County Aquifer Study are complete. Cal and I expressed willingness of the Town of Caroline to support continued funding of the station if the partners had reasons to do so. There was consensus that the station is redundant with the Besemer Stream Gauge and that continued operation is not necessary. All agreed that the station should be retired but could be revived if there was a purpose. If agreeable to the landowner, the station will remain in place and maintained by USGS. This is a standard operating procedure. Based on these findings and discussions, I will offer a resolution not to renew our recently expired funding agreement with USGS at this time.
* We (Towns of Ithaca, Danby, Dryden, and Caroline) have finalized the terms of an easement agreement with NYSEG for use of their railbed property as a recreational trail.

**Town Clerk, Velvet Lyke for Jessica Townsend**

The Town Clerk will continue to collect taxes until March 31, 2024. Then the County will continue to collect. Everything is running smoothly.

**Code Enforcement, Cliff Babson**

During February Cliff performed 16 inspections and approved five building permits that included: EV charger, split duct ac/heat, solar, pool and three-bedroom home.

Clm. Murray - **Website Design** is going very well with Yvonne.

**Clm. Brown - History Room Advisory Committee:**

Clm. Brown proposed the following members: Clm. Brown (chairperson), Becky Dewitt, Clm. Kelley -Mackenzie, and Barb Kone will meet in May when Barb is back in town. Main purpose of the committee is to set up a disaster plan in case of issues.

**Resolution 77 of 2024: History Room Advisory Committee Members**

Motion by: Brown Second: Murray

Clm. Brown recommended Becky Dewitt as a member of the committee since she is very experienced.

Becky Dewitt spoke of her interest in history and her love for Caroline over her last 22 years living in Caroline. Her love of architecture and the history of the various parts of Caroline. She is involved with the Caroline History Club as well as other history clubs around the county.

Clm. Brown made the resolution to set the members of the History Room Advisory Committee as Clm. Brown (Chairperson), Clm. Kelly-Mackenzie, Barbara Kone (Historian), Jennifer Johnson (Deputy Historian) and Becky Dewitt.

**Motion Carried.**

**Ayes: Witmer, Snow, Murray, Kelley-Mackenzie, Brown**

**Nays: None**

**Clm. Snow** - Provided information on battery storage.

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**Jean McPheeters**

Jean and her husband have lived in Caroline since 1970. She has worked for various congresspersons, BOCES, and Chamber of Commerce. She had her own business. Chaired Zoning Commission for the Town for two years. She would like to be on the Review Board since she is familiar with the proposed Zoning Law.

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**Discussion and Edits of Zoning Law:**

County reviewed the revised local law, and they found no impacts but suggested a minor language changes.

**Resolution 78 of 2024. Edits to Local Law 2 Town of Caroline Zoning Law**

Motion: Witmer Second: Brown

# Town of Caroline Local Law No. 2 of 2024

A Local Law Repealing Local Laws No. 1 of 2014 and No. 2 of 2018 and Adopting the Town of Caroline Zoning Law

Be it enacted by the Town Board of the Town of Caroline, Tompkins County, as follows:

Section A. The Site Plan Review Local Laws No. 1 of 2014 and No. 2 of 2018 are hereby repealed in their entirety.

Section B. The Town of Caroline Zoning Law, as follows, is hereby adopted.

2. Replace last sentence of 5.3.G.2.a. with:

Any town action subject to referral to Tompkins County under New York State General Municipal Law Section 239 -l, -m and -n may be evaluated by the county for potential impacts on water quality, as well as other criteria as outlined in the state law

3. Definitions: Development Unit – Revise second sentence as follows:

A residential Development Unit is one that provides for living quarters within the unit for the exclusive use of a single household in single-family or two-family dwellings or for the totality of dwelling units permitted for Townhouse Style Dwellings, and Multifamily Dwellings.

4. Table 2.1. For “Townhouse Style Dwelling” under “Number of Development Units Counted Per Development Type”, revise as follows:

One Development Unit needed for each Townhouse structure of four dwelling units or less

5. This may include outdoor facilities, take-out services, and food trucks.

**Motion Carried.**

**Ayes: Witmer, Snow, Murray, Kelley-Mackenzie, Brown**

**Nays: None**

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**Resolution to Adopt a Town of Caroline Zoning Law**

Motion by: Murray Second: Brown

Resolution 79 of 2024. Resolution to Adopt a Town of Caroline Zoning Law

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Caroline, by resolution, created a Zoning Commission in February 2021 with a charge to examine existing conditions, recommend the boundaries of the zoning districts and appropriate regulations to be enforced therein through a process which encourages and accommodates public input, make a preliminary report, hold public hearings on the preliminary report, and submit a final report to the Town Board, and

WHEREAS, the Caroline Town Board appointed a Zoning Commission in March and July 2021 to draft zoning regulations to support the goals of the Town as expressed in the Town’s updated Comprehensive Plan, adopted on January 13, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Caroline Town Board engaged with Community Partners & Environmental Associates to assist the Zoning Commission in its work; and

WHEREAS, after 51 public meetings and two Public Hearings, the Zoning Commission presented their Final Report to the Town Board on March 27, 2023, and the Town Board accepted their report on April 5, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the Caroline Town Board has further reviewed and revised the proposed zoning law with public input over the past year, including Public Hearings on February 14, 2024, and March 20, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Caroline Town Board has reviewed the amended Town of Caroline Zoning Law, in which a hamlet district was changed and several changes were made to the Use Table, with respect to the findings of the prior SEQRA Part 1 and Section F Narrative, and Parts 2 and 3 and Negative Declaration, and none of the changes, individually or cumulatively, whether standing alone or in respect of any effects such changes may or could have upon any prior impact mitigation findings, make any of such prior findings or determinations of no or minor impacts likely to change to be or become in the future moderate or significant impacts, such that a formal supplemental review is not necessary and the existing Negative Declaration is hereby duly continued; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Caroline has referred the proposed zoning law, and later the amended version, to the Tompkins County Planning & Sustainability Department for GML 239 -l, -m, and -n review, for both of which the county determined that the proposed action will have no significant county-wide or inter-community impact; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Caroline Zoning Law has been reviewed by the New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets and other Interested Agencies, and adjacent municipalities have been notified; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Zoning Law has been reviewed by the Town Attorney; and

WHEREAS, having further considered public input the Caroline Town Board is satisfied that the proposed Town of Caroline Zoning Law will guide development in the Town of Caroline in a manner that promotes the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and protects the interests of residents.

and their properties; therefore be it

RESOLVED, the Caroline Town Board hereby adopts Local Law No. 2 of 2024, the Town of Caroline Zoning Law.

**Town Board Comments:**

Murray -thank zoning commission and the town board for their work and to those who provided input and believes that it is communal law.

Kelley-Mackenzie – Thank all Caroline residents who were involved and engaged in this process. Thanked the Zoning committee for their work and the planning board for their work on the comprehensive plan.

Brown – thank the zoning commission members and Chair Jean Mcpheeters.

Snow – believes that there was democratic consent, but not broad consensus.

Witmer – thanked the planning board who have passed the last two Comprehensive Plans. He also thanked the Zoning Commission who answered and researched 216 questions. He feels that the Zoning Law is an excellent product for land usage for this wonderful community.

**Roll Call:**

Murray - yes

Kelley-Mackenzie - yes

Brown - yes

Snow - no

Witmer – yes

Zoning Law Adopted 4 to 1

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**Resolution 80 of 2024. A Resolution in Support of Ongoing Clean Energy Education and Outreach Activities by the Town of Caroline and Partners**

Motion by: Witmer Second: Brown

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Caroline recognizes the value of raising awareness for clean energy measures in order to lower residents’ energy use, transition to renewable energy sources, and lower energy expenses; and

**WHEREAS**, Federal, State, Utility, and Local agencies and entities are offering incentive programs to adopt clean energy measures; therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, the Town of Caroline supports a series of one or more clean energy public engagement campaigns to be undertaken by the Town and partners. These Community Campaigns may include, but are not limited to, providing information about opportunities and incentives for Clean Heating & Cooling technologies, Renewable Energy projects, and Electric Vehicles, as well as engaging with local partners such as Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County and municipal partners to implement local sustainability programs.

**Motion Carried.**

**Ayes: Witmer, Snow, Murray, Kelley-Mackenzie, Brown**

**Nays: None**

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**Resolution 81 of 2024. Resolution not to renew funding agreement with USGS for operation of the Brooktondale Stream Gage**

Motion: Witmer Second: Murray

Whereas, the funding agreement with USGS and partners (Towns of Caroline and Dryden, City of Ithaca, Tompkins County Soil & Water) has expired; and

Whereas, the original goals of the Brooktondale Stream Gage to provide information for the Tompkins County Aquifer Study have been fully met; and

Whereas, the Besemer Stream Gage located about three miles downstream provides much of the same information on stormwater flow and sediment runoff; and

Whereas, there is new technology that will provide more accurate and real-time information on turbidity, and hence, sediment flow; and

Whereas, resources formerly directed to the Brooktondale Stream Gage can support operation of the Besemer Stream Gage; and

Whereas, the “partners” are unanimous in the judgement that continued operation of the Brooktondale Stream Gage is not warranted at this time; therefore be it

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board hereby determines not to seek renewal of the funding agreement with USGS for operation of the Brooktondale Stream Gage at this time.

**Motion Carried.**

**Ayes: Witmer, Snow, Murray, Kelley-Mackenzie, Brown**

**Nays: None**

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**Resolution 82 of 2024. Approval of Vouchers for Payment of Bills**

Motion: Witmer Second: Kelley-Mackenzie

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board hereby approves payment audited vouchers with the following totals for each fund:

A Fund: $31,272.12

DA Fund: $76,786.39

SL Fund: $400.00

Murray asked if the budget for the Highway new out building has been established or if competitive prices have been done.

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**Approval of Minutes**

The Town Board did not approve the March 6, 2024, Agenda Meeting Minutes at this time.

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**Resolution 83 of 2024. Executive Session**

**Motion: Witmer Second: Murray**

The Town Board Adjourned to Executive Session at 9:17 p.m.

The Town Board returned from Executive Session at 9:55 p.m.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Clm. Kelley-Mackensie and seconded by Clm. Snow and carried unanimously at 9:56 p.m.

**\_\_\_\_ Meeting Adjourned\_\_\_**

**Respectfully submitted by Velvet Lyke, Assistant to the Supervisor**