

Village of Schoharie Planning Board

Feb. 26, 2026

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance:

Board members: Tom Hitter, Steve Babbitt, Dave Knoop, Mike Ullman

Board Consultants: None

Applicants: None

Public: Jill Sholtes

Tom called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. A joint meeting with the Zoning Board of Appeals had been planned, but they had scheduling conflicts and canceled, so only the planning board members gathered. We reviewed copies of the draft Feb. 12 meeting minutes, with edits and annotations submitted by Tom. Mike made a motion to approve the revised minutes, seconded by Dave, and the vote was 4-0 in favor.

With no actionable items on the agenda and no applicants present, we discussed the status of the DRI grant (the award announcement probably won't occur until April) and the Mainbridge Commons and the Depot Lane Housing projects. For Mainbridge Commons, further planning board progress awaits a ruling from the Zoning Board on an area variance for dwelling unit density. For the Depot Lane Housing project, we have had a preliminary meeting with their design team and have received an application packet, but await the March 05 public forum (which we plan on attending), and direction from the village board regarding which of the 3 boards will serve as Lead Agency for the SEQR process.

Next, Jill Sholtes expressed her views regarding the Depot Lane Housing proposal:

She had lived for a while as a neighbor to another RSS housing facility and they had been good neighbors, no troubles. But she feels there would be locations better suited than the Depot Lane site that would be able to provide close access to all the expected necessary day-to-day services, supplies, activities, and entertainments, and not require transport to obtain them; Schoharie village lacks these conveniences. There are few leisure time diversions that would appeal to the younger adult generations. She questioned whether locating housing for highly-functioning, but impaired individuals in a flood plain was a good judgment; flood waters at the jail site were 7 feet high during the 2011 flood, and during recovery, the judgment was to move the public safety command offices and the jail population out of the flood plain. The cumulative impacts to volunteer fire, volunteer EMS, law enforcement and public school systems, when combined with those being added by the Mainbridge Commons development, would be considerable: volunteer staffing at fire and EMS is already stressed and rapidly rising out-of-district school pupil transportation costs have recently become a big concern. But, while Mainbridge Commons is also adding rental housing in the flood plain, she feels the benefits it promises of many new local jobs and scarce health care services outweighs the flood risk and is in favor of it. She feels the addition of more large apartment complexes is beginning to affect the character of the village by shifting the demographic balance between apartment rental units and owner-occupied homes and would prefer to see owner-occupied units, preferably small modular homes on a subdivision. She referred to an affordable housing project underway in Schenectady, funded by a grant from the NYS Housing & Community Renewal's 'Move-In NY' housing initiative, where factory-built modular homes being installed on landbanked parcels enable ownership for moderate income families using subsidized mortgage terms.

We briefly discussed rules governing conversations between board members that occur outside of publicly announced meetings.

Tom made motion to adjourn, seconded by Mike, with vote 4-0 in favor: adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Future Meetings: Thursday March 12 6:30 p.m. Joint meeting with Zoning Board of Appeals

Respectfully,

Steve Babbitt

SB 03/16/2026