



**NIAGARA COUNTY PLANNING BOARD**  
SAMUEL M. FERRARO CENTER FOR ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
6311 INDUCON CORPORATE DRIVE  
SANBORN, NEW YORK 14132

**Joseph Kibler**  
**Chairman**

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**MEETING MINUTES**

**Niagara County Planning Board**  
**6311 Inducon Corporate Drive – Suite One**  
**Sanborn, New York 14132**  
**Monday, August 18, 2025 – 2:00 p.m.**

**Members Present:** William Agronin, Walter Garrow, Joseph Kibler, Norman Machelor, Thomas Ohol, James Sobczyk, Mary Jo Tamburlin

**Members Absent:** J. Anthony Collard, Michael Carney, Garret Meal (Ex-officio)

**Staff Present** – Nathaniel Bonafede, Margit Denning

1. The meeting was called to order at 1:59pm.
2. Approval of the July 21, 2025 meeting minutes - A motion for approval was made by Mr. Garrow and seconded by Mr. Machelor. Unanimous. Carried.
3. Niagara County Planning Board Referrals

**No. 7003 – Town of Niagara – Site Plan Review**

Request by the Robert Burns for the Planning Board to review a site plan to allow for the construction of a 7,200 sq. ft. pole barn to be used for storage of vehicles, boats, trailers, etc. on the property located at 4501 Hyde Park Blvd. The property is 0.8 acres and is zoned HI Heavy Industrial. There are issues concerning the project that are currently being addressed at the local level. A site plan was not provided. A motion to table the referral due to lack of information was made by Mr. Garrow and seconded by Mr. Ohol. Unanimous. Carried.

**No. 7004 – Town of Niagara – New Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Map Amendment**

Request by the Town of Niagara for the Planning Board to review a new zoning ordinance and zoning map amendment pertaining to the Town's ongoing zoning code update. Ari Goldberg of Barclay Damon, Special Counsel representing the Town of Niagara was present to discuss the request. Mr. Goldberg explained that the Town is updating its zoning code to bring it into compliance with state regulations and the Town's 2019 comprehensive plan. Mr. Agronin asked for an overview of major changes. Mr. Goldberg explained that new uses not currently regulated by the existing code have been added. Additional controls on square footage and other lot requirements have been added to promote high density development. District names have also been changed. Mr. Garrow expressed concerns regarding infringements upon the airbase and the lack of inclusion of an airport protection overlay district in the proposed zoning code. Mr. Machelor pointed out that the airbase is in multiple municipalities and stressed the importance of communication between municipalities about retaining this asset and having an overlay district. Mr. Garrow emphasized that the loss of the airbase would have a significant impact on Niagara County. Mr. Sobczyk inquired about the new Natural Resources and Open Space district. Mr. Goldberg explained the new designation is for parks and other open land within the town. Mr. Sobczyk expressed concern over the code allowing solar farms to locate within the district, which includes town park land as well as land directly south of the airfield. It was clarified that any large scale solar development will require a special use permit. Mr. Goldberg stated that he clearly understands the Board's concern of infringement upon the airbase and will present those concerns to the town. A motion for approval with modification that the town integrate an airport protection overlay into the zoning code and map was made by Mr. Garrow and seconded by Mr. Agronin. Unanimous. Carried.



**No. 7005 – City of North Tonawanda – Site Plan Review**

Request by Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club for the Planning Board to review a site plan to allow for the construction of two separate cabin additions in the park located at 1601 Sweeney Street. A 10' x 10' single person bathroom and 16' x 10' storage room will be added to the "Uncle John Cabin", and a 15' x 30' living space and 10' x 10' single person bathroom will be added to the "Thelma & Walter Balling Cabin". The property is 22.98 acres, and is zoned R1-2 Single Family District. Karl Heilemann from the Board of Directors of the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club was present to discuss the project. Mr. Heilemann explained the non-profit organization operates and maintains the Donald F. Miller Park. The camp is used by a variety of organizations year round including the Boys & Girls Club Summer Camp. The additions are needed to improve accessibility for private bathrooms, clothes changing areas, additional storage, and additional living spaces. Utilities are on site. The board had no concerns. A motion for approval was made by Mr. Agronin and seconded by Ms. Tamburlin. Unanimous. Carried.

**No. 7006 – Town of Somerset – Site Plan Review, Special Use Permit, and PUD Amendment**

Request by Wulf Compute LLC for the Planning Board to review a site plan, special use permit, and PUD (Planned Use Development) amendment to allow for the construction of additional buildings at the Artificial Intelligence Data Center complex located at 7725 Lake Road. The project area will cover approximately 30 acres of the 410 acre former power plant site. The property is zoned PUD Planned Use Development. John Marabella, Senior Construction Manager, was present to discuss the project. Mr. Marabella explained the company is expanding its Artificial Intelligence operations. A special use permit is needed to construct a 700' x 240' 50MW data center building containing data servers, computer room air handling units, a mechanical room with chillers, chiller pumps, condenser pumps, heat exchangers, and UPS batteries. A 600' x 120' dry cooler yard is also proposed. The PUD amendment is needed to allow for UPS batteries to be housed within the building. Mr. Kibler inquired about the anticipated number of additional employees to be hired and parking accommodations. Mr. Marabella expects more than thirty additional employees will be hired; enough parking is currently available on site. Mr. Agronin inquired about discharge into the lake. Mr. Marabella stated there will be no discharge into the lake. The cooling systems are all closed-loop systems. Mr. Garrow inquired about the specific cooling technology being used in the facility. Mr. Marabella explained the systems are electricity driven. There is a chiller system and a condensing system. The chillers are operated by compressors. Mr. Garrow inquired about battery technology and firefighting provisions. The batteries are lithium ion and are designed to shut off if they reach 480°. The batteries are self-contained and only for load and grid stability, not for storage. There is a water operated fire suppression system and Argon gas operated fire suppression system. Mr. Garrow inquired about the availability of energy sources. Mr. Marabella explained that infrastructure formerly serving the power plant will be used to bring power to the facility. There is a plan to install additional transmission infrastructure and another switch yard. Solar panels will be installed on site in the future. A motion for approval was made by Mr. Sobczyk and seconded by Ms. Tamburlin. Unanimous. Carried.

**No. 7007 – Town of Lockport – Site Plan Review**

Request by Metzger Civil Engineering on behalf of Eric Bogart for the Planning Board to review a site plan to allow for the construction of 3 commercial lease space buildings along with ancillary infrastructure, located at 6013 Robinson Road. The property is 3.7 acres and is zoned B-1 Local Business Use District. Michael Metzger of Metzger Civil Engineering was present to discuss the project. Mr. Metzger explained that the project will be high-bay lease space and serve as an incubation park for small businesses. Three buildings will be configured into a U shape with the doors of all the buildings facing inward toward a parking lot in the center. Two 220' x 60' buildings will contain 11 units and the third 200' x 60' building will contain 10 units. One 30' wide curb cut will serve as both the entrance and exit. A storm water management area will be located at the front of the lot as well as a small septic system. The town recently amended the zoning code to allow for incubation parks to locate within the B-1 district. The zoning permits small-scale, low-traffic businesses; retail stores, restaurants, etc. are prohibited. A motion for approval was made by Ms. Tamburlin and seconded by Mr. Agronin. Unanimous. Carried.

4. Old Business – The Board reviewed a letter to be distributed to all municipalities in the county, requesting storm water and drainage mitigation program plans be submitted for reference by the Board.
5. New Business
  - a.) Correspondence Review – Mr. Bonafede informed the Board of SEQR lead agency correspondence received from the City of North Tonawanda regarding the City's new comprehensive plan.

b.) Mr. Bonafede informed the Board that the County's Planning & Zoning Training has been scheduled for Tuesday, October 28, 2025. More information on topics and time to come.

Adjournment – A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Garrow and seconded by Mr. Machelor at 2:49 pm. Yes 7, No 0. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Margit Denning  
Margit Denning, Recording Secretary