

TOWN OF SANTA CLARA PLANNING BOARD

5367 State Route 30
Saranac Lake, NY 12983

January 27, 2026

PRESENT: Planning Board Members: Scottie Adams, Beth Hall, John LaHart, Mike Ritchie, Bill Young, Code Enforcement Officer (CEO), Todd David.

ABSENT: Alternate Board Member Connie Rockefeller.

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Scottie Adams at 9:00 AM.

Beth Hall moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Mike Ritchie seconded the motion. All members were in favor of the motion. The minutes from the Planning Board meeting on 11-20-2025 are approved.

Variance Application:

APPLICANT: Harrison Flynn, Dock Doctors, for CHEERS, MF Holdings NY LLC

PARCEL ID: 442.2-9-13.600

LOCATION: 87 Saranac Inn Lane, Upper Saranac Lake

This application was reviewed as a Site Plan Review Application (SPRA) at the previous planning Board meeting. It is for the replacement of an existing dock and “boathouse” with a new dock and a boathouse with a deck on top. The replacement would exceed what is allowed in the Town Land Use Code in total percentage of the shoreline. The altering of a non-conforming structure is not allowed.

The plans for the new dock variance application appear to be identical to the plans already reviewed in the SPRA last meeting. One notable difference is that the variance application shows a picture of the dock viewed from the water and it notes that the APA considers the structure a boathouse since both slips are covered with a canvas cover on a metal framework. Considering this development, a boathouse/dock is being replaced by a boathouse /dock.

Another point of discussion for the Planning Board was the existing concrete well house with a deck on top of it and the stairs down to the boathouse/dock and the extra set of steps. The same picture shows that the concrete well house with the deck on top and the stairs are barely visible from the water.

After discussion, the following points were considered: (1) that the new structure will be more visibly appealing and a structural improvement on the current situation, (2) the APA requirement and approval for the extra staircase and (3) the fact that a great deal of effort and cooperation has gone into this project. Beth Hall moved that the Planning Board report to the Variance Board that there is no objection to approving the variance. The motion was seconded by John LaHart. All members voted in favor of the motion. Motion passed. The Chair will

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provide a copy of the draft minutes of the meeting to the Variance Board chair and secretary within the next few days.

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Trash Situation

John LaHart reported that he has received return receipts from 3 out of four letters have been received. Post Office reported that if they know the people are away, they will hold it. None of the recipients have contacted any member of the Planning Board members about the situation. This issue continues to be an ongoing project.

TSC Land Use Code Section 8.3

The town attorney has replied that he is still looking into the matter. This is an issue that has only arisen a few times since the Land Use Code was implemented, so is not an urgent matter that can be addressed at any time.

STRs

Now that the STR regulations have been in effect for 2 years, it is time to review them and evaluate what is working and what might not be necessary.

The Chair presented Planning Board members with a variation of the document which is included in the monthly packet for the Town Board meetings listing all STR permits. The list showed the annual income for each year and the projected income for 2026 if all current permit holders renew. It also showed the weekly rental rate for some of the properties. One purpose of this financial assessment was to enable the Planning Board to make a recommendation to the Town Board concerning the annual renewal of a contract with Granicus, the company which provides STR address identification and monitoring, the 24/7 hotline and compliance outreach. All board members and CFO, who administers the STR program, agreed that the services were valuable, the service fees were reasonable, and it would be time consuming to begin with another company. The chair will prepare a report to the Town Board for their next meeting recommending that the Granicus contract be renewed.

Other issues discussed were the registration fees, the number of rental days allowed, inspections, and evacuation signage. The checklist and application forms on the web site could be modified. Considering that the registration fees are for 2 years and seeing some examples of weekly rates for rentals, there seems no reason to lower the rates. Since the cost of implementing the regulations are covered by the fees, it should not be necessary to raise the fees. Initially there were some legal fees involved, but theoretically, all legal challenges should have been addressed in the first 2 years. There was an extensive discussion about changing the number of rental days allowed. The original STR regulations developed by the Planning Board allowed for 90 days. The Town Board limited the rental period to 60 days, the current limit.

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Some Planning Board members felt 90 days was not unreasonable, but more than one Board member thought that the limit of 60 days should remain. It was suggested that allowing 75 days might be a reasonable compromise. It must be noted that the Planning Board can only make recommendations. After vetting by the attorney, and a public hearing, then the Town Board makes the final decisions.

Open Discussion

There was no public comment at this meeting as there were no public attendees.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be scheduled as needed.

John LaHart moved that the meeting be adjourned. Bill Young seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion. Meeting was adjourned at 9:43 AM.

PSA