

TOWN OF SANTA CLARA PLANNING BOARD

5367 State Route 30
Saranac Lake, NY 12983

April 21, 2026

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

ABSENT: Mike Ritchie, Bill Young, 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. John LaHart seconded the motion. All members were in favor of the motion. The minutes from the Planning Board meeting on 02-10-2026 are approved.

STRs

The main focus of this meeting was to finalize the report on current STR regulations and forms, that will be submitted to the Town Board for their consideration. The revisions to the STR regulations which were reported in the minutes of the Planning Board from 2-10-26, have been approved by the Town Counsel and the experts on STR law at the Town law firm. The only change to the document is the revision of Article H, 4). It now reads:

Article H. **Short Term Rental Regulation**

4). No Short-Term Rental Property may be rented for Short-Term Rental purposes for greater than a total of **sixty (60), seventy-five (75), ninety (90) days** in any calendar year.

There was a lively discussion of the pros and cons of allowing each rental period, and no consensus could be reached. The attorney's advice was to simply state the controversy and leave the decision to the Town Board. Beth Hall presented an idea proposed to her by an STR registrant. The basic idea was to allow rental properties greater than 5 acres to rent for 75 days instead of 60 days. Because all the current changes made by the Planning Board have been approved by the attorney, it is too late for the Planning Board to consider additional changes. Any new ideas can be presented to the Town Board, preferably in writing.

John Lahart made a motion that the Planning Board submit the revised STR regulations to the Town Board, with the 2 deletions and one addition that have been approved by the legal counsel, noting that the decision on the number of rental days is to be decided by the Town Board since the Town Board initially decided on the 60-day limit. The motion was seconded by Beth Hall. All members present voted in favor of the motion.

Again, it must be noted that the Planning Board can only make recommendations. Those recommendations are sent to the Town Board. The Town Board can (1) reject the recommendations and leave the STR regulations as they are currently written or (2) accept the recommendations or (3) make their own changes. Any changes to the original law must be presented at a public hearing. After the public hearing at which the public may make comments

TOWN OF SANTA CLARA PLANNING BOARD

5367 State Route 30
Saranac Lake, NY 12983

in person or in writing, the Town Board will consider the public input and make a final decision on how the STR regulations will be amended. Any changes to the original recommendation by the Planning Board must be approved by legal counsel.

The chair will finalize the report as discussed and send to the Town Clerk to be shared with the Town Board.

Trash Situation

As discussed before, nothing has been heard from any of the owners who were notified by certified mail that their trash receptacles were a public health and traffic issue. Of the three notices sent, one (1) was returned as un-deliverable even though the address used was the same as the address that tax notices are sent. The Planning Board will not take any further action until it is seen whether the letters to the property owners on Hoel Pond have any effect.

Open Discussion

The chair briefly discussed the possibility of developing a Comprehensive Plan for the Town. A comprehensive plan describes a vision and goals for a town's future and provides the overall foundation for all land use regulation in the town. The Town has no formal comprehensive plan but Article 6.11 the Town Land use Code states "It is the intent of this Article to ensure the optimum overall conservation, protection, preservation, development and use of the natural and man-related resources of the Town, by regulating land use activity within the jurisdictional area through review and approval of site plans." So perhaps a formal comprehensive plan is not necessary since the Town is largely residential.

The Chair also reported that she had attended an online refresher course provided by the Development Authority of the North Country (DANC) on Internet Mapping Applications (IMA). Information on Town of Santa Clara's properties are available through this application and the Planning Board worked with the developers back in 2019 to create a map of the zoning in the Town. The different land use codes are depicted in differing colors. However, the colors used for District R-1-8.5 are difficult to distinguish from the colors used for District R-1-3.2. The chair will contact the developers at DANC to see if colors can be tweaked to provide better distinction between the two land use designations.

Guy Middleton, Executive Director of the Upper Saranac Lake Foundation inquired about the status of a lake front property with a badly deteriorated dock. Apparently, the property has recently been sold, so upgrades are likely to resolve the issue in the future. The CEO is aware of the situation.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be scheduled as needed.

Beth Hall moved that the meeting be adjourned. John Lahart seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion. Meeting was adjourned at 9:26 AM.

TOWN OF SANTA CLARA PLANNING BOARD

5367 State Route 30
Saranac Lake, NY 12983

PSA