

TOWN BOARD MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING

July 8, 2026

6:45 PM

Call to Order

Supervisor Holdridge called the Town Board meeting to order at 6:45pm.

Attendance

Town Clerk Zappala called the roll:

- Supervisor Holdridge: Present
- Council Member Becker: Present
- Council Member Cassara: Present
- Council Member Courtenay: Present
- Council Member Diffley: Absent

Determination of Quorum: Yes X No

Pledge of Allegiance

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. Supervisor Holdridge wished a Happy 250th Birthday to the Country.

RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT 6/24/26 TOWN BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Supervisor Holdridge asked if everyone had reviewed the minutes from the June 24, 2026. With no questions or debate points raised, the Minutes were accepted.

MOTION by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Cassara to accept the June 24, 2026 Meeting Minutes as presented by Town Clerk Zappala.

MOTION carried.

VOTE: AYES(4): Holdridge, Becker, Cassara, Courtenay, ABSENT(1):Diffley

ADOPTED

SUMMARY OF BILLS

Supervisor Holdridge reported that the Town would be paying bills in the amount of \$194,123.48.

PUBLIC HEARING ON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AS AMENDED AND INTRODUCTORY LOCAL LAW 10 OF 2025 – ZONING AMENDMENTS

Supervisor Holdridge introduced this agenda item and asked Town Attorney Elizabeth Cassidy to summarize any changes since the prior meeting.

Attorney Cassidy clarified that no substantive changes had been made to the comprehensive plan since the June 24, 2026 public hearing. She explained that the purpose of this continuation was procedural in nature: to ensure that the legally required notice pursuant to state law had been forwarded to the Clerks of all adjoining Towns, which she had verified with Town Clerk Zappala.

MOTION to continue the public hearing was made by Council Member Becker and seconded by Council Member Courtenay at 6:50pm.

The MOTION carried.

VOTE: AYES(4): Holdridge, Becker, Cassara, Courtenay, ABSENT(1):Diffley

ADOPTED

The following is the notice as appeared in the Times Herald Record on July 1, 2026.

TOWN OF CHESTER
1786 KINGS HIGHWAY
CHESTER, NY 10918

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

INTRODUCTORY LOCAL LAW 10 OF 2025, A LOCAL LAW TO CONFORM THE TOWN CODE TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Please take notice that the Town Board of the Town of Chester will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, July 8, 2026 at 6:45 p.m. or as soon thereafter as may be heard in the Town of Chester, Town Hall Meeting Room, 1786 Kings Highway, Chester, NY. Said public hearing is to hear comments on the above captioned proposed amended local law simultaneously as the public hearing on the amended Draft Comprehensive Plan.

A copy of the proposed amended local law and amended Draft Comprehensive Plan is on file in the Town Clerk's Office and is available for inspection during normal business hours (Monday-Friday, 8 am to 5 pm). All documents including comments and response to comments may be found at: <https://chester-ny.gov/Town-departments/comprehensive-plan/>

Any person interested in commenting on the proposed local law may appear in person or by agent. All written communications should be addressed to the Town Clerk at the above address.

**BY ORDER OF THE TOWN BOARD
TOWN OF CHESTER**

**LINDA A. ZAPPALA, RMC
TOWN CLERK
DATED: June 25, 2026**

Public Comment on the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Amendments

John Cappello, Attorney (J&G Law), on behalf of VA Lake Station Holdings

Attorney Capello appeared before the Board on behalf of the owners of VA Lake Station Holdings, whose property is located at Town of Chester, tax map section 17, block 1, lot 21, on BA Lake Station Road. Attorney Capello distributed materials to the Board and referenced a map, noting that his client's property (marked in red) is surrounded by warehouse uses on both sides and is adjacent to a 160,000-square-foot warehouse that was recently approved.

Attorney Capello recounted the history of the application, stating that his clients had submitted an application to construct a 102,000-square-foot warehouse beginning in September 2025, but were asked to hold back while the then-Board and planning Board considered the 160,000-square-foot facility that was subsequently approved. He noted that affidavits had been submitted from an engineer, a planner, and the property owners, documenting that given the surrounding character of the area, it would be very difficult to develop the property for large-lot single-family residential use, particularly given the lack of sewer and water availability.

Attorney Capello explained that his clients had recently considered and submitted a possible compromise position that would not involve a warehouse or any use with loading docks, but instead would be a flex-style building accommodating different types of contractors or inside storage, with no loading docks. He described a concept featuring no single user occupying more than 10,000 square feet, no building exceeding 20,000 square feet, and individual units ranging from approximately 2,500 to 5,000 square feet — suitable for plumbers, electrical contractors, or similar tradespeople. He noted that traffic would consist primarily of vans and box trucks rather than tractor-trailers.

Attorney Capello formally requested that the Board table the portion of the proposed zoning amendments that would change the designation of his client's property to large-lot residential, and to instead keep an open mind toward a potential compromise that could address the Board's and neighborhood's legitimate concerns about heavy warehouse traffic while allowing for some transitional commercial use consistent with the surrounding area. He concluded by thanking the Board and inviting questions.

Council Member Becker responded that while he found the proposal fairly reasonable, he would still have concerns about contractor units potentially operating seven days a week and noted that any approval would need to include time restrictions. He observed that such conditions would likely be a planning Board or ZBA matter. Attorney Capello agreed, stating that his clients understood they would need to go before the planning Board and that reasonable conditions, including potentially singular management requirements, hours of operation restrictions, and maintenance obligations, could be placed on any approval.

Marion Holdridge, Sunfish Lane, addressed the Board stating that she wished to receive answers to questions she had posed at the prior meeting. Town Attorney Cassidy indicated that those questions would be addressed following the close of the public hearing, as the public hearing portion was not intended as a question-and-answer forum.

Ms. Holdridge then offered a comment pertaining to the comprehensive plan, asking whether any consequences for non-compliance with special permits had been incorporated into the plan. Supervisor Holdridge clarified that enforcement mechanisms and fines are a matter of general Town code, not the comprehensive plan itself. Attorney Cassidy noted that some provisions were carried over from the existing code and that detailed county provisions were in place. Ms. Holdridge expressed concern that, based on historical patterns in Orange County, fines were insufficiently high to deter violations and that residents continue to break the law without meaningful consequence. She urged the Board to consider a cap on how many times violations can occur before a certificate of occupancy is pulled. Supervisor Holdridge noted that a new set of codes was being proposed as part of the zoning amendments, available for public review on the Town's website, and that her remaining questions would be addressed after the close of the public hearing.

Melissa Zott, Brookview Drive, stated that she had been unable to attend the June 24th meeting due to prior work obligations. She noted that she had reviewed all materials provided to the public for that meeting, including the red-flag zoning amendment, the response to public comments, the final draft of the plan and what she described as the most important document: the conclusion of the zoning and land use attorneys on the proposed amendments.

Ms. Zott expressed appreciation to the Town Board for the level of transparency demonstrated by making all documents publicly available, acknowledging that the volume of materials was considerable but that the issues warranted careful review. She also thanked the Board for heeding residents' requests to bring in specialized land use attorneys, noting that she had independently reviewed the attorneys' professional backgrounds and found that both had significant experience representing municipalities in land use, zoning, and litigation matters.

Ms. Zott stated her understanding that the Town could regulate certain uses through a special permitting process and that any property owner within the Town could apply for such a permit. She emphasized that the key was to ensure a structured process with proper accountability and enforceable standards. She urged the Board to continue in that direction, to keep listening to residents, to make reviews meaningful, and to ensure that any approval comes with genuine accountability. She also asked that if gaps in the code are identified in other areas going forward, those gaps be corrected. She concluded by expressing appreciation for the seriousness with which the Board had approached the entire process.

Supervisor Holdridge, in response to a comment from the floor regarding the number of legal reviews conducted, stated that five attorneys; the Town Attorney, Planning Board Attorney, Zoning Board Attorney,

County Attorney, and the Special Counsel retained at residents' request, had all reviewed the matter and agreed that special use permitting was the appropriate framework.

MOTION to close the public hearing was made at 7:05pm by Council Member Becker and seconded by Council Member Courtenay.

The MOTION carried.

VOTE: AYES(4): Holdridge, Becker, Cassara, Courtenay, ABSENT(1):Diffley

ADOPTED

RESOLUTIONS ON AMENDING THE COMP PLAN, NEGATIVE DECLARATION, ADOPTING THE COMP PLAN, ADOPTING THE ZONING AMENDMENTS, DIRECTING THE TOWN CLERK TO FILE ALL DOCUMENTS, LIFTING THE BUILDING MORATORIUM AS OF FILING, LIFTING THE BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM MORATORIUM AS OF FILING

Following the close of the public hearing, Town Attorney Elizabeth Cassidy delivered an extended response to public comments received during this cycle and provided background context before proceeding to the formal resolutions.

Summary of Agency Referrals and Responses to Planning Board Comments

Attorney Cassidy noted that the Board had received a referral letter from the Orange County Department of Planning pursuant to General Municipal Law Section 239, and that the County had recommended approval of the amended plan. The letter, dated July 7, 2026, noted a few clerical corrections in the SEQR documents, which Attorney Cassidy confirmed she had corrected.

Attorney Cassidy also addressed comments from the Town of Chester Planning Board, which had previously responded to the referral. She reviewed each of the Planning Board's comments in turn:

- Land disturbance scope: The Planning Board asked that the words "clearing" and "grading" be added. Attorney Cassidy directed the Planning Board's attention to the definition of "disturbance" in Section 98-2, which she stated already clearly includes grading, addressing the concern.
- Topography standards: The Planning Board had asked to modify language regarding topographic contour intervals. Attorney Cassidy noted that the two-foot contour interval standard in the code is industry standard and represents a floor, not a ceiling, meaning the Planning Board retains discretion to require tighter intervals where appropriate.
- Buffering and landscaping: The Planning Board asked that discretionary language be added. Attorney Cassidy noted that the existing language already includes a "to the planning Board satisfaction" standard and that adding the word "discretion" would not meaningfully alter the existing provision.
- Ridge preservation and tree survey: Attorney Cassidy explained that prior versions had used diameter at breast height in one section and three feet in another. The decision was made to standardize at three feet for consistency, acknowledging that if the standard proves onerous or cost-prohibitive, the code can be revisited.
- Religious institutions and height: The Planning Board asked that structures such as spires, crosses, and steeples, which are exempt from height restrictions, not be used for occupancy. Attorney Cassidy noted this was addressed by the New York State Uniform Code, observing that habitable use at such heights would require sprinklers and other building code compliance that effectively precludes occupancy.
- 75-acre minimum for resort-style hotels: Attorney Cassidy explained this requirement was intentionally designed to foster broader resort-style hotel development, not merely a hotel building on a smaller lot. She noted a purely built-out use would require only five acres, but the intent was to encourage an open-space resort character.
- Battery energy storage systems: Attorney Cassidy noted that BESS regulations remain an evolving area of law and that the Board would continue to monitor developments. She noted that the Town of Warwick was similarly in the process of reviewing its own law and that further discussion on this topic should be anticipated.

Response to Public Comments

Attorney Cassidy acknowledged comments submitted by resident Veronica Mott, who had recommended minor changes to the comprehensive plan text. These included references to the Chester Artillery, updated language regarding the Sugar Loaf sidewalk project, and updated references to the Sugar Loaf Performing Arts Center to reflect its recent sale to Orange County. Attorney Cassidy stated she had drafted a resolution incorporating these and several other minor editorial changes.

Attorney Cassidy also addressed two letters received from the Preservation Collective. On the request for a conservation residential zoning district, Attorney Cassidy noted that this concept had appeared in the 2002 master plan but was not advanced as a recommendation by the comprehensive plan committee and was being raised formally for the first time during this process. She noted that existing protections, including the ridgeline overlay implemented in 2005 and strengthened through these amendments, as well as expanded special use permit requirements in the AR-3 district provide significant protections. She indicated this could be a future consideration for the Board.

On concerns about multiple permitted uses on a single site and associated parking requirements, Attorney Cassidy referenced proposed code Section 98-22(D)(4) as the governing provision. She also addressed the issue of parking for religious institutions, noting that the special permit criteria already require a parking plan for any event where on-site parking capacity is exceeded.

Comments on Camp Monroe

Attorney Cassidy provided a thorough response to public comments regarding Camp Monroe and its operation by Congregation Heichal Torah, which had been raised at both this and the prior public hearing. She prefaced her remarks by emphasizing that the comments received had focused on current site operations rather than the proposed zoning amendments themselves.

Attorney Cassidy clarified that the proposed zoning amendments contain no zone changes specific to Camp Monroe. Rather, the proposed changes affect the AR-3 zoning district as a whole. She noted that a comprehensive written response to comments had been published on the Town's website beginning at page 30, and that she had delivered a public presentation on November 19, 2025, also available on the Town's website.

Attorney Cassidy explained that Camp Monroe, which was established prior to the Town of Chester's 1974 zoning code, operates as a preexisting nonconforming use. She distinguished the concept of preexisting nonconforming use from a variance, explaining that a use variance, once granted, renders a use permitted, whereas a preexisting nonconforming use is one that predates zoning or that existed at the time zoning was adopted and has continued uninterrupted. She noted that such uses may not expand or become more nonconforming than what already exists, and that the amended code contains detailed regulations governing expansions of nonconforming uses.

Attorney Cassidy stated that the existing seasonal camp use would be permitted to continue regardless of whether the Board adopted the proposed AR-3 changes. However, she noted that Camp Monroe, like any other property in the AR-3 district, could be redeveloped into other permitted uses, including single-family residential. She confirmed she had searched Orange County land records and found no restrictive covenants limiting the site's use.

Attorney Cassidy then read into the record a letter submitted by the Town's building inspector, responding to questions raised at the June 24, 2026 public hearing. The letter addressed the following:

- Camp Monroe was established prior to adoption of the Town of Chester zoning code and is considered a preexisting nonconforming use.
- Certificates of occupancy on file date back to 1969, with records including a CO for a two-story home and office, a 1993 building permit for a camp office, 1998 COs for two additional buildings, a 2007 oil tank removal and replacement, 2015 sheds, a 2019 building demolition, and a 2021 CO for a dormitory building. Supervisor Holdridge noted that the 2021 dormitory CO was issued under the prior administration by a prior building inspector.
- The Town code does not require certificates of occupancy for improvements constructed prior to the 1974 zoning code.
- A notice of apparent violation was issued on March 25, 2025, following an in-depth review of building department records conducted in coordination with Attorney Cassidy's office.

- The owners of Camp Monroe filed an appeal with the Zoning Board of Appeals on May 23, 2025. Enforcement proceedings were automatically stayed upon filing of that appeal. The appeal was subsequently held in abeyance pending completion of the comprehensive planning and zoning amendment process.
- The Town's code defines short-term rentals as offering any residential dwelling or space to persons for a period of less than 30 days in exchange for compensation. The property owner has argued that the use does not constitute a short-term rental, and that determination is ultimately for the Zoning Board of Appeals.
- As a summer camp, Camp Monroe is subject to permitting and inspections by the Orange County Department of Health, including a temporary residence permit, children's camp permit, and regulation of the water supply system.
- The building department noted that prior to the current inspector's tenure, which began in 2024, required annual fire safety inspections had not been conducted. The department has been working through the backlog of inspections for the past eighteen months. Camp Monroe is scheduled for inspection within the following week. There are no other pending violations.

Supervisor Holdridge summarized the situation for members of the public, explaining that a notice of apparent violation had been issued, that it had been appealed to the ZBA, and that all enforcement had been stayed as a matter of law during that appeal. He explained that the ZBA had held the appeal in abeyance because it did not make sense to adjudicate the matter while the zoning code itself was in flux. He stated clearly that once the zoning amendments are adopted, the matter will move forward; either the appeal will proceed to the ZBA, or the property will seek a special use permit through the Planning Board.

Supervisor Holdridge emphasized that the Town Board was, through this process, establishing the first-ever special use permit framework in the Town of Chester's history, applicable not only to Camp Monroe but to any property involving religious use or any of the other uses enumerated in the amended code. He stated that this framework would allow the Planning Board to impose conditions such as hours of operation, traffic plans, parking plans, and site circulation requirements, and that the public would have an opportunity to participate in any Planning Board hearing. Council Member Becker echoed this point, noting that the Planning Board process would give the public a meaningful voice regarding what takes place on the property — a voice that does not currently exist given the absence of any governing framework for religious uses in the Town code.

Attorney Cassidy confirmed that counsel for Congregation Heichal Torah had indicated the congregation would apply for a special use permit if the code is adopted. She also confirmed that any changes to the use or layout of Camp Monroe would require site plan review, a special use permit, and site-specific SEQR environmental review. Buildings not constructed for year-round occupancy would need to be brought into compliance with the current New York State Building Code. She stated clearly that the proposed zoning code was not drafted in coordination with Camp Monroe and that the Town has no knowledge of any proposals for new construction on the property.

In response to a question from the floor regarding whether residents would be permitted to live on the property year-round, Supervisor Holdridge acknowledged that, to the Board's knowledge, only one building on the property, the dormitory, has been winterized for year-round use, and that this matter would be addressed as part of the Planning Board process. He stated that through that process, any approved use would be legitimized and legalized and have restrictions and regulations placed on it, ensuring full public transparency.

Supervisor Holdridge concluded by announcing his intention to send a written letter to residents in the neighborhoods surrounding Camp Monroe summarizing the explanations provided by the building inspector and the Town Attorney, and outlining the process moving forward, including the options available under the new framework.

Resolutions

Attorney Cassidy proceeded to read into the record the full text of the comprehensive whereas clauses recounting the multi-year planning process, including the establishment of the comprehensive plan committee, engagement of Lanc & Tully as planning consultant, referral to Orange County and adjoining municipalities, receipt of agency comments, conduct of public hearings, and adoption of amendments. The Board then voted on the following seven resolutions:

TOWN OF CHESTER
TOWN BOARD

RESOLUTIONS TO ADOPT THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND
ADOPT INTRODUCTORY LOCAL LAW 10 OF 2025, A LOCAL LAW TO CONFORM THE TOWN
CODE TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ADOPTED JULY 8, 2026

WHEREAS, the Town of Chester has undergone a multi - year comprehensive planning process which included the development of a draft comprehensive plan together with a draft zoning law to implement the goals of the comprehensive plan;

WHEREAS, the Town Board established a Comprehensive Plan Committee (“Committee”) for the purposes of identifying the needs of the Town of Chester to develop a Comprehensive Plan pursuant to § 272-a of New York State Town Law;

WHEREAS, the Town retained the services of Lanc & Tully for the purpose of preparing a draft Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Committee met on numerous occasions over the course of a year evaluating the needs and goals of the Town and solicited public input; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board acknowledged receipt of the draft Comprehensive Plan as recommended by the Committee on January 22, 2025 and directed its consultants including Lanc & Tully and the Law Office of Elizabeth K. Cassidy, PLLC to develop a draft zoning ordinance to implement various recommendations of the draft Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board declared itself to be lead agency for purposes of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) that same evening and further determined that the adoption of the comprehensive plan and the zoning local law were a Type I action under SEQR;

WHEREAS, the comprehensive plan and zoning local law together with SEQR documents including an expanded Long Environmental Assessment Form have been referred to the Orange County Department of Planning, the respective Clerks of Towns of Warwick, Goshen, Blooming Grove, and Monroe, and Villages of Florida and Chester and the Clerk of the Orange County Legislature and Palisades Interstate Park Commission as required by General Municipal Law § 239 et seq. and has been referred to the Town of Chester Planning Board as required by the Town Code;

WHEREAS, a duly noticed public hearing was held on October 22, 2025 and held open for 10 days thereafter for receipt of written public comment; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board is in receipt of the following agency correspondence:

1. Letter from Orange County Department of Planning, dated November 19, 2025
2. Letters from Town of Chester Planning Board, dated October 3, 2025.

WHEREAS, the Town Board, upon receiving public comments, caused written responses to comments to be prepared which is annexed hereto and which was published to the Town’s website; and

WHEREAS, the draft comprehensive plan and zoning amendments were amended by resolution dated May 27, 2026 and a second public hearing was held on June 24, 2026 and continued until July 8, 2026; and

WHEREAS, said amendments were again referred to the Orange County Department of Planning, the respective Clerks of Towns of Warwick, Goshen, Blooming Grove, and Monroe, and Villages of Florida and Chester and the Clerk of the Orange County Legislature and Palisades Interstate Park Commission and the Town of Chester Planning Board; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board received the following agency comments as to the amended draft comprehensive plan and zoning amendments:

1. Letter from Orange County Department of Planning, dated July 7, 2026 recommending approval.
2. Letter from the Town of Chester Planning Board, dated June 24, 2026

WHEREAS, having heard, discussed and considered the public comments and responses thereto, together with the comments of the Orange County Planning Department and the Town of Chester Planning Board, the Town Board makes the following resolutions:

Resolution #1

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the draft Comprehensive Plan is amended as follows in response to public comment:

- Page 6 – Add reference to Chester Artillery and its role in the Revolutionary War
- Page 31 – Revision to reflect purchase of the Sugar Loaf Performing Arts Center by Orange County
- Page 33 – Add Oak Park to recommendation of renovation or replacement of playground equipment
- Page 60 – revisions to reflect the recently completed Sugar Loaf sidewalk project
- Page 62 – revisions to reflect recent Historic District designation in the Hamlet of Sugar Loaf
- Page 69 – Add as a recommendation “Review overall residential zoning for compliance with state and federal regulations.” (See also recommendation 77)
- Page 70 – Add “Review the Town’s special permit criteria and approval process to ensure consistency with state and federal regulations”
- Page 70 – Define data centers in the code, separately from warehouses or other industrial uses.
- Page 74, recommendation 22 – add Oak Park

The Town Board finds that these amendments are de minimis changes which address changes within the Town since the draft Comprehensive Plan was first introduced for projects such as the Sugar Loaf sidewalk project and the sale of the Sugar Loaf Performing Arts Center. The changes set forth in these amendments do not alter the intent of the recommendations as recommended by the Comprehensive Plan Committee and presented to the public nor do the amendments above alter the Town’s environmental review.

MOTION by: Council Member Courtenay, Second by: Council Member Becker

Vote Rollcall:

Supervisor Holdridge	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Becker	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Cassara	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Courtenay	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Diffley	Yes		No	Abstain	Absent X

ADOPTED

Resolution # 2

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that after consideration of the Environmental Assessment Form Parts I, II and expanded environmental assessment form (part III), the public comment, the recommendations of the Town of Chester Planning Board and the Comprehensive Plan Committee, the Town Board hereby finds that the proposed comprehensive plan and zoning local law, will not have any adverse environmental impacts and hereby declares the written “negative declaration” pursuant to SEQR as more fully set forth in the EAF Part 2 and 3 and negative declaration incorporated herein as if set forth at length.

MOTION by Council Member Courtenay, Second by: Council Member Becker

Vote Rollcall:

Supervisor Holdridge	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Becker	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Cassara	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Courtenay	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Diffley	Yes		No	Abstain	Absent X

ADOPTED

Resolution # 3

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town of Chester Comprehensive Plan as amended is hereby adopted.

MOTION by Council Member Cassara, Second by Council Member Becker, who cast his vote in honor of Council Member Dysinger.

Vote Rollcall:

Supervisor Holdridge	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Becker	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Cassara	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Courtenay	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Diffley	Yes		No	Abstain	Absent X

ADOPTED

Resolution # 4

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED Introductory Local Law 10 of 2025, A LOCAL LAW TO CONFORM THE TOWN CODE TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN as amended on May 27, 2026 is hereby adopted as Local Law 6 of 2026.

MOTION by Council Member Becker, Second by Council Member Courtenay

Vote Rollcall:

Supervisor Holdridge	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Becker	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Cassara	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Courtenay	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Diffley	Yes		No	Abstain	Absent X

ADOPTED

Resolution # 5

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of the Comprehensive Plan, and Local Law 6 of 2026 shall be filed in the Town Clerk's Office and shall be transmitted to Orange County Department of Planning together with a report of final action;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk is hereby directed to file Local Law 6 of 2026 with the Secretary of State, cause notice of adoption to be published pursuant to Town Law § 265 and to cause said local law to be codified in the Town of Chester Town Code.

MOTION by: Council Member Courtenay, Council Member Becker

Vote Rollcall:

Supervisor Holdridge	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Becker	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Cassara	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Courtenay	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Diffley	Yes		No	Abstain	Absent X

ADOPTED

Resolution # 6

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the building moratorium instituted by Local Law 1 of 2024 and as extended by Local Law 9 of 2025 shall be lifted upon the filing of Local Law 6 of 2026 with the Secretary of State. The Town Clerk shall notify the Building Department, the Chair of the Planning Board, and the Chair of the Zoning Board of Appeals upon such filing.

MOTION by Council Member Cassara, Second by Council Member Courtenay

Vote Rollcall:

Supervisor Holdridge	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Becker	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Cassara	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Courtenay	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Diffley	Yes		No	Abstain	Absent X

ADOPTED

Resolution # 7

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the moratorium of Battery Energy Storage Systems instituted by Local Law 8 of 2024 as extended by Local Law 3 of 2026 shall be lifted upon the filing of Local Law 6 of 2026 with the Secretary of State. The Town Clerk shall notify the Building Department, the Chair of the Planning Board, and the Chair of the Zoning Board of Appeals upon such filing.

MOTION by Council Member Becker, Second by Council Member Courtenay

Vote Rollcall:

Supervisor Holdridge	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Becker	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Cassara	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Courtenay	Yes	X	No	Abstain	Absent
Council Member Diffley	Yes		No	Abstain	Absent X

ADOPTED

Closing Remarks on the Comprehensive Plan

Following congratulations from Town Attorney Cassidy, Supervisor Holdridge offered extended remarks in tribute to those who contributed to the process. He echoed Council Member Becker's memorial tribute to Larry Dysinger, calling him integral to the process and noting his significant contributions as both a Board member and comprehensive plan committee member. Supervisor Holdridge also recognized Board liaisons and the following comprehensive plan committee members: Richard Logothetis, Mike Mallon, Veronica Mott, Tracy Schuh, David Stevenson, and committee chair Matt Woods for his leadership, which Supervisor Holdridge described as incredible.

Supervisor Holdridge summarized the major accomplishments of the plan, including: a ban on data centers in the Town of Chester; a ban on large-scale battery storage facilities; the institution of the Town's first-ever special use permit framework; a dramatically more detailed land disturbance permit framework; strengthened regulatory language regarding daycares, religious institutions, bed and breakfasts, fast food businesses, and solar projects; the conversion of industrial zoning to suburban/residential zoning on multiple Lake Station Road lots; and reinforcement of the mixed residential/business zoning in the hamlet of Sugar Loaf.

Supervisor Holdridge acknowledged the plan's imperfections while stating it does a lot of good for the Town of Chester and fulfills the commitment he and other Board members made to end the Wild West development and restore the Town's ability to enforce its code. He described the plan as a living, breathing document and committed to continuing to amend and refine the code to fulfill all of the comprehensive plan committee's goals.

Council Member Courtenay added that the prior comprehensive plan document had sat on a shelf gathering dust, and that this Board had done its due diligence, along with the community volunteers, to produce a plan that would not suffer the same fate. He expressed confidence that the plan would continue to evolve, stating: "Life evolves and that document is an evolving document. It's not a once and done."

EXECUTIVE SESSION – PERSONNEL

MOTION to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel matters was made by Council Member Becker and seconded by Council Member Courtenay at 7:50pm.

The MOTION carried.

VOTE: AYES(4): Holdridge, Becker, Cassara, Courtenay, ABSENT(1):Diffley

ADOPTED

The Board entered Executive Session. Upon conclusion, a motion was made to return to open session.

MOTION to come out of Executive Session was made by Council Member Becker and seconded by Council Member Courtenay at 8:30pm.

The MOTION carried.

VOTE: AYES(4): Holdridge, Becker, Cassara, Courtenay, ABSENT(1):Diffley

ADOPTED

PUBLIC COMMENT

Robert Klein, North Hudson Street, addressed the Board regarding the condition of the existing playground equipment prior to any replacement. He noted that his four-year-old grandson had visited the playground approximately nine months prior and offered the perspective that the current playground was not entirely obsolete, as it had been partially renovated ten years ago in 2016. Mr. Klein requested that the Board evaluate the condition of existing amenities before tearing everything down, suggesting that functional elements such as spring-ride equipment might be salvageable and could be repaired or modernized at low cost and integrated into an expanded playground complex rather than fully replaced.

Supervisor Holdridge responded that the engineer had already reviewed the site and that a committee of residents spearhead the effort. He noted that the committee had deliberately separated itself from the Town, as Town entities are not permitted to fundraise, enabling the committee to function as a not-for-profit fundraising body and then donate the completed project to the Town. Supervisor Holdridge confirmed that the plan involves upgrading all three Town playgrounds; Carpenter Park, Chester Commons, and Oak Street with ADA-compliant equipment and rubber pour flooring in place of rubber mulch. He noted that the \$10,000 Skoufis grant would be directed toward the Commons playground, and that additional grants and private donations were being pursued. He indicated that if there are elements worth preserving, they would be preserved, but acknowledged that much of the existing equipment is old and in need of replacement.

Town Attorney Cassidy provided additional context on the structure used in Warwick, explaining that Warwick Playground Dreams had been established as a separate not-for-profit entity, which conducted all fundraising and volunteer coordination. The resulting playground, valued at approximately \$2,000,000 in combined labor and

materials, was then inspected and dedicated to the village as a municipal park. Attorney Cassidy reiterated that the Town itself cannot actively fundraise and must rely on separate unrelated entities to do so and then dedicate the result to the Town.

Meryl Newler, Lincoln Road, raised questions about the Town of Chester's dial-a-bus service and expressed concern about potential costs to taxpayers following reported issues with the service in the Town of Monroe and its relationship with the Town of Woodbury.

Supervisor Holdridge explained that the Town currently holds a longstanding contract with the Town of Goshen for dial-a-bus service, but that this contract only transports residents within Chester or Goshen. He acknowledged that many residents have their medical appointments, shopping, and family connections in Monroe, and that the current Goshen contract does not serve their needs. He stated that the Town is in negotiations for a possible intermunicipal agreement with the Monroe dial-a-bus to provide supplemental transportation for Chester residents living in the Monroe-Woodbury School District area. He noted that a similar conversation is underway with the Town of Warwick for residents in the Warwick School District portion of Chester.

Supervisor Holdridge clarified that this would be a much smaller, supplemental contract, not a full Town-wide replacement of the existing Goshen service, and that its cost would be significantly less than the current Goshen contract. He stated that any agreement would include appropriate protective provisions to ensure the Town is not left exposed, and that terms would be released publicly once fully negotiated. He acknowledged awareness of the difficulties experienced in Monroe's relationship with Woodbury and stated that any agreement accepted by the Board would need to properly protect the Town of Chester. He also noted that the possibility of the Town eventually operating its own dial-a-bus service was a conversation worth having in the future, though not at this stage.

REPORTS

Supervisor Holdridge noted that reports had been submitted from the Building Department, Empress EMS, Millennium Strategies, the Highway Department, Parks and Recreation, the Town Historian, the Police Department, Animal Control, and the Water Department, and that all would be included in the official meeting minutes or posted to the Town's website.

Council Member Cassara commended the Highway Department and Parks Department for their outstanding work cleaning and maintaining Town parks and the surrounding community.

Council Member Becker reported that the recent heavy rains had again exposed the need to address infiltration issues across all Town sewer districts. He noted that while pump station upgrades had been completed, infiltration into the piping system remains a significant and worsening problem. He recommended that the issue be prioritized in future planning.

Council Member Becker also reported on the sewer pump station in the Moodna Basin area, noting that a new SEP system had been installed and that a new ventilation system was being put in place to address heat and noise concerns related to a large air compressor that had been moved to an open garage area. He indicated that fencing repairs and visual screening for the facility were also being priced out for the upcoming budget.

Council Member Becker presented preliminary water rate information, noting that in order for each water district to break even on purchasing costs, rates would need to increase substantially: Walton Lake Estates to \$20 per 1,000 gallons (from the current \$10); Surrey Meadows to \$19 per 1,000 gallons; Lake Hill Farms to \$15; and Sugar Loaf to \$14. He stressed that these were preliminary research figures requiring further analysis and that potential cost-sharing with the Fieldcrest and Greens of Chester districts may help reduce rates. He also addressed a prior public inquiry comparing Town rates to the Village of Chester's lower rates, explaining that the Village's lower rates reflect decades of in-house infrastructure work and a larger customer base, all of which significantly reduces per-unit costs.

Supervisor Holdridge reported that he had attended and volunteered at the congregate dining event and thanked parks and recreation staff for organizing it. He noted that he had held "Bagels with Brandon" sessions in the past two weeks and had spoken directly with several residents about their concerns. He also reported on ongoing negotiations with the Towns of Monroe and Warwick regarding dial-a-bus enhancements. He stated that he had met with the Chester Preservation Plan Advisory Committee and that the updated draft plan identifying properties to be protected was nearly finalized, with a vote to introduce the related local law anticipated at the July 22, 2026 meeting, pending input from the Village of Chester following their July 13th meeting. Finally,

Supervisor Holdridge reported that he had met that morning with resident Tracy Schuh, a representative from Lanc & Tully, and a representative from the Highlands Trail Commission to discuss the development of a trail on the 13 acres of land preserved off Camp Monroe Road and Lakes Road the prior year. He noted that the Highlands Trail volunteers would perform trail clearing at no cost, with only minimal grading of the entrance required from the Town.

Supervisor Holdridge also announced that the Town had received a \$10,000 grant from Senator Skoufis for the annual senior picnic, the third consecutive year such a grant had been awarded. The 2026 senior picnic will be held at Chester Carpenter Park, as the Sugar Loaf Performing Arts Center is no longer Town-owned. A planning session to determine the date is scheduled for the following week.

CHESTER PRESERVATION PLAN ADVISORY BOARD TERMS

Supervisor Holdridge noted that when the Chester Preservation Plan Advisory Board members were originally appointed, Board terms had not been set as required. He proposed the following staggered term assignments, consistent with the governing local law, to prevent complete turnover in any single year:

Tracy Schuh — 5-year term;

Mikaela Hayes-Hodge — 4-year term;

Simon Ziegler — 3-year term;

David Stevenson — 2-year term;

Ivan Bonet — 1-year term.

All terms are renewable. Attorney Cassidy confirmed that the one-year term would expire December 31, 2026, with subsequent terms following accordingly, and that at reorganization, any expiring member would be eligible for reappointment to a full 5-year term.

No questions or debate were raised.

MOTION to set the terms for Chester Preservation Plan Advisory Board members as stated was made by Council Member Courtenay and seconded by Council Member Becker.

The MOTION carried.

VOTE: AYES(4): Holdridge, Becker, Cassara, Courtenay, ABSENT(1):Diffley

ADOPTED

TOWN HISTORIAN EDUCATION REQUEST

Supervisor Holdridge presented a request from the Town Historian to attend the Association of Public Historians of New York State 2026 Annual Conference in September 2026, at a registration cost of \$300, plus hotel, travel, and parking expenses. He noted that the Town Historian had not yet provided the complete breakdown of additional expenses, but that he had approximately \$1,500 remaining in his education budget line, providing more than sufficient funds to cover the anticipated total cost.

Supervisor Holdridge proposed approving the request for up to \$700 total, with the option to amend if necessary.

MOTION to approve the Town Historian's education request for attendance at the Association of Public Historians of New York State 2026 Annual Conference, for an amount up to \$700, was made by Council Member Courtenay and seconded by Council Member Becker.

The MOTION carried.

VOTE: AYES(4): Holdridge, Becker, Cassara, Courtenay, ABSENT(1):Diffley

ADOPTED

REVISED LOCAL LAW 284

Supervisor Holdridge explained that Revised Local Law 284 required an amendment to add the paving of Johnson Road, which is funded by a \$115,000 grant from Senator Skoufis, received approximately in 2020 or 2021, now coming to fruition. No questions or debate were raised.

MOTION to accept Revised Local Law 284 as amended to include the paving of Johnson Road was made by Supervisor Holdridge and seconded by Council Member Cassara.

The MOTION carried.

VOTE: AYES(4): Holdridge, Becker, Cassara, Courtenay, ABSENT(1):Diffley

ADOPTED

SUGAR LOAF COMMUNITY FOUNDATION VOICES OF LIBERTY TEMPORARY ASSEMBLY PERMIT REQUEST

Supervisor Holdridge reported that the Board had previously granted a temporary assembly permit to the Sugar Loaf Community Foundation for the Voices of Liberty event. Due to inclement weather, the organization had requested that the permit dates be amended to July 18th, with a rain date of July 19th, at Sugar Loaf Crossing, 1405 Kings Highway. No questions or debate were raised.

MOTION to amend the temporary assembly permit to reflect the revised dates of July 18th and July 19th was made by Council Member Cassara and seconded by Council Member Courtenay.

The MOTION carried unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(4): Holdridge, Becker, Cassara, Courtenay, ABSENT(1):Diffley

ADOPTED

EDUCATION REQUEST

Supervisor Holdridge presented a request from Deputy Comptroller McPhee to attend the NYGFOA Webinar on Foundations Budgeting at a cost of \$170. No questions or debate were raised.

MOTION to approve the education request for Deputy Comptroller McPhee to attend the NYGFOA Foundations Budgeting Webinar for \$170 was made by Council Member Courtenay and seconded by Council Member Becker.

The MOTION carried.

VOTE: AYES(4): Holdridge, Becker, Cassara, Courtenay, ABSENT(1):Diffley

ADOPTED

2026–2027 AGREEMENT WITH ORANGE COUNTY FOR SNOW AND ICE CONTROL ON CERTAIN COUNTY ROAD

Supervisor Holdridge presented the annual 2026–2027 agreement with Orange County for Snow and Ice Control on Certain County Roads, under which Orange County will pay the Town of Chester \$62,985 for road maintenance services. No questions or debate were raised.

MOTION to approve the 2026–2027 snow and ice control agreement with Orange County was made by Council Member Cassara and seconded by Council Member Courtenay.

The MOTION carried.

VOTE: AYES(4): Holdridge, Becker, Cassara, Courtenay, ABSENT(1):Diffley

ADOPTED

ROAD CLOSURE REQUEST FOR SUGAR LOAF COMMUNITY FOUNDATION CAR SHOW

Supervisor Holdridge reported that a required meeting with the police department to develop a proper traffic management plan had not yet taken place, and that this item could not be acted upon at this time.

MOTION to table the road closure request for the Sugar Loaf Community Foundation Car Show pending a meeting with the Police Department was made by Council Member Cassara and seconded by Council Member Becker.

The MOTION carried.

VOTE: AYES(4): Holdridge, Becker, Cassara, Courtenay, ABSENT(1):Diffley

ADOPTED

Supervisor Holdridge noted that the event is scheduled for October 3rd, providing sufficient time to complete the required planning.

CABBAGE FILM PERMIT REQUEST

Supervisor Holdridge reported that the Board had previously approved a film permit for Cabbage, and that the production company now required one additional day of filming on July 19th from 2:00 PM to 2:00 AM at 3424 NY-94, Chester, New York, at a fee of \$250. No questions or debate were raised.

MOTION to approve the amended Cabbage film permit request for July 19th was made by Council Member Courtenay and seconded by Council Member Cassara.

The MOTION carried.

VOTE: AYES(4): Holdridge, Becker, Cassara, Courtenay, ABSENT(1):Diffley

ADOPTED

NEW BUSINESS

1) Resolution to Authorize Supervisor Holdridge to Sign Agreement with Sugar Loaf Arts Collective for Summer Camp Staffing

Supervisor Holdridge reported that the Town's summer camps were scheduled to begin the following Monday and that sufficient enrollment had been achieved to proceed. He stated that the Town was awaiting final comments from the Sugar Loaf Arts Collective on the agreement, and that in order to have something in place before the camp's start date, he requested Board authorization to sign the agreement once a countersignature from the Sugar Loaf Arts Collective and approval from the Town's legal counsel were obtained. No questions or debate were raised.

MOTION to authorize Supervisor Holdridge to sign the agreement with the Sugar Loaf Arts Collective for summer camp staffing, subject to signature from the Collective and approval from the Town Attorney, was made by Council Member Courtenay and seconded by Council Member Cassara.

The MOTION carried.

VOTE: AYES(4): Holdridge, Becker, Cassara, Courtenay, ABSENT(1):Diffley

ADOPTED

2) Resolution to Temporarily Hire and Onboard Andrina Wolff, Chuck Ragsdale, Katie Weir, and Emily Buliung

Supervisor Holdridge presented this resolution as a contingency measure, to be implemented only in the event that the agreement with the Sugar Loaf Arts Collective does not come to fruition. He identified the four individuals to be temporarily hire and onboard as Andrina Wolff, Chuck Ragsdale, Katie Weir, and Emily Buliung.

MOTION to authorize the temporary hiring and onboarding of Andrina Wolff, Chuck Ragsdale, Katie Weir, and Emily Buliung as a contingency measure in the event the Sugar Loaf Arts Collective agreement falls through was made by Council Member Courtenay and seconded by Council Member Cassara.

The MOTION carried.

VOTE: AYES(4): Holdridge, Becker, Cassara, Courtenay, ABSENT(1):Diffley

ADOPTED

PUBLIC COMMENT

No additional public comment was received, either in person or via the online platform.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Council Member Courtenay, and second by Council Member Becker to adjourn the meeting at 9:00pm there being no additional business brought before the Board.

VOTE: AYES(4): Holdridge, Becker, Cassara, Courtenay, ABSENT(1):Diffley

ADOPTED

Respectfully submitted,

Linda A. Zappala, RMC
Town Clerk
2026-7-08