

Village of Port Leyden Zoning Commission

Date: 4/20/2026

Time: 3:30 PM-5 PM

Location: Virtual/ Lyden Justice Building, 3514 Mechanic Street, Port Leyden, NY

1. **Attendance-** Nick Byrne, Karen Baxter and Megan Krokowski.

The Port Leyden Zoning Commission met virtually to continue refining the draft zoning law and address key regulatory areas necessary for the village's long-term development. Conversation centered on balancing community needs, economic opportunities, enforcement capacity, and the desire to maintain village character while supporting responsible growth.

2. **Zoning Model Comparisons**

The team reviewed nearby municipal zoning codes. Constableville's regulations were assessed as a practical middle-ground model, while Lowville and Croghan were noted as highly restrictive. The Commission emphasized the need for clarity, proportional regulation, and avoiding over-specific or unenforceable rules.

3. **Housing & Property Improvements**

Megan provided an overview of a New York State Real Property Tax Law incentive allowing municipalities to adopt an existing program that encourages exterior home improvements without increasing assessed taxes. Adoption at the county level is anticipated, and the village may opt in, providing dual tax benefits to participating homeowners.

4. **Enforcement & Definitions**

Members agreed that zoning must clearly designate enforcement authority to avoid gaps, particularly for junkyards, nuisance uses, and special permits. Clear definitions of noise, lighting, odor, changes of use, and expansions will prevent loopholes and ensure that regulations are enforceable.

5. **Special Use Permits & Expansions**

To prevent unchecked business expansion, the group discussed adding a threshold (such as a 25% increase over 3-5 years) that would trigger site plan review. Renewal cycles for special use permits were also discussed, with a preference for a two-year cycle to balance oversight with administrative practicality.

6. Short-Term Rentals (STRs)

With 220 residential units in the village, the Commission discussed capping STRs at 5% (approximately 11 units). Karen expressed concern about housing shortages, while Nick noted flexibility and limited current demand. All agreed the cap could be adjusted via future zoning text amendments. Clarification was made that each unit in the former school would count individually toward the cap. [Megan will reach out to Mark L. to determine how many STRs are planned at the former elementary school to ensure the cap licenses aren't utilized by a single property, while noting that NYS funding was provided to create such units.](#)

7. Water & Sewer Connections

The Commission agreed that all residents must obtain written approval before connecting to municipal systems. This ensures compliance with the upgraded water infrastructure and prevents unauthorized connections. [Megan will incorporate language addressing properties still using septic.](#)

8. Accessory Dwelling Units & Tiny Homes

The group supported allowing accessory dwelling units up to 800 sq ft and including provisions for tiny homes (~400 sq ft) to expand affordable housing options. Potential for small “tiny home villages” was also noted as an opportunity for seniors, veterans, and young adults. [Megan will draft language for ZC to review.](#)

9. Animals & Agricultural Uses

Consensus was reached on the following guidelines:

- Minimum **5 acres** required for large farm animals.
- Cap of **20ish poultry** per property.
- **Roosters prohibited** due to noise.
- Limit of **6 large farm animals per acre**.
- Compliance window of **180 days** for existing non-conforming properties.
- Exotic animals must comply with DEC regulations.

10. Outdoor Wood Boilers

Despite many villages prohibiting them, the Commission supported allowing new outdoor wood boilers due to energy cost concerns, acknowledging smoke-related considerations.

11. Future Economic Opportunities

Nick raised the possibility of exploring a village-operated water bottling venture, given the strength of the village's water source. While preliminary, grant funding opportunities may make such a project feasible in the long term.

12. Next Steps

The group will reconvene next month to continue reviewing zoning provisions. Virtual attendance remains acceptable, with in-person participation optional.

Next Meeting: May 18, 2026 at 3:30 PM VIRTUALLY or at the Justice building with Nick B.