

**Summary**  
**Rhinebeck Regular Town Board Meeting**  
**Monday, April 28, 2025**

For more information regarding this meeting's agenda and resolutions, go to Rhinebeck Town Government Agenda webpage at <https://ecode360.com/RH0960/documents/Agendas> Scroll down and click on the **Town Board** meeting agenda for April 28, 2025.

Present:       Supervisor Elizabeth Spinzia  
                  Deputy Supervisor Chauncey Walker  
                  Councilperson Allan Scherr  
                  Councilperson Chad Kleitsch  
                  Councilperson Dana Peterson

**Resolutions**

The Town Board (TB) addressed 18 resolutions, passing 18 unanimously. Below is a summary of the major resolutions addressed and passed. Other resolutions addressed by the board may be viewed on the town's website as noted in the opening paragraph.

**Resolution 2025-126** – Amending the Town of Rhinebeck Zoning Map to Rezone Property Located Between Astor Drive and Rhinecliff Road to Permit an Affordable Workforce Housing Development within the Workforce Housing District

The Town Board (TB) approved the application from Kearney Developers for the development of an affordable workforce housing project consisting of 23.3 acres located within the Town's VG (Village Gateway) Zoning District, which will consist of 80 affordable workforce rental units in six buildings, with ingress and egress provided by a private driveway (now a designated town road allowing for school bus transportation) located on Rhinecliff Road extending through the site to through Wells Manor Lane and then to Astor Drive.

**Modifications** -The following modification have been added to the original plan:

- Maximum Building Height. The required maximum height set forth in the Code of 35 feet shall be modified to allow for a height of 40 feet for this project.
- The required 1.5 spaces per dwelling unit are amended to allow for 2.0 spaces per dwelling unit for this project. Supervisor Spinzia asked if additional parking spaces could be added to the plan. Kearney's CEO responded that any additional parking spaces would require a change in the overall site plan, requiring a new study and delays with the project.

- Design Standards. The overall site layout and the exterior architectural features of the dwelling units as previously reviewed by the Town Board have been determined to be of a quality, character, compatibility and appearance that is in harmony with the surrounding neighborhood. Therefore, the Town's Neighborhood Design Standards and Guidelines shall not be used as a basis to require further modification to the project.
- The Applicant shall be responsible for the maintenance and repair of the internal road for the project in perpetuity. The internal road shall be maintained in a manner that provides for the safe passage of emergency vehicles and all other motor vehicles in all weather conditions.

#### **Resolution 2025-127 – Compost Program Between Town and Village**

The TB approved this resolution allowing for town residents to participate in the Village's Compost Program with Ellerslie Stables. Town residents can register at the Village Hall. Once registered, town residents can pick up a compost bucket at the Town Hall and use the Village drop off dumpster, located at the municipal parking lot. As part of the Village's agreement with Ellerslie Stables, a portion of one 50-lb bag or equivalent can be given out to participants. The Village will host an annual compost give-out event at the Village Highway Department each spring.

#### **Resolutions 2025-131, 132 and 133 – Friends of Rhinebeck Cemetery Spring Programs**

The Friends of Rhinebeck Cemetery (FRC) will be hosting the following programs:

- Volunteer (historic) grave cleaning day, Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM.
- FRC will purchase shrubs and perennial plantings for two areas of the historic cemetery, to be planted and maintained by the town cemetery.
- Volunteer garlic mustard remediation (hand pulling) on Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, starting at 9:00 AM at the Natural Burial Ground.

#### **Resolution 2025-138 – Recreation (Summer Camp Counselors) Cell Phone Usage Policy**

The TB approved a request from the Recreation Director to clarify and restrict cell phone usage for summer camp counselors in order to ensure the safety of the public using the pool and the children attending the weekday camp.

With the exception of an emergency situation, cell phones, including all types of portable electronic devices, may not be used for personal purposes unless the employee is on a break or has explicit permission from the supervisor.

## Public Comments

A number of people attending this meeting spoke about the civil suit between the Town of Rhinebeck versus the Towns of Clinton and Hyde Park, over alleged code violations (illegal zoning) with the Six Senses Hotel/Spa project, sponsored by InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG).

Residents from Clinton, Hyde Park and Rhinebeck came forward and thanked the TB for its civil action in response to what they claimed was “legal bullying” by IMF. They mentioned the project’s threat to areas of significant biodiversity and habitats for endangered turtle (Blanding turtles) species. One speaker commended the TB for setting an example for other Hudson Valley town boards to follow and adhere to their zoning codes and comprehensive plans when facing large projects such as Six Senses. Another resident who lives opposite the proposed entrance site, described the annoying noise issue with the use of helicopters transporting guests to the prior hotel at the site.

In opposition to the town’s civil suit, the President and CEO at the Hudson Valley Economic Development Corporation, expressed his support for the project, claiming that it would be economically beneficial for Dutchess County. A local resident, who had brokered the property sale to IMF, questioned the town’s involvement in a suit over land in a neighboring town. Why should town residents’ taxes be used for an issue outside of the town? In response, Supervisor Spinzia stated that the town opposes illegal (spot) zoning in other towns that abut Rhinebeck or threaten its cultural and environmental assets. TB member, Dana Peterson commented that when neighboring towns fail to follow their zoning codes and regulations, it creates unfair economic burdens on Rhinebeck businesses. While Rhinebeck does encourage local business growth, this growth must comply with the town’s zoning codes.

For more information about the Six Senses project and issues, visit Common Senses HV, Save Our Rural Towns website at <https://sites.google.com/view/stopsixsensesny/home> .

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The next TB meeting will be held on Monday, May 12, 2025 at 6:00 PM.