



Board of Zoning Appeals
Zoom Hybrid Meeting
Draft Meeting Minutes
January 21, 2026
Approved: _____

Board Members Present: Chair Stephen Morreale, Jonathan Ferrari, Cheryl Thompson
Quorum Present

Absent Board Members: Andrew Hillman, Karen Meador

Town Staff Present: Niels Tygesen, Lori Asperschlager, Katelin Olson

Applicants Present: Victoria Wilson, Eric Mau

Members of the Public Present: Mark Sherman, Cynthia Mannino, Joe Mannino

Members of the Public Present on Zoom: Dolores Higareda, Tyler Sherman, Linda Liddle, Scott Dawson, Karen Guthrie, Redmond, Sage Peake, Alexis Schaefer

Proceedings

Chair Morreale called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM at Town Hall.

Approval of Agenda

Thompson suggested moving the approval of the past minutes to later in the meeting. Chair Morreale agreed.

NEW BUSINESS ITEM

VAR2512-01 Pritts 2 Lot Minor Subdivision Area Variance
5230 Cold Springs Road, Parcel Number 12.-4-19.2

The applicant, the Town of Ulysses, on behalf of the owners, Marvin and Allison Pritts, applied for a minor subdivision for the subject site to subdivide the existing 16.58 acre lot into two lots, Parcel A approximately 1.37 acres and Parcel B approximately 15.21 acres. Proposed parcel B would be a flag lot with a proposed width of 38 feet for the 'pole' portion of the lot where 50 feet is required per the Code of the Town of Ulysses (CTU) 212-130.A.

Town Supervisor Katelin Olson presented on behalf of the donors, Marvin and Allison Pritts. Olson gave a history on the donation, public comment period, and intended use.

The town board has built restrictions into the donation agreement that restricts how the property can be used for the next 75 years. Mitigation efforts include that it will only be used for recreational activities, no external illumination allowed beyond safety, there will be noise limitations, a fence line will be installed on the neighboring property, and vegetative screening for all properties nearby on Cold Springs Road for all year-round screening.

Olson shared that a town owned road is 20' wide and the town board considered the need for an area variance to request a 38' wide driveway that is large enough for emergency vehicles. No vehicle parking will be allowed on the driveway.

Olson shared a memo from the town attorney regarding the precedent of an approved flag lot.

Chair Morreale stated that this is a substantial deviation and precedent is helpful, but the board wants to review the request based on the zoning laws for the town. Morreale asked about the visual buffer. Olson confirmed there will be a fence visual buffer on the side of the property not owned by the Pritts. In addition the donated property is adjacent to 3 other residential from the rear section of the property which will have visual buffer added also. The western side of the property is a vegetative area and the northern section is a creek, the eastern portion is owned by the Pritts.

Morreale opened the public portion of the meeting regarding the variance request.

Mark Sherman spoke as a neighbor to the donated property. Concerned that the high volume of foot traffic and road traffic. Would like to see the driveway be blacktop and not gravel, an added ditch for runoff. Asked if a sidewalk would be added for safety.

Dolores Higareda in support of the park and is hoping the BZA would allow for the variance.

Cynthia Mannino spoke of her support of the park. Understands the concerns of the neighbors with the change coming but thinks it will have a positive impact.

Sage Peake is a resident on Cold Springs Road and spoke of her support of the park.

Karen Guthrie spoke of her support of the park. Would be a good place for community engagement.

Morreale asked Olson to speak on the public comments. The Town has not adopted any design plans at this point (only a concept plan from Cornell Design Connect students). Gathered public comments, two open houses and received a lot of feedback. The Town is not in a position to say what the final plans would look like.

Morreale closed the public portion of the meeting.

Thompson asked Olson if the Cornell Design Connect plan had a sidewalk, but they did not go into that level of detail.

The proposal maintains zoning compliance on the residential property next to the 5230 Cold Spring Road property. Olson and Highway Superintendent Stewart talked with TCWH in January 2025 about moving the septic field and in the donation agreement there is a condition that allows for the move.

Ferrari is sympathetic to residents' concerns and recommends the Town works closely with the neighbors to address as many concerns as possible. The 38' driveway can likely allow for what is needed. Sherman briefly spoke to say any of the board members can come and see the property and space.

Thompson recommended that the board add a condition to the resolution that there is a permeable surface on the driveway. Ferrari would like to add a recommendation that there is a pedestrian pathway. This resolution will be reviewed by the Planning Board on February 3. If any recommendations are added by the BZA, they would be added at their February 18 meeting.

Motion: Thompson moved to approve [Board of Zoning Appeals Resolution No. 2026-001 A Resolution Requesting the Town of Ulysses Planning Board Provide a Written Recommendation on the Pritts 2 Lot Minor Subdivision Area Variance.](#)

Ayes: Chair Morreale, Ferrari, Thompson

Nays: None

Absent: Hillman, Meador

Abstain: None

**VAR2512-02, Wilson Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit Area Variance
1587 Taughannock Blvd, Parcel Number 18.1-1.4**

The applicant and property owner, Victoria Wilson, proposes a renovation of an existing detached accessory building into a 2-story accessory dwelling unit (ADU). The proposed request is a setback of +/- 9 feet from the mean high water mark (MHWM) where, per the application, 50 feet is required.

Eric Mau with Space Architecture Studio and Victoria Wilson the homeowner and applicant attended to present to the board. The plan is to demolish the existing building down to the foundation and build a wood structure on the existing footprint.

The applicant and board discussed the plan and the three variances (distance from the lake, expansion of non-conforming, and building higher).

Owner completed a conversion application with TCWH for the septic tank. Ferrari would like to see a cross-section elevation in relation to the high-water mark. If needed the plumbing can be on the second floor.

Morreale has some concerns about the height (24'). With a legally non-conforming building by expanding the staircase and adding height, both increasing the size requires variances.

Suggestion to put deck on the top/roof rather than expand it closer to the lake. This would eliminate one variance. If a deck has an impervious roof it does count in lot coverage, if it doesn't have an impervious roof it does not. Applicant talked to the Planning Board at recent meeting about putting a gutter up with a downspout right into the ground where there is shale.

Recommending building on stilts to allow for flooding and go up a couple of feet on the building height (height restriction of 32' in that area) so water would go under the building. Recommending 4-6ft for the stilts. The height would not ruin sight lines because it is tucked against the cliff.

Thompson is concerned that the applicant is asking BZA for too many variances and recommends reducing the number by changing the design. Ferrari suggests maintaining the footprint, going vertical (or cantilevered) and if there is just one variance then it may be improving what is there now.

Suggestion to change the design of the staircase to reduce one variance (distance from the lake). If the plan was to only build higher than only one variance would be needed for this project.

The BZA would like to see from the applicant a plan that would only have one variance for height and a design that shows sewer elevations.

Planning Board will act as lead agency for the environmental review.

Approval of Past Minutes

Tabled approval of September 17, 2025 meeting minutes to next meeting due to no quorum

2026 Meeting Schedule

Reviewed the meeting schedule and approved [Board of Zoning Appeals Resolution No. 2026-002 A Resolution Adopting the Regularly Scheduled Meetings for 2026.](#)

2026 BZA Vice Chair

Tabled to the next meeting due to no quorum.

Motion: Ferrari motioned to adjourn; Thompson seconded.

Vote: Thompson, aye; Chair Morreale, aye; Ferrari, aye.

Motion Carried.

ADJOURNED 9:02 PM

Lori Asperschlager
Board of Zoning Appeals Secretary

From: [Andy Schaefer](#)
To: [Town of Ulysses Permits](#)
Subject: Cold Springs Zoning Appeal
Date: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 5:09:32 PM

To Members of the Ulysses Board of Zoning Appeals and Planning Board,

I strongly support the approval of a zoning variance and subdivision requests for the Cold Springs park land donation.

The community is overwhelmingly in support of this donation, and the variance necessary is very minor. The town board has already undertaken and agreed to many mitigations to make it easier on the adjacent neighbors and the neighborhood as a whole.

Please do not let 12 feet prevent the final approval of the variance and subdivision because all necessary safety features can be achieved with a 38 foot width flag pole.

The community very strongly needs additional recreational space and this generous donation will serve generations of kids and adults alike.

Thank you for your time.

Andy Schaefer
1645 Taughannock Blvd

From: [Carolyn Kreisel](#)
To: [Town of Ulysses Permits](#)
Subject: In Support of the Cold Springs land donation
Date: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 2:40:07 PM

Please share this note with the BZA and Planning Board:

I support the variance and subdivision requests of the Cold Springs land donation because the children and adults of Ulysses deserve the recreational activities that this property will provide.

Regards,
Carolyn Kreisel

From: [Cynthia Mannino](#)
To: [Town of Ulysses Permits](#); [Carissa Parlato](#)
Subject: In support of Variance for the Town Park
Date: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 6:29:11 PM

Hello,

Please provide this message for both the Planning Board and BZA. Please read aloud at the meeting.

I support the variance and subdivision requests of the Cold Springs land donation because Town parks offer good health for life long healthy habits for all residents. I appreciate that this Town Park will be open to all, without a barrier.

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Mannio
124 Tamarack lane
Trumansburg NY

CC; Town Clerk, Carissa Parlato

From: [Rachel Ostlund](#)
To: [Town of Ulysses Permits](#)
Subject: Letter of support regarding the land donation
Date: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 5:33:40 PM

Hello -

The statement below is in support of the Town accepting the land donation. Could it please be provided to both the Planning Board and the BZA?

I support the variance and subdivision requests of the Cold Springs land donation, for the following reasons:

It's incredibly important that we prioritize the creation of free, accessible parks, and the land donation is providing the town with the rare opportunity to do just that.

We need safe, free spaces that everyone can access in order to spend time outdoors, as well as spaces where kids can run around, play sports and be outside.

Everyone, regardless of income, deserves equitable access to green space - and having a Town park in a central location means that the myriad benefits of outdoor recreation will be available to everyone in our community. It also is a symbol of the Town's commitment to shared resources and creating welcoming spaces for all.

Easy, equitable access to parks and green spaces not only gives people access to space that improves their mental and physical well-being, but free community parks are an essential part of creating the social infrastructure necessary for healthy, vibrant and interconnected communities.

Parks are egalitarian spaces where informal encounters and new connections bolster and build community - and as our community continues to grow and change over time, having spaces where both new and long-time residents and families can interact and build social connections are an important way to develop and create a sense of community identity.

I am so excited for the tremendous possibility that this space holds!

- Rachel Ostlund

From: [Helen Arco](#)
To: [Town of Ulysses Permits](#)
Cc: [Helen Arco](#)
Subject: New Town of Ulysses Town Park
Date: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 7:08:38 PM

Hello! I am a Village of Trumansburg resident. My husband and I moved here 20 years ago to raise our family. We are in support of the park!

My son is now 20 and a college sophomore at SUNY Geneseo and my daughter is a junior at Charles O Dickerson High School. During this time, our kids were very active in sports and the arts as were many of their friends. While growing up, I had always longed for a local park that was closer than Taughannock that could be leveraged by them and their friends.

Now that they are older, I had hoped something would come about for the younger families and finally there is an option developing. I hope the town and village can continue to work towards providing our community with such a place!

I hope I can meet my friends there for walks and dog walking...a place where we can watch our local sports teams play and a place where my kids can bring their grown friends to enjoy.

Please continue to work to bring our local park on Cold Springs Road to fruition!

Sincerely,
Helen Arco

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Kathryn Maroney](#)
To: [Town of Ulysses Permits](#)
Subject: Please forward to both Planning Board and BZA
Date: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 6:56:57 PM

I support the variance and subdivision requests of the cold spring land donation. It's so important that the town be able to finish this land ownership transfer.

I understand there may be a group coming out to the BZA meeting tonight in opposition, so this is just a reminder that the community has been overwhelming in its support of this project. A few loud people cannot cancel out the big majority of our town who want to see this process completed and moving forward.

This park is a concrete way to support the connection of our community, and the variances requested are both reasonable and appropriate. There are many steps left to make this space a usable public park, but let's give ourselves that chance. Please vote to support the necessary variances so this town can make this long-held and hard-fought dream a reality.

Thanks for your service, and for showing up in so many ways to support our community.

All best,
Kasia Maroney

From: [Emily Ouckama](#)
To: [Town of Ulysses Permits](#)
Subject: Support for Cold Springs Land Donation Variance
Date: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 5:43:39 PM

Please provide the following message to the Planning Board and BZA.

I am writing to express my support for the variance and subdivision requests related to the Cold Springs land donation.

This project has broad community support and will benefit the town for generations to come.

Sincerely,
Emily Ouckama

President, Taughannock Soccer Club

From: [andygray84](#)
To: [Town of Ulysses Permits](#)
Subject: Support for Cold Springs Land Use
Date: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 4:19:27 PM

This message is for the Planning Board and Boarding Zone of Appeals

I am writing to communicate my support for the variance and subdivision requests of the Cold Springs land donation. I have a prior commitment for the meeting tonight, otherwise I would love to be there. Our town needs recreation space for kids. As a youth soccer coach I have seen the overcrowding and overuse of the school facilities. As a parent I have seen the lack of outdoor, communal space impact my children. We have an amazing opportunity to create space for children (and adults) to enjoy themselves and create community at a low cost.

I worry that there is a NIMBYism taking root in our town. Please do not let the loud voices of the few take this opportunity away from us.

Thanks for all you do for our town!
Andy Gray (Podunk Rd)

From: [Christine Feely](#)
To: [Town of Ulysses Permits](#)
Subject: Support of the Park
Date: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 6:02:27 PM

I'm unable to make the meeting , but I again speak out in support of the park. A park supports community, health and joy!
Christine Feely

Sent from my iPhone

From: [David Foote](#)
To: [Town of Ulysses Permits](#)
Subject: Supporting Public Park
Date: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 6:57:45 PM

Hi,

I am writing in support of the Cold Springs land donation leading to the establishment of a public park. More public spaces that we can enjoy together would be a huge boost to local social lives and shared community. I love parks. Seeing that there is also some element of recreation and supports, I hope that this will also include a basketball court. I've lived in Ulysses for 10 years and always felt this was missing from our community. I'd like to get out of the house some weekends and throw up some shots!

David F.

From: [Mary M. Bouchard](#)
To: [Town of Ulysses Permits](#)
Subject: Writing in support of zoning variance and property subdivision
Date: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 2:24:21 PM

Please provide this letter to the Planning Board and the BZA.

I am writing in support of the zoning variance and subdivision requested to allow the town to finally transfer ownership of the Cold Springs Road donated lands from the Pritts' to the town for the establishment of a town recreation area. Public sentiment has been overwhelmingly in favor of this development, and approving the subdivision and the variance would be in line with the majority of residents' wishes.

Sincerely,
Mary Bouchard
Former Town of Ulysses councilmember

From: [Nina Redmobd](#)
To: [Town of Ulysses Permits](#)
Subject: Yes to the park!
Date: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 7:44:46 PM

I am looking forward to having the new public park in town. I live on Searsburg Rd in Ulysses. I attended the town meeting online and the plans sound well thought out with considerations for all issues. I hope this project goes through for our community!

Nina Redmond

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Mary Kaszyca](#)
To: [Town of Ulysses Permits](#)
Subject: Town Park
Date: Thursday, January 22, 2026 1:50:32 PM

Please share our message with the Ulysses Planning Board and Board of Zoning:

We support the variance and subdivision requests of the Cold Springs land donation and look forward to one day seeing a town park in Ulysses. We have every confidence that the town of Ulysses will undertake this project with consideration for the Cold Springs neighborhood and for Ulysses taxpayers. A gift of prime park land from the owners of this property is too generous to pass up.

Respectfully,

Mary Kaszyca and Ken Pickens
Trumansburg