Minutes

Public Hearing on the Proposed Local Law Regulating Battery Energy Storage Systems Within the Town of Putnam

Public Hearing on Revisions to the Site Plan Review Law

Regular Putnam Town Board Meeting

August 13, 2026, 7:00 pm

~ Putnam Town Hall, 14 Putnam Center Road ~ ZOOM

Town Board Members present:	Supervisor	Darlene Kerr
	Councilman	Rick Bezio
	Councilman	Mark Karlson
	Councilman	Charles Bain, Sr.
Town Board Member absent:	Councilwoman	Carole Schneider

Others present: May Drinkwine Shiell (Resident, 439 County Route 3), Larry Shiell (Resident, 439 County Route 3), Kay Greenough (Resident, 427 County Route 3), Nancy L. Treadway (Putnam Town Clerk), Candy Hyatt (Resident, 4393 Link Way), Nancy Wolf-Fisher (Resident, 5183 Sagamore Road), Gary Treadway (Highway Superintendent), Eileen Murray (Resident, 4341 Link Way), Carolyn Andersen (Resident, 62 Backus Lane), Paula Wilson (Resident, 15 County Rte. 3), EJ Conzola (NYVT Media), Jamie Tyrell (Resident, 48 Mott Lane)

** ZOOM Participants are noted as they appeared on the screen, or if a participant spoke and identified themselves.

Present via ZOOM: Rob Winn (Town Attorney), Cee McKenzie, Garbis, Brian Bolon

Supervisor Kerr called the Public Hearing on the Proposed Local Law for Regulating Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) to order at 7:00 pm.

She then asked if anyone in-person or on ZOOM had any comments or questions.

- **Supervisor Kerr**
  - Clarified that the Town of Putnam has not received a BESS application and that a notice circulated on Facebook and elsewhere may have given residents the impression that a BESS application had already been submitted.
  - Emphasized that the Town has no pending BESS application and that there are no known applications currently being considered.

- Explained that the purpose of the public hearing is to establish a regulatory framework that will protect the Town and reminded residents that the Town Board previously enacted a six-month moratorium while it developed permanent regulations.
- Stated that the Town cannot legally impose an outright ban on BESS facilities but can establish extensive regulatory requirements. The Board's intent is to regulate BESS facilities as extensively as legally permissible and make the Town a less attractive location for such development.

- **Councilman Karlson**
  - Commented that residents may have seen the required newspaper public notice and mistakenly believed that the notice concerned an actual BESS application.
  - Explained that the proposed law is intended to establish requirements that would make it difficult for a prospective developer to pursue a project in Putnam.

Supervisor Kerr asked if anyone had additional comments or questions from both in-person attendees and Zoom participants. No other questions or comments were made, and the Public Hearing closed at 7:03PM.

Supervisor Kerr called the Public Hearing on the Revisions to the Site Plan Review Law to order at 7:03 pm

She then asked if anyone in-person or on ZOOM had any comments or questions.

- **Nancy Wolf-Fisher**
  - Stated that she had reviewed the proposed revisions and expressed appreciation that the Board had retained several protections, including:
    - Notification of neighboring property owners;
    - Protections concerning blasting; and
    - The Town's authority to require stormwater management.
  - Questioned why the Lake Champlain shoreline was not included in the critical environmental areas.
  - Suggested that the language refer to Lake George and its watersheds, rather than wetlands alone, because a watershed encompasses a larger area than wetlands.
- **Councilman Karlson**
  - Explained that the term "Critical Environmental Area" was intentionally used because it is terminology utilized by the Lake George Park Commission (LGPC), and that the Board intended to make the Town's language consistent with the LGPC's existing regulatory terminology.
  - Explained that the LGPC uses specific geographic criteria, including measurements from the mean high-water mark and that property can be within a watershed without necessarily falling within the LGPC's definition of a critical environmental area.
- **Supervisor Kerr**
  - Development on the Lake Champlain side is subject to substantially greater acreage requirements under Adirondack Park Agency regulations compared to the Lake George area, and that those restrictions reduce the likelihood of the type of concentrated development like in the Lake George area.

- She thanked Nancy for raising her concerns, and asked if anyone else had any comments or questions.

- **Eileen Murray**
  - Asked about references to a compliance officer and an enforcement officer in the proposed law, and whether the Town would have an individual specifically responsible for enforcement.

- **Supervisor Kerr**
  - Explained that the terms appear in the definitions section.
  - Stated that the Town intends to hire a compliance officer who will:
    - Review applications;
    - Verify that required information is submitted;
    - Confirm that applications comply with applicable Town requirements; and
    - Assist in ensuring that applications are complete before presenting to the Town Board for review.
  - Stated that the compliance officer will also serve as the Town's FEMA local administrator and clarified that Washington County Code's Office handles building code enforcement.

- **Councilman Mark Karlson**
  - Explained that Washington County is responsible for code enforcement and clarified that the Town retains authority under its own Site Plan Review Law.
  - Commented that the Town's law contains penalties for noncompliance and that projects involving enforcement of the Town's Site Plan Review Law would come before the Town Board.

- **Eileen Murray**
  - Asked for clarification that there would not be a separate Town enforcement officer.

- **Councilman Karlson**
  - Confirmed that there would not be a separate Town enforcement officer.

- **Supervisor Kerr**
  - Acknowledged that written comments and suggestions from Cee McKenzie were received, and thanked her for her detailed review.

- **Town Attorney Rob Winn**
  - Reviewed several of Cee's comments concerning wording and grammatical errors.
  - Discussed language concerning protections for farm operations.
  - Drafting notes and questions will be removed before the final document is filed.
  - The document addresses the responsibilities of the Compliance Officer, Town Board, and County Code Enforcement.

- **Councilman Karlson**
  - Commented that some forms and procedures referenced in the law still need to be developed.

Supervisor Kerr asked if anyone had additional comments or questions from both in-person attendees and Zoom participants. No other questions or comments were made, and the Public Hearing closed at 7:12 pm.

Supervisor Kerr called the Regular Town Board Meeting to order at 7:12 pm.

Councilman Charles Bain, Sr. led the Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:

Town Board Members present:	Supervisor	Darlene Kerr
	Councilman	Rick Bezio
	Councilman	Mark Karlson
	Councilman	Charles Bain, Sr.
Town Board Member absent:	Councilwoman	Carole Schneider

Resolution #78

Accept the Minutes of the July 15, 2026 Public Hearing and Regular Town Board Meeting with correction

- The Resolution for the Proposed Local Law for a 12-month Moratorium on Data Centers should have stated it would be Local Law #5

On motion of Councilman Charles Bain, Sr., seconded by Councilman Mark Karlson; all in favor.
Resolution unanimously adopted.

Resolution #79

Accept the Financial Reports for the month of July 2026

On motion of Councilman Rick Bezio; seconded by Councilman Mark Karlson; all in favor.
Resolution unanimously adopted.

Resolution #80

Accept the Town Clerk's Report for the month of July 2026

On motion of Councilman Charles Bain, Sr., seconded by Councilman Mark Karlson; all in favor.
Resolution unanimously adopted.

Resolution #81

Accept the Town Justice Report for the month of July 2026

On motion of Councilman Rick Bezio, seconded by Councilman Mark Karlson; all in favor.
Resolution unanimously adopted.

Resolution #82

Pay Bills as audited

On motion of Councilman Charles Bain Sr., seconded by Councilman Mark Karlson; all in favor. Resolution unanimously adopted.

Resolved, the bills on the following are paid as audited.

General Fund	#162-189	$ 6,927.21
Highway Fund	#79-89	$10,550.15
Black Point Sewer District	#6	$61,464.47

Correspondence

None

Courtesy of the Floor

Supervisor Kerr opened Courtesy of the Floor.

- **Paula Wilson**
  - Reported that two cleats were missing at the Town boat launch and asked whether the Town intended to replace them. Highway Superintendent Treadway responded that replacement cleats had already been ordered.
  - Followed up on previously raised concerns about the boat launch becoming increasingly shallow and that pontoon boats were having difficulty entering the launch. Also asked whether the Town could use equipment to back-drag or otherwise improve the area. Highway Superintendent Treadway commented that he had inspected the area that day and that there is a substantial hole in the launch area.
- **Supervisor Kerr**
  - Explained that improvements to the boat launch and bathrooms are being considered in connection with the CHPE host benefit package.
  - Stated that dredging would require a permit and that the permitting process could be lengthy. The Town Clerk has the past permit in the Town's records that may be useful.
  - Stated that the Town is also considering improvements to the ball field.
- **Eileen Murray**
  - Asked whether the boat launch is restricted to Town residents.
- **Supervisor Kerr**
  - Confirmed that the launch is intended for Town residents and seasonal renters.
  - Explained that Putnam taxpayers fund the facility, and there's also limited parking.
- **Highway Superintendent Treadway**
  - Explained that some Vermont license plates may belong to contractors working for Putnam residents. Dock Doctors is an example of a Vermont-based contractor whose employees may be using the launch while working for residents.

- **Supervisor Kerr**
    - Explained that only four to six spaces are currently available for boaters.
    - Stated that future bathroom improvements may provide an opportunity to restructure the area, but septic tanks and other site limitations may affect what changes can be made.
- **Eileen Murray**
    - Asked whether the Town intended to bring additional sand to the beach.
- **Supervisor Kerr**
    - Explained that sand placed on the beach gradually washes into Gull Bay so the Town limits the amount of sand added.
    - A load of sand had been brought in during the previous year, and the Town generally adds sand only periodically because of the impact on Gull Bay.
- **Paula Wilson**
    - Raised concerns regarding geese at the beach and boat launch area.
- **Supervisor Kerr**
    - Explained that the Town has attempted to discourage people from feeding the geese but unfortunately some people continue to feed them.
    - Stated that goose waste is a health concern.
- **Jamie Tyrell**
    - Commented that Mossy Point has signage asking visitors not to feed birds and suggested similar signage at the Town beach.
- **Highway Superintendent Treadway**
    - Confirmed that the Town already has signage in place.
    - Stated that signs had been installed near the boat shack and another location near the beach.

Supervisor Kerr asked if anyone had additional comments or questions from both in-person attendees and Zoom participants. No other questions or comments were made, and courtesy of the floor was closed

Supervisor's Report

Supervisor Kerr reported:

- **Washington County Safety Information**
    - Washington County provides monthly safety information and the current materials concern digital eye strain and eye injuries. Previous materials addressed rabies and sun exposure, and she encouraged residents to review the flyers that are available at Town Hall.
- **SNAP / Community Work Opportunities**
    - Discussed changes to the Washington County Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) that would have work requirements affecting certain "able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD)".
    - Explained that qualifying individuals would be required to work or volunteer for at least 20 hours per week.

- Stated that the Town may be able to provide community work opportunities like painting cemetery fences, painting Town facilities or raking the beach

- **Putnam Founders Scholarship Program**
  - Recognized the Putnam Founders scholarship organization for its support of local students, and explained that the organization provides scholarships to Putnam students continuing their education after high school.
  - The scholarship amounts increase as students progress through college, and that the program has grown substantially from its initial $50 scholarship.
  - The organization had $834,523.15 in assets at the time of the most recent meeting.
  - The program is for:
    - Two and four-year colleges;
    - Master's degree programs; and
    - Trade schools.
  - She expressed gratitude to the officers and board members of the Putnam Founders, and commented that the scholarship program has provided meaningful assistance to local students and families with educational expenses.

Mary Jane Dedrick

- Explained that the organization initially raised money through community fundraising activities. However, a gift of $200,000 had significantly increased the organization's resources.

Highway Department Report

Highway Superintendent Gary Treadway reported:

- The transmission in the 2017 highway pickup had failed, and the truck box has deteriorated.
- Presented an estimate for a replacement Ford three-quarter-ton, four-wheel-drive truck with an eight-foot box, which was a purchase price of $49,157 after the applicable OGS discount.
- He intended to place the order as soon as possible so an anticipated delivery would be around November.
- Explained that additional plow and equipment outfitting would be addressed separately, and he usually works with Woodward Equipment.
- Requested authorization to proceed with the purchase

Resolution #83

To authorize the Highway Superintendent to purchase the replacement highway truck as per the estimate

On motion of Councilman Charles Bain Sr., seconded by Councilman Rick Bezio; all in favor. Resolution unanimously adopted.

Highway Superintendent Treadway also reported:

- The truck rental that the Highway Dept. is currently using might be needed until November, but it may be able to be returned by September or October.
- The 2017 highway pickup truck will need to be designated as surplus so that it can be auctioned off, which is what was done with the old garbage truck.

Resolution #84

To designate the 2017 highway pickup truck as surplus

On motion of Councilman Mark Karlson, seconded by Councilman Rick Bezio; all in favor.

Resolution unanimously adopted.

Planning

Supervisor Kerr stated that prior to the meeting, while conducting the audit of bills, the Board reviewed the following:

Jon Herttua

A Site Plan Review Application was submitted by Jon Herttua with regard to a replacement of a garage. Although it will be larger than the current garage, it will keep to the same footprint and is believed to not obstruct the neighbor's view. However, as he is still waiting to hear back from LGPC with approval and a stormwater plan, further review of this project will be moved to the September 10th Town Board Meeting.

Supervisor Darlene Kerr

Disclosed that she recently had her home's roof replaced. Larry Shiell had asked if she got a permit, and she confirmed that she obtained the required permit from Washington County and had made the disclosure for the purpose of transparency.

Marta Kolman

Supervisor Kerr reported receiving correspondence from Marta Koleman concerning the Barshinger project. It was explained that the project had already gone through the applicable approval process and a lengthy public hearing process with the Planning Board, and the Town does not enforce private homeowners' association rules. It was also explained that private association concerns should have been raised during the applicable public hearing process, but nothing was brought up regarding the building size from anyone within the association. The Town will not be withdrawing an approval that had already been properly granted. Councilman Karlson commented that he had communicated with Ms. Coleman, and he intends to have another conversation with her to further explain the approval process.

Fire Department Report

No report.

Reminder: Annual Chicken BBQ – August 15th at the Putnam Firehouse starting at 2:00 PM.

Old Business

Proposed Local Law Regulating Battery Energy Storage Systems Within the Town of Putnam

- **Supervisor Kerr**
    - Reiterated that the proposed BESS law is intended to restrict and heavily regulate BESS.
    - Explained that the Town must comply with the limits of State law, and cannot completely ban BESS. However, the proposed requirements are intended to make Putnam as unattractive as legally permissible to prospective BESS developers.
    - Reiterated that the Town does not currently have a BESS application.

- **Jamie Tyrell**
    - Asked whether the proposed law would prevent BESS facilities from being located in Putnam, and whether a future change in the NYS law/government could give Towns the authority to prohibit BESS facilities.
- **Supervisor Kerr**
    - Explained that the proposed local law is to impose extensive requirements so that a developer would likely choose another area, but the Town must comply with applicable legal requirements with the State. However, if there were any future changes in the State it would need to be evaluated at that time.
- **Carolyn Andersen**
    - Asked about the Town's existing law concerning commercial solar facilities.
- **Supervisor Kerr**
    - Explained that Putnam's commercial solar regulations are highly restrictive but clarified that residential solar is treated differently.
    - Stated that the Town does not provide certain tax discounts or incentives for commercial solar facilities and that the Town is attempting to take a similarly restrictive approach to BESS and data centers.
- **Councilman Karlson**
    - Stated that prospective commercial solar developers had contacted the Town after the solar law was adopted, and after reviewing the requirements those developers chose not to pursue projects in Putnam.

Resolution #85

To approve the Proposed Local Law Regulating Battery Energy Storage Systems Within the Town of Putnam

On motion of Supervisor Darlene Kerr, seconded by Councilman Mark Karlson; all in favor.

Resolution unanimously adopted.

Revisions to the Site Plan Review Law

- **Councilman Mark Karlson**
    - Would like to approve the proposed revisions to the Site Plan Review Law and recommended that identified typographical and drafting corrections be incorporated into the final version.
- **Supervisor Kerr**
    - Discussed updating application forms and developing a flow chart to assist applicants with the revised process.
    - Confirmed that the revised law will not become effective until properly filed with New York State.

Resolution #86

To approve the revisions to the Site Plan Review Law

On motion of Councilman Mark Karlson, seconded by Supervisor Darlene Kerr; all in favor.
Resolution unanimously adopted.

New Business

To set a public hearing for a proposed local law to override the tax levy limit established in General Municipal Law 3-c

- **Supervisor Kerr**
    - Explained that the Town expects its first PILOT payment associated with the CHPE power-line project during 2027, and PILOT payments are included in the statutory tax-cap calculation.
    - Stated that the payment could cause the Town to exceed the applicable tax levy limit. And without authorization to exceed the tax cap, the amount above the cap would have to be placed into a reserve and would not be available for the Town's intended use.

Resolution #87

To approve setting a public hearing for a proposed local law to override the tax levy limit established in General Municipal Law 3-c for September 10, 2026

On motion of Councilman Charles Bain, Sr., seconded by Councilman Mark Karlson; all in favor.
Resolution unanimously adopted.

To set a date for a budget workshop

- Supervisor Kerr proposed to set a budget workshop for Tuesday, September 1, 2026 at 3:00 p.m.

Resolution #88

To approve setting a budget workshop for September 1, 2026 at 3:00 pm

On motion of Councilman Mark Karlson, seconded by Supervisor Darlene Kerr; all in favor.
Resolution unanimously adopted.

New York State Association of Towns Conference

- **Supervisor Kerr**
    - Reported that the New York State Association of Towns (NYAOT) will hold its Legislative Conference in Albany on September 22–23, 2026 and she intends to attend.
    - Explained that the conference will address a proposed Bill of Rights for Towns.
    - Reviewed the Association's priorities:
        - Municipal home rule;
        - Local land-use and development authority;
        - Protection from unfunded State mandates;
        - Modernization of public notice requirements; and
        - Greater State transparency.

- There's a financial burden placed on counties and towns by unfunded State mandates, and explained that the New York State Association of Towns is advocating for State mandates to include an identified source of funding.
- Discussed the Association's efforts to modernize public-notice requirements to allow greater use of online publication and municipal websites.
- Supervisor Kerr volunteered to serve as the Town's delegate and asked for Board approval.

Resolution #89

To approve Supervisor Darlene Kerr to act as the Town's delegate at the NYAOT conference to be held on September 22-23, 2026

On motion of Councilman Rick Bezio, seconded by Councilman Mark Karlson; all in favor.
Resolution unanimously adopted.

New York State Association of Towns Bills of Rights (See attached)

- **Supervisor Kerr**
  - Presented the Association's proposed Bill of Rights and explained that the Association is asking towns that are members to adopt the document by resolution. The adoption would constitute an expression of support for the Association's legislative priorities. The NYAOT provides legal, financial, educational and other assistance to member municipalities.
- **Councilman Karlson**
  - Asked whether the adoption is common among New York towns.
- **Supervisor Kerr**
  - Stated that the vast majority of New York towns are members of the Association, and that the Association serves as an advocate for municipalities.

Resolution #90

To adopt the New York Association of Towns Bill of Rights

On motion of Councilman Mark Karlson, seconded by Councilman Rick Bezio; all in favor.
Resolution unanimously adopted.

Additional Board Discussions

Ball Field

- **Councilman Karlson**
  - Commented that the Town ball field looked good, and also commented that it was in good shape for the tournaments that took place.
  - Briefly discussed the possibility of future improvements.

Roadside Mowing

- **Supervisor Kerr**
  - Complimented the Highway Department on recent roadside mowing.
- **Paula Wilson**
  - Reported that vegetation near County Road 3 were obstructing visibility for motorists.

- **Superintendent Treadway**
    - Commented that although that is a County road, the Town Highway Department could look over the area and take care of the vegetation if need be.

Tennis Court

- **Councilman Bezio**
    - Reported that he had recently observed a few Ticonderoga residents using the Town tennis court and they had mentioned they preferred the Putnam court to other available facilities.
    - The perimeter fence has deteriorated, but it was suggested that if the Town could at least replace the tennis net as a relatively small investment could help maintain the facility and encourage continued use.

Town Hall Slate Roof

- **Councilman Karlson**
    - Asked about the status of repairs to the Town Hall roof.
- **Supervisor Kerr**
    - Explained that an individual who had previously offered to assist with the slate roof had passed away, but that the Town is continuing to seek contractors qualified to perform slate roofing.
    - Reported that two contractors had declined the work unless the existing slate was completely removed and replaced with another roofing material, such as metal or asphalt.
- **Jamie Tyrell**
    - Offered to ask her boyfriend, who is a contractor, if he would be interested in the work. Supervisor thanked Ms. Tyrell and asked that he contact the Town office if he was interested in the project.

Supervisor Kerr adjourned the meeting at 7:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy L. Treadway
Putnam Town Clerk

Darlene Kerr _____ Supervisor

Carole Schneider _____ Councilwoman

Rick Bezio _____ Councilman

Charles Bain, Sr. _____ Councilman

Mark Karlson _____ Councilman

New York Association of Towns
Bill of Rights

Whereas, town government provides services essential to the vitality and success of New York State, like maintaining and repairing roads; protecting neighborhoods and businesses; guiding and supporting growth and economic development and acting as the first line of defense, communication and safety to residents every day of the calendar year.

Whereas, towns in New York State are phenomenally diverse, ranging in population, geography, demographics and other factors, and decisions are best made at the local level, by the government that best understands their town's attributes, challenges and character.

Whereas, 933 total towns in New York State are claimed as HOME by more than 9.1 million New Yorkers, New York's towns should not be considered subsidiaries of the state, but rather as ***partners*** in shaping New York's future.

Bill of Rights

1. Protect and Defend Municipal Home Rule

As the level of government closest to the people, towns are best positioned to understand local needs, balance competing interests, and make decisions that shape daily life in meaningful ways. Preserving that authority matters not just for towns, but for the health of local democracy itself.

2. Protect Our Lands, Guide Our Development

Land use and zoning decisions belong in local hands - not in statewide zoning schemes or arbitrary shot clock deadlines that ignore the voice of residents and elected officials that live there.

3. Freedom from Unfunded Mandates

Local taxpayers should not be expected to bear the brunt of orders placed by bureaucrats in Albany and Washington, D.C. Taxpayers deserve fairness, and local budgets need relief.

4. Modernize Transparency, Accessibility and Engagement

Outdated public notice requirements soak up very essential dollars in municipal budgets by forcing them to pay money for print public notices that can be often missed and are counterproductive to civic awareness.

5. A Voice in Decisions Impacting our Hometowns

A true partnership between the State of New York and its local governments will propel the Empire State forward and bear dividends to benefit all New Yorkers. As the governing body closest to more than 9.1 million New Yorkers, town government should be treated by the state as true partners -- not as an afterthought or a hurdle to clear.