

**Town of Marcellus**  
**PLANNING BOARD**  
**22 East Main Street**  
**Marcellus, New York 13108**

**Date:** January 5, 2026

**Board Members Present:** Jerry Wickett, Chairperson  
Kathy Carroll  
Chris Christensen  
Ron Schneider  
Scott Stearns  
Holly Tufenkjian

**Board Members Absent:** Mark Taylor

**Town Counsel:** James Gascon of Costello, Cooney, and Fearon

**Town Engineer:** TDK Engineering (Absent)

**Codes Officer:** John Houser

The Planning Board of the Town of Marcellus met in regular session January 5, 2026 at 6:30pm in the Marcellus Town Hall located at 22 East Main Street, Marcellus, New York.

**DISCUSSION**

**Farmland Protection Program**

Scott Stearns started the conversation with questions regarding the program and what can the Town do to preserve both farmland and land that could be used for additional housing. Mr. Stearns referenced the area between Old Seneca Turnpike and Limeledge Road. This farm area (Hanford property) is being considered for the Farmland Protection Program by the current owner. Mr. Stearns indicated this area is also designated as an R-1 zone and has potential for housing. Part of the application process for the Farmland Protection Program includes obtaining a letter of support from the governing Town. The Planning Board does not see these requests and Mr. Stearns has concerns we are not fully considering the impacts on future housing developments.

Town Counsel James Gascon explained the program grants conservation easements that restrict the land to farming activities. NYS pays for and owns the easements, and the Federal Government oversees the program. The easements can have term limits or can be indefinite. Mr. Gascon stated most Towns support the easement applications and the approvals are typically automatic without review. Mr. Gascon is not aware of any Town that has challenged the

application request. NYS strongly supports agricultural lands and looks for farms with rich soil to preserve under this program.

Holly Tufenkjian added she believed the State allocates a certain amount of money each year to buy these easements and can only grant so many each year.

Chairman Wickett suggested notifying the Town Board with a request that the Planning Board be notified of these applications and have a chance to review and comment before the letter of support is sent. A chance to review would not necessarily be to oppose the applications, but to be informed when designating residential areas for housing in our Town.

### **Wind Energy**

Chris Christensen started the conversation and noted that our previous windy energy ordinance is not in the current Code Of The Town Of Marcellus. Also, that previous ordinance is outdated and may not address all of the important factors to consider – example, battery storage. Mr. Gascon stated that his firm is very familiar and experienced with windmills and the regulation of them and provided the Board with materials to review. Mr. Gascon also suggested one of his colleagues from his firm, Jeff Eaton, who has experience in wind energy, attend one of our Planning Board meetings. The Board agreed and will review the materials and invite Mr. Eaton to speak at the February meeting.

### **MINUTES**

Chairman Wickett made a motion to approve the December minutes as written, Scott Stearns seconded. The motion carried with the following vote:

J. Wickett, K. Carroll, C. Christensen, R. Schneider, S. Stearns, H. Tufenkjian – AYE  
M. Taylor – Absent

Chairman Wickett made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Kathy Carroll seconded. The motion carried with the following vote:

J. Wickett, K. Carroll, C. Christensen, R. Schneider, S. Stearns, H. Tufenkjian – AYE  
M. Taylor – Absent

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Joanna Clarke  
Secretary