



**Cortland County
Agriculture, Planning &
Environmental
Committee
Committee Meeting
~ Minutes ~**

60 Central Ave.
Cortland, NY 13045
www.cortlandcountyny.gov

Thursday, January 8, 2026

10:00 AM

Room 302

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Committee Chair William McGovern.

Roll Call

PRESENT:	Legislator Reed Cleland, Legislator Beau Harbin, Legislator Paul Heider, Legislator Jason Prentice, Legislator Sandra Price, Committee Vice Chair Mitchel Eccleston, Committee Chair William McGovern
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ABSENT:

EXCUSED:

Others Present:

Deputy Clerk of the Legislature	Ashley Millard
County Administrator	Michael Ponticiello (arrived late 10:10 a.m.)
Legislator	Christopher Newell (arrived late 10:10 a.m.)
Planning Director	Trisha Hiemstra
Grants Administrator	Morgan Spaulding
Cortland County Resident	Kim Cameron
Mobility Coordinator	Lillian Jensen (Remote)
Planning Executive	Jessica Leet (Remote)
Administrative Officer	

Approval of Minutes

1. **December 4, 2025 Agriculture, Planning & Environmental Committee Minutes**

RESULT:	APPROVED
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Resolutions

Monthly Reports

1. **Soil & Water Monthly Report**

RESULT:	COMPLETED
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2. Cornell Cooperative Extension Monthly Report

RESULT:	COMPLETED
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3. Planning Department Monthly Report

RESULT:	COMPLETED
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Discussion Items

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.



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60 Central Ave.
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Thursday, December 4, 2025

10:00 AM

Room 302

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 AM by Committee Chair Beau Harbin.

Roll Call

PRESENT:	Legislator Mitchel Eccleston, Legislator Paul Heider, Legislator William McGovern, Legislator Jason Prentice, Committee Vice-Chair Reed Cleland, Committee Chair Beau Harbin, Deputy Clerk of the Legislature Ashley Millard, Mobility Director Melssa Potter, Planning Director Trisha Heimstra, County Administrator Executive Assistant Wendy Canfield, Legislator Chris Newell, Legislator Cathy Bischoff, Soil & Water Conservation District Manager Amanda Barber, Cornell Cooperative Extension Executive Director Kelly Guy, Remote: County Attorney Executive Assistant Nicole Compton, Planning Executive Assistant Jessica Leet, Finance Director Andrea Herzog
ABSENT:	
EXCUSED:	Legislator Sandra Price

Approval of Minutes

1. November 6, 2025 Agriculture, Planning & Environmental Committee Minutes

RESULT:	APPROVED
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Resolutions

ON MOTION OF BEAU HARBIN

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1.

Appoint Members to the Transportation Advisory Committee

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 289-19 authorized the formalization of the Transportation Advisory Committee as a Citizen's Advisory Committee; AND

WHEREAS, the Transportation Advisory Committee, as a formal advisory committee of the Agriculture, Planning, and Environmental Committee, will consist of a membership from a wide variety of community service agencies and government agencies; AND

WHEREAS, the Cortland County Legislature approved changes to the Bylaws of the Transportation Advisory Committee, which include staggering terms of members; NOW THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED that the Cortland County Legislature be and hereby appoints the following community service and government agency representatives, or their designee, to the Transportation Advisory Committee for a term beginning January 1, 2026 as follows:

NAME	AGENCY/CAPACITY	TERM ENDING
Brandy Strauf	Community Action Program of Cortland County (CAPCO)	12/31/2028
Olivia Prioli	Office for Aging	12/31/2028
Alexandra Mikowski	Access to Independence	12/31/2028
Brandy Fetterly	Cortland County Department of Social Services	12/31/2027

RESULT:	APPROVED (4 TO 0)
MOVER:	Legislator William McGovern
SECONDER:	Legislator Mitchel Eccleston
AYES:	Paul Heider, Jason Prentice, Reed Cleland, Beau Harbin
NAYS:	None
EXCUSED:	Sandra Price
ABSENT:	

Monthly Reports

1. Cornell Cooperative Extension Monthly Report

RESULT:	COMPLETED
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2. Planning Department Monthly Report

RESULT:	COMPLETED
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Discussion Items

Adjournment



Cortland County Soil and Water Conservation District

100 Grange Place, Room 202, Cortland, NY 13045

Phone: (607) 756-5991 Fax: (607) 756-0029

www.cortlandswcd.org

SWCD...established to promote the conservation and wise use of our county's natural resources

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT MONTHLY REPORT – January 2026

From: Amanda Barber, SWCD Manager

December 31, 2025

AGRICULTURE AND PRIVATE LAND CONSERVATION

Agricultural Nonpoint Abatement and Control Program (AGNP) – Construction inspections and project oversight continue for the Ruschmann barnyard runoff management project and Ullrich barnyard runoff management project. We have requested extensions for both contracts. The Randall silage leachate management project and the Murray barnyard runoff management project are mostly complete. There will likely be some wrap-up work to do with final payments in the spring.

Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) – As-builts are complete for the Tuning heavy use area protection and waste storage project and we are working on the closeout. The Whey Street silage leachate management project and one New Hope View heavy use area protection projects are complete. We will be wrapping up documentation and completing closeouts for BMPs in the next few weeks. The Cortland County AEM Strategic Plan was updated and submitted to NYS Ag and Markets. The next AEM Base Program, Round 19, begins January 2026 and will extend for three years until December 2028.

Climate Resilient Farming – Design and coordination of several projects are underway - two silage leachate control and irrigation, two ponds and one tree planting/fencing project. The Mikochik fencing and tree planting project is progressing with fencing completed last month. We are working on a partial payment, with the tree planting planned for spring.

Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) Enhanced Nutrient and Methane Management Program (CAFO ENMP) – Project coordination and engineering design work continue.

Cover crop incentive funding has been allocated in both the Chesapeake Bay watershed and Finger Lakes watershed. We have submitted documentation and invoiced for the funding. Landowner payments will be processed once funding is received.

COMMUNITY NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

Little York Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District (LYLPRD) – The at-large and lake association members of the Advisory Board are due for appointment this year. An update letter is being sent to the District next week.

Upper Susquehanna and Chesapeake Bay Watershed – The Owego Creek watershed stream assessment work is nearly complete. Staff were trained for road culvert terrestrial passage assessment and are working on those additional evaluations in Owego Creek and Trout Brook watersheds as weather allows. Watershed mapping, planning/design, and background data collection continue.

The Trees For Tribs program will continue again this year. Landowners with land adjacent to streams are eligible for free trees to plant and establish riparian buffers. SWCD will assist with planning and completing application paperwork.

Finger Lakes Watershed –We have revisited Grout Brook crossings for terrestrial crossing assessment, and continue work on watershed mapping, planning/design, background data collection, and report drafting.

React plow blades were purchased by SWCD for several municipalities in the county with roads in the Finger Lakes watershed. These live edge blades will maintain better contact with the surface of the road and more effectively remove snow, thereby reducing sand and salt use, which is especially important in our Finger Lakes watersheds. Salt and sand overuse can harm the environment, corrode vehicles and infrastructure, contaminate drinking water, negatively affect aquatic life, and contribute to harmful algal blooms. Our efforts are consistent with the “Don’t Be Salty, New York!” campaign. Visit <https://dec.ny.gov/environmental-protection/water/rock-salt-reduction> for more information on reducing rock salt use.

We continue to work on potential stream restoration projects, as well as planning for buffers, upland tree planting, and prescribed grazing with landowners in the Finger Lakes watershed. Funding is available to cost-share a variety of conservation practices and interested landowners should contact the office for more information.

Stormwater Management – We are now compiling the 2024 Stormwater Systems Maintenance and Management report for the Town of Cortlandville. We will be sending out the 2025 maintenance report reminder to facility owners in the new year.

Landfill Environmental Monitoring - We are working to catch up on all the reporting. A letter was drafted by SWCD for submission to NYSDEC requesting a modification to the current PFAS monitoring. We are also collaborating with the county consultant to prepare a request to NYSDEC to reduce some of the other sampling.

CONSERVATION EDUCATION/PROGRAMS/ADMINISTRATION

The Spring Planting program online shop is open with several new native plant species available this year. The link is on our website home page. Go to www.cortlandswcd.org

Save the Date! An Ag Celebration Luncheon and educational workshops will be held on March 19th.

We continue work on the 2025 Annual Report, as well as all of our state reports which are due February 15th.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cortland County

Kelly Guy: Executive Director

Highlights:

- College or Art, Architecture and Planning Project at Camp with Cornell Students for spring semester

On the Horizon: NYSFI (Flower Industries) Regional Class co-sponsor January 21st, CCE Executive Directors Leadership Conference held in Albany January 27 and 28

South Central Dairy and Field Crop Program

Janice Degni: Regional Field Crops Specialist, Betsy Hicks: Regional Dairy Specialist

On the Horizon: Winter Bale Grazing Walk Jan.10 and Winter crops meeting Jan 23.

4- H Team

Rebecca Ireland-Perry: 4-H Team Leader, Abby Thomas: 4-H/Agriculture Educator

Highlights:

- Jr. Fair planning: fair book revisions, scheduling, contest changes. Scheduling meetings with both dairy and livestock committees.
- Informational and educational workshops for youth interested in raising and selling market animals.
- Schedule set up for the Tractor Certification class to begin in March. Registration will be open in February.
- Ongoing planning for winter/spring programs and workshops to offer. Continuing the Quick Bread workshops, and planning a series of Needle Arts workshops, beginning with knitting in January.
- Planning the 4-H Sewing Camp that will be held during the school break in February.
- Practices will be starting for our dairy quiz bowl, horse quiz bowl, hippology, and livestock skillathon contests that are held on a regional level.
- Scheduling a 4-H Public Presentation Informational meeting and then planning for county public presentations to be held in March.

On the Horizon: 2026 Livestock skill-o-thon meeting and practices will begin in January. It is a 4-H regional and state competition about Livestock breeds, care, and industry knowledge. Farm to School Visit about Maple Syrup Production with Legislature Eccleston.

Cornell University Art, Architecture and Planning College Partnership:

- Challenge: To re-envision the camp's 128-acre property from a collection of isolated areas into a cohesive, modern, resilient outdoor learning campus.
- Primary Goals & Desired Outcomes:
 - A comprehensive design that integrates master planning, green infrastructure, accessibility, and creative programming.
 - Conceptual drawings and diagrams.
 - Imagery for future fundraising and outreach.
 - A prioritized project list with plausible phasing.

Research, Site Planning, Detailed Design: 15 weeks, 70 students, 6 instructors

- Weeks 1-3
 - *Introduction from Community Partner (Town Hall with stakeholders at AAP)*
 - Intro Project
- Week 4-6:
 - *Site Visit to Camp Owahta*
 - Site Planning Project
- Weeks 7-15:
 - *Midterm Review Week 8 (at AAP)*
 - *Community Service (Camp Owahta)*
 - Detailed Design Project
 - *Final Review Week 15 (AAP and Cortland)*

Details:

- Engagement:
 - Town Hall with stakeholders
 - Site Visit (camper experience)

- Midterm Review (interactive)
- Community Service (camp setup, teams and T-shirts)
- Final presentation to Board and Stakeholders in Cortland
- Projects (*authorship*):
 - 1) Introductory project exploring semester themes (constructed wilderness, memory-making, composing space, site matter)
 - 2) Research: Precedent studies (camp/cabin typologies, timber construction) and site research, site analysis
 - 3) Building Design(s) within a group Site Plan

Outcomes:

- **For CCE:**
 - Community service
 - Research books (site, construction typologies)
 - (12) overall site plan options with detailed building designs for further discussion/consideration
 - Curated “aspirational imagery” for fundraising
 - Potential for a student to continue work in summer research
- **For Architecture students:**
 - First experience with a real project with real constraints
 - Learning outcomes related to collective dwelling, site, community program, notions of preservation, and the interaction of building and landscape
 - Opportunity to give back to community

ACTIVITY REPORT



Planning Department

Administration

- **Broadband Projects** – Updates



- **Education & Outreach**

- DOS 2025-2026 Winter Webinar Series for Planning & Zoning Board Officials (*Flyer Attached*)

- **Snowmobile Grant**

- ✓ 2025 – 2026: 70% Payment Voucher received from state
- ✓ Contracts Signed with the clubs
- Phase 3 – Ongoing review of monthly Expenditures for the 2025–2026 season

- **Grants & Initiatives**

- DOS Brownfield Grant Opportunity – **AWARDED!**
- County Infrastructure Grant Program
- **Marathon Substation Modernization Project:** (\$7-8M Total project cost)
 - ARC POWER Grant Application – Pending (\$2,000,000)
 - NYSERDA Resilience Grant Application – Pending (\$2,594,400)
 - ARC IJA Pre-Application – Pending (\$900,000)

Regional Partnerships

SOUTHERN TIER 8 REGIONAL BOARD

- Sustainability Group
- CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy)
- Housing Initiatives
- ARC Applications and Projects

GIS

Cortland County's ArcGIS Applications	August Total views/usage	September Total views/usage	October Total views/usage	November Total views/usage	December Total views/usage
GIS Portal (Website Hub)	5731	7482	6367	6855	7157
Instant App (Parcel Viewer)	1210	2079	1872	1337	1123
Workspace (Parcel Viewer)	890	1346	1262	1049	1114
E-911 and Postal Addressing (Website Hub)	103	127	98	143	119
Formula Based Housing Condition Survey	N/A	2553	4323	1676	575
Abutter Map (Parcel Viewer Tool)	58	65	63	65	54
McGraw Recreational Opportunities (Web Map)	139	154	98	103	109
Food Pantry Locations (Web Map)	N/A	N/A	N/A	365	N/A

2026 Parcel Viewer Updates Coming Soon!!

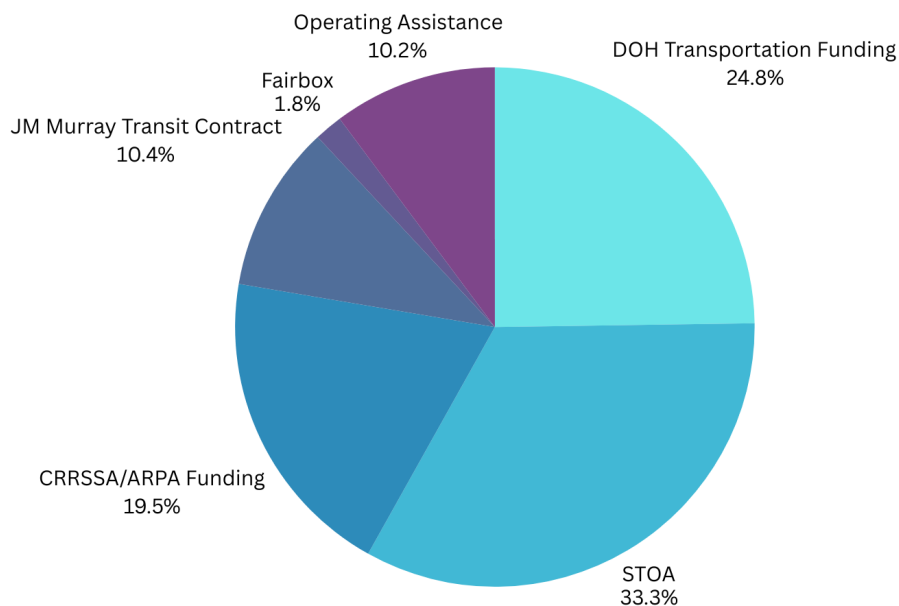
Cortland County Planning Board

- **2026 Planning Board and GML Referral Calendar**
- **GML 239 Reviews** (November)
 - 4 Returned for local determination
 - 3 Staff Reports
- **Featured Local Moratorium's** (in the past 6 months)
 - Cortlandville – Battery Energy Storage
 - **Cortlandville – Solar Energy Systems**
 - Homer (T) – All Renewable Energy Systems
 - Virgil – Solar & Battery Energy Systems
 - Preble – Wind Energy Systems

Mobility Management

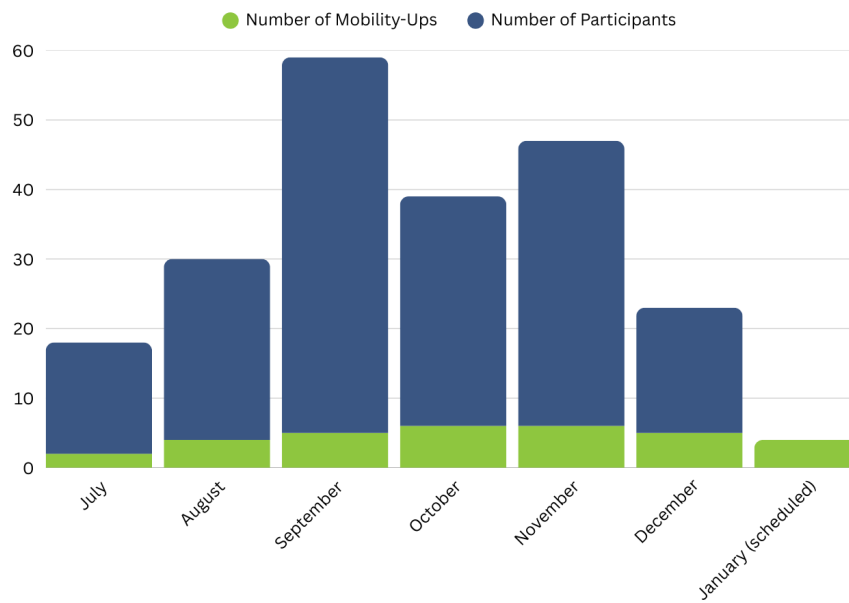
- ❖ Centro Operations
 - Full, uninterrupted service
- ❖ Final operating assistance reimbursements, including FTA Section 5311 funds, are being processed to fully offset transition-related operating costs and make the County whole.

Public Transit Operating Funding
Sources During the Transdev to
CENTRO Transition



- ❖ Transportation Advisory Committee – *Monday, January 26 at 10am*
- ❖ Connectivity Subcommittee
 - Ongoing coordination with the Health Department on walk audits, sidewalk Inventory and GIS Mapping in progress
 - In December, met with DOH Representatives on the project
- ❖ Community Collaboration & Grants
 - Collaboration with community partners on mobility initiatives.
 - Exploring upcoming grant opportunities to support accessibility, travel training, and multimodal transportation improvements.
- ❖ Travel Training
 - Case Management and development of custom travel plans for individual riders
- ❖ Education & Outreach
 - In December, attended 3 Job Seeks Workshops, educated 12 individuals
 - Mobility Meet-ups Program
 - Completed 32 meet-ups, serving 201 participants
 - Scheduling with OFA's LASS Sites in collaboration with Traffic Safety Program

Total Number of Mobility Meet-ups and Participants Served



OUR TEAM:



Trisha Hiemstra, PE
Director
of Planning



Melissa Potter, MPH
Mobility
Manager



Jessica Leet
Executive
Administrative Officer



Chris Jankus
GIS
Planner



Scott Hourigan
GIS
Planner



Lillian Jensen
Mobility
Coordinator



Department of State
Local Government

Division of Local Government Services

2025-2026 Winter Webinar Series

When:

December 2025 and January 2026

Where:

Attend on WebEx from wherever you are. You will need a computer with speakers or a mobile device.

Courses:

State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) Basics, Zoning Basics for Enforcement Officials & Board Members, Planning Board Overview, Zoning Board of Appeals Overview, Essentials for Planning & Zoning Board Staff.

Who:

Planning Board Members, Zoning Board of Appeals Members, Governing Board Members, Planning Staff, Code Enforcement Officers, Other Local Officials.

Training Schedule:

<https://dos.ny.gov/local-government-training-schedule>

To Register:

Click on each course below to register. Once registered, you will receive a confirmation email with instructions for joining each session.

December 15, 2025

State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) Basics
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
2 hours training credit

December 22, 2025

Zoning Basics for Enforcement Officials and Board Members
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
2 hours training credit

January 5, 2026

Planning Board Overview
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
2 hours training credit

January 12, 2026

Zoning Board of Appeals Overview
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
2 hours training credit

January 22, 2026

Essentials for Planning and Zoning Board Staff
2:00 PM – 3:30 PM
1.5 hours training credit