

PROPOSED AGENDA
GHENT TOWN BOARD MEETING
September 17, 2026

1. Call to Order
2. Open Meeting for Public Comment
3. Accept Minutes of Previous Meeting
4. Consent Agenda Approval
 - Building, Clerk Report, Correspondence
 - Historian Report
 - Food Pantry Report
 - Dog Control
 - Parks And Rec
 - Senior Reports
5. Committees/Boards
 - Planning and Zoning Boards
 - Climate Smart Committee- EMC appointment
 - County Report
 - Rail Trail Committee
 - Community Engagement and Communications Committee
 - Affordable Housing Committee
 - Town Beautification Committee
 - Zoning Review Committee
 - Workshop Topics
6. Highway
 - Accept Highway Superintendents Report
7. Unfinished Business
 - Correction of August Bills
8. New Business

9. Payment of Bills / Acceptance of Monthly Budget Report
 - General A \$ _____
 - General B \$ _____
 - Highway DB \$ _____
 - Lighting \$ _____
 - TOTAL \$ _____
10. Public Comment (limited to topics discussed at meeting)

Town of Ghent

August 20, 2026

The Regular Meeting of the Town Board was held August 20, 2026, at the Ghent Town Hall, 2306 State Route 66, Ghent NY 12075. Supervisor Simmons opened the meeting at 7:00 pm with the pledge to the flag.

Present:	Craig Simmons	Supervisor
	Wally Engel	Councilman
	Carl Quinn	Councilman
	Dan Barufaldi	Councilman
	Marie Meltz	Councilwoman
	Ben Perry	Highway Superintendent
	3 members of public	
Absent:	Michelle Radley	Town Clerk
	Matt Cabral	Attorney for the Town

Resolution #47 for 2026

TOWN OF GHENT COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK YEAR 2026 RESOLUTION 47

At a regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Ghent, Columbia County, New York, duly held on 20th day of June, 2026, the following Resolution came before the Board:

WHEREAS, the Town Clerk is temporarily absent and unable to attend the Town Board this evening, August 20, 2026; and

WHEREAS, there is no duly appointed and qualified Deputy Town Clerk present and able to act during such absence; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to New York State Town Law §30(10)(b), when the Town Clerk is absent or unable to act and there is no duly appointed and qualified Deputy Town Clerk present and able to act, the Town Board may appoint a qualified person, other than a member of the Town Board, as Deputy Town Clerk for the duration of such absence;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board hereby appoints Kelly Baccaro as Deputy Town Clerk pursuant to Town Law §30(10)(b), effective upon the taking and filing of the required constitutional oath of office, to serve during the temporary absence of the Town Clerk and in no event longer than the duration of such absence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that during such appointment the Deputy Town Clerk is authorized to attend and act as clerk of the August 20, 2026 Town Board meeting, keep a complete and accurate record of the proceedings, prepare the minutes and perform such other lawful duties of the Town Clerk as may be necessary during the Town Clerk's absence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the meeting may be audio recorded to assist in maintaining a complete and accurate record of the proceedings, and that the notes, recording, minutes and other records of the meeting shall be maintained and delivered to the Town Clerk's office as Town records; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this temporary appointment shall terminate upon the return and ability to act of the Town Clerk.

Upon question of the foregoing Resolution, the following Town Board Members voted "Aye" in favor of the Resolution.

MOTION # 1 TO APPOINT A TEMPORARY DEPUTY TOWN CLERK TO TAKE MINUTES made by Councilman Barufaldi, seconded by Councilwoman Meltz, and approved unanimously.
Ayes: 5 Simmons, Quinn, Barufaldi, Meltz, Engel
Nays: 0

A brief pause as the Temporary Clerk was sworn in by Councilman Barufaldi. An Oath of Office was signed by Temporary Clerk Baccaro and notarized by Councilman Barufaldi.

Public Comment: none

MOTION # 2 TO ACCEPT MINUTES FROM JULY 16, 2026 made by Councilman Barufaldi, seconded by Councilman Engel, and approved unanimously.
Ayes: 5 Simmons, Quinn, Barufaldi, Meltz, Engel
Nays: 0

MOTION #3 TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA made by Councilman Engel, seconded by Councilman Quinn and approved unanimously.
Ayes: 5 Simmons, Quinn, Barufaldi, Meltz, Engel
Nays: 0

Dog Control Report:

I have 7 entries for this month:

7/12 - Report of a loose brown/white shepherd mix on the Northbound side of the TSP near mile marker 94.1. "No further reports.

7/17 - Report of a dog bite at Camphill Ghent. Management chose to seek eviction of the resident instead of pursuing any charges against the owner.

7/10 - Older female beagle found on Rt 20:1 near Roxbury Rd reunited with its owners shortly after

7/30 - Report of a missing female border collie mix. Found safe by the owners a few days later.

8/1 - Report of a missing red healer in Ghent. Found by the owner shortly after.

8/1 - Report of a loose black and white beagle sized dog on Cty Rt 9/Ghent Mellenville Rd. Believed to be the missing dog from 7/30.

8/17 - Report of a loose black/white/grey greyhound mix wearing a purple collar near exit 91 on the southbound side of the TSP. Last seen headed towards Philmont on Rt. 217.

No new updates on the dangerous dog case.

Kyle Miller, Dog Control Officer

Councilman Quinn will follow up regarding the dog control report noted recent police activity involving tickets issued, which requires further follow-up with the officer.

Parks & Recreation Report:

Supervisor Simmons confirmed that the parks survived the recent storm, summer camp has concluded, and field conditions, including those used by Pop Warner, appear to be in good order.

Senior Report:

Councilwoman Meltz reported on a recent meeting featuring a presentation by Christopher Liberati-Conant from the DA's office regarding fraud targeting seniors, which was well-received. Other updates included a successful ice cream social donated by Stewarts, high participation in flyer distribution in paper form for the Ghent Press (newsletter) and for the Columbia County Office for the Aging flyers. OFA's upcoming Senior Day is scheduled for September 16th at the Fairgrounds, which requires pre-registration. The next committee meeting is set for September 2nd at the Ghent Reformed Church. The OFA Advisory Counsel does not meet next month because of the Senior Day, but will resume in the fall.

Thank you letter from Mayor Howe

July 14, 2026

Dear Supervisor Simmons, Superintendent Perry, members of the Ghent Highway Department, and Town Council Members,

On behalf of the Village Board of Trustees and the Village of Chatham DPW, I wanted to take a moment to send a heartfelt thank you to everyone involved in the cleanup efforts after the recent devastating storm.

An event of that scale creates immense challenges, but the coordination between the Board and the Highway Department was seamless. Superintendent Perry, your crew worked tirelessly under demanding conditions to clear fallen trees, manage debris, and restore safety to our roadways.

The hard work, long hours, and dedication of the crew did not go unnoticed by the residents of the Village of Chatham. Please pass along our deepest gratitude to every member of the team who braved the elements to get our town back on its feet.

Thank you for everything you do to keep our village safe and moving forward.

Sincerely,
John Howe
Mayor
Village of Chatham

Historian Report:

Town of Ghent Historian

July, 2026 Report

- maintained Facebook page for the 1,642 people who follow and many more who lurk there
- gave talk "One-room Schoolhouses" at Riders Mills Historical Society- it was well received
- attended Great Community Day Committee meeting was special guest at Gardina Lane/Gaul Hollow Summer Book Party - a beautiful event where some neighbors were meeting each other for the first time after many years of living adjacent to one another
- facilitated the meeting of Sallie Snyder Freidman and a long lost distant relative who contacted me — Jeanne Kline — they are working on getting a marker for Snyder Cemetery and their ancestor, Tunis Snyder, a Rev War Vet.
- provided information for and had a long phone conversation with Lindsay Burdette, descendant of Joan Skinkle — an 18th century West Ghent resident whom I speak about often in my talks — she was delighted to hear the house has been fixed up and has people living in it!
- Met with John Winkler and his mother Mrs. Winkler - of the Snyder Road Winklers — to talk about the history of their house — probably an 18th century house
- In preparation for a talk I'm giving in Red Rock, I visited Red Rock's recently restored one room schoolhouse
- worked with the Pomeroy Foundation on some grant details for a marker to be placed in front of the Ghent Reformed Church — fingers crossed

Gregg Berninger

Town of Ghent Historian

Planning Report:

Planning and zoning reports were also noted with no specific questions raised by the board.

7/22 Planning Board Public Hearing & 8/5 regular meeting

7/22 @ 7:00 PM Hearing for the Meadowgreen Wellness Resort Board members present were French, Conn, Stoner, and Machiz

There were 6 representatives from the applicant and 6 from the public. Questions were raised and answered about the restaurant, amplified music, the months of operation, the times of operation, whether pets would be allowed at the campground, parking, capacities, the ponds, trails, and lighting. After much discussion, the public hearing was closed and moved to the regular meeting in August.

Adjourned at 8:47
July 14, 2026

8/5 Planning Board Meeting @ 7:00

All 7 board members were present as well as Michayla McMahon and Chris Keefe. Matt was not present. Dear Supervisor Simmons, Superintendent Perry, members of the Ghent Highway Department, Total other persons at the meeting was 18 with one dog in attendance as well.

On behalf of the Village Board of Trustees and the Village of Chatham DPW, I wanted to take a moment to send a heartfelt thank you to everyone involved in the cleanup efforts after the recent devastating storm.

An event of that scale creates immense challenges. Superintendents Perry, your crew worked tirelessly under demanding conditions to clear fallen trees, manage debris, and restore safety to our roadways.

The meeting was opened and members discussed the previous public hearing for the Meadowgreens Wellness Resort. Representatives discussed matters in lighting for the project. No objections were raised regarding the planned project. Approved by the board.

Public Hearing for Cedar Flow Construction for a SUP/SPR for a contractor facility at 1870 Rt 9H at the corner of Falls Rd. Formerly an office building for insurance. The engineer discussed previous requests from the board to the board and public. Larry had additional questions about lighting. A member of the public voiced that the proposed lighting would be better and more compliant than the lighting at the town hall. No other comments from the floor. Public comment closed. SUP/SPR was approved by the board.

Public Hearing for Adrian Zuniga for a SPR for a residential garage at 37 Nelson Ave. The plan is for a 30'x40' garage currently under construction. An updated site plan was presented by Mr. Zuniga. The majority of the public was present for this project. The chairman repeatedly stated that the application is for a residential use garage. The public concern is that the location will be utilized for business use. One neighbor has raised concerns due to the number of vehicles, both registered and unregistered. This includes cars, trucks, trailers, and lawn mowing equipment. One neighbor was concerned about the possibility of increased traffic in the residential area. After some additional Q&A, the public hearing was closed. After a lengthy discussion the application was approved.

New Business:

Baker Addition for a SPR at 2237 Rt66 for a retail/bakery at the former Columbia Paper/Ghent Post Office. The applicant is Ghent resident Bonnie Davis who currently utilizes a retail spot in East Chatham and has been seeking a location closer to home. Larry brought up the existing lighting and the landlord of the building brought up the lighting at the town hall. In a tit for tat, he stated he would trade light for light to be compliant. Additional discussions regarding parking and hours of operation. A public hearing is set for September 2nd. 8:58

Submitted by Councilman Engel

Zoning Report:

ZBA met on 8/12.

In attendance: Lyle Trued, Lew Streeter, Beth Lenihan, Jack Fenn, Michayla McMahon

Minutes of previous meeting accepted.

Applicant: Frank and Aretta Stancari, Area Variance for accessory dwelling unit

Public hearing closed (had been left open after last meeting)

Discussion about setbacks, timing of the home (a tiny home used as an ADU), what happens if not occupied, and neighbor feedback. Application approved, unanimous vote.

Meeting adjourned at 7:22pm

After the meeting, I engaged the ZBA in a lively chat about ADU and affordable housing. Some good ideas came from it, that I will matriculate with our AHC projects.

Best,

Dan B

(Filling in for Marie, the ZBA Liaison)

Climate Smart Committee Report:

Climate Smart met on 8/11. 630pm to 730pm.

Attendees. Cia, Carl, Anamyn, Eddie, Alex, Tracey, Lucy, Jill and Elyse. All in person at town hall. Craig stopped by briefly but got called away.

Carl shared 2 messages from Craig: \$1,000 grant from Bank of Greene County. Would like to plant an Oak Tree at Town Hall. Dave has stepped down from County Environmental Management Committee. Craig wants to know if any Climate Smart member would like to fill the seat to represent Ghent. Members will consider and get back to Craig if interested.

Resolution #48 for 2026

**TOWN OF GHENT
COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK
YEAR 2026
RESOLUTION 48**

AUTHORIZATION FOR THE TOWN OF GHENT TOWN BOARD TO ACCEPT A GRANT
UPON, at a meeting held on the 20th of August 2026; WHEREAS, the Bank of Greene County Charitable Foundation has awarded the Town of Ghent a grant in the amount of \$1000.00 to be given to the Ghent Climate Smart Committee for more tree plantings.

WHEREAS, the Town of Ghent is requesting permission to accept this grant and amend the budget;

NOW, THEREFORE BE RESOLVED, that authorization is hereby granted for the Town of Ghent to accept a grant from the Bank of Greene County Charitable Foundation in the amount of \$1000.00

MOTION # 4 TO ACCEPT A GRANT FOR \$1000.00 FROM THE BANK OF GREENE COUNTY made by Councilman Barufaldi, seconded by Councilman Engel, and approved unanimously.

Ayes: 5 Simmons, Quinn, Barufaldi, Meltz, Engel

Nays: 0

The Resolution having been approved by a majority of the Town Board, the same was declared duly adopted by the Supervisor of the Town of Ghent.

Dated: August 20, 2026

Discussion on activities for Community Day tabling.

Discussion of creating a "Ghent Talks" or "Ghent Voices" program similar to "Taghkanic Talks" which has been successful. Alex to talk to Ghent Playhouse on use of their space during show downtimes.

Discussion about Gregg Berninger being the first presenter to kickoff series. Topic of Ghent affected by climate issues in early settling of Ghent.

Recap Earth Day Austerlitz joint activities and suggestions we might tap into.

Next meeting 9/8.

Carl

Councilman Quinn advised the committee discussed preparations for Community Day in September, including the creation of a display highlighting local environmental activities. There is a proposal to establish a regular speaker series featuring community voices and historical environmental topics, with potential involvement from local figures such as Greg. Additionally, coordination is underway with the Ghent Playhouse to potentially host these events.

Tree Planting Grant: Supervisor Simmons applied and received a \$1,000 grant for tree planting to commemorate the town's 250th anniversary. The plan involves planting a white oak at the town hall this fall, mirroring a tradition established during the bicentennial, with a celebration to follow.

County Commission Vacancy: The board discussed the vacancy on the County Climate Smart Committee and the need to identify a replacement for Dave Newman. While the committee intends to investigate the position's requirements, the board plans to reach out to potential candidates and provide a recommendation by the next meeting.

County Report - Tax Benefit Adjustments: The board was informed of upcoming county-level changes regarding tax benefits for Seniors and Disabled & Low-Income residents. These changes involve raising income thresholds to account for inflation, and the board plans to review these adjustments once finalized by the county to determine the specific impact on the town. Will affect 3 people in the village and 15 in the town.

Rail Trail Infrastructure and Traffic Rerouting: The board discussed the upcoming installation of a bridge over Route 22, which has been in development for approximately 10 years. Traffic will be rerouted through County Route 7, and the county is managing the signage and detour planning. Clarification was provided that the rail trail installation will not disrupt the fairgrounds parking area, as an existing agreement secures access for the fair.

Community Engagement - Community Day Status - the Committee is approximately 90% prepared for Community Day, with planned attractions including a truck simulator, bounce house, obstacle course, music, and a karate demonstration. Efforts are focused on maintaining a regular posting schedule on social media and the town website.

Report:

We are very nearly there. Notes from last meeting.

Dan & Marie - Co-Chairs

Done/Confirmed

- Truck Simulator
- Community Day on Town Web
 - Community Day Page
 - Vendor Posting/solicitation/registration.
 - Updated Vendor List
- Kids Offerings and Grouping
- Music Program
 - Bagpipes 11:00
 - Marilyn and Rick 11:30-12:30
 - Ghent Band 1:00-2:30pm
- Food
 - VFW - Burgers and Dogs
 - Chatham Bakery Greatest Hits - Donuts & Grilled Cheese
 - Ghent Reformed Church - Pies. Sandwiches and Soup
 - GVFC#1 Ladies Aux- Mac&Cheese. Chili
 - Town of Ghent - Free Coffee

Other Program | Town Representation | Town Supported

- Truck Simulator
- Obstacle Course and Bounce House
- Big Equipment Display
- Historian
- Climate Smart Committee
- Beautification Committee
- Rail Trail
- Food Pantry

- Ghent Fire Co's and EMS squads
- Col Co Sheriff

Other

- Tent, chairs, tables, tablecloths
- Shirts/Hats

Open Items

- Banner & Lawn Signs — Final notes collected. design will go to printer this week - DAN
- Sponsors
 - Web Page — Updated. but needs another - SHELLEY & DAN
 - Sponsor Appreciation Signs - DAN (Design done. just waiting to finalize list)
- Create Community as an event in Social Media - SHARI
- Resource Table - MARIE
 - Voter Registration
 - Town newsletter
 - Hat and shirt sales?
 - Coffee
- Confirm Tent Electric hookup - DAN
- Confirm Porta-potties
- Straw bales -Craig
- Final schedule for Volunteers and Vendors. Friday and Sat am Mon.

NEXT MEETING: Sept 16. 6pm. Town Hall. and we will have our last meeting at the regularly scheduled for Monday 9/21 6pm Town Hall

Thank you everyone...this gets easier and better every year, and it's entirely because we have on awesome group of folks who care about our town. THANK YOU!!!

Communication System — Councilman Barufaldi shared a copy of the “Textmygov” proposal in the packet. The board evaluated a proposal for a text-based emergency alert system costing \$9,000.00 in the first year and \$6,000.00 annually thereafter, which was deemed too expensive. The board expressed a desire to find a more cost-effective solution that allows for mobile-based emergency alerts during power and internet outages. Further exploration will include consulting with the county 911 center and investigating lower-cost 800-number texting services.

Affordable Housing Committee Update: The committee is currently in the research phase, utilizing AI to categorize 187 potential housing strategies into 10 distinct areas. The long-term goal is to present the town board with three prioritized projects, such as zoning changes or an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) program, within approximately eight months.

Report:

Affordable Housing Committee — August 4, 2026 Meeting The Affordable Housing Committee continued its review of potential housing strategies for the Town, using a new Affordable Housing Solutions Matrix developed by the Committee Chair with research assistance from ChatGPT. The Matrix draws from the Comprehensive Plan prior committee research, regional housing resources, the housing toolbox provided by Nan Stolzenburg, and research into approaches used or proposed in other communities.

The Matrix identifies 187 individual potential housing strategies organized into 10 major categories. It is intended as a comprehensive inventory of possible tools—not a list of recommendations. The Committee is using it to systematically evaluate the options and identify those most appropriate and potentially useful for Ghent.

Committee Direction

The Committee discussed a phased approach to its work:

- Phase 1: Narrow the broad range of potential strategies to a manageable number of priority areas and develop several high-level project concepts for presentation to the Town Board.
- Town Board Review: Present those priorities to the Board for direction before undertaking significant

implementation work.

- Phase 2: Subject to Board direction, organize project teams to develop specific proposals, identify resources and partners, and determine implementation requirements.

The Committee also discussed the importance of public engagement, including when and how residents should be brought into the process. There was general agreement that public communication will be important, while recognizing that detailed public outreach may be more productive after potential initiatives have been narrowed and discussed with the Town Board.

Areas Discussed

The Committee began reviewing and prioritizing the Solutions Matrix, with significant discussion focused on:

- Zoning & Land Use, including ADUs, smaller lots, missing-middle housing, planned residential development, adaptive reuse, streamlined approvals, and other approaches that could enable additional housing while maintaining community character.
- Existing Housing Preservation, particularly helping seniors age in place, preserving and rehabilitating existing housing, and connecting residents and property owners with existing County and State resources.
- New Housing Production, including workforce and farmworker housing, modular/manufactured housing, senior housing, and opportunities for small-scale or nonprofit development.
- Infrastructure, particularly wastewater and septic limitations, which were identified as a significant constraint on housing development in Ghent. Potential work could include researching shared or alternative septic systems and working with County and other partners to reduce regulatory barriers.
- Land & Property Strategies, including opportunities involving underutilized or donated land, land trusts, Habitat for Humanity, and other potential development partnerships.
- Financial & Tax Incentives, including density incentives, PILOTs, financing tools, fee reductions, and potential partnerships with financial institutions.
- Long-Term Affordability Mechanisms, including ways to ensure that housing created as affordable housing remains affordable over time.
- Housing Assistance & Education, particularly opportunities to connect residents, property owners, tenants and landlords with existing programs and resources.

Several strategies that appeared less applicable to Ghent were also identified for removal or lower priority.

To Be Discussed

The Committee did not complete its review of the Matrix. Two major categories remain for more detailed discussion:

- Capacity, Partnerships & Delivery, including potential partnerships with the County, nonprofits, Habitat for Humanity, land trusts, developers, financial institutions, employers and other organizations, as well as the capacity needed to move projects from concept to implementation.
- Planning, Data & Community Engagement, including housing and zoning analysis, infrastructure and buildable land studies, housing inventories, community engagement and education, and ongoing housing planning and data collection.

Next Steps

The Committee will complete its review of the remaining Solutions Matrix categories and further consolidate the list into a smaller number of potential initiatives. Members will receive material in advance of the next meeting to help prioritize the alternatives.

The goal remains to bring the Town Board a focused set of potential housing initiatives, along with an initial assessment of what each would require, before proceeding into detailed implementation work. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Committee also briefly reviewed U.S. Census demographic and housing data for Ghent, including population, age distribution, and homeownership.

Town Beautification Committee: Councilman Quinn advised they have held off from holding an official meeting until a committee is appointed. He shared a list of potential members.

Skylar Meltz —(Tipple Rd) Strong interest in gardening, flowers and landscaping. Enjoys creating welcoming outdoor spaces that residents and visitors can appreciate. Believes beautification fosters town pride.

MOTION #5 TO APPROVE Skylar Meltz made by Councilman Barufaldi, seconded by Councilman Engel; Councilwoman Meltz abstained and motion was approved.

Ayes: 4 Simmons, Quinn, Barufaldi, Engel

Nays: 0

Abstain: 1 Meltz

Cassandra Meltz —(Garage Place Rd) Been a resident for close to 2 years. Lives right in the heart of town. Wants to be part of the committee to show the town that love that it has shown her family. Would like to be part of adding to the beauty of Ghent.

MOTION #6 TO APPROVE Cassandra Meltz made by Councilman Barufaldi, seconded by Councilman Engel; Councilwoman Meltz abstained and motion was approved.

Ayes: 4 Simmons, Quinn, Barufaldi, Engel

Nays: 0

Abstain: 1 Meltz

Brenda Gevertz —(Hillside Road) Committed to preserving and enhancing our community's natural beauty. Avid gardener with deep respect for local environment. Master's degree in public/social service administration with an emphasis on community organization. Believes civic engagement through committees like this can strengthen community bonds and heighten local pride.

MOTION #7 TO APPROVE Brenda Gevertz made by Councilman Barufaldi, seconded by Supervisor Simmons; and was approved unanimously.

Ayes: 5 Simmons, Quinn, Barufaldi, Meltz, Engel

Nays: 0

Jen Stoner — (County Rte 22) Aware of the goals set forth by the town and feels she can contribute to the group based on long-term involvement with the Town and track record of bringing people to the table.

MOTION #8 TO APPROVE Jen Stoner made by Councilman Barufaldi, seconded by Councilman Engel; and was approved unanimously.

Ayes: 5 Simmons, Quinn, Barufaldi, Meltz, Engel

Nays: 0

Tracy Pennea —(County Rte 22) is currently on Climate Smart and wants to use her experience to help the Beautification Committee. Is very involved in Climate Smart activities of other towns and brings a lot of knowledge about outdoor environments.

MOTION #9 TO APPROVE Tracy Pennea was made by Councilman Barufaldi, seconded by Supervisor Simmons; and was approved unanimously.

Ayes: 5 Simmons, Quinn, Barufaldi, Meltz, Engel

Nays: 0

Amy Krane —(Habeck Rd)- Freelance architectural color consultant for interiors and exteriors. Also a local realtor. Trained at NY Botanical Garden for garden design and is an avid gardener. Looking forward to participating in anything to do with architecture, property and gardens

MOTION #10 TO APPROVE Amy Krane was made by Councilman Barufaldi, seconded by Councilwoman Meltz; and was approved unanimously.

Ayes: 5 Simmons, Quinn, Barufaldi, Meltz, Engel

Nays: 0

Mary Wood – Has lived in Ghent for 40 years with her husband and raised four children. She is looking forward to working on the Beautification Committee to keep Ghent beautiful!!

MOTION #11 TO APPROVE Mary Wood was made by Councilman Barufaldi, seconded by Councilwoman Meltz; and was approved unanimously.

Ayes: 5 Simmons, Quinn, Barufaldi, Meltz, Engel

Nays: 0

Zoning Review Committee - Lot Coverage Study: The committee has resumed its review of town code regarding lot coverage area percentages. The objective is to determine appropriate lot coverage percentages for commercial properties without creating non-conforming lots, using AI to assist in analyzing development levels across the town

Report: ZRC Report to Town Board - August 19 Meeting

All,

The ZRC met on August 19. In attendance were Dan Barufaldi, Lyle Trued, Geoff French and Conrad Coon.

We reviewed the history and the status of the proposed law. After careful consideration, we agreed the new law should move forward as originally conceived - correct the conflict by fixing the syntax and redefining Lot Coverage Area (LCA).

Because the definition of LCA has changed to include other items, we need to better understand what this means on the ground before settling on the right percentage:

- How many lots that are built now would become non-conforming at 60% LCA, 70%, or at other possible thresholds?
- What is the LCA for developed commercial lots now? Can we use this to inform us on what balance to strike between development and preservation
- Can we do a substantive survey of land area coverage in Commercial, or will we have to extrapolate from a sample?

We also need to reconcile whether the split-zoned lot provision can be improved - whether to allow for some discretion through a variance or site-by-site review process.

Next Steps

I will sit with Chris Keefe to determine what is already possible around gauging LCA, and what we might be able to leverage to better understand commercial zone density. We also plan to explore whether AI might help with the analysis.

Next Meetings

September 23, October 28 and November 25. All meetings are scheduled for 6:00-7:30pm at Town Hall.

Best,

Dan Barufaldi

Workshop - Accountant Introduction: The board reviewed the meeting with the new town accountant, Bob Patterson, noting their satisfaction with the financial tracking for the 2025 fiscal year and the preparation for 2026.

Highway Superintendent Report - Storm Recovery: The highway department successfully managed significant storm impact from 9.5 to 11 inches of rain in a 24-hour period. Despite the volume of water, the town avoided losing any pipes, and four roads with significant damage—Arch Bridge, Hickory Hill, Angel Hill, and Dupier—were reopened within 30 hours. The crew continues to manage foliage control,

guard rail maintenance, and paving projects, noting that while the storm caused delays, ongoing operations remain effective.

Highway Safety Protocols: Safety remains the primary focus during storm operations, with the implementation of a mandatory buddy system and radio check-in procedures for crew members.

Highway - Water Street Private Culvert Issue: Regarding the culvert on Water Street, the superintendent clarified that the issue involves private property and that the town only intervenes during declared emergencies. While the crew attempted to clear the pipe during the storm, they were recalled for safety reasons when the obstruction could not be safely removed.

MOTION # 12 TO ACCEPT HIGHWAY REPORT made by Councilman Quinn, seconded by Councilman Engel, and approved unanimously.

Ayes: 5 Simmons, Quinn, Barufaldi, Meltz, Engel

Nays: 0

New Business:

Confidential Secretary Resignation:

MOTION # 13 TO ACCEPT THE LETTER OF RESIGNATION FROM THE CONFIDENTIAL SECRETARY/DEPUTY CLERK EFFECTIVE JULY 30TH. made by Councilman Barufaldi, seconded by Councilman Engel, and approved unanimously.

Ayes: 5 Simmons, Quinn, Barufaldi, Meltz, Engel

Nays: 0

The Board plans to consult with legal counsel regarding the resignation from multiple roles and the request for an unpaid leave of absence before determining how to proceed with staffing.

Appointment to the Environmental Management Council –

Supv. Simmons stated that he is tabling this till next month. This conversation led to the Councilman Barufaldi recommending the standardization of appointments to various committees, ensuring that positions are publicly announced and require formal letters of interest. This discussion aimed to ensure transparency and consistency across all town committees, moving away from relying solely on informal recommendations.

Spectrum Phone and Internet Contract: The board authorized the Supervisor Simmons to enter into a three-year contract with Spectrum for a bundled phone and internet package. This transition is expected to save \$100.00 per month and upgrade the town's outdated 30-40 year-old phone system, with confirmation that the new setup is compatible with current security and firewall systems.

MOTION # 14 TO CONTRACT WITH SPECTRUM FOR NEW PHONE & INTERNET SERVICE made by Councilman Barufaldi, seconded by Councilman Engel, and approved unanimously.

Ayes: 5 Simmons, Quinn, Barufaldi, Meltz, Engel

Nays: 0

MOTION # 15 TO PAY ALL AUDITED BILLS, ACCEPT THE MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT made by Councilman Barufaldi, seconded by Councilman Quinn and approved unanimously.

Ayes: 5 Simmons, Quinn, Barufaldi, Meltz, Engel

Nays: 0

Supervisor Simmons confirmed that the voucher audit process is being followed, requiring signatures from board members to approve payments, and that these vouchers will be paid following the meeting. Due to the absence of the town clerk and the loss of a deputy clerk, Supv. Simmons noted that the workflow for preparing vouchers and repairs has changed. The process ensures that all invoices are reviewed by two board members before vouchers are created and payments are authorized, maintaining the standard level of oversight.

Supervisor Simmons presented the current bills for review, noting a total of \$64,671.80. The breakdown includes \$3,844.90 for General A, \$1,591 for General B, and \$31,595.44 for Highway DB. The Highway DB total was lower than usual because crews spent two weeks on storm cleanup and did not purchase covers for Washington. Additionally, street lighting costs were reported as \$722.45.

Public Comment-

Supervisor Simmons responded to a question regarding the monthly street lighting cost, confirming it is approximately \$722 per month. He explained that the town uses an LED lighting program implemented in the past, which reduced the monthly bill from \$1,000 to the current rate, providing savings of \$300 to \$400. It was clarified that this lighting district does not encompass the entire town.

MOTION # 16 TO ADJOURN MEETING AT 8:01 PM made by Councilman Barufaldi, seconded by Councilman Quinn, and approved unanimously.

Ayes: 5 Simmons, Quinn, Barufaldi, Meltz, Engel

Nays: 0

Respectfully Submitted, Kelly Baccaro, Temporary Deputy Clerk

Account#	Account Description	Fee Description	Qty	Local Share	
A 1255	Marriage Lic.	MARRIAGE LICENSE FEE	2	35.00	
	Town Clerk Fees	Death Certificate	18	180.00	
	Sub-Total:			\$215.00	
A1255	Conservation	Conservation	9	63.11	
	Medium Trash Bags	Medium Trash Bags	55	11.00	
	Small Trash Bags	Small Trash Bags	25	0.00	
	Sub-Total:			\$74.11	
A2544	Dog Licensing	Female, Spayed	7	42.00	
		Female, Unspayed	2	22.00	
		Male, Neutered	13	78.00	
		Male, Unneutered	2	22.00	
	Senior	Senior	13	-45.50	
		Sub-Total:			\$118.50
	Total Local Shares Remitted:			\$407.61	
Amount paid to:	Columbia County Treasurer			259.00	
Amount paid to:	NYS Ag. & Markets for spay/neuter program			32.00	
Amount paid to:	NYS Environmental Conservation			1,080.89	
Amount paid to:	State Health Dept. For Marriage Licenses			45.00	
Total State, County & Local Revenues:		\$1,824.50	Total Non-Local Revenues:		\$1,416.89

To the Supervisor:

Pursuant to Section 27, Sub 1, of the Town Law, I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full and true statement of all fees and monies received by me, Michelle Radley, Town Clerk, Town of Ghent during the period stated above, in connection with my office, excepting only such fees and monies, the application of which are otherwise provided for by law.

Supervisor

Date

Town Clerk

Date

Town of Ghent Historian

August, 2026 Report

- maintained our Facebook page for the 1,642 people who follow and many more who lurk there
- researched and compiled information on Claude and Ellen Barrow for Art Omi – the Barrows are buried on the Art Omi property
- modified one-room schoolhouse talk to be given at the Red Rock Historical Society on Saturday, September 19th at 3 pm
- continued to work with the Pomeroy Foundation regarding the grant for a marker for the Ghent Reformed Church – went to the church to find some more primary source material
- purchased two beautiful photos of the Ghent Band from the mid-twentieth century – they were at an estate sale at the home of the Moses/Craft family – long time Ghent Band people
- researched and compiled information on the Fowler farm that was on Fowler Lake Road - current owner of property there inquired

Gregg Berninger

Town of Ghent Historian

Chatham-Ghent Senior Gathering

September 2, 2026

The monthly meeting of the Chatham-Ghent Seniors was held on Wednesday, September 2nd, 2026 at 1:00 PM at the West Ghent Church. Approximately 64 in attendance and total membership is now over 100.

Updated the Senior Group that the Columbia Board of Supervisors have approved some partial tax exemptions for residents over 65 and individuals with disabilities for 2027. Advised that they can reach out to Lynn Hotaling, Ghent Tax Collector starting in November to check eligibility.

Reminder to license your dogs with Town Clerk Shelley Radley.

Supervisor Simmons has secured a grant for \$500,000.00 to support the second phase of the water system in Ghent.

Reminder to all about:

Senior Day at the Columbia County Fairgrounds on September 16th, 2026.

Community Day on 9/26/2026 Reminder.

The One Room School House Presentation on 9/16/2026 in East Chatham.

Shared out newsletter which is very well received.

Question arose of when the Chatham/Ghent Seniors started meeting, I forwarded this to Greg Berninger for further investigation.

Annual Christmas Party will be held on December 2nd, 2026 at the Kinderhook Elks Lodge. Group has decided instead of a gift exchange just have folks donate to the music fund at CHS to honor Mr. Gitto.

Group did ask if Supervisor Simmons would "donate" a raffle basket/gift since Supervisor Collins will be donating one.....

Next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 7th, 2026.

Marie Meltz

Payment of Bills / Acceptance of Monthly Budget Report- August 20,2026

General A \$	30,844.90
General B \$	1,509.01
Highway DB \$	39,448.43
Lighting \$	722.45
TOTAL\$	64,671.80

Payment of Bills / Acceptance of Monthly Budget Report- August Corrected

General A \$	33,579.08
General B \$	1,509.01
Highway DB \$	39,448.43
Lighting \$	772.45
TOTAL\$	75,258.97