

Approved 8/12/09

MINUTES
PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE
JULY 8, 2009 3:15 P.M. COURTHOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM

Present: P. Mackesey, Chair; M. Robertson; C. Chock; F. Proto
Excused: W. Burbank
Staff: E. Marx, J. Leccese, Planning; J. Mareane, P. Younger, Administration; K. Fuller, Deputy Clerk
Guests: C. Schutt, Soil and Water Conservation; M. Stamm, Tompkins County Area Development;
Stacey Shackford, *The Ithaca Journal*

Call to Order

Chair Mackesey called the meeting was called to order at 3:15 p.m.

Withdrawal from Agenda

Ms. Mackesey withdrew the Environmental Ban on BPA from the agenda. A brief discussion on the topic occurred and it was noted the topic should also be discussed at the Board of Health due to the environmental health concerns and the Health and Human Services Committee.

Approval of Minutes of June 10, 2009

It was MOVED by Mr. Proto, seconded by Ms. Robertson, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of June 10, 2009, as amended. MINUTES APPROVED.

Appointment

The Committee was provided an application for a position on the Planning Advisory Board for consideration.

Ms. Chock expressed concern that an individual working for Cornell University as a planner is more appropriate for the education seat and not the At-large seat. Mr. Marx said he is recommending the individual due to his interaction with her as well as the broad planning knowledge and perspective, and an international perspective the candidate has. She has contributed very well to discussions he has been involved in and he believes her addition would be of great value. Mr. Marx also noted there is less Cornell University representation on this board than other advisory boards. Mr. Marx does not see the candidate's filling an At-large seat as a problem and also noted Mr. Gutenberger is a good Education representative.

Ms. Robertson inquired what other vacancies on the board exist. She was informed that in addition to the At-Large designation there are three vacancies: Human Services, Natural Environment, and Built Environmental Design, which he hopes to fill in the next few months. There is also a potential to have another At-large seat become vacant. Ms. Robertson asked that in the future Legislators be informed when openings occur. Mr. Marx indicated he has some ideas for the Human Services seat.

Mr. Proto asked to be provided with a listing of membership on the Board. Mr. Proto also requested the Planning Advisory Board attendance records be provided to the Committee.

Ms. Chock asked if the appointment should be postponed. She noted there have been many conversations with her constituents expressing concern that whatever discussions and work take place in the planning area, the County needs to make sure there is adequate representation across-the-board including individuals representing neighborhoods adjacent to Cornell. Mr. Marx indicated it is not possible to do so on the Planning Advisory Board. Ms. Chock said she would not have an objection to an individual from another area

of Cornell University filling the seat, however, in this particular case the individual's income is from Cornell University Planning Department, which could be a conflict of interest. Ms. Mackesey asked for clarification of Ms. Chock's preference to see the candidate hold an Education seat. Ms. Chock said she assumes the seat designation would be for a particular educational organization's representation; the At-Large designation is not.

Mr. Proto said he believes the candidate's broad spectrum of experience with activities outside Cornell University he would be in favor of moving the appointment along.

Ms. Robertson also would like to move the appointment forward. She acknowledged Ms. Chock's concerns, but as she thinks of Cornell's representation on all other boards it is true that appointments should be reviewed. She also acknowledged that the candidate would bring diversity to the board in several areas.

It was MOVED by Mr. Proto, and seconded by Ms. Robertson, to recommend appointment of Minakshi Amundsen at an At-large representative to the Planning Advisory Board for a term to expire December 31, 2011.

It was requested to obtain a list of membership prior to any other appointments coming forward.

Ms. Chock indicated she would like to table the appointment at this time. She would rather not vote against the applicant as Ms. Amundsen is a strong planner with a lot of skills. She asked if it is possible to change the Education representative to this individual; it was explained it is not normal procedure to do so.

It was MOVED by Mr. Proto, seconded by Ms. Robertson, to Call the Question. A voice vote on the motion resulted as follows: Ayes – 3; Noes – 1 (Legislator Chock); Excused – 1 (Legislator Burbank). QUESTION CALLED.

A voice vote to recommend the appointment of Minakshi Amundsen as an At-large representative to the Planning Advisory Board for a term to expire December 31, 2011, to the full Legislature resulted as follows: Ayes – 3; Noes – 1 (Legislator Chock); Excused – 1 (Legislator Burbank). APPOINTMENT APPROVED.

Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation District

Mr. Schutt, Conservation District Manager, provided written information relating to the current and future budget implications for the Soil and Water Conservation District. The information showed that during 2008 the District operated over a \$1 million budget with approximately 72% of that coming from State sources, however, to date no State dollars have been received by the District in 2009. A memorandum was received indicating the funds are in the process and should be received shortly from Agriculture and Markets. Mr. Proto noted the lack of sending the funds occurred prior to the current problems existing at the State level. Some money from the Environmental Protection Fund is starting to come forward. At the present time the State has not stated they are reducing any of the amounts due to the District.

Ms. Mackesey asked how the District is maintaining operations. She was informed the District had prepared the vouchers for a good portion of the grant funds prior to the present grants so there was a fund balance to draw upon, with the intention of replacing the funds when received. Mr. Proto noted the Stormwater Grants are affecting many agencies and municipalities due to having to by into the programs. The County has between \$40,000 to \$50,000 they are waiting for as well. Many of the municipalities are concerned and are reluctant to budgeting more monies without the reimbursements. Mr. Schutt said at the present time new permits are being applied for in the Stormwater grant program, and it is expected to be more restrictive. He said the State just released two request for proposals for this type of proposals, one through the Department of Environmental Conservation for Environmental Protection Funds for projects such as the stormwater and other programs, and one through Department of State for waterfront revitalization. If you do not apply the you are out

of the loop, however it is difficult to consider without the reimbursement. He does not think the Stormwater Coalition will be participating due to the lack of reimbursement.

In response to Ms. Robertson's question of State Legislator involvement, Mr. Schutt said he has had continual conversations with the State Legislators as well as the Governor's Office of Budget, all of whom state the same information.

Mr. Proto reported the Water Resources Council wrote letters in support for the FL-LOWPA funds as well as the Stormwater grants. He also noted that the County is also awaiting reimbursement of funds from the State.

Mr. Schutt reported New York State Department of Transportation for hydro-seeding, which is providing some revenue for the agency.

Mr. Proto noted that the County did not adequately fund the Soil and Water Conservation District (15 years) and then started to fund at an appropriate level. He said the District brings in over a million dollars in grants to the county annually.

Ms. Mackesey asked if there is any way the Legislature could assist him in the reimbursement matter. Mr. Schutt stated the problem is statewide and all Districts are attempting to determine how to balance their budgets. He spoke of continuing calls to State legislators to attempt to call attention to this critical matter.

Tire Collection Day

Mr. Schutt reported there would be a tire collection day on Saturday, September 26th at the Town of Lansing Highway Barns.

Tompkins County Area Development

Mr. Stamm, President of Tompkins County Area Development (TCAD), provided a brief history of TCAD that included the origin, governance and funding; projects and accomplishments; programs and initiatives; and included future opportunities and challenges. He noted TCAD's board is made up of a very diverse group, with local elected officials, representatives of a variety of employment sectors, labor, agriculture and tourism. The funding was historically an even mix of government funding and private sector membership funds. With regard to accomplishments, Mr. Stamm said TCAD has done very well. Since 1973 to 2008 the Industrial Development Agency Program (IDA) has created over 3,000 jobs with a non-management wage averaging over \$18/hour. The cost per job is low in comparison to other counties, with \$2,700 per job versus Niagara County's \$135,000 per job for their Yahoo Technical Center. This does not include the property taxes paid by the projects. The value of property tax abated by all the projects the IDA has undertaken is \$6.8 million; the amount of property taxes paid as the abatements decline is over \$14 million, leaving a net gain of over \$7 million in property taxes, which wipes out the cost per job and is a positive program. Mr. Stamm is proud of the projects the IDA has assisted over the years, noting they work with one person from the inception to completion of a project. He spoke of having worked with Sean Whittaker who wanted a machine shop, having left another shop. The funds were loaned for his first machine, he grew and acquired the old Kohler Machine building and now has a very successful business called Incodemia.

Mr. Stamm then spoke of the program and initiatives launched and/or administered by TCAD, which include: Air Service Task Force/Air Service Board (1997), Finger Lakes Entrepreneurs Form (1996), Workforce Investment Board (in anticipation of the Workforce Investment Act) and was the first in New York State up and running, Cayuga Venture Fund (invested over \$60 million funding in high-tech businesses in Tompkins County), Industrial Development Agency, Revolving Loan Fund management for the County as well as Dryden, Empire Zone, Sewer and Water Infrastructure Study, Economic Development Strategy, and Workforce Investment Strategy.

With regard to future opportunities and challenges, Mr. Stamm spoke of the recession having hit the community hard. Some that were having difficulties will not survive, while others who were persist but will take time to recover. TCAD is offering technical assistance and spoke of one long-standing company who was able to speak to an attorney and an accountant at no cost to determine how to get the best out of a bankruptcy proceeding. He also spoke of the State Legislation being chaotic and anticipate changes to economic development agency legislation, which was used wisely; changes to the Empire Zone, it is anticipated the State would "blow up" the program as a result of abuses that occurred under the old legislation. The Empire State Development is in chaos, with many staff changes. Empire State Development was a predictable source of incentives to bring in companies, however has changed a great deal. TCAD has grant contracts but have waited for months for the funds. There are also problems with energy costs in the State and programs designed to assist with this problem are in limbo. He noted TCAD is excited about Cornell University's increased commitment to tech transfer and the work done at CTEC who are aggressively bringing in venture capitalist and entrepreneurs to match up with the technology. Mr. Stamm believes as the economy recovers there will be an increased number of technology-based companies starting up in our area; TCAD has begun looking at funding opportunities that would be available in this area.

Mr. Stamm spoke of the funding of TCAD and noted they are too reliant on Industrial Development Agency funding. The total budget is approximately \$576,000, of which approximately \$370,000 is from IDA (64%). The funds available at this time would take them through this year, next, and possibly a third year. If they are not able to identify replace funds for IDA funding the agency would have to cut back on expenses. The County funding for the agency is minimal (\$10,000) with a reduction next year due to the budget constraints. Mr. Stamm noted the County leadership has consistently said that if IDA funds were to become less reliable the County would step up to fill the gap. Mr. Stamm said it is hoped to start discussions this year with the County regarding the funding. The membership campaign to assist in supporting TCAD from 2009 through 2011 was fairly successful and met the goal (approximately 22% of TCAD operating budget) with the recession. There are approximately 80 to 90 members ranging from small businesses through large employers such as Borg Warner and Cornell.

Mr. Proto asked whether the State has had any discussions regarding tax-exempt bonds. Mr. Stamm spoke of the bonds that had been designed to assist not for profit entities. TCAD aggressively used this mechanism that provided funding for the IDA. The State legislation that had allowed TCAD to use the bonds sunset at the end of 2008 and was taken over by the State Dormitory Authority. There is not any movement in the state regarding the tax-exempt bonds, which is surprising due to the coalition encouraging the State to again allow IDA's to do so (including hospitals, YMCA, Cerebral Palsy Foundation, etc.). Mr. Proto asked whether the bylaws allow TCAD to charge for their services. Mr. Stamm said it would be allowed to do so, however, they feel the membership fees provided by businesses is similar in nature to a fee. He said companies assisted are asked to become members at various levels.

Ms. Chock asked whether TCAD interfaces with various other organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, Credit Unions, Cornell University, etc. to assist with funding; is it possible to do any funding. Mr. Stamm said Cornell University, Ithaca College and others are anxious to see if there is a mechanism to allow bonding through the IDA. In addition, the bond counsel has lost a great deal of business as well due to the Dormitory Authority taking over the bonding. Several things are being explored and are awaiting a legal opinion but thus far nothing positive has occurred. He spoke of the collaboration with banking firms to determine what could be provided for interest rates, etc.

In response to Ms. Robertson's question on membership, Mr. Stamm said the level of membership is dependent on the size and success of a firm. Ms. Robertson spoke of Mr. Stamm's many trips to Albany to discuss concerns regarding the tax-exempt bonding issue. Mr. Stamm said the Federal Stimulus Package has changed the law to make tax-exempt bonds more beneficial to the buyer; New York State is the only state that cannot take advantage of this due to the State taking away the ability for the IDA to issue them.

Ms. Chock asked about what role TCAD takes with regard to housing. Mr. Stamm said Ms. Filiberto is one of three county representatives in the housing consortium, he thinks the water and sewer infrastructure study is important, and that TCAD has offered incentives to individuals who are developers of housing projects.

Planning Department

Renters' Survey

Ms. Leccese announced the survey would be presented to the Planning Advisory Board at its next meeting and that the documents would be posted to the Planning website in the near future. She said the intent is to complete this survey every three years; this survey is the first and will act as a baseline. Information from the executive summary is noted below. Ms. Leccese noted one item that was of interest is that the student population pays a significantly higher rent for a three-bedroom unit compared to the general population. She said the questions were designed to be appropriate in future years as well.

Ms. Leccese noted Cornell University's interest in knowing the comparison of distinctive characteristics of housing between the general population and student population. The general renters were most interested in the condition of the apartment while students were condition as well as location of apartment. Ms. Robertson noted an interest in how affordable the apartments were versus location; what was the driving force that determined where to rent. Ms. Leccese said the survey looked at the cost of apartment as related to their income.

Ms. Leccese reviewed the information contained in the executive summary. Following the review members of the Committee discussions noted the following:

- Did the survey show where individuals lived? No, it did not provide exact location. The general population was countywide.
- With regard to the survey indicating the need for affordable housing as well as showing paying more than 30 percent of housing costs and then decreases significantly. Is it possible to determine the affordability information in more detail? It was explained the housing needs assessment is looking at both homeowners and renters, which could be the variable that shows the reduced percentage to income.
- It was noted fifty-one percent spoke of desiring to live urban neighborhood, village, or hamlet. Perhaps the concept of nodal development could be used with regard to this information.
- With regard to the questions asking if there is access to a garage, it appears it is different than simply parking area. It was noted it was not related to parking but simply access to a garage.
- How will the information be used? It was noted it would be available online and is open for use by municipalities and other interested parties.
- It was recommended to make the information available to the landlord's association. Also, it was suggested to have an introductory paragraph relating to the present economic conditions that could have an impact on the information received.

Survey Methodology:

The Tompkins County Planning Department, in conjunction with Cornell University's Office of Government and Community Relations, contracted with Survey Research Institute (SRI) to conduct a survey of renters in Tompkins County. Two renter populations were surveyed - students from Cornell University, Ithaca College and Tompkins Cortland Community College and non-students. The students were surveyed via a web-based survey instrument and the non-students were surveyed by phone.

In December 2008, the Tompkins County Planning Department contracted with Survey Research Institute to complete a Combined Analysis of Student Renters and the General Population.

General Population

A random sample was drawn by Genesys Sampling Systems targeting renters in Tompkins County. Potential respondents were screened as to their rental status, non-student status, whether they are a decision-maker, and if they live in Tompkins County. If respondents fell into all of those categories, they were deemed eligible. A total of 380 respondents completed the survey, with a response rate of 41.9%.

Student Population

The samples of student email addresses were provided by each participating institution: Cornell University, Ithaca College, and Tompkins Cortland Community College. Only students living off-campus were surveyed. The survey was sent out to 1,999 people, 1,755 of whom had valid email addresses and were eligible for the survey. Invitation emails were sent out on April 22, 2008 followed by five reminder emails. Data collection ended on June 6, 2008. 356 people completed the survey out of a possible 1,775 valid email addresses yielding a response rate of 20.1%¹.

Objectives of Renter Survey:

The key objectives of the Renter Survey were to gain better information on the following:

- The cost of rent as it is related to the number of bedrooms in a unit.
- The cost of rent and utilities combined as it is related to the number of bedrooms in a unit.
- Comparison between the student renter population and the general renter population regarding desired characteristics in a rental unit.
- Characteristics retired renters are looking for in a rental unit.
- The quantity of respondents who have moved from homeownership to renting in relationship to age.
- The cost of rent related to income and the proportion of income contributed to monthly rent.
- Desired characteristics in a rental unit and reasons for renting among different age groups.
- Characteristics in a home among those renters who would like to purchase a home.
- Demographics of the student renter population and general renter population.

Key Findings:

- The cost of rent as it is related to the number of bedrooms in a unit.
 - The 3-bedroom cost (rent only, not including utilities) differential between the general population and student population are striking. A plurality (42%) of the general population pays \$700-899 for a 3-bedroom unit; the majority (51%) of the student population pays \$1,100 or more for a 3-bedroom unit.
- The cost of rent and utilities combined as it is related to the number of bedrooms in a unit.
 - When utilities are part of the total cost of rent a plurality (44%) of the general renter population pays \$900-1,099 for a 3-bedroom unit.
- Comparison between the student renter population and the general renter population regarding desired characteristics in a rental unit.
 - The condition of the apartment is the most important characteristic for the general renter population (90%).
 - Location of apartment/house and condition of apartment are the most important characteristics for the student renter population (90.6% and 87.3%, respectively).
 - Access to garage is the least important characteristic for the general renter population (77.9%).
 - Play area for children on-site is the least important characteristic for the student renter population (86.4%).
 - The following characteristics were very important to both the student renter population and the general renter population: adequate number of bedrooms, location of apartment/house and condition of apartment.

¹ The students were surveyed near the completion of the spring semester. This was found to be a less than ideal time period. Subsequent surveys will be administered in January/February for greater student participation.

- The following characteristics were not important to both the student renter population and the general renter population: play area for children on-site, access to garage, and common areas in the building.
- Characteristics retired renters are looking for in a rental unit.
 - The general renter survey asked the work situation of the individual. Information regarding those who answered “retired” was pulled from the data for further analysis. The primary reason retired individuals are renting is to have less maintenance and responsibility in a rental unit (88%). The condition of the apartment is the most important characteristic in a rental unit for retired individuals (88%).
- The quantity of respondents who have moved from homeownership to renting in relationship to age.
 - Two-thirds of respondents age 35-65 had owned a home prior to renting; three-quarters of respondents over the age of 65 had owned a home prior to renting.
- The cost of rent related to income and the proportion of income contributed to monthly rent.
 - The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) standard is that no more than 30% of a renter household’s income should be spent on rent and utilities.
 - Of those individuals (general renter population) with an income of less than \$20,000, 38% are paying more than 30% on housing costs; those with an income of \$20,000 to 40,000, 12% are paying more than 30% on housing costs.
 - Of those individuals (student population) with an income of less than \$20,000, 90% are paying more than 30% on housing costs; those with an income of \$20,000 to 40,000, 39% are paying more than 30% on housing costs.
- Desired characteristics in a rental unit and reasons for renting among different age groups.
 - Survey respondents were asked the importance for renting based on the following factors: (1) desire to be close to job; (2) cannot afford down payment on a house; (3) have another home/vacation home; (4) does not need a large living space; (5) less maintenance and responsibility; (6) financially more affordable than owning; and (7) may move from Tompkins County in the near future. Individuals were able to indicate multiple factors. The data was analyzed by age cohorts, i.e. under 25; 25-34; 35-65; and over 65.
 - All age cohorts indicated that having another home or vacation home was the least important factor for renting.
 - Both the under 25 cohort and the 25- 34 age cohort indicated that the desire to live close to their job was the most important factor for renting.
 - Both the 35-65 age cohort and the over 65 age cohort indicated that less maintenance and responsibility was the most important factor for renting.
 - The 25-34 age cohort identified four (out of seven) factors that a majority of respondents felt were important: (1) cannot afford down payment on a house; (2) less maintenance/responsibility; (3) financially more affordable than owning; and (4) may move from Tompkins County in the near future.
- Characteristics in a home among those renters who would like to purchase a home.
 - Those interested in owning a home in the near future are most interested in purchasing a single family home (75%) in an urban neighborhood (31%), village or hamlet (20%), suburban subdivision (17%) or rural area (32%).
- Demographics of the student renter population and general renter population.
 - Survey demographic data were compared to data available through the U.S. Census American Community Survey 2005-2007. Using the American Community Survey, the respondents surveyed represent an accurate sample of the larger renter population in Tompkins County.
 - 86% of households are single or two-person households among the general renter population and 85% of general renter households do not have children.

The data and analysis provided in the 2008 Tompkins County Renter Survey provides housing organizations, local government, employers, and higher education institutions an initial snapshot of the larger rental housing situation as it relates to both the general renter population and the student renter population. The initial findings

reinforce the need for affordable, well maintained housing, both renter and owner-occupied, in our communities. As subsequent renter surveys are completed, it will provide the opportunity to identify trends within the renter housing market.

Aquifer Study

Ms. Jurkowich reported a contract has been received by United States Geological Survey (USGS) for Pony Hollow Aquifer Study. She noted the County established a capital program for the various Aquifer Studies, with a budget of approximately \$77,000 per year for the program. When established it was set for a twenty-year program, with USGS funding at a thirty percent level that could lock in for a long period as long as the program is continued. The local USGS indicates what would be requested on an annual basis; if not requested, the funding is lost. Local communities also share in the cost of the projects that have taken place; thus far are in the Town of Dryden, Town of Caroline, and Town of Danby. Some of the local share funding for the projects are coming from State legislator member items. She reported that USGS funding has the ability to, but does not pay for the cost of drilling; with the cost of their overhead it costs more to have them do this work. Also due to the nature of the projects, the front-end funding is more expensive. The capital program was developed to allow for overlapping projects over the course of the twenty years.

In response to a question regarding the status of the projects, Ms. Jurkowich reported the Town of Caroline project has the draft report complete and is going through the USGS approval process. The Town of Dryden project is almost complete, with another well being drilled; to date no draft report is completed. The Town of Danby should be complete next year.

It is thought that Groton is considering the program. In addition there are discussions with the Town of Ulysses who is somewhat interested in the program. Ms. Jurkowich said often the program is considered following water-related problems. Mr. Proto noted previous participation does not preclude them from subsequent studies.

Commissioner's Report

Mr. Marx reported having met with New York State Department of Transportation in Jacksonville to discuss repaving on Route 96. As a result of the corridor study they will be incorporating recommendations including striping in Jacksonville for crosswalks, stripe a shared parking/pedestrian lane to have a calming effect. He has received a notice last week about grant opportunities including the New York State Department of State water revitalization program. He met with Kevin Millington who suggested the possibility of a water trail on Cayuga Lake be looked into as a suggestion to take advantage of the funds; Ms. Chock suggested there might be tourism funds available as a match to the grant. Mr. Marx reported at the present time there is a one-month window for a USCPA grant (Environmental Protection Act funds) for Climate Showcase Communities. Grants are up to one-half a million for twenty to thirty communities nationwide who create a model that could be used in other communities. At the present they are looking at several potential elements that have been worked on by the Planning and other departments in the County, Cornell University, and the Cornell Climate initiative group to formulate a concept in time to meet the deadline.

Budget Discussion

Mr. Marx provided a written document indicating what the impact of the budget constraints would entail. He said it is not going to be possible to continue operations as they have been done and will require reducing staff hours. It is hoped that it could be done in a creative manner in order to maintain staff, through voluntary reductions or staff sharing workloads. It will mean there will be less staff hours available to do the work completed at the present time. There will be a reduction of staff support and funding for advisory board support to a basic level, will be reducing staff funding for programs with several dropping or reducing in a significant manner (snowmobile grant program, rural economic development program, and others). It will also affect what would be done in the future; new actions with regard to the Comprehensive Plan would be limited or

not likely to occur in the future. Also project funding may be eliminated or reduced. He explained when he went to half-time status within Planning it was designated for use in hiring consultants, assistants, etc. for projects within the department. He spoke of these funds having assisted in such projects as the Route 96 corridor study as the County portion of the project. The ability to undertake the renter survey in three years is in question as well as other things made possible by the funds. Mr. Marx noted the reductions are the equivalent of reducing staff by a half-time individual. With regard to grant applications it will affect the manner they are approached due to the lack of matching funds.

Mr. Marx said the focus of the department has been on the components of the Comprehensive Plan and he anticipates that the ability to respond on new projects would be difficult to maintain. Mr. Marx asked that items of interest or suggestions from the Committee would be welcomed. He said there may be some flexibility in the budget but does not expect to request over-target requests as he does not anticipate having funds available.

Ms. Robertson spoke of her desire to have the items being cut laid out as an over-target request, leaving the choice to the Legislature to determine if they should be funded as well as clearly indicating what is being lost with the reductions. Mr. Marx believes there would be a way to show what is lost during the budget presentation.

Mr. Proto asked if the personnel would be reassigned or will simply be a reduction of hours. Mr. Marx does not wish to eliminate positions, rather at voluntary reductions or obtaining revenue from sharing staff time with other departments. Mr. Proto then asked about other entities completing tasks outlined within the Comprehensive Plan, particularly whether they would be encouraged to take on some responsibility. Mr. Marx indicated that has occurred over time; he would anticipate that expecting others take on the work some form of remuneration would be sought. Mr. Marx hopes to complete as much work as possible within the financial constraints that exist.

Ms. Chock said part of what makes the county such a special place to live due to the work completed by the Planning Department. She inquired how much funding would it be to continue work at the same level. Mr. Marx said the total cut is approximately an 8.5 percent reduction (\$50,000). With regard to the reduction of services to outside organizations and advisory boards Mr. Marx said he would provide an equivalent amount of support to all boards, but less than prior; providing the ability to continue to function. He stressed the department is looking at the situation programmatically as much as possible and do not want to eliminate those things the County does well. He will craft the budget to complete the stronger things.

Ms. Robertson spoke of the work being done regarding gas drilling, noting it is very important and valued. She noted the County has not yet gone to Tompkins County Council of Governments to seek funding for the work. She believes if they are concerned about gas drilling there may be a willingness to assist with funding.

Mr. Proto spoke of the circuit rider program that used to exist, noting the County charged a fee for services provided in various areas. Ms. Jurkovich said at the present time the department does very limited contractual work due to the lack of time. If the department were to take something on it would simply eliminate work done in another area. She said the County presently charges one-half of staff time for work on the projects and this could perhaps be charged the full cost, although it would be a nominal amount.

Ms. Mackesey said she appreciates the fact that the department is not planning to submit many over-target requests and are carefully looking at the work that being done.

Mr. Proto said it is necessary to also look at work plans for review, they may not be the same priorities that the Legislature sets and compromise may be necessary. Ms. Mackesey expressed concern that for everyone to bring forward over-target requests would be a burden to the budget process. Ms. Robertson noted she did not mean to list all cuts, rather ones that are significant within the department. Mr. Proto said that some items the

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department works with related to land values it with could affect the value of assessment. Ms. Mackesey said the department making decisions regarding reductions in the budget is and important step.

Adjournment

On motion the meeting adjourned at 5:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted – Karen Fuller, Deputy Clerk