

MINUTES

Approved 10/13/08

PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

OCTOBER 8, 2008 3:00 P.M. SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM

Present: M. Robertson, Chair; P. Mackesey, F. Proto, C. Chock
Excused: M. Sigler
Staff: K. Fuller, Deputy Clerk of the Legislature; E. Marx, Planning and Public Works Commissioner; J. Leccese, K. Borgella, L. Schill, Planning Department; J. Jurkovich, Deputy Planning Commissioner; J. Kippola, Strategic Tourism Planning Board; J. McPheeters, Chamber of Commerce President; F. Bonn, Convention and Visitor's Bureau; F. DeAragon, ITCTC; D. Mengel, D. Bodner, Department of Social Services

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

Changes to Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

Postpone Discussion

Ms. Mackesey spoke of the late date the Committee received the Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Element of the Comprehensive Plan and suggested it be discussed at a future meeting since she did not have the opportunity to review the information in the short period between receipt and the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

It was MOVED by Mr. Proto, seconded by Ms. Mackesey, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2008, meetings as amended.

Appointment

It as MOVED by Ms. Mackesey, seconded by Ms. Chock, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the appointment of Jacalyn Spoon to the Central New York Resource Conservation and Development Board as Tompkins County representative with no set term. Mr. Proto suggested Ms. Smith contact Craig Schutt at the Soil and Water Conservation District regarding projects that are associated with the CNY Resource Conservation and Development Board. He would like to be certain Ms. Spoon has a full understanding of responsibilities and would be able to provide a report to the Planning Committee. It was agreed that it would be useful to have this occur since items such as switchgrass and palletizing projects are associated with Soil and Water Conservation District.

Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council

Transportation Plan Status Report

Mr. DeAragon reported the agency is working on the long-range plan for transportation update process. They would be meeting next week on October 15th at 6:30 p.m. at the Tompkins County Public Library. There will be a good deal of publicity on the meeting and the update would occur over the next year with an anticipated date of December 2009 for completion of the update. It will be a work in progress with a committee of the Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council to review and revise the mission statement and vision with drafts coming forward. *Mr. Proto requested the Committee be provided with periodic copies of the plan.* Mr. DeAragon noted the updates are available on the web.

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Ms. Mackesey inquired on the status of the \$100,000 coming to Tompkins County Area Transit to see about providing service to regional carriers. Mr. DeAragon said the work is still forthcoming and it is may be possible to receive \$75,000 in funding. Ms. Chock noted the October 15 date conflicts with Tompkins County Legislature Budget meetings.

Mr. Proto inquired whether there would be municipal involvement in the process. He was informed it is not project oriented but rather is a broad overview of transportation services.

Ms. Robertson spoke of previous discussions regarding the potential flexibility of transportation improvement projects to assist in nodal development and whether there was any progress. She was informed that at present time there is no funding for new projects and that the focus is only on projects that have been approved, not new projects.

Resolution

It was MOVED by Ms. Chock, seconded by Mr. Proto, to recommend adoption of the following resolution to the full Legislature.

Mr. Mengel provided the following information:

This budget adjustment appropriates Federal Transportation Authority Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and Community Solutions for Transportation funds (CST) in the County budget for the community transportation program managed in the Department of Social Services. The JARC and CST grants were previously authorized by the Legislature and awarded to the County. The community transportation program funds mobility alternatives available to the general public, but a special effort is made to encourage use by rural residents, low income households (less than 200% of federal poverty level), seniors, youth, and people with disabilities.

Overall program's objectives include: developing transportation options for people who are unserved by TCAT's fixed route service or who need flexible services, investing in information technology to increase the scheduling capacity of transportation operators (e.g. GADABOUT and taxi companies) to carry more passengers, and creating a central source of consumer information for all mobility options, public and private, in the County.

In 2008, the County community transportation program includes: promoting ridesharing, the County contract with Tompkins County Cornell Cooperative Extension for the RIDEWISE consumer information project, developing a feeder van pilot project for Enfield and Newfield residents to access TCAT buses, coordinating public transit and human service transportation planning, supporting TCAT's forthcoming vanpool program by targeting service to rural county residents and increasing transportation supports for DSS clients traveling to jobs. It was noted only 9 percent of the Enfield population have easy access to TCAT buses at the present time.

The chart indicating the breakout of funding was requested in order to provide additional information to the full Legislature.

It was noted the vehicles are to be used to transport individuals to bus stops; the van pool pilot program is only for Tompkins County rural residents inside the county.

Ms. Chock spoke of how this program could assist to have senior citizens stop driving and utilize public transportation. Mr. Mengel spoke of a program in Maine that provides for car banking – the value of the car is credited toward transportation or other services.

A voice vote resulted as follows: Ayes – 4; Noes –0; Excused – 1 (Legislator Sigler).
RESOLUTION ADOPTED.

RESOLUTION NO. - BUDGET ADJUSTMENT – TRANSPORTATION GRANT

WHEREAS, pursuant to Administrative Manual Policy 05-02, budget adjustments exceeding \$5,000 require Legislative approval, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Planning, Development, and Environmental Quality Committee, That the Director of Finance be directed to make the following budget adjustments on his books:

Transportation Grant

Revenue Account	Title	Amt	Appropriation Account	Title(s)
5631.43594	Mass Transit	\$28,860		
5631.41792	Transit Income	\$800		
5631.44594	Fed Aid Mass	\$163,840		
5631.42770	Other Misc. Rev	\$500		
		\$500	5631.52206	Computer Equipment
		\$900	5631.52230	Computer Software
		\$200	5631.54303	Office Supplies
		\$1,500	5631.54330	Printing
		\$100	5631.54332	Books/Publications
		\$93,500	5631.54400	Program Expense
		\$3,000	5631.54402	Advertising and Promotion
		\$800	5631.54412	Travel and Training
		\$300	5631.54416	Dues/Memberships
		\$93,000	5631.54425	Service Contracts
		\$200	5631.54442	Professional Services

Explanation: These accounts were not budgeted during the 2008 Budget Process because grant funds and program configuration were not established. There is no local share in 2008.

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Table A. Geographical Coverage of TCAT Routes by Total Population and Senior Population
 In Tompkins County, NY - 2000 Census

2000 Census	# of Persons within 1/4 mi of a bus line	Total Persons in municipality	Percentage within 1/4 mi of a bus line	# Seniors* within 1/4 mi of a bus line	Total Seniors in municipality	Percentage within 1/4 mi of a bus line	Urban/Rural
C/Ithaca	28,775	28,775	100.0%	1,836	1,836	100.0%	Urban
T/Ithaca	12,833	18,710	68.6%	1,477	2,343	63.0%	Urban
V/Lansing	3,041	3,417	89.0%	256	318	80.5%	Urban
Subtotal Urban**	44,649	50,902	87.7%	3,569	4,497	79.4%	Urban
T/Caroline	827	2,910	28.4%	96	289	33.2%	Rural
T/Danby	420	3,007	14.0%	43	299	14.4%	Rural
T/Dryden	4,736	13,532	35.0%	441	1,245	35.4%	Rural
T/Enfield	312	3,369	9.3%	23	296	7.8%	Rural

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T/Groton	1,642	5,794	28.3%	315	743	42.4%	Rural
T/Lansing (Rural)	2,372	7,104	33.4%	270	740	36.5%	Rural
T/Newfield	1,533	5,108	30.0%	176	452	38.9%	Rural
T/Ulysses	2,158	4,775	45.2%	383	696	55.0%	Rural
Subtotal Rural**	14,000	45,599	30.7%	1,747	4,760	36.7%	Rural
Total County	58,649	96,501	60.8%	5,316	9,257	57.4%	

Village Data is included in the above Town Data.

V/Groton	1,468	2,470	59.4%	296	413	71.7%	Rural
V/Dryden	1,348	1,832	73.6%	129	210	61.4%	Rural
V/Freeville	457	505	90.5%	66	66	100.0%	Rural
V/Trumansburg	1,123	1,581	71.0%	181	1,581	11.4%	Rural
V/Cayuga Heights	3,075	3,273	94.0%	541	785	68.9%	Urban
V/Lansing	3,041	3,417	89.0%	256	318	80.5%	Urban

Strategic Tourism Planning Board

It was MOVED by Mr. Proto, seconded by Ms. Mackesey, to recommend adoption of the following resolution to the full Legislature. Members of the Committee expressed concern at reducing the number of Arts and Cultural representatives on the board and having a large number of At-Large members. It was noted that the amendment is to obtain members willing to serve due to business and other responsibilities. Ms. Kippola explained the membership committee process used to select membership. In addition, it was noted the applications for membership on the board would be brought to the Committee and full Legislature for their approval as well. A voice vote on the resolution resulted as follows: Ayes – 4; Noes – 0; Excused – 1 (Legislator Sigler). RESOLUTION ADOPTED.

RESOLUTION NO. - AMENDING BYLAWS FOR THE STRATEGIC TOURISM PLANNING BOARD TO INCREASE MEMBERSHIP

WHEREAS, the current membership of the Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB) is limited to specific categories, and the committee would benefit from the expertise from other areas that contribute to the Tompkins County Tourism Program, but do not fit into the current specified categories for membership, and

WHEREAS, the reason for such extension is to enjoy the benefit of experience that the board gains from members who serve on the STPB, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Planning, Development, and Environmental Quality Committee, That the bylaws for the Strategic Tourism Planning Board that were adopted by the Board of Representatives, on February 20, 2002, be amended as follows:

Section 1. Appointment Procedure.

a. Voting Members

- Two representatives of lodging
- One from Recreation representatives
- One representative from Agriculture
- Four Arts/Culture representatives
- One Cornell University representative
- One Ithaca College representative
- One Tompkins Cortland Community College representative
- Seven At-large representatives

b. Non-Voting Members

The STPB shall have 6 non-voting members from:
The Tompkins County Legislature
Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce (Convention and Visitors Bureau)
Governmental Transportation
Tompkins County Area Development
Downtown Ithaca Alliance
Community Arts Partnership

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Appointment

It as MOVED by Ms. Mackesey, seconded by Mr. Proto, to recommend approval of Debbie Teeter to the Strategic Tourism and Planning Board as the Agricultural representative for a term to expire December 31, 2011. A brief discussion took place during which it was noted Ms. Teeter's connection to various activities highlighting the agricultural aspects of the County. Mr. Bonn also spoke of agri-tourism projects she was involved in.

Following the discussion it was requested that future selections to the STPB include a brief explanation on why an individual was chosen over other nominees.

A voice vote on the motion resulted as follows: Ayes – 4; Noes – 0; Excused – 1 (Legislator Sigler). APPOINTMENT APPROVED.

Resolution

Mr. Bonn explained he undertook the design of the upgrade, noting the site has specific requirements to enable a link to the New York site, as local business are not able to link to New York a request for proposals was not appropriate. Mr. Proto inquired why the funding is not from the Convention and Visitor's Bureau (CVB) budget. Mr. Bonn provided a brief history of the STPB budget committee determined to undertake the design of a website in 2007; this is an upgrade to that. Mr. Proto spoke of the surplus room tax reserve fund balance within the tourism line, he feels it is inappropriate to come from the STPB budget and not CVB. It was explained the funding is not a grant but an approval of use of the reserve fund monies. Ms. Kippola spoke of the STPB acting conservatively when setting budgets due to the instability of the economy.

It was MOVED by Ms. Chock, seconded by Ms. Mackesey, to recommend adoption of the following resolution to the full Legislature. Ms. Chock spoke of the possibility of surveying individuals of why they choose to visit the community. The site has not been redesigned since 2003 or 2004. Following a brief discussion it was suggested it would be a good time to review the use of the room tax funds. Mr. Proto also suggested the possibility of utilizing room tax funds to purchase a building for CVB. This topic would be brought forward at a future meeting.

A voice vote on the resolution resulted as follows: Ayes – 4; Noes – 0; Excused – 1 (Legislator Sigler). RESOLUTION ADOPTED.

RESOLUTION NO. - FUNDING OF TOURISM WEBSITE UPGRADE

WHEREAS, the Ithaca/Tompkins Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) is designated as Tompkins County's tourism promotion agency, and

WHEREAS, one of the CVB's key tools to market the area is its website known as VisitIthaca.com, which provides visitors with intriguing images, facts, tips, lodging, and meeting resources, as well as relocation guides, and

WHEREAS, it is timely to update and upgrade the VisitIthaca.com website, to make it a more user-friendly, efficient, and effective marketing tool to bring more tourism to Tompkins County and thereby strengthen the local economy, and

WHEREAS, the CVB has reviewed its website designer's proposal with a cost not to exceed \$12,000 for the upgrade, and

WHEREAS, the Strategic Tourism Planning Board received and reviewed a proposal from the CVB to upgrade the website and recommended its approval to the Tompkins County Legislature through the Planning, Development, and Environmental Quality and the Budget and Capital Committees, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Planning, Development and Environmental Quality Committee and Budget and Capital Committee, That the County Administrator or his designee is authorized to execute an amendment to the Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce contract for the CVB's website upgrade for an amount not to exceed \$12,000,

RESOLVED, further, That the Director of Finance be authorized and directed to make the following appropriation from the Room Tax Reserve:

Appropriation:	0980.0000	Room Tax Reserve Fund Balance	\$12,000
Expense:	6475.54630	Convention and Visitors Bureau	\$12,000

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Future Grant Submission

Ms. Kippola reported the time for grant applications is now taking place; a due date of October 21st was provided.

Planning Department

Public Response to the September 2 Draft of the Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Element of the Comprehensive Plan

Ms. Borgella reported that since August a draft of the plan has been developed (dated September 2, 2008) and following nine meetings, over 300 people within the County have provided input. In addition were 18 pages of public comments relating to the element of the Comprehensive Plan. She indicated that as a result of the various discussions the plan was revised based upon comments provided. Many of the comments dealt with who needs to have education and the comments would be used to assist in proceeding with implementation. With regard to the timeline, the advisory boards will be provided thirty days to review the SEQR and draft elements to comply with the State Environmental Quality Review (TYPE I) and will go out on Tuesday, October 14th. Committee comments could be incorporated in November if it is necessary to amend the SEQR documents.

The action items listed would require an agency or organization to sign on as the lead agency, which is a different step than the advisory board review; agency and organization heads would have to make a determination to take on the action items. It was noted agencies are aware, however, they would be formally asked prior to any action coming before the Legislature; if there is not any agency or organization willing to commit, it would then be reconsidered whether to maintain the action item within the plan. Mr. Marx expressed his opinion that it would be beneficial to maintain the timeline involved. He spoke of the community expressing appreciation that the work is being done.

Mr. Proto inquired when a budget projection would be prepared. Mr. Marx indicated that the Planning Department would work items into their workload as is feasible with existing resources. There may be applications for grants that could assist in the initiative. Other agencies are also asked to do the same, not to spend additional funding. It is believed that the organizations missions are to be involved in the issues noted but there is not the desire to increase funding requests. Ms. Robertson spoke of it

directing efforts to undertake the action items noted within this element of the plan. Mr. Marx noted the way things might get done could be delayed due to fiscal circumstances; the document is a guideline.

Ms. Schill reviewed the document and noted the changes that were made, providing the reasons for inclusion. In addition, Committee members offered preliminary comments on the plan. Following the review it was noted the LEED certification and other aspects should be referenced to a specific date, the actual requirements could change over time. Ms. Chock also agreed there is a need for proper code compliance and asked what the County could implement to assure public awareness of environmental and infrastructure responsibility. It was also noted the plan does not address code compliance as that is a municipality's responsibility; however, municipalities would be interested in suggestions regarding this area. Mr. Marx spoke of the work of a rapidly evolving government subject to change; the plan is based upon what the County is aware of and constituents desire, namely to do the best possible within financial constraints. Mr. Marx stated the plan provides focus that will have an impact; not necessarily so general it would be difficult. Ms. Chock said she believes the plan should include the relationship of codes. A brief discussion about the issue resulted in an agreement to review to determine the possible inclusion of language regarding codes.

It was noted the wind energy piece is a result of many discussions with the public. Mr. Proto spoke of placement of wind energy sites having a potential impact on land value for nearby owners. Mr. Marx spoke of the issue and said although there are discussion regarding wind there are potential impacts depending on the area, e.g. the airport may be good but proximity of the airport it may not be desirable. It is the combination of wind speed, not highly developed land, and other factors. The plan may outline where it is not feasible and suggest other area it is; however, it would assist in identifying issues to the particular site. It is designed to help the community to understand how it may work.

Ms. Robertson spoke of Ms. Kiefer's statement that LEED may not be the best measure. Mr. Marx spoke of how LEED points are determined, which may not be solely on energy; it could include purchase of materials locally, saving emissions, etc. Ms. Robertson would like to add monitoring State and Federal policy changes or laws.

Mr. Marx expressed his recognition of excellent work Ms. Schill and Ms. Borgella put into the plan. Ms. Robertson spoke of the public comments indicating the plan element is very readable and assists in stimulating action.

Resolution

MOVED by Mr. Proto, seconded by Ms. Mackesey. Mr. Marx noted the funds would be utilized for homeowners with the intent of looking into specific community development. There will be two public hearings, the first to speak of eligibility requirements, the second would speak to the proposed application.

A voice vote on the resolution resulted as follows: Ayes – 4; Noes – 0; Excused – 1 (Legislator Sigler). RESOLUTION ADOPTED.

RESOLUTION NO. - AUTHORIZING PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR HOUSING, PUBLIC FACILITIES, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEEDS FOR THE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY RENEWAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the New York State Office of Community Renewal's funding for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program accepts competitive applications for housing, public facilities, and microenterprise projects in the spring of each year, and

WHEREAS, Tompkins County would like to apply for competitive housing, public facilities, and/or microenterprise funds in 2009, and

WHEREAS, Tompkins County is required to have at least two public hearings pursuant to any CDBG applications for funding, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Planning, Development, and Environmental Quality Committee, That two public hearing dates be set: the first to be held on November 5, 2008, to discuss general housing, public facilities, and economic development needs in the County and the second to be held on January 20, 2009, to discuss submitting a specific application for competitive housing, public facilities, and/or microenterprise funds under the CDBG program in 2009,

RESOLVED, further, That these hearings will be held at 5:30 p.m., at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Tompkins County Legislature, 320 North Tioga Street, Ithaca, New York,

RESOLVED, further, That the Clerk of the Legislature is authorized to place proper notice of these public hearings in the official newspaper of the County.

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Update on MOU Between County/City of Ithaca/Cornell University for Housing Funds

Ms. Leccese provided an update on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Tompkins County, the City of Ithaca, and Cornell University for housing. At this time the City and County have reviewed the document and it has been forwarded to Cornell University Real Estate staff for review. Overall, it appears all are in agreement with only some minor items to discuss. It is hoped a resolution to approve the MOU would come forward in November. Mr. Proto indicated his preference to have the document indicate that no single party may act as the individual negotiating on behalf of the County. It was noted by Mr. Marx the suggested amendments are not substantive.

Committee Report on Disposition of Biggs B

The Committee provided basic information regarding options available for the Biggs B real estate following the construction and occupancy of the Health Department at 55 Brown Road.

It was MOVED by Mr. Proto, seconded by Ms. Chock, and unanimously approved by voice vote by members present, to move into executive session to discuss potential real estate matters.

An executive session occurred from 5:00 p.m. to 5:12 p.m. On motion of Mr. Proto, seconded by Ms. Mackesey, and unanimously approved by voice vote, open session began at 5:12 p.m.

Update on Proposed Carrowmore Project

In response to Mr. Proto's question, Mr. Marx indicated he is not certain of the status of the proposed project; he indicated it appears that there are some elements that should be modified to fit into the Tompkins County housing policy.

Commissioner's Report

Mr. Marx provided updates in the following areas:

- Route 96 – The final public meeting will take place on October 28th at 6:30 p.m. at PRI Institute. The results of the hearing will be taken back to the technology committee to make a report and recommendations to say how the committee should implement suggestions. He noted previous comments and planning have been utilized in the Town of Ulysses Planning.

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- The dredging committee met regarding Cayuga Inlet. In some ways the same problem is occurring, namely no place to put the sludge removed.
- Achieving Greener Communities Conference – a state-wide conference would be held at Mt. Morris, New York; sponsors are New York State Association of Counties, Cornell University, and others.
- On November 12 there will be a rural forum on nodal group. Later on there will be a larger event to better define the efforts of the forum.
- Next week the Planning Department intern will begin working on Greenfleet policies. Ms. Robertson suggested the Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Element component of the Comprehensive Plan.

Adjournment

On motion, the meeting adjourned at 5:22 p.m.