

Minutes

Planning, Development & Environmental Quality Committee Tompkins County Legislature

Regular Meeting

September 10, 2007 3:30 PM Courthouse Conference Room

Members Present: Martha Robertson (Chair), Jim Dennis, Pam Mackesey, Frank Proto, Tyke Randall

Other Legislator Present: Dooley Kiefer

Staff: Katie Borgella, T C Planning Dept.
Joan Jurkowich, TCPD
Jackie Kippola, T C Administration
Ed Marx, Commissioner of Planning & PW
Julia Mattick, Tompkins Workforce New York
Kathy Wilsea, TCPD

Visitors: Jon Bosak, TCLocal
Krys Cail, Cooperative Extension
Paul Curtis, Cornell University
Mark Macera, Ithacare
Jean McPheeters, Chamber of Commerce
Steve Nicholson, Environmental Management Council
Monika Roth, Cooperative Extension
Michael Stamm, Industrial Development Agency
Gary Stewart, Cornell University

- 1) **Call to Order & Agenda Changes** -- The meeting was called to order at 3:30 PM by the Chair, Martha Robertson, with all members present. There were no changes to the agenda.
 - a) **Approval of Minutes from August 13, 2007** – Moved by Tyke Randall, seconded by Jim Dennis and passed unanimously.
- 2) **Industrial Development Agency**
 - a) **Resolution:** Resolution of PDEQ Recommending that the Tompkins County Legislature, as the Elected Legislative Body of Tompkins County, New York Approve the Issuance by the Tompkins County Industrial Development Agency of **up to \$14,000,000 Civic Facility Revenue Bonds (Ithacare Center Service Company, Inc. Project)**, Series 2007 – Resolution moved by Frank Proto, seconded by Jim. Michael Stamm introduced Mark Macera, Executive Director of Ithacare. Pam Mackesey asked if livable wage was considered in the project. Michael said it was part of the IDA review, and a few new jobs would be below what is considered a livable wage. Mr. Macera said Ithacare has an aggressive benefits, retirement, education and sick leave package, and they already have people asking about the jobs being created. There was discussion of the requested extension of the tax exemption. Michael said that TCAD annually tests the value of Ithacare's services to the indigent against the value of the property tax abatements, and the value of the services is always greater. Site plan details were reviewed by the Town of Ithaca Planning Board, with 239 review by the County Planning Department. Construction time is anticipated to be one year. The Ithacare resident council welcomes this age-in-place addition, and staff will gradually be added as the facility fills. Minutes of the public hearing were distributed (there were no comments at the 9/7 meeting). Resolution passed unanimously.
- 3) **Peak Oil Task Force**
 - a) **PDEQ Resolution: Requesting the formation of an Energy and Resource Planning Task Force** of the Environmental Management Council to assess Tompkins County's exposure to diminishing supplies of oil and natural gas and make recommendations to address vulnerabilities – Jon Bosak reported that Portland, Oregon created a citizen task force to examine what Portland needs to address in terms of self sufficiency following peak

oil production. TCLocal recommends that Tompkins County create a similar committee. Resolution moved by Pam, seconded by Jim.

Ed Marx said this is a great initiative, and suggested adding reference to the Tompkins County Local Action Plan in the first Resolved clause. The Planning Department work program has similar work planned for the Environmental Management Council and Planning Advisory Board in 2008. He would prefer to proceed as planned at TCPD, and maybe revise the resolution. Dooley Kiefer said there is a problem with the local business/commercial sectors not taking "peak oil" into account. Last year she recommended and the Legislature adopted a change to TCAD's Economic Development Strategy to include a charge of taking peak oil into account, but this is not reflected in Tompkins County Area Development's goals. Ed said it is seen in the Planning Department as the next major commitment for staff. Frank was concerned about the last resolved clause. Since TCPD is struggling to staff advisory boards, he doesn't want this Task Force to have authority over staff functions. He also wondered if there are budget implications. Steve Nicholson agreed that energy is the next big initiative. He came today to stress peak oil/greenhouse gas focus. EMC is interested, and he noted they responded very positively to Jon's presentation when he visited EMC. Pam withdrew the motion pending review. Jon Bosak, Ed Marx, Steve Nicholson, and Martha Robertson will meet to develop a proposal. They will try to include Michael Stamm. Dooley Kiefer asked to be informed of their meetings and progress.

4) Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board

a) **Results of the Rural Landowner Survey** – Monika Roth and Krys Cail were present. Monika said AFPB was motivated by the energy crisis and wanted an opportunity to examine biomass potential along with other aspects of energy production. A class from Cornell's City/Regional Planning Department helped develop the survey instrument. It went to all agriculture-assessed parcels, all vacant rural parcels over ten acres, and to a sample of rural residential parcels over ten acres. Response rate was good. They gave a PowerPoint presentation of the data analysis and provided paper copies. Information will be used to form future mailings, workshops and fact sheets to help interested landowners take the next steps. Monika also said they will break the responses down by towns and seek Ag and Market funds to support ag protection planning.

5) **Workforce Investment Board** – Julia Mattick provided an update on regional grant applications. Many federal and state grant opportunities are regional, and she sees a clear interest in regional cooperation. She is currently collaborating with twelve counties along the proposed I-86 corridor in the Southern Tier region. There are initiatives for matching curriculum at community colleges and technical schools. Advanced agriculture and manufacturing are clear curriculum needs regionally.

6) Strategic Tourism Planning Board

a) **Public Art Policy** – Jackie Kippola and Jean McPheeters were present. Some language in paragraphs 1 and 2 is being clarified, and the attachment (Ithaca Downtown Partnership guidelines) will be clearly marked as an example. Next step is a presentation to Tompkins County Council of Governments. Regarding the agenda attachment, Frank asked that rural municipalities be informed that the watering truck is available.

7) Tompkins County Planning Department

a) **Resolution: Authorization to Accept 2007-2008 Snowmobile Trails Grant-in-Aid** – Moved by Pam, seconded by Tyke, and passed 4:0 (Jim excused at this point).

b) **Resolution: Making a Negative Declaration of Environmental Significance in Relation to Resolution No. ___ of 2007** – Adoption of the Tompkins County **Forest Management Plan** and Authorization to Implement the 2007 and 2008 Work Schedule – and

c) **Resolution: Adoption of the Tompkins County Forest Management Plan** and Authorization to Enter into an Agreement with a Forestry Consultant to Implement the Work Schedule Through 2012 – Katie Borgella provided a handout summarizing changes to the draft plan. The 1988 County Forest Plan was used by Bevan Forestry in developing this new plan. These properties are identified as important in the NYS Open Space Plan because they are part of the Emerald Necklace. The work segments of the Plan will only move forward if economically sustainable, in other words if the harvest revenue equals the costs to implement the plan. Bevan is the only certified forester willing to operate in this region, so the contract for work will be with them. Pam asked what it means to be certified. Ed Marx said it is becoming an economic value, as suppliers want to commit to using certified products, locally produced, in green building projects. It shows we are using the highest standards. Frank

suggested he and Greg Stevenson review the Plan first, then share the copies with other Legislators. Resolutions will be on the October 18th PDEQ agenda.

- d) **Resolution:** Authorization to Enter into an Agreement with the **Town of Dryden to Implement the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Implementation Grant** and Co-Hold a Conservation Easement on the Lew-Lin Farm – and
- e) **Resolution:** Authorization to Enter into an Agreement with the **Town of Lansing to Implement the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Implementation Grant** and Co-Hold a Conservation Easement on the Bensvue Farm – Both resolutions moved by Frank, seconded by Tyke. Frank said he would also like to recognize the efforts of Cooperative Extension staff in these successful PDR applications. Pam said she recently drove through Lansing farmlands and found the trip breathtaking. Both resolutions passed unanimously. Katie said a market study is being done of the Bensvue property. If the new information shows the property to be of significantly higher value, a supplemental request will be made to the State.
- f) **Resolution: Appropriation from Contingent Fund – Terminal Pay – Department of Planning –** Moved by Jim, seconded by Pam. Resolved clause changed from Public Safety to PDEQ. Passed unanimously.
- g) **Route 96 Corridor Study** – Ed said the RFP is almost ready for release. This partnership is the County, City of Ithaca, Town of Ithaca, Town of Ulysses and maybe ITCTC. PDEQ requests reports on the project. In October, Ed will bring a resolution to PDEQ for participation in an intermunicipal agreement that will spell out the financial partnership.
- h) **Commissioner’s Report** – Ed said the TCPD 2006 Annual Report was released and he welcomes comments and questions. The TCSP grant projects are all nearing completion and final reports will be presented at Planning Advisory Board on 9/26 at 9 AM. TCPS projects are the Route 13/366 Corridor Study, Northside Waterfront Study, and Walkability Studies in Trumansburg and NE Town of Ithaca. The Route 13/366 Study sought opportunities for nodal development, and the Town and Village of Dryden are now working on updating their zoning ordinances. The Village of Lansing is moving forward with protection for a segment of the Bolton Estates development. These cliffs on Cayuga Lake are also known as Poison Ivy Point, and are in a UNA and NFFA. Ed received an email today that the City of Ithaca is moving forward with ways to implement the Housing Strategy. Several agencies are also working on this. Ed had responded to inquiries from Albany, on the county’s proposal for the three initiatives with the greatest funding need, the Black Diamond Trail, move of DOT from the Inlet to Dryden, and dredging of the Inlet. He is beginning to get calls from state agencies about these and some other projects that need attention and funds. The NFFA Conservation Plan will be posted on the website in the next few weeks.

8) Cornell University

a) **Deer Management Plan** – Gary Stewart and Paul Curtis attended. A handout was provided with Frequently Asked Questions. Paul said CU is committed to a five-year plan of fertility control and hunting, and showed the areas on a large map. A program coordinator will be hired to research fertility control and coordinate hunting. Fertility control will occur on the central campus, and will involve trapping, tagging, sterilization at the veterinary college, and release at the trap sight. Hunting will be allowed in an area directly east of the central campus, and will involve archery by hunters who will sign in and out, hunt on a specific property, bring the carcass for recording of biodata, and taking two does before they can take a buck. Contact is being made with all individual farms in the target area. Goals are to reduce deer impacts by 50% in the perimeter property and up to 75% on campus. The proposal to fence Cornell Plantations was opposed by Forest Home residents, so this alternative was developed and fencing at Plantations will be for small areas only. They hope to start the trap/tag portion in winter 2008, and realize they may need to cap hunter participation. Cost is estimated at \$70,000 per year without the project coordinator’s salary. Landowner response has been very supportive.

9) **Adjournment** – Pam announced there will be a meeting on 9/27 at 1 PM in the Old Jail Conference Room about traffic of garbage haulers through Tompkins County. On 10/18 she will need to leave PDEQ early for a regional meeting on the same topic in Aurora. Jim asked if the Planning Department would have a role in disposition of the Biggs B site if the Health Department moves out. Ed expects TCPD will be involved, but not lead the efforts. The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Wilsea, Secretary
Tompkins County Planning Dept.