

Tompkins County
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

121 East Court Street
Ithaca, New York 14850

Edward C. Marx, AICP
Commissioner of Planning
and Public Works

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AGENDA

PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD

Wednesday, March 28, 2012
9:00 AM

Scott Heyman Conference Room, 125 E. Court St.

Call to Order & Changes to the Agenda	Mina Amundsen
Election of Officers	Nominating Committee
Development Focus Areas Update (draft version shared with municipalities available at: http://www.tompkins-co.org/planning/documents/DevelopmentFocusAreasStrategyvers14.pdf)	Joan Jurkowich
City of Ithaca Comprehensive Planning Process	Ed Marx
Commissioner's Report <ul style="list-style-type: none">Kingdom Farm and Proposed Lansing Sewer DistrictClimate Showcase Communities and Biggs RFP Update	Ed Marx
Appointment of Membership Committee for At-Large Applications	Chair
Approval of Minutes from November 30, 2011 and January 23, 2012	Chair
Announcements	Members
Adjournment	Chair

Please allow 1 ½ hours for this meeting.

*If you will be absent, please notify
Kathy Wilsea at 274-5560 or
kwilsea@tompkins-co.org*

Upcoming meeting dates: April 25, May 23

Inclusion through Diversity

1 *Draft 12/02/2011*

2 **PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD**
3 **Wednesday, November 30, 2011**
4 **SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM**
5 **125 East Court Street**

6
7 **draft MINUTES**
8

9 **Members Present** – Mina Amundsen, Martha Armstrong, Todd Bittner, Dick Coogan, Sue
10 Cosentini, Rick Couture, Fernando de Aragon, Dave Herrick, Dooley Kiefer, Pam Mackesey, Kathy
11 Schlather, John Spence, Rob Steuteville, Scott Whitham, Andy Zepp

12 **Members Excused** -- John Gutenberger, Gay Nicholson

13 **Member Absent** – David Kay, Monika Roth

14 **Others Present** – Katie Borgella (TCPD), Joan Jurkowich (TCPD), Ed Marx (Commissioner of
15 Planning & Community Sustainability), Kathy Wilsea (TCPD)

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17 **Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 9:05 AM by the Chair, Mina Amundsen. The
18 agenda item on Proposed Changes to Agricultural District 1 will occur at a later date, probably
19 January 2012.
20

21 **Revised Request for Proposals for Sale/Lease of Biggs Property** – Ed Marx sought agreement
22 from PAB to have this proposal go to PDEQ and the Town of Ithaca, after which it would be
23 released in early 2012 with a deadline for submission being several months after release. The RFP
24 will have many attachments. Ed reviewed how the document has changed since last month's
25 discussion, mainly by changing certain aspects from requirements to qualifying for flexible points.
26 Also added was the County's right to reject any or all proposals. The affordable housing portion of
27 the project can be set aside for a partner. Common amenities are suggested as a way to keep units
28 small. Minimum bid was included, as well as the option to include K House in the project.
29 Provision is now included to defer half of payment for land. All of these points have been discussed
30 with the County Attorney and the County Administrator.
31

32 During discussion, it was clarified that more density will be requested for the PDZ, with a goal of
33 70 units, but that count is up to the Town of Ithaca. The Pedestrian Zone will be included. If a
34 developer intends to turn the affordable portion over to a not-for-profit organization, a letter of
35 commitment from the partner will be required. Ed noted that several local NFPs would be
36 interested. Rob Steudtville brought up the topic of timing and what are the reasons to go forward at
37 this point. Ed said we need to reach the commitment phase within the period of the EPA grant, but
38 the node was identified in the Route 96 Corridor Study, with this site being at the edge of the node.
39 The County has had the intention to do something with this lot for a long time as part of the move of
40 the Health Department out of Biggs B. There are many benefits if it also demonstrates Climate
41 Showcase Communities principles. Any node takes time to develop, and commercial portions
42 won't be supported until residential aspects are a reality.
43

44 There have been some discussions with the Town of Ithaca, but nothing specific can happen until
45 the County Legislature sees the RFP. There is probably no unanimous opinion, and Ed conceded it
46 might go in a different direction. Sue Cosentini pointed out it is unfortunate that it is perceived as
47 grant-driven, but it will create the future for the Town and can be utilized effectively. Ed said
48 discussions have occurred with Cayuga Medical Center and other neighbors, and will continue.
49 Fernando de Aragon said it would be nice for the Town to make a commitment to nodal
50 development sooner rather than later. There is a lot of pressure from the public to block West Hill

51 development due to traffic concerns. A node is needed to make it come together. Ed said this
52 concept has been under discussion with the Town for two or three years. The Town is still not
53 ready to present their draft Comprehensive Plan, and we can't keep waiting for that to happen. This
54 is an opportunity to present a nodal plan to the community and show a concept that is better than the
55 35 lots that could be developed under current zoning.

56
57 Andy Zepp said he understands the need for the timeline, but asked if there are any spots on East
58 Hill. Mina Amundsen said Cornell is in discussion with the Town about Game Farm Road, and the
59 Town will probably rezone after their Comp Plan is updated. She noted West Hill is not perfect, but
60 is an opportunity to make something happen. Cornell is trying to have zoning in place before they
61 propose anything. Ed said Cayuga Medical Center is going forward with their district energy. This
62 site is right next door, and is an incredible opportunity for district energy. More information on that
63 will be included with the RFP. It would reduce occupancy cost, and will be a factor in discussions
64 with the Town. Rob asked if all three projects (EcoVillage, Aurora Dwelling Circle and Biggs)
65 need to proceed for the grant qualification. Ed said yes, and the grant provides an opportunity for
66 something we always intended to do. The timeline is from the grant, but would have started earlier
67 if the grant hadn't come along. Lagging occurred to match the Town process.

68
69 Dooley Kiefer asked if energy use will be measured at this site. Ed said information from the other
70 two communities will be available for the grant. The Biggs part will demonstrate building
71 principles. Dooley felt it is necessary to keep the option of leasing the land, and suggested
72 rewording the RFP for sale or lease. She would expect this to be a topic brought up at the County
73 Legislature discussion. Todd Bittner spoke of the open space and stormwater management piece,
74 and pointed out the need to prevent the open space from becoming a retention basin for stormwater.
75 He asked what is the base of "50% stormwater reduction". Also, if walkability is desired, the
76 project needs trails in the open space for recreation and healthy living. Ed said the intent is to
77 minimize the amount of stormwater that needs to be managed. The RFP does require an open space
78 management plan. He thinks the RFP needs to clarify the intent to maintain the forest as a buffer,
79 and Todd suggested adding it to the flexible points system. Fernando said the trails need to connect
80 to adjacent activity centers, too. Ed responded that the RFP states the intention to use money from
81 additional units to connect to a bus stop, which is not on this property.

82
83 Martha Armstrong pointed out the RFP doesn't actually encourage 70 units. Ed said that is part of
84 the balancing act with the Town to use half of the land for housing. The site borders suburban area
85 to the north, and those residents are potentially the largest opponents. The site also includes a
86 federal wetland. Rob said it is one thing to draw a half-mile circle, and another to connect. Ed said
87 that is true, and there is no master plan in the community. He will be discussing the hope to add
88 connectivity further with Cayuga Medical Center. Dave Herrick was concerned about segregation
89 of the affordable housing and asked if styles will differ. Ed said they do ask that it be part of the
90 proposal. Due to scale, it can't be very isolated, and it is desirable to have full integration.
91 Returning to stormwater, Dooley agreed it needed a basis of comparison. Ed said that is
92 comparison to current code, and will be clarified. Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Service reports
93 they have actually achieved 50%. Ed will circulate further revisions to PAB. The RFP will be a
94 topic of discussion with the County Legislature and the Town of Ithaca.

95
96 **Comments to DEC on dSGEIS on Gas Drilling** – Ed reported PDEQ will be considering several
97 resolutions at a special meeting today. Resolution topics are general comments, affirmation of
98 home rule, and two versions of impacts not mitigated for agriculture, Finger Lakes, or water
99 resources.

101 **Commissioner's Report** – Ed Marx reported the Planning Department received the County version
102 of the housing demand study yesterday. That information will be examined and shared. ▪ Ed has
103 been invited to a presentation on EPA brownfield development at the Emerson site on South Hill.
104 Tompkins County Climate Protection Initiative developed the case statement, which was shared
105 with a consulting firm in DC, and through work with TCAD, the City and Town of Ithaca, a grant
106 application has been submitted. ▪ Recommendations are due to the Governor 12/1 for NYSERDA
107 Regional Sustainability grants. ▪ John Spence asked if Chuck Thomas' housing report (Sept. PAB)
108 will be distributed. Ed said it will be put together with the housing demand study.

109
110 **Approval of Minutes from September and October** – Dooley Kiefer made suggestions for
111 amendments to the September minutes. Both sets of minutes were then moved by Dick Coogan and
112 accepted by voice vote. Final minutes are available on the Planning Department website:
113 www.tompkins-co.org/planning/ under Advisory Boards.

114
115 **Announcements** – Kathy Wilsea announced Tompkins County Council of Governments will be
116 posting comments on their website from local organizations to DEC on the gas drilling dsGEIS.
117 Pam Mackesey announced a TCCOG-sponsored public hearing on the gas drilling dsGEIS to take
118 place 12/1, 7 to 11 PM at the State Theatre. Transcript will go to DEC. Dooley said the
119 Environmental Management Council is sponsoring an event on dredging, also 12/1, 7 PM at the
120 Library. This is a report from a class at Cornell. Sue said she expects to break ground for the
121 Aurora Dwelling Circle in the spring. She sees this as an education opportunity and welcomes ideas
122 from PAB members. Info is available at the website: www.newearthliving.net. Ed recommended
123 that members check out the HUD Rural Development report that was recently sent to members by
124 email. Mina announced a Town/Gown event on Saturday, 12/3 at 10 AM.

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126 **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 10:26 AM.

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128 Respectfully submitted,

129
130 Kathy Wilsea, Secretary
131 Tompkins County Planning Department

132
133 Minutes adopted by PAB on __, 2012.

134
135 **Membership:**

Mina Amundsen, At-Large	Dooley Kiefer, Associate Member
Martha Armstrong, Economic Dev.	Pam Mackesey, Planning Committee
Todd Bittner, Natural Environment	Gay Nicholson, At-Large
Dick Coogan, Local Planning (non-urban)	Monika Roth, Agriculture
Sue Cosentini, Business	Kathy Schlather, Human Services
Rick Couture, Education	John Spence, Housing
Fernando de Aragon, Transportation	Rob Steuteville, Built Environment Design
John Gutenberger, Education	Scott Whitham, Cultural & Historic Pres.
Dave Herrick, Facilities/Infrastructure	Andy Zepp, Land Pres./Public Land Mgmt.
David Kay, Local Planning (urban)	

1 *Draft 1/26/2012*

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3 **PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD**
4 **Wednesday, January 25, 2012**
5 **SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM**
6 **125 East Court Street**

7 **draft MINUTES**

8
9 **Members Present** – Mina Amundsen, Dick Coogan, Sue Cosentini, Rick Couture, Fernando de
10 Aragon, John Gutenberger, David Kay, Dooley Kiefer (Associate), Kathy Schlather, Andy Zepp

11 **Members Excused --** Todd Bittner, John Spence, Scott Whitham

12 **Member Absent** – Martha Armstrong, Dave Herrick, , Pam Mackesey, Gay Nicholson, Monika
13 Roth, Rob Steuteville

14 **Others Present** – Joan Jurkowich (TCPD), Ed Marx (Commissioner of Planning & Community
15 Sustainability), Debbie Teeter (Cooperative Extension), Kathy Wilsea (TCPD)

16
17 **Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 9:08 AM by the Chair, Mina Amundsen. Due to lack of
18 a quorum at this point, agenda items will be taken out of order.

19
20 **2011 Planning Department Work Program** – Ed Marx provided an overview, noting there were a fair
21 number of carryover items due to the many interruptions to work and schedules in 2011, which included
22 formation of the Regional Economic Development Council, funding applications, transfer to TCPD of the
23 Tourism program, gas drilling, and new staff. Those delayed projects will show up again – Conservation
24 Strategy, Development Focus Areas Strategy, and Tourism Strategic Plan, to name a few. Some of the
25 programs for 2012 that he wanted to point out are work on the Energy Road Map by four Cornell graduate
26 students, participation in the Get Your GreenBack campaign, the feasibility study for West Hill combined
27 heat and power and its possible expansion to a district energy concept, Climate Smart Communities, Biggs
28 RFP, a pending brownfields grant for the former Emerson site, updating the All Hazards Mitigation Plan
29 with inclusion of a climate adaptation plan, and the Cleaner Greener Communities grant for which TCPD is
30 negotiating the scope and hiring a consultant for completion of plans for eight counties in eight months.
31 NYSERDA has added adaptation planning to CGC.

32
33 Concerning Cleaner Greener Communities, Ed responded to member questions saying he thinks CGC is
34 looking at deferred increase through land use, although there are many groups with land use control across
35 the region. NYSERDA wants measures in the transportation analysis, some of which we have already been
36 talking about. Joan Jurkowich pointed out accomplishing this in eight months will be tough, and we don't
37 want to alienate any municipalities so they reject the whole plan. Also, it took us years to get to our level of
38 conversation about Smart Growth, so we won't have time for the whole region. Ed agreed we need to
39 consider analysis of future State implementations. Best practices communities will become models for the
40 region. Phase II CGC projects are unknown now, but will need to be tangible projects. The program wants
41 to see money used for leverage, too.

42
43 Also listed in the Work Program this year are tourism objectives: evaluation of existing programs and the
44 grant programs, which may be streamlined.

45
46 Concerning the process for the Development Focus Areas, meetings will be held between staff and
47 municipalities between now and the public meetings that will be conducted in March and April. Andy Zepp
48 expressed interest in maximizing impact on the municipal level, where changes to development patterns can
49 occur, and volunteered to help. Ed estimated that 70% of efforts will go into organizing, and 30% into
50 disseminating information. He acknowledged it is hard to get the public to learn about these concepts and to
51 take an interest. Although members of zoning boards of appeal will be invited, the target audience is the
52 elected officials and planning board members. TCPD has a small amount of money for matches with
53 municipalities on projects.

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Eight-Year Review of Ag District 1 – Debbie Teeter was present from Cooperative Extension. She reviewed the phases conducted in the update under NYS Agriculture & Markets division. Ag & Markets oversees ag districts, ag district law, and the protection tools for farmland. She reminded members that, under current law, there is an addition period every year but the eight-year review is the only time landowners can request removal. Ag & Farmland Protection Boards are specified in NYS law to make recommendations to the County Legislature. In Tompkins County, review includes contact with municipal planning boards and PAB. AFPB includes information on agriculture assessment to municipalities as part of the process. History shows that farmers pay more in taxes than they receive in services, and must have at least \$10,000 income from agriculture to get the agriculture assessment. Debbie interacted with towns concerning recommendations to add or remove. Parcels in villages were not considered. Owners of all eligible property were contacted by mail concerning the recommendations to add or remove and, in all cases when the landowners responded, their requests were honored. Considerations included parcel size, proximity to the existing ag district, and ownership or rental for agriculture purposes. Debbie noted Cornell land is not in the ag district. All parcels were double checked with the County Assessment department. Today, Debbie seeks approval of PAB so the proposal can go to PDEQ and then the County Legislature. Dick Coogan moved to accept, which was seconded by Andy Zepp and passed by unanimous voice vote.

2011 Planning Department Work Program (continued) – Dooley Kiefer suggested some of the programs would be well demonstrated with maps. Answering other questions, Joan and Ed said Conservation Partners include Finger Lakes Land Trust, Cooperative Extension forestry staff, DEC, and State Parks. The Annual Housing Report will probably come out in March. For the Southern Tier Regional Rural Initiative Venture Fund, the regional office is developing guidelines for the \$3 million in funds. Guidelines need to go through the draft-circulate-finalize cycle. Right now the draft is a combination of loans and grants. For the Sustainability Center, announcement has just been made that they wish to hire a part-time coordinator, with Downtown Ithaca Alliance conducting advertising. Displays are under development and the center location is under discussion with the County Legislature. Taking over fundraising, oversight and grantwriting from TCPD will be the work of the coordinator, and the Park Foundation is helping fund the position. A Park Fellow from Cornell is helping with long-range planning for the Sustainability Center. The Healthy Homes program is funded by a Community Development Block Grant and involves repairs/replacements for roofs, septic systems and drinking water wells for homes that are currently in such bad condition they are not qualified for weatherization grants. Any other questions or comments can be sent to Joan or Ed by email.

Commissioner’s Report – Ed Marx reported the Southern Tier Sustainability Plan is taking lots of his time. ▪ Comments to DEC on the rdsGEIS on gas drilling are up on the Planning Dept. webpage. ▪ In their comprehensive planning process, the Town of Ithaca seems to be moving their preferred site for development on West Hill south and west of the Biggs location. ▪ In March, PAB will probably have a presentation on the Energy Road Map. ▪ The Blueway Trail held a kickoff meeting.

Announcements – Dick Coogan reported the Town of Ulysses has preliminary information on a 54-unit development proposal south of Jacksonville on the west side of Route 96. In several ways, this is not a good match for the recommendations of the corridor study. Fernando deAragon announced the kickoff of the Transportation Study.

Adjournment – Other agenda items were not address due to lack of a quorum. The meeting was adjourned at 10:32 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Wilsea, Secretary
Tompkins County Planning Department

Minutes adopted by PAB on __, 2012.