

1 4/27/16

2 **PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD**  
3 **Wednesday, April 27, 2016**  
4 **SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM**  
5 **125 East Court Street**

6 **MEETING MINUTES**

7  
8 **Members Attending:**

Name		Representation
Martha Armstrong	E	Economic Development
Todd Bittner	P	Natural Environment
Joe Bowes	A	Housing
Sue Cosentini	P	Business
Fernando de Aragón	P	Transportation
John Gutenberger	E	Education
Dave Herrick	A	Facilities/Infrastructure
Ruth Hopkins	E	At-Large
Rod Howe	P	Historical/Cultural Resources
David Kay	P	Local Planning (urban)
Darby Kiley	P	Local Planning (non-urban)
Gay Nicholson	P	At-Large

Name		Representation
Martha Robertson	P	Planning Committee
Monika Roth	E	Agriculture
Kathy Schlather	P	Human Services
Rob Steuteville	P	Built Environment Design
Andy Zepp	A	Land Pres/Public Land Mgmt
<i>Dooley Kiefer</i>	P	<i>Associate Member</i>
<b>Others Present</b>		
Ed Marx	P	Commissioner of Planning
Katie Borgella	P	Deputy Commissioner
Joan Jurkowich	P	Planning Administrator

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12 **Call to Order & Changes to the Agenda** – David Kay called the meeting to order at 9:04 AM.

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14 **Municipal Planning for Energy** – Ed introduced the topic saying that the recently finalized Energy  
15 Roadmap calls for accelerating the transition to renewables and the department wants to provide some  
16 information to municipal boards on how to incorporate renewables into its land use regulations. Joan outlined  
17 the approach being considered. The effort will be on small-, medium-, and large-scale solar and wind, and  
18 micro-hydro, and the focus will be on identifying the key provisions that municipalities should include in the  
19 laws, not necessarily developing model ordinances. The goal is to produce such a list within 6 months.  
20 Considering asking TCCOG to form a special committee to assist and advise on this work and/or developing  
21 a series of workshops for municipal planning board and town board members (asking first about concerns  
22 they have and information they would like and then bringing back the lists of key provisions). The  
23 possibility of meetings for public input is also being considered.

24  
25 PAB members suggested it would be good to offer professional, well-researched information to local  
26 governments to give them something more defensible to stand behind when facing political controversy.  
27 They also supported a hybrid approach of coordinating with TCCOG and having the workshops for local  
28 officials. Among the suggestion from the board: to prepare maps showing setbacks and other limitations that  
29 are proposed and estimating how much that would restrict development of solar and wind energy; to at least  
30 compile a list of good ordinances to point people towards when developing municipal ordinances; to get  
31 engagement from the private sector, and for micro-hydro to get early involvement from the DEC. Gay said  
32 that she engaged with DEC on micro-hydro last year and found DEC staff to be cooperative. They have done  
33 this recently in Madison County on a protected trout stream.

34  
35 Members emphasized the educational component to this work, and stressed that it's critical to get ahead of  
36 the land use activities to make sure that local municipalities don't regulate renewables so much that it will be  
37 impossible to meet the aspirations in the Energy Roadmap. We should also consider if there are things the  
38 County could do to encourage renewables, like tax exemptions, for example.

39

40 Town of Ulysses took 7 months to adopt solar regulations into its zoning. They've shared the results with the  
41 Town of Ithaca. It was suggested that the NYSERDA-funded research on this topic by Pace University be  
42 reviewed.  
43

44 Katie asked for input on whether we should keep this work focused or expand into other related areas, as we  
45 are getting frequent requests to do so. Examples given were solar leasing guidelines and how to interpret and  
46 use the energy and emissions aspects of the SEQR law. Feedback was to allow Cooperative Extension to  
47 lead on the solar leasing provisions and maintain focus on the core renewable aspects. It was suggested that  
48 we could ask the DEC for guidance regarding their intent on the energy components of SEQR. The SEQR  
49 Workbook was identified as a reference to check on this. Suggestion made that County could develop and  
50 adopt its own SEQR forms and share with municipalities.  
51

52 **Municipal Planning for Adaptation/Flooding** – Ed reported that the department was planning on doing  
53 some sort of outreach and education to local communities on flooding and rethinking how floodplains are  
54 regulated locally, especially in light of a changing climate. Within the next 2-3 years the DEC is expected to  
55 start work on updating the local floodplain maps, but there is a need to move on this issue sooner than that.  
56 The hope is to encourage municipalities to be more protective of their floodplains and to do more to stop  
57 unpermitted filling in floodplains. Suggestion was made to address agricultural tiling practices and the  
58 possibility of instituting a stormwater impact fee for landowners wishing to lay tile for expedited drainage. It  
59 was noted that because tiling farmland is a generally accepted agricultural activity NYS Agricultural  
60 Districts law may restrict any ability to regulate it locally in an Ag District.  
61

62 Another suggestion was to use the new wetlands maps more robustly – perhaps encourage the DEC and  
63 Army Corps of Engineers to use them in its permitting activities. Also suggested to bring the code officers  
64 into the discussion and educate them on the consequences of these activities. Suggestion to partner with Soil  
65 and Water Conservation District in this work, as they have good rural landowner relationships already.  
66

67 **Airport Area Microgrid Feasibility Results** – Ed reported that the State's cost-benefit analysis determined  
68 that the benefits of the micro-grid would offset the costs if the area experiences 0.33 days of service  
69 interruption per year over the projected 20 year life of the micro-grid. Cost is now a +/- 25% estimate, so that  
70 could change if the Phase II more detailed analysis was done. Applications for Phase II are due in October.  
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72 **Commissioner's Report** – Ed reported on the following:

73 Old Library Site – the DeWitt House is moving forward with expectation that the formal application will be  
74 submitted to the City in May. Plans now are for Lifelong to keep its property and existing brick building, sell  
75 the white house on Court Street, and use new proposed community space in DeWitt House for some of its  
76 programmed activities.

77 Housing Needs Assessment – the modeling is more complicated than anticipated, so it's taking longer.  
78 Expect to have results to share with the public by the end of May.

79 NYS Ag and Markets has announced the next round of funding for purchase of development rights. 6-7  
80 farms have expressed interest and expect that 1-2 applications will be submitted.

81 Airport Commercial-Industrial Park Feasibility Study – about a month away from completion. Analysis  
82 indicated little expected demand for office space in the county in the future.

83 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory – nearing completion and expect results by late May.

84 Green Energy Incentives project – Taitem Engineering getting very interesting results. Next step is to  
85 develop possible incentive program for the IDA to consider adopting.

86 Energy Focus Areas Study – consultants have developed expected energy demand in the next 10 years for 4  
87 areas of the county. NYSEG is starting to analyze South Hill to see whether existing infrastructure could  
88 provide those energy services.  
89

90 **Announcements** – Kathy asked where up-to-date information is posted on road projects. Fernando said the  
91 best map is in the City of Ithaca Engineering Department.  
92

93 **Approval of Minutes from March 21, 2016** – Dooley noted that Darby was listed twice as being present.  
94 The minutes were approved by unanimous vote. Final minutes will be available on the Planning Department  
95 website: [www.tompkins-co.org/planning/](http://www.tompkins-co.org/planning/) under advisory boards.

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97 **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 AM.

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99 Respectfully submitted,  
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101 Katie Borgella, Deputy Commissioner of Planning  
102 Tompkins County Planning Department