

AGRICULTURE , PLANNING, TOURISM & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 24, 2009

AG/PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Campbell, Rymph, Scribner,  
Lindsay, N. Hall

AG/PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Brown, Hurley

SUPERVISORS: LaPointe, Henke, G. Hall

Debra Prehoda, Clerk

Kevin Hayes, County Administrator

Chris DeBolt, Planner

Marge Mohn, Tourism Director

Karen Pratt, Director IT

Mike Trackey, Deputy Director IT

Roger Wickes, County Attorney

Renee Bouplon, Agricultural Stewardship Association

AGENDA AS PRESENTED IN COMMITTEE NOTICE:

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Approval of Minutes – February 24, 2009 Meeting
- 3) Department Reports/Requests
  - A. Planning
    - a. Presentation – New Visions PLC – Carmen Branca
    - b. Economic Stimulus Updates
    - c. Monthly Planning Board Report
    - d. EPA Water Quality Grant
  - B. Agriculture
    - a. Ag Stewardship Association
  - C. Community Development
    - a. Wash Co. Alternative Energy Work Group Update
  - D. Tourism
    - a. Monthly Report
- 4) Other Business
- 5) Adjournment

Chairman Campbell called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M.

A motion to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2009 meeting, was moved by Mr. Lindsay, seconded by Mr. Rymph and adopted.

PLANNING: Chris DeBolt, Planner, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Presentation – New Visions PLC (handout on file) – Carmen Branca, New Visions, of Syracuse, New York addressed the committee. His company can deliver very high speed broadband services to counties know matter how many homes on a street. He stated affordable broadband services have been a problem across the country. “New Vision is creating the next generation broadband network utilizing the Electric utilities network to deliver broadband services.” He stated the FCC approved the technology they use five years ago and New York State also has approved it. “New Visions has a agreements with Utilities to utilize their electric lines for the purpose of delivering broadband services.” Basically the way the equipment works is that they put equipment up on the pole and when connected to

the electric grid it in return sends a frequency through the lines to your home outlet. The modem plugged in at your home then can connect to the internet. This is an affordable service costing approximately \$25.00 - \$30.00 per month. They offer high speed internet, telephone service and soon will be offering cable. He feels this will greatly assist economic development in the county and also, potential savings on communication costs for the county, towns and villages. A survey would need to be done to determine what the interest is in this program and that would be a County undertaking. He would like to address law enforcement and emergency services personnel to explain this technology and services. There is no charge or liability to the county for these services. They would bill customers directly. He would like to work with a small group to get information together on this offering. An interdepartmental group met with Mr. Branca prior to this meeting, Chris DeBolt - Planner, Karen Pratt – IT Director, Mike Trackey – Deputy Director IT, and Tori Riley – Director Local Development Agency. That group felt Bill Cook, Director of Public Safety, should be included and they also asked if a Supervisor would like to participate. A motion to have Supervisor Henke serve on the interdepartmental group discussing this technology was moved by Mr. Scribner, seconded by Mr. Rymph and adopted. Chairman Campbell would like this group to meet as soon as possible. This group will be working to explore providing this option in the County.

- Economic Stimulus Updates – Chris reported 15 projects were ranked. Two separate lists were submitted: water and sewer projects and all other projects on a prioritized list. Identifying which funding stream to apply to each project is the next step.
- Monthly Planning Board Report – One project in the Village of Cambridge that was a matter of local concern.
- EPA Water Quality Grant – The grant period has expired and the reporting has been completed. The EPA has notified Chris that we will be audited. He has the paperwork to complete prior to the audit.
- Miscellaneous:
  - Wind Power – Mr. Scribner asked if the County is ready for a wind energy project, placing wind towers throughout the county, as mentioned at the March 20<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting. Several supervisors stated this county is not right for a wind tower project, the elevations in the County are not high enough for this type project. Roger Wickes, County Attorney, stated we do not have countywide zoning and it would be a matter of local concern.

AGRICULTURE: Renee Bouplon, Ag Stewardship, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Ag Stewardship Association – PDR Program Updates – Renee stated the Moses project was approved by Ag & Markets and the voucher is working its way through the system. The State has not made any announcements on last year's project. There is no guarantee that there will be requests accepted for this year. They plan

Agriculture, Planning, Tourism & Community Development  
Committee Meeting Minutes – March 24, 2009 – Page 3

to move forward as if there will be requests this year so the County will not be at a disadvantage. They will be holding PDR pre application meetings. The program funding has been dramatically reduced in the Governor's proposed budget.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – Chris DeBolt, Planner, updated the committee on the following item:

- Washington County Alternative Energy Work Group Update – Chris reported that the soy crush operation is looking positive and is moving forward in Hampton.

TOURISM – Marge Mohn, I Love NY Program Director, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Monthly Updates – handout attached. Marge reported the I Love NY Program funding has been received in the amount of \$66,156.00 and approved for \$56,491.00 for 2009. A copy of the proposed Washington County map was distributed, on file. Several proposed cover pages being considered for the cover of the tour guide were distributed for review. A handout detailing funding applications for the Washington County Tourism Association Marketing Program 2009 listing the applicants approved for a total of \$21,263.50 in funding was distributed, on file. Also distributed and on file, a copy of the Washington County Tourism Association I Love NY budget for 2009, \$44,708.50. Washington County will be advertised in See You There.
- Americade - Kevin suggested opening the parks during Americade weekend as a destination for bikers but the parks are not usually open until the end of June. Mrs. G. Hall stated the residents might not like opening the parks to others when the County did not budget for full use by the residents. She stated a plan is needed.
- Great American Steam Boat Flotilla – The Great American Steam Boat Flotilla will be traveling from Whitehall to Waterford and also a floating museum will be in Whitehall on August 8<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> and also in Fort Edward, dates unknown.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- Resolutions - Mr. Henke presented for consideration resolutions (also addressed at the last Intercounty Legislative Committee of the Adirondacks meeting) opposing Environmental Protection Agency Action to Classify Agricultural Methane as a Pollutant and Taxing Cattle and Crops and Resolution Supporting Reintroduction of the Federal Milk Marketing Improvement ACT, copies on file. A motion to introduce both resolutions at the April 17<sup>th</sup> Board meeting was moved by Mr. Scribner, seconded by Mr. Lindsay and adopted. Mr. Henke's name will be added as a sponsor of these resolutions.

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 PM.

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