

AGRICULTURE , PLANNING, TOURISM & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
MAY 20, 2009

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

AG/PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: None

SUPERVISORS: Wilbur, Henke, G. Hall

Debra Prehoda, Clerk

Kevin Hayes, County Administrator

Roger Wickes, County Attorney

Chris DeBolt, Planner

Debbie Perkins, Tourism Assoc.

Phyllis Cooper, Treasurer

Tori Riley, LDC

AGENDA AS PRESENTED IN COMMITTEE NOTICE:

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Approval of Minutes – April 22, 2009 Meeting
- 3) Department Reports/Requests
 - A. Agriculture
 - a. Ag Stewardship Association
 1. PDR Program Update
 - B. Planning
 - a. Broadband Update
 - b. Local Planning Board Members Training
 - c. County Planning Board Monthly Report
 - d. Historic Preservation Membership
 - C. 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 April 22, 2009 meeting was moved by Mr. Scribner, seconded by Mr. Lindsay and adopted.

AGRICULTURE – Renee Bouplon, Ag Stewardship Association, updated the committee on the PDR program:

- PDR Program Update – Renee provided a brief status report on projects, attached. PDR pre-applications for the next grant round are due to ASA by June 1st. Discussion ensued on the program in general.

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

- Broadband Update – They had a meeting last week with two companies offering broadband services, CBN Connect and ECC Communications. CBN Connect is a non-profit connected to SUNY Plattsburg Technology Center. This is the firm that Warren County would like to contract with for a needs assessment study and have Hamilton and Washington Counties participate at a cost to Washington County of

\$40,000. The second company was ECC Communications with a \$45,000 cost for a needs/telecommunications inventory assessment. Their offer was more detailed than the CBN Connect plan but required a lot of staff time by Planning and the GIS Technician. Chris did feel that the ECC Communications product would be a powerful economic development tool, being able to locate potential business sites and services available. Both firms were asked about the option of broadband over the power lines (New Visions – March committee presentation) and both stated they felt it was worthless. CBN Connect does not have any cable lines or customers. ECC Communications is just in the study business. Chris did speak with someone using the New Vision technology in Solvay, NY and they are pleased. They do business in Solvay but at no other location. Discussion ensued. Chairman Wilbur mentioned a broadband conference call tomorrow through NYSAC to discuss funding opportunities for broadband expansion and public safety improvements. Chairman Campbell wrapped up the discussion, stating that we will stay the way we are going. He also stated that Bill Cook informed him that Verizon plans to make substantial changes in telecommunications over the next coming years. Mr. Brown recommends contacting Dave Putman of Giant Solutions to run these concepts by him.

- Local Planning Board Members Training – Training on June 3rd for municipal board members on SEQRA forms, step-by-step instruction, handout attached.
- County Planning Board Monthly Report – handout on file. A site plan in the Village of Cambridge was determined to be a matter of local concern, site plan, Village of Fort Edward matter of local concern and special use permit, Town of Fort Edward for a cell tower was disapproved
- Historic Preservation Membership – The Historic Preservation Council thanked the Board for the presentation ceremony. They also have two new members, Steven Lapham, Hebron and Edith Sparling, Granville.
- Planning Director Position – Kevin Hayes, County Administrator, advised the committee that Chris has passed the planner test and can be promoted to the Director position. A motion to recommend appointment of Chris DeBolt to Director of Planning and forward to the Finance and Personnel Committee to establish salary was moved by Mr. Lindsay, unanimously seconded and adopted.
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TOURISM – In the absence of Marge Mohn, Tourism Director, Debbie Perkins, of the Tourism Association, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Monthly Updates – handout attached.
- Handout – 2009 Tour Guide, Washington County, on file.
- Tourism Association Meeting -May 12th – Chairman Campbell attended the May 12th Tourism Association meeting and discussed the tourism program. At this time, tourism will remain with the association and not be brought in house (back to County). Better communication is needed between the Board of Supervisors and the Tourism Association, making an effort to work together. Chairman Campbell

stated things will change and changes are necessary because now is the time tourism can move to the forefront in the County but not the way we are doing things now. Every effort will be made to work together. Debbie mentioned she is actively involved in snowmobiling at both the state and county level and that \$9 billion dollars came into the state from snowmobiling in 2003. They are doing a preliminary survey of what is coming into the county. Debbie will work with Marge on better presentations to the committee.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- Chairman Campbell mentioned a recent Post Star newspaper insert that named local best and many Washington County museums, attractions and business were named.
- EPA audit – Chris DeBolt, Planner, stated he has received the official start of the EPA audit and has fifteen days15 calendar days to complete the survey.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 PM.