

PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD
Wednesday, June 25, 2008
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
615 WILLOW AVENUE

MINUTES

Members Present – Dick Coogan, Fernando de Aragon, John Gutenberger, Dave Herrick, Dooley Kiefer (Associate), Peter Penniman, Monika Roth, Scott Whitham, Fred Wilcox, Andy Zepp

Members Excused -- Martha Armstrong, Rick Couture, Martha Robertson , John Spence

Members Absent -- Betty Falcao, Gay Nicholson ,

Others Present – Jeanne Leccese (TCPD), Ed Marx (Commissioner of Planning & PW), Leslie Schill (TCPD), Kathy Wilsea (TCPD)

Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 9:08 AM by the Chair, Dick Coogan.

Update on the Cayuga Lake Waterfront Trail – Rick Manning was unable to attend today, so Fernando de Aragon provided some information. Phase 3 has received a NYS grant for the area by The Haunt and Newman Golf Course. Phase 3 is moving along, has no right-of-way issues, and is expected to be open in 2009. Phase 2 still has right-of-way issues with two landowners in the old restaurant area north of Buffalo Street. Ed Marx asked if there has been any discussion on purchase & redevelopment of those two properties, and Fernando said he hasn't heard of that idea. Dooley said there was a funny letter in the Ithaca Times about a Superfund Trail and beaming hikers from Phase 1 to Phase 3 areas. John Gutenberger said he has heard that property owners claim the City is requiring them to pay for trail construction on their properties, and this doesn't make sense to him because he thought construction was covered by grants. Fernando will check on that. Ed said the City has received a grant from the tourism fund for a master plan for Stewart Park, and Rick Manning is also working on that. Fernando said another traffic test was conducted on Route 96 at the bridge by Pete's. The fire chief is now neutral on the plan to reduce the bridge to two traffic lanes and devote part of the bridge to the Waterfront Trail.

Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Element of the Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan – Leslie Schill distributed a written update. She said she and Katie Borgella got good feedback at the public meeting on June 5th. They are putting together a framework now, and will split up the no-cost options to short term, medium term, and long term activities. In addition to the “build local energy programs” selections included in the update, there are maybe 50 more. They are still on course to take this to the County Legislature by the end of 2008. They hope to get the draft document out early in order to gather comments. Some new numbers have been obtained about the shares of energy usage for transportation, residential, commercial, agriculture, so calculations are being worked on again. Tim Fahey's carbon footprint article is being used as an example of different measures, and will be included in background information. Dooley Kiefer pointed out that LEED guidelines do not necessarily stress low energy usage. The ICLEI Local Action Plan baseline edits may impact the goal agreed upon by the County Legislature. She sees possible discussion on whether improvements should be measured against the original data or the revised baseline. Leslie acknowledged the data corrections altered the baseline, and said focus groups discussed the goal, and whether the goal should be for County government or for the community. Peter Penniman asked if municipalities are buying into the concepts in the County's Comprehensive Plan, and will the City's new comprehensive plan tie in to the County's? An increase in housing in the City could cut transportation for people who now commute from outside the City to jobs here. Leslie said there are some municipal representatives on the steering committee. Ed Marx said there is currently no intermunicipal planning group. Housing and density are high among City ideals. The City is currently in transition with no Planning Director, but the City bought into the principles of the County's Comp Plan principles on housing and nodal development. Fernando asked if a County Planning Department staff member will serve on the City comp plan committee. Ed said TCPD will have a

chance to review the draft because all municipalities are required to send draft comp plans for review and comment. He is hearing consensus on principles from the City.

Committees: Biggs B Evaluation – Jeanne Leccese will work with this committee. TCPD is helping with move of the Health Department to Brown Road, which is expected to be completed in October, 2009. The County Legislature wants recommendations on disposal of Biggs B. The committee was appointed in March, and will begin their work by meeting on Friday, July 11th at 10 AM. **Rural Small Business Loan Oversight** – Staff is not aware yet of any more volunteers to work on this committee. Check will be done to see if the County Legislature needs to confirm the committee appointments. They will meet Friday, 6/27 at 9 AM to review a loan application.

Commissioner's Report – Ed Marx reported that a property on the tax foreclosure list sold with a conservation easement that staff developed to protect the wetlands and creek. The easement establishes a buffer for habitat protection and still leaves room for a building. Habitat for Humanity purchased the lot. Things look positive for establishment of a housing affordability grant and trust fund program, with City of Ithaca, Tompkins County and Cornell University as partners. Notice of Funding Availability is being drafted for release in late summer or early fall. This was an element of the Housing Strategy. A grant application has been submitted for replacement of an old railroad bridge on Pine Tree Road. The new bridge would be wider for bikes and pedestrians, improve drainage and provide standard height for commercial vehicle passage underneath. This fits in with the East Hill Village concept, which is part of the Cornell University Master Plan. Ed is confident the renovations of the new Health Department building will be LEED certified, possibly at the silver level. The standards for renovations are probably within budget; a higher level might cost more but provide payback. He finds this exciting and interesting, and hopes it will provide some models for other buildings in the technical park. The funding reviewed at PAB from the Capital Reserve Fund for Natural, Scenic & Recreational Resource Protection (for Lick Brook) was approved by the County Legislature. Ed attended a NYSDOT meeting on reconstruction work being planned for Route 13 south of the City on an area that is now two lanes. TCPD staff recently meet with a consultant and officials from Chautauqua County, who plan to use the Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan for a model as they develop theirs. Andy Zepp said gas exploration issues are cropping up again. He is interested in having a speaker from DEC or Chemung County visit PAB and talk about siting, access roads, pipelines, and water injection methods. A well in VanEtten is producing enough gas for 50,000 homes, so interest is high in the area. Dave Herrick asked how the housing roundtable discussion went, and Jeanne said it was held yesterday with participants from most of the municipalities plus four developers. Discussion included interesting questions and comments. Jeanne spoke about the model ordinance for inclusionary zoning that is being drafted at TCPD, with lots of positive feedback.

Approval of Minutes from March 26 and April 23, 2008 – Both sets of minutes moved by Fred Wilcox, seconded by John Gutenberger and accepted without change by voice vote.

Announcements – The property of former PAB member Dan Krall will be part of a garden tour on July 12th.

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 10:02 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Wilsea, Secretary
Tompkins County Planning Department

Minutes adopted by PAB on October 22, 2008.

Membership:

Martha Armstrong, Economic Dev.

Dick Coogan, Local Planning (non-urban)

Rick Couture, Education

Fernando deAragon, Transportation

Betty Falcao, Human Services

John Gutenberger, Education

Dave Herrick, Facilities/Infrastructure

Dooley Kiefer, Associate Member

Gay Nicholson, At-Large

Peter Penniman, Business

Martha Robertson, Planning Committee

Monika Roth, Agriculture

John Spence, Housing

Scott Whitham, Cultural & Historic Pres.

Fred Wilcox, Local Planning (urban)

Andy Zepp, Land Pres./Public Land Mgmt.