Resolution No. 272   November 13, 2012

Urging The New York State Department Of Environmental Conservation To Expedite And Complete The Processes Necessary To Advance The Project At Williams Lake

Referred to: The Economic Development and Tourism Committee (Chairman Maloney and Legislators Loughran, Maio, Roberts and Wishnick)

Chairman of the Economic Development and Tourism Committee, James F. Maloney, and Deputy Chairman Peter Loughran offer the following:

WHEREAS, Ulster County is part of both the Hudson Valley and Catskills region; and

WHEREAS, both of those regions are dependent on environmental based tourism; and

WHEREAS, the people of Ulster County are inherently good stewards of the environment, and as we have chosen to make our home in this part of New York State; and

WHEREAS, the Williams Lake Resort is a well known resort which once hosted thousands of families throughout the year and was a hub of tourism in the Rosendale area; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, Hudson River Valley Resorts proposed a plan with the support of the long-time operator of Williams Lake, Anita Peck, herself a long-time leader in hospitality in Ulster County well respected for the jobs she created; and

WHEREAS, since 2007, Hudson River Valley Resorts has been diligently proceeding to establish a resort at Williams Lake ("the project"); and

WHEREAS, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) substantially delayed the project by taking seven months to determine simply who the lead agency would be under the State Environmental Quality Review Act; and

WHEREAS, in August, 2012, this Legislative body has learned that the NYS DEC's Region 3 office unnecessarily delayed the project further after requesting documents that that office could have requested long ago; and

WHEREAS, the project would create substantial economic benefits and is supported by the Supervisor of the Town of Rosendale; and

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WHEREAS, the project developers estimate the project would, among other things, create over 1,300 construction related jobs over the anticipated ten year build out of the project; and

WHEREAS, this Legislative Body is committed to the employment of every Ulster County resident needing a job; and

WHEREAS, the greater than 9% unemployment rate faced by Ulster County residents is found by this Legislative Body to be too high – and unnecessarily too high in part because of the substantial amount of tourism jobs that could and should be created through projects such as the project at Williams Lake; and

WHEREAS, the project anticipates building a much needed, high quality, 130 room hotel which would be an asset not only to Rosendale but to families who wish to visit, for example SUNY New Paltz and other regional attractions; and

WHEREAS, the project would open up a now closed section of a rail trail, which could be enjoyed by the public at large; and

WHEREAS, the project would create significant tax rateables for the Town, County of Ulster, and local schools; and

WHEREAS, the substantial unfunded mandates which every taxpayer in Ulster County pays for would be lessened with the $1.9 million in anticipated tax revenue associated with this project that would come along to Ulster County; and

WHEREAS, the project has been planned in a manner which actually directs tourism into downtown Rosendale instead of keeping tourists and property owners on premises for shopping; and

WHEREAS, at this time the NYS DEC is developing six draft permits associated with the project – three of which were accepted as complete and the other three of which do not appear to be moving forward in a reasonably acceptable timeline for the County of Ulster; now, therefore be it

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RESOLVED, that this Legislative Body calls upon the NYS DEC to expedite and complete, rather than delay their review and processing of all draft permits, so that the draft permits can be advanced to the necessary public comment period and to issue as soon as possible any required findings so that the site plan application can start to be processed before the Town of Rosendale Planning Board; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Legislative Body hereby asks that the NYS DEC provide timely, legal, and fair reviews of projects of importance to Ulster County including the project at Williams Lake; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to Governor Andrew Cuomo, DEC Commissioner Joe Martens, Town of Rosendale Supervisor Jeanne Walsh, Williams Lake Owner Anita Peck, Hudson River Resorts Project Manager Tim Allred and the representatives of Ulster County in the New York State Legislature,

and moves its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: 22   NOES: 0
(Absent: Legislator Belfiglio)

Passed Committee: Economic Development and Tourism on October 31, 2012

FINANCIAL IMPACT:
NONE

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STATE OF NEW YORK

                    ss:

COUNTY OF ULSTER

This is to certify that I, the undersigned Clerk of the Legislature of the County of Ulster have compared the foregoing resolution with the original resolution now on file in the office of said clerk, and which was adopted by said Legislature on the 13th day of November, 2012, and that the same is a true and correct transcript of said resolution and of the whole thereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal of the County of Ulster this 14th Day of November in the year Two Thousand and Twelve.

|s| Victoria A. Fabella
Victoria A. Fabella, Clerk
Ulster County Legislature