

ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING, PLANNING & TRANSIT COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES - SEPTEMBER 23, 2009
MEETING HELD AT: UCAT – One Danny Circle, Kingston, NY

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PRESENT: Legislator Hector Rodriguez – Chair Legislator Peter Loughran
Legislator Joseph P. Roberti Jr. (left 7:40) Legislator Mary Sheeley
Legislator Catherine Terrizzi

ABSENT OR EXCUSED: Legislator Gary Bischoff, Legislator Wayne Harris

OTHERS ATTENDING:

Dennis Doyle, Director of Planning; Lydia “Lee” Reidy, Exec. Director of Cornell Co-Op
Lance Matteson, President of UCDC; Legislator Gregorius: Richard Schaedle: Brian Powell,
Phoenicia Times & Olive Press; Joseph Libonati, Laborers Local 17;

Chairman Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and asked for a motion to approve the August minutes. **Motion was made by Legislator Loughran, seconded by Legislator Terrizzi. Legislator Sheeley abstained due to absence at August meeting All else were in favor;**

OLD BUSINESS:

As requested at the previous meeting, Dennis Doyle will update the committee on UCAT, as Bob DiBella was not available. FTA came in to do a review of capital programming. Grants generally have a 3 year shelf life to expend the funds - and the review went extremely well. UCAT staff put together a spread sheet that showed the grants, where things stood with the grants, etc. and FTA felt it was an excellent format.

- \$460,000 grant - Automatic Vehicle Locator system is being implemented
- 15,000 gallon fuel storage tank is moving along; in the process of choosing a construction manager; manager will also oversee UCAT building completion (additional offices, training room being moved upstairs)
- complete analysis of routes being conducted; transit density routes – new route schedules will be done and broken down by corridor; schedules within corridors and Bill Tobin of Planning is on loan for 3 hours a week to UCAT working on this project
- UCAT will provide service for Walkway, Garlic Festival and Woodstock Film Festival
- Staff have come together and stepped up during the transition, with a wealth of experience and expertise they are willing to share; Cynthia Ruiz has been assisting as well and left the department in good shape; they are to be commended
- Bus Rodeo is this coming weekend down in Ellenville

NEW BUSINESS:

UCDC Presented:

Lance Matteson was excused as he had a religious obligation and will return next month for a budget review and update on UCDC activities. Lance provided us with a summary which he will discuss in detail next month.

County Planning Presented:

Dennis Doyle – Amthor has been finalized and there continues to be a strong interest in Ulster County in terms of economic development. Kadem Winery continues to move forward and they are working with Empire Zone for State funding. Recruitment effort continues for solar and targeted sites at Tech City. Blueprint for Restore New York applications have been submitted – two applications have been submitted but sense is they will not bode well in that Restore New York funds are being heavily sought after so there is an extreme amount of competition for this funding. Solar continues to be a focus for economic development opportunities.

Revolving Load Fund being looked at by UCDC. County is finding it difficult to seek additional funding due to revolving loan fund structure under continued economic funding round as long as balance is in fund.

Legislator Sheeley updated the committee on the auction sale of the Nevele. Being told now there is a problem wiring the money from overseas although the day of the auction, people were informed money already transferred. Now an application from the original owner is before the town planning board for logging the property. Owner says he has (3) back up buyers but will not divulge details. Site has no water or electricity at this time and last season, pipes broke and water was turned off – an enormous amount of damage was done to the infrastructure. Dennis Doyle pointed out there are several cell towers on top of the building. Legislator Sheeley knows of several parties interested in the place but the owner doesn't appear to be entertaining all offers. OET is working with the staff who were at the Nevele.

Shovel Ready applications are coming in from Marlboro and Tech City/Town of Ulster; GIS project is being done at Tech City and improvements are being implemented and advancements being made. Website is being worked on that will allow people to readily view what space is rented, available, etc. Legislator Loughran questioned how much funding is being provided given the Tech City owner has fought for tax reductions, etc. Director Doyle indicated in spite of the past issues with the owner, things are going well now and there is a cooperative working relationship in place resulting in good things happening at Tech City.

Marlboro is looking for a waterline extension and water hook-ups.

Planning and Development Corp through their Balanced Growth Committee are putting together a syllabus of training programs and will be able to offer training credits and certificates to local planners. First course will be in October as part of an Economic Development Toolbox Series – what is an IDA, Development Corporation, etc.

Legislator Rodriguez asked where Paul Hakim, Chairman, and the Committee are on streamlining the permit and review process which was the charge of the committee initially. A planner's guide is being done that reviews fast tracking the permit approval processes. Planning is looking to partner with Department of Environment so forum exists for Environmental agencies and Economic agencies to readily come together for discussions on policy issues as well as projects.

Governor announced the possibility of more stimulus funding; repaving of sections of Route 28 corridor may be done with this funding

Transportation Funding bill expires on June 30th and the Transportation Council is hoping there will be legislation passed extending the funding. There is talk that if it is renewed, transportation enhancement funding as well as trails funding will be removed;

Highway Trust Fund, who manages this money, is expected not to have enough money to meet it's 2010 obligations unless the above bill, extending funds, is passed; County should be looking at ways of funding transportation needs in the future.

Housing Consortium is finishing it's Housing Campaign and looking to rollout an event in November (3rd week?). They'll have a website and are pursuing sponsors for the event. Dennis is hoping the Legislature will support a Housing Awareness Month resolution but before he can propose anything, he needs to discuss the request with a number of others involved with the campaign roll out.

October 22nd there will be a UCDC dinner.

Open Space has received several hundred thousand dollars to close on several farms.

Planning has a Tourism oversight committee that is working on the nuts and bolts of getting a campaign launched by Oct. 2nd in conjunction with the Walkway Over the Hudson Opening. New campaign will be Ulster County Alive and the website data input has been enormous. Legislator Rodriguez expressed appreciation for the update but asked in the future that Dennis Doyle and others keep the Legislature informed along the way, presenting them with an opportunity for input, rather than tell him and his colleagues what has been completed as funding assistance is requested.

Cornell Co-OP Presented:

Lee Reidy has a group, inclusive of US Senator Gillibrand and NYS Assemblyman Crouch, taking a farm tour. All legislators were invited as well. This was put together at the request of Senator Gillibrand who is on the Agriculture Committee. UCAT will be providing the transportation and as of now, it's about 15 people. They will be visiting various farms throughout the County – Gill Farm, Dominoes Farm, Flying Change Farm, Hudson Valley Lab for lunch where all local products will be served, WG Miner Apple Farm and Jeff Christ

Apple Farm. They'll talk about a myriad of issues related to their farm operations (ie farmer housing, use of solar energies)

Local farm was selected as Dairy of Distinction and was in the paper. \$50,000 grant was given to a slaughter house in Liberty which will be good for the local livestock farmers.

Co-Op is waiting on two grants in particular - a Health and Communities Grant and a Relatives as Parents Grant; DEP is allowing Co-Op to use grant monies as matching funds for other grants being pursued so environmental programs can be implemented and maintained, especially in the watershed area.

National 4-H Week Proclamation was greatly appreciated and assists with growing the 4-H programming and making those participating feel good. Nutrition information and working with the low income who are receiving food stamps in the Liberty area and Highland areas is a new program. Co-Op works with the Department of Social Services in terms of establishing the targeted areas. There are lots of programs in place at Co-Op of varying topics – gardening, financial management, nutritional training, etc.

Dennis complimented Lee and her staff as well as the staff of the Environmental Department for coming together with planning and repurposing an old \$50,000 grant to be able to be used in the watershed district.

Dennis also announced if any townships indicate communities are no longer eligible for flood insurance it's because a number of communities (11?) did not adopt necessary local legislation and get it filed with DEC specific to flood plains and flood maps. Dennis will follow up as to what communities have been impacted and email Mary Carey the information to be shared with all legislators.

RESOLUTIONS:

Encouraging and Supporting the Construction of Belleayre Resort to be Managed by Crossroads Ventures, LLC – Supporting Economic Development and the Tourism Industry in Ulster County. **Legislator Loughran agreed to pull resolution until next month**

Discussion: A lot of discussion occurred, primarily between Legislators Rodriguez, Loughran and Greorius on this resolution. Legislator Loughran addressed that this project has been around for years and years and with the economy being so bad, the Ulster County Legislators should be supporting this project and assisting with trying to move it along at this point, provided Crossroads is doing what is required of them, rather than continue to sit back. It would be economically advantageous to the County as a whole right now. There has been a tremendous loss of jobs from companies closing across the county, people are having difficulties paying their taxes, we spend a tremendous amount of funds promoting tourism, etc. and there are numerous advantages to having this project move forward with environmental issues being addressed as opposed to doing nothing.

Legislator Gregorius, advocated for the Legislature not to take any action on this resolution or any other resolutions concerning the Crossroads Ventures project until SEQRA and environmental concerns were all addressed, applications to DEC were filed and approved, and the overall scope of the project could be determined. Legislator Gregorius raised concerns that the nature of this project is not fully known – it's not clear what the project is at this point nor what impact it will have on roadways, property values, the environment, etc. This should be full explored before any action is taken. Legislator Gregorius questioned why are we involved and promoting this large private project, when we

have not concerned ourselves with the Canopy Project in Rosendale or the Waterfront Project in Kingston? Additionally, concerns of usurping home rule were raised and Legislator Loughran reiterated that this project would be beneficial to the County as a whole and that the Legislature has made decisions on numerous matters that could be made home rule issues, ie safety net, whereby the entire Legislature has voted. It was pointed out there were other projects as well (ie Casinos, Rivendall Winery) over the years, that were voted on by the full legislature that could be argued were home rule in nature but not treated as such. Legislators at times have had to vote what was in the best interest of the County as a whole, not just in the interests of their district constituents.

Legislator Rodriguez expressed concerns that the Legislature should not allow the Agreement in Principal (AIP) to dissolve, which is presently being talked about, as that would place the whole matter back at square one after all these years and the hard work of many. The scope of this project impacts a vast number of people, both in and out of the district, more so than

Mr. Schaedle spoke to the Dan Lighthouse, Project Mgr. at DEC, on Monday, and because of the AIP, they will not and can not issue impact statements (DEIS) and unit management plan (UMP) to Belleayre Ski Center until they get environmental submissions from Crossroads Ventures for their SDEIS, which has not occurred yet. AIP indicates Eastside has to be sold to the State before the Westside can go forward. Legislator Rodriguez expressed he feels that all parties, for numerous reasons, have contributed to the extensive delays.

Lance Matteson of UCDC indicated it's his understanding the sale of the 1200 acres to the State can be done independent of the rest of the project and would encourage the Legislature to consider minimally trying to move this portion of the project along. All parties are in agreement on this sale.

Legislator Terrizzi, who is a new Legislator, and Legislator Sheeley, who support economic development, would like to see the developer present the current plans and project either to the committee or to the full legislative body as it has changed from what was originally proposed. It seems no one has a clear understanding of what the project is at this point. Dennis Doyle indicated the developer has presented numerous times to both the Legislature and the Planning Board, however, there has been nothing recent and since the AIP has been put in place, which changed the plans significantly.

Legislator Loughran agreed to pull the resolution for a month and will be contacting Crossroads Venture and the State to get additional information. He will also speak to the Chairman to request an information session or privilege of the floor being given to Crossroads Venture to present what the project proposal is at this time and bring the full body up to date on the status of the project. Legislator Gregorious would like to see "both sides" given time for presentation. Legislator Loughran indicated that he is not seeking "opinions" on the project but rather factually what the project being presented is. Legislator Rodriguez indicated he will leave it to the Chairman, as should both Legislators Gregorious and Loughran, to decide who will be granted Privilege of the Floor.

Legislator Loughran will speak to the Chairman about an information session and requested that Planning reach out to Mr. Gitter to see what has been submitted, where things stand, etc. Director Doyle suggested that the reason County Planning has not likely been contacted and kept informed on the project by Crossroads Venture is that they are dealing with the locals (Town of Shandaken) on permits and so forth that must be in place prior to

County Planning becoming involved. Also, the State is being dealt with on specific matters so County Planning is essentially not needed as of yet. Legislator Rodriguez acknowledge that procedurally they may not be needed but they should be on top of this project and involved on portions of the project where their input can possibly make a difference.

Authorizing the Chairman of the Ulster County Legislature to Execute an Agreement with the NYS Department of Transportation – Accepting NYS Share for Mass Transportation Projects for Federal Fiscal Year 2009 – Dept of Public Transportation (Ulster County Area Transit)
Motion was made by Legislator Sheeley, Seconded by Legislator Loughran. Legislator Roberti abstained due to his employment. All else were in favor.

Authorizing the Ulster County Executive to Execute Contracts and Amendments Thereto, with the NYS Housing Trust Fund Corporation Represented by the Office of Community Renewal (OCR), for Federal Funding for the Implementation of Community Development Block Grants – Dept of Planning **Motion was made by Legislator Sheeley, Seconded by Legislator Loughran. All were in favor.**

Motion to Adjourn:

**Motion was made by Legislator Loughran , Seconded by Legislator Terrizzi
All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM**

Submitted by: Mary L. Carey, Clerk of the Legislature on October 28, 2009