

# ULSTER COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

## *Minutes –April 6, 2011*

The Ulster County Planning Board Meeting  
7:30 p.m. – Surrogate Courtroom, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
County Office Building

### **The Executive Committee did not meet**

Chairman Wilkin called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm and Mr. Doyle read the roll call.

- 1. ROLL CALL Present:** R. Pecora, J. Konior, T. Marion, K. Lovelett, T. Hokanson, H. Grant, T. Wilkin, M. Baden, F. Greitzer, P. Economos, K. Holmquist, M. Watkins, R. Budziak, A. Yuran, E. Hooper, R. Elwell, R. Kinnin, D. Doyle, J. Schwartz Berky, R. Leibowitz **Absent:** L. Biggin, G. Matichuk, S. Frederick, **Excused:** J. Katz, S. Finkle, P. Hakim **Guests:** Bob DiBella – Fair St., Jerry Soldner – Green St.

Mr. Economos introduced himself as the new member from the Town of Saugerties.

### **2. PREVIOUS MINUTES (February & March Minutes)**

Mr. Baden informed staff (via e-mail) that the vote for Mt. Rest Road Gatehouse (#2011-032) was missing on the March zoning minutes. Those minutes have been corrected to show that 18 members voted "Yes" and zero voted "No."

**Mr. Wilkin asked for the Board's approval of the March minutes as amended. Motion to approve made by Ms. Pecora, seconded by Ms. Hokanson. Mr. Economos abstained. The rest were in favor.**

**Mr. Wilkin asked for approval of the amended February minutes (the Financial Report was corrected). A motion was made by Ms. Pecora to approve, seconded by Ms. Elwell. Abstentions were made by Mr. Holmquist, Mr. Lovelett, Mr. Economos, Ms. Grant, Mr. Watkins and Ms. Hooper. The motion was unable to pass due to lack of majority vote.**

Mr. Doyle stated he would check with the County Attorney to see if we could accept minutes from meetings where they were not able to be approved.

### **3. FINANCIAL REPORT - 2011**

Please note that the March Financial Report was amended to include encumbered funds for the Tri-State Traffic Data contract. Encumbered funds for contracts will show in the Expended column of Line Items #4400 & #4411.

Mr. Doyle noted that this report is accurate to the date that it is pulled from the County's HTE system. He added that we are in good shape. Mr. Wilkin asked if the Tri-State contract comes out of the Planning budget. Mr. Doyle answered that the Planning budget includes the Transportation budget. Mr. Wilkin stated he noticed counters on various roads and a van that had Tri-State Traffic Data on it. Mr. Doyle responded those counters were not from our contract.

### **4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Bob DiBella, who lives at 116 Fair Street, asked the Board to consider a negative declaration on a property applying for a Use Variance at 131 Fair Street for a boarding house, which he believes, had an inadequate amount of parking. Jerry Soldner, stated he resides at 7 Green Street and is President of the Uptown Residents Alliance. He and also spoke about the same proposed project on Fair Street adding that the applicant's proposed solution to the parking issue was to lease a neighbor's backyard as a parking lot. Mr. Soldner added that this would set a negative precedent in the neighborhood and asked that the board take a negative vote on the referral for this reason. Mr. Wilkin asked if the Board would like to review the project sooner in the meeting since these people were concerned with it. Ms. Hokanson wanted to clarify that a Negative Declaration would mean no environmental impact and she didn't believe that was what Mr. DiBella was requesting.

KEY: (f) = handout will be in folder at meeting  
(m) = handout included in the mailing

Mr. DiBella agreed. Dr. Doris Soldner, also a resident of 7 Green Street, was concerned with the same issue. She expressed how frustrating it is to have single family homes become housing for six and seven families. Mr. Leibowitz stated the house in question was a few blocks from the County Office Building and the referral was actually for a special permit. The property is outside the 500 foot rule so he could make advisory comments for an area variance regarding the lack of parking. See Zoning Minutes (UCPB referral #2011041) for vote.

## 5. COMMUNITY REPORT

Ms. Hokanson stated the Town of New Paltz Draft Farmland Protection Plan is out to Ag Society for review and also that New Paltz sent Mr. Doyle a Southern Ulster Alliance preliminary draft of the design for connection of Hudson Valley Rail Trail. Ms. Pecora stated that Mid-Hudson Valley FCU completed construction in Esopus and the grand opening is scheduled for April 19<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Baden informed the board that the Town of Rochester Historic Preservation Commission has just finished a study of 10 Historic Farmsteads. The town hired consultant Harry Hansen and they will be having a presentation at the Reformed Church on April 15<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Baden added that he believed all 10 farms were still in operation and some go back over 300 years. Mr. Baden offered to forward the flyer to Mr. Doyle for distribution. Mr. Wilkin thanked Ms. Hokanson for hosting the seminar in New Paltz. He added that there was a heavy turnout. Mr. Wilkin also asked the board to canvas their communities to see if there was any need of further ZBA trainings. He added that it would be good to get feed-back after these trainings to see what people liked and disliked. Mr. Wilkin asked if the seminar was worth more training time since it lasted later than what the flyer stated. Mr. Doyle answered that we offer two hours of credit for our seminars. Mr. Wilkin stated he would like the Board to send Mr. Lithco a thank you letter for taking part in the seminar. Mr. Doyle stated that we are currently working on putting together a Transportation seminar. Ms. Hokanson stated that one of the Article 78s in the Town of New Paltz regarding Flood Plains was settled in the Town's favor.

## 6. COMMUNICATIONS

No member comment

## 7. OLD BUSINESS

### a. SEQRA Comments Due

Mr. Doyle stated the Board was provided with a draft of the comments, which are due to the DEC on April 8<sup>th</sup>. Our comments concern the vast use of forms for SEQRA. They have a "one size fits all form" and we would like to see the department develop a form that is specific to land actions. We would like three part form that includes the existing conditions of the site, instead of the current two part form that calls for information and analysis of that information as it relates to impacts. The form should help with the design of the project. If you look at the form to guide for significant impacts you find there is no guidance. The forms should get the answers together before an action moves forward. Mr. Doyle stated he thought the DEC has the responsibility to have the guidance posted. If communities want to be more restrictive they could go about it by other avenues. Mr. Wilkin brought up Air Quality concerns and stated there were many restrictions concerning air and water. Mr. Doyle stated that we have noted that the changes to the short form offer a lot of opportunity and are a major improvement. Our comments are intended to get the DEC to think about the use of these forms for land use actions.

**Ms. Elwell made a motion to support submitting the comments to DEC. Seconded by Mr. Watkins. All were in favor.**

### b. Main Streets Program Update (Postponed from February)

Ms. Schwartz informed the Board that we have been working with communities around the county to help with strategies for Main Streets and have worked with RUPCO to apply for the New York Main Street grant. She added that Ulster County has won more Main Street grants than any other county in New York. Unfortunately due to the economic climate at that time, some of the communities were not able to use all of the funding and it had to be returned to the state. This put us in the position of having to justify future funding. Ms. Schwartz stated the Main Streets programs in Ellenville and Kingston were successful. Funding was turned back in Port Ewen and Milton.

Ms. Schwartz stated that we are currently working in the mountain towns as we have received a \$50,000 grant from the Catskill Watershed Corp. Ms. Schwartz went over the Main Streets handout with the Board and played an internet presentation on strategy. Ms. Schwartz spoke about working with Phoenicia; developing a stronger central presence to improve visibility and market its many offerings. Mr. Doyle stated we have taken a look at physical planning activities and combined them with an understanding of economics. We look at what is driving the tourists. He stated that aesthetics plays a significant role in Main Streets, making places more inviting to visit. Ms. Schwartz added that we have to look at the long view on how to increase foot traffic on Main Street.

Ms. Schwartz also hand a handout showing how the Greenway Compact was progressing. She added that Mr. Doyle wanted to reconvene the Committee working on this. Ms. Schwartz mentioned the various communities that she and other staff have met with so far. She stated the Greenway Compact is an opportunity to determine smart growth areas (priority growth). Ms. Schwartz informed the Board that the Adirondack Park is using a model to analyze areas of zoning and growth and we have been able to generate our own model based on this. Ms. Schwartz stated that we will probably hold some workshops in the Fall. Once we have met with all of the communities we will type up the results into a low-tech report to share with the Greenway people. Then we would ask the communities if they want to join the Greenway Compact. Ms. Schwartz added that being involved in the Greenway Compact offers many benefits.

Mr. Kinnin asked to have a published date added to the handouts. Ms. Schwartz replied that we could repost them to our website. Mr. Kinnin also asked to add Broadband (as well as cell reception) to the infrastructure assessment section. He added it might be a good tool to entice businesses to Pine Hill or Port Ewen. Mr. Kinnin also mentioned inconsistencies in the website URLs.

## **8. NEW BUSINESS**

### **2011 Annual Ag District Inclusions**

- a. Mr. Doyle informed the Board that the deadline for receiving applications was March 30<sup>th</sup>. We had 13 applicants that included 26 parcels for a total of 847 acres. Mr. Doyle stated the parcels were in Esopus, Wawarsing, Marbletown, Marlborough, New Paltz, Olive and Hurley. Mr. Doyle stated that the material will be transmitted to the Legislature for their consideration. Staff will be making field inspections soon and we are trying to schedule a meeting with the Farmland Protection Board for their recommendation. The Legislature will consider those recommendations in June. Mr. Doyle informed the board that we have been given the responsibility of managing the Farmland Protection Board because Cornell Cooperative no longer wishes do it. Mr. Doyle clarified that these are annual additions. The districts are reviewed every 8 years. If a property is not used agriculturally it cannot be removed until the district runs out.
- b. Mr. Doyle stated the new Census material has come out and it is posted on our website. He informed the Board that the new County population is approximately 182,500. Mr. Doyle stated this is not the full Census data; it is the redistricting data. He added that the office is immersed in redistricting efforts. Mr. Doyle stated that Mr. Leibowitz has been dealing with a number of people coming in learning the new software, as well as removing viruses from personal computers and attending meetings of the Reapportionment Committee. Mr. Doyle added that we have not only committee member coming in to use the reapportionment software in the back cubicle but also members of the press and the public.
- c. Mr. Doyle stated our office has been working very hard along with the UCDC to put together a Brownfields Opportunity Grant application. He added that he did much of the budget work, Ms. Gallagher did much of the writing and Ms. Schwartz did much of the initial work on land use and the editing. Mr. Doyle stated that we are running out of staff in-kind time to work on grants. He added that the slideshow could be presented at a Board meeting and that he believed it was a very good economic development tool. Ms. Schwartz clarified that this initial study is for properties with the perception of blight not just contaminated sites.
- d. Environmental Notice Bulletin – No Member Comment

- e. Zoning Referrals – *See Separate Zoning Minutes*

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:44 pm.