

ULSTER COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Minutes – February 9, 2011

(Rescheduled from February 2nd due to the weather)

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

The Executive Committee met at 6:45 PM

(Mr. Wilkin, Ms. Elwell, Mr. Watkins (excused), Ms. Hokanson, Ms. Pecora & Mr. Budziak)

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

1. ROLL CALL Present: R. Pecora, J. Katz, J. Konior, T. Marion, T. Hokanson, T. Wilkin, M. Baden, F. Greitzer, R. Rascoe, R. Budziak, A. Yuran, R. Elwell, R. Kinnin, S. Finkle, D. Doyle, J. Schwartz Berky, R. Leibowitz **Absent:** L. Biggin, S. Frederick **Excused:** P. Hakim, H. Grant, K. Holmquist, M. Watkins, G. Matichuk, A. Zlatkin

2. PREVIOUS MINUTES - The January Minutes were not approved.

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Baden, which was seconded by Ms. Elwell. Mr. Rascoe and Mr. Kinnin both abstained. The vote did not pass due to lack of quorum and will be held again in March.

3. FINANCIAL REPORT - 2011

Mr. Doyle stated that we have not expended much of this year's budget. We are looking into purchasing new software – Autobound LE, and Maptitude. Mr. Leibowitz informed the Board that Census numbers should be coming out the week of March 7th. Mr. Doyle stated we are looking at the State budget and its impact on the Board and the department with respect to the County. Mr. Doyle stated that we have a concern at the Federal level as the reauthorization of Transportation Bill will occur at the end of March. We have two staff members funded by transportation funds. Mr. Baden noted that there was an error on the Financial Report. Mr. Doyle stated this would be corrected. Mr. Kinnin asked if March Gallagher was a new employee. Mr. Doyle stated that Ms. Gallagher has been on staff for two years and has attended three board meetings. He explained that Ms. Gallagher's Economic Development position is intertwined with Planning and funded through our department. We have recently secured funding for a "Ready-to-go" (Shovel Ready) program, which is funded from a CDBG grant (run through the Planning Department), Central Hudson money and monies through the IDA. Mr. Doyle added that Ms. Gallagher brokered all of the deals that secured that funding. Mr. Finkle stated that he has worked with Ms. Gallagher and he affirmed that many projects would not be accomplished without her tenacity and input. Mr. Katz gave examples of two businesses that Ms. Gallagher helped to coordinate a move to Gardiner to help keep them in business. Mr. Doyle stated that Ms. Gallagher works the maximum allotment of comp time, which keeps her from attending many board meetings, though we will have her address the Board quarterly.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT – There was no public comment

5. COMMUNITY REPORT

Ms. Pecora stated that the Mother Cabrini School in Esopus is closing due to their financial situation. Town of Esopus is looking into various solutions for site design for the property. Mr. Doyle he would like to have coordinated meetings with the Cabrini representatives, the town and the county. Ms. Pecora stated that there was more information about Mt. Saint Alphonsus, but she was not able to discuss it at this time. Mr. Doyle stated the whole "religious ridgeline" down the Hudson needs to be looked at. Mr. Rascoe stated that in Town of Shawangunk the opposite is happening with large tracts of land being removed from the tax roles with religious properties moving in. Mr. Finkle stated that we want to make sure we have some sort of economic base so as not to fulfill RPA's dream of making Ulster County into NYC's playground. **Mr. Doyle stated he would like to have support from the Board to initiate a discussion with all of the entities involved.** Mr. Finkle suggested having discussions to encourage public access without taking the property off the tax rolls.

Ms. Pecora stated the Town also wants properties to be on the tax rolls. Ms. Elwell added that we should get involved early on before too much is discussed or decided. She gave an example of a recent trails meeting with representatives from several communities, non-profits, NYSDOT and Mr. Samuelson representing the Planning Department; and stated that due to the project being such an early stage everyone was willing to listen to each other and it was a very productive and pleasant meeting.

Mr. Rascoe stated the State budget also affects employment in correctional facilities in Ulster County in places such as Highland, Gardiner, Shawangunk, New Paltz, etc. He added the reduction in staff in Highland was inevitable. Mr. Rascoe said he felt we would be facing an even bleaker economic outlook should more jobs be lost and he added that perhaps someone should lobby for support of these jobs.

Mr. Wilkin asked for a motion to initiate a conversation with the property owners in Esopus: Ms. Hokanson made a motion to authorize the County to organize a meeting with the property holders in Esopus. Mr. Finkle wanted to add an emphasis on the interest in economic opportunities with an eye toward maximizing economic activities we could have. The motion was seconded by Mr. Konior

Discussion: Mr. Doyle stated that we are aware of prison closures and have been dealing with DOCS and it seems unlikely that NYS would close our prisons at this time. We were aware that the Highland facility would be affected, but we believe the medium security prisons are okay. Mr. Rascoe stated that any opportunity to make this our primary focus.

Mr. Wilkin called for a vote. Ms. Pecora abstained. The rest were in favor.

Mr. Wilkin stated that a reporter called him regarding the Senior Housing project that was reviewed at the previous meeting. Mr. Kinnin stated he was also contacted, but was unsure how the reporter acquired his phone number.

6. COMMUNICATIONS - No member comment

7. OLD BUSINESS

a. Board Membership/Contact Information

Mr. Doyle mentioned that contact information was mailed to members and he asked that if anyone's information was incorrect to please let us know. Mr. Doyle asked if the Board had all been contacted for the cancellation of the February 2nd meeting. Mr. Konior stated that he prefers a phone call as he does not check his e-mail frequently.

Mr. Kinnin asked if the Board could receive their Agenda packets by e-mail if they chose to. A contact sheet was circulated and members who wanted electronic mailings were indicated. Mr. Doyle stated we will send both e-mail and paper packets to everyone next month and then just e-mail to those who indicated that preference for April (the rest of the Board will still receive Agenda packets via the US Mail).

b. Issue Brief from the County Executive on the NYCDEP Pollution of the Lower Esopus

Mr. Doyle made note of the Issue Brief in the packet. He stated it was put together by the County Executives office, the County Attorney's office, Dept. of Environment, Ms. Schwartz Berky and himself.

c. Main Streets Project Update Presentation POSTPONED until April

Ms. Schwartz Berky introduced herself to the Board and she explained that she does not report to the Board regularly due to comp time and her teaching schedule. Ms. Berky invited the Board to view the website and she displayed the home page for Main Streets. She offered to have hard copies made available at the April meeting.

d. **Greenway Compact Update**

Ms. Schwartz Berky stated that we have met with approximately 20 communities so far. We still need to meet with the Town of Shawangunk, Village of New Paltz, Town of Woodstock, Town of Rochester and the City of Kingston. She added that they had an excellent meeting with Supervisor Hokanson and Planning Board Chairman, Mike Calimano in the Town of New Paltz last week. The meetings concern Priority Growth; the principals we embrace to become a Greenway Compact County. Ms. Schwartz Berky stated that once the last five meetings are completed, we will hold a meeting with all of the municipalities. Ms. Schwartz Berky stated we do have a handout and will post it on the website and have copies for the April meeting. Mr. Rascoe asked if any other stakeholders would be brought in. She answered yes, with the Main Street work.

8. NEW BUSINESS

a. **2010 Annual Report**

Mr. Doyle informed the Board that we need to submit a draft Annual Report to the Legislature by March 1st. Mr. Doyle stated that our next meeting is on March 2nd so he asked the Board to indulge him by allowing him to submit a draft report to the Legislature and he will make sure to get copies out to the Board.

b. **Environmental Notice Bulletin**

Mr. Wilkin mentioned a grant that was listed by the Orange County Planning Federation called "Acres for America Grant" funded by Walmart and the Fish & Wildlife Federation. Mr. Wilkin also brought up SEQRA comments. Mr. Doyle stated that SEQRA comments are due on Feb 18th. He added that he has only received comments from Mr. Wilkin at this time. Mr. Doyle invited the rest of the board members to submit comments on the new SEQRA form.

c. **Zoning Referrals – See Separate Zoning Minutes**

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

The February 9, 2011 meeting and zoning minutes were approved at the May 4, 2011 meeting.