

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

DATE: **September 26, 2006**

Committee Members Present:

Supervisors Monroe
Mason
Stec
Champagne
F. Thomas
Kenny

Others Present:

Representing Warren County Economic
Development Corporation:
Leonard Fosbrook, President
Peter Wohl, Director, Adirondack Regional
Business Incubator
John Wheatley, Project Manager, Queensbury
Industrial Park

Vacant:

Town of Queensbury

Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board
JoAnn McKinstry, Confidential Secretary to the
Commissioner of Administrative & Fiscal
Services
Nicholas Caimano, Budget Officer
Supervisor Haskell
Maury Thompson, *The Post Star*
David Strainer, Town of Queensbury
Debra L. Schreiber, Legislative Office Specialist

Mr. Monroe called the meeting to order at 9:52 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Mason, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the August 22, 2006 meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk.

Mr. Monroe apprised that the Warren County Board of Supervisors Chairman, William H. Thomas asked him to become the new Chairman of the Economic Development Committee (EDC), replacing Michael Barody.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Mr. Fosbrook, who distributed copies of his agenda packet to members of the committee, a copy of which is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Fosbrook reminded the members about their invitation to the Adirondack Scenic Rail event on October 3, 2006 commencing at 9:30 a.m. at the Thurman Station in North Creek with a luncheon planned at noon.

Referring back to Item 1, Pipeline for Jobs Fund Program, Mr. Fosbrook extended the floor to John Wheatley, Project Manager. Mr. Wheatley explained their department became aware of this program in late August and it was administered by the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation (NYSEFC). He stated there was approximately \$11.25 million in grant funds available designed to increase water facilities for municipalities but for the express purpose of facilitating economic development and job growth. After reviewing their current projects, Mr. Wheatley filed two pre-applications: 1) the Chester Waterline Extension; and 2) Project Queensbury (Connector Road). He said it would be extremely advantageous to extend the Chester waterline south along Route 9 as water/sewer were nonexistent in that area. In addition, he noted, it would expand the site opportunities. With the assistance of their engineering consultants, Mr. Wheatley confirmed

a pre-application form had been submitted for this project requesting a total amount of \$775,503.

With respect to the second site, Project Queensbury, Mr. Wheatley explained if they were successful in obtaining this grant, it would help offset the cost of bringing in the waterlines specifically to the Connector Road between Main Street and Luzerne Road in Queensbury. After consulting with the engineers, he said a pre-application form was submitted requesting a total amount of \$120,582. He said he anticipated a response to their pre-applications sometime in October and hoped they were successful. In response to Mr. Caimano's inquiry whether there was a County match, Mr. Wheatley apprised both projects were 100% grant funded.

With respect to the Chester Industrial Park, Mr. Monroe commented the Town of Chester identified that site approximately ten years ago as being an excellent site for development. He further stated that the Town asked the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) to approve a change in zoning to industrial; thereafter, he said, it became exclusively within the jurisdiction of the Town and just recently the Planning Board approved the site. Mr. Champagne queried if sewer was included and Mr. Fosbrook answered it was only for water facilities.

Mr. Fosbrook stated significant progress had been made on the Gore Mountain/North Creek Ski Bowl project. He apprised the developer made a commitment to the Town of North Creek to assist in the purchase of fire equipment; the water issues had been resolved and the waste water system for the ski hut would be tied into the development. In addition, he said, the Town of North Creek executed a 20 year operating contract with ORDA (Olympic Regional Development Authority) for the ski bowl facility, as well as the lodge. By resolving all these issues, he said it allowed the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) application to be submitted. Mr. Fosbrook commented ground breaking could commence this spring. Mr. Monroe queried if there were still issues with the APA approval. Strategically there were issues surrounding the lawsuit, Mr. Fosbrook replied, so they withdrew and resubmitted the application and they would be looking for those approvals along with the developer's approvals.

Mr. Champagne queried who would fund the Project Queensbury if the grant was not approved. Mr. Stec answered it would be in Mr. Schermerhorn's best interest to expand the water beyond his property.

Mr. Wheatley, Project Manager of the Queensbury Industrial Park (QIP), apprised the National Guard was scheduled to close on the land on Wednesday, September 27, 2006. He related they had not received a response on the EDA (Economic Development Agency) grant which was contingent upon the EDA budget being passed, but they had been advised it would be early October before they knew whether they were invited to formally apply. Mr. Wheatley reported the shovel ready process was moving forward; however the Governor's Office of Regulatory Reform was the driving force along with Empire State Development. While he said he had hoped to receive a response by now, progress moved at a slow pace when dealing with different government bodies.

Mr. Fosbrook summarized the total cost for construction of the QIP road was \$1.1 million with an EDA grant of \$500,000; National Guard offered \$300,000 for infrastructure; Warren County Economic Development Corporation, \$100,000 and the \$200,000 shortfall was submitted in the 2007 LDC (Local Development Corporation) budget request, which this committee approved. He commented the time had come after three or four years when they could see the light at the end of the tunnel, and while they not only satisfied the National Guard, they received eight other sites

to develop for industrial use. Mr. Caimano emphasized there would not be any funds in the budget for 2007 for additional projects. Mr. Fosbrook queried whether the EDA grant was a matching grant and Mr. Wheatley acknowledged it was a County match that would be paid in 2007 in the amount of \$500,000. Mr. Fosbrook indicated they had the matching funds (\$300,000 from the National Guard plus their contribution of \$100,000) as well as a possible shovel ready grant (\$75,000) from National Grid. He stated the shortfall was the LDC request in the 2007 budget. Mr. Caimano confirmed the road was fully funded and the EDC was not requesting additional funds in the budget. Mr. Fosbrook assured the Budget Officer they were not seeking additional funds other than what had already been requested.

Mr. Haskell entered the meeting at 10:10 a.m.

Continuing on with Item V, Exit 18/Connector Road, Mr. Fosbrook apprised there was a meeting with the Queensbury Planning Board unanimously approving a land swap that enabled a potential developer to meet the necessary requirements for their proposed project. He said he expected an announcement would be made shortly regarding the details but this had become a nice public/private partnership. Mr. Caimano queried about the purpose of the land swap because he thought it had been resolved with the Queensbury Economic Development Corporation (QUEDC). Mr. Fosbrook explained the County EDC contracted with the Town of Queensbury to provide economic development services; however, the QUEDC was the bank and holder of the land. He said located on the corner of the two roads (Luzerne Road and the connector road), was the EMS (emergency medical services) building and a Park and Ride, which left approximately 5 ½ acres of undeveloped land. Unfortunately, he said the potential developer did not have sufficient land to accommodate the plans so the Town of Queensbury agreed to deed a portion of the land back to the County.

With respect to the last item, Mr. Fosbrook mentioned there had been conversations about the consolidation of the two LDC's (Hudson River and the County). After reviewing the public authority legislation and accountability, he said, it did not make sense for two organizations within the same County working on economic development, therefore, they were attempting to combine the two agencies. While he was convinced the consolidation would be successful, Mr. Champagne suggested the organizations/departments heads schedule a meeting to assign duties and responsibilities, as well as inform members of the unknowns (i.e., who signs the checks, who prepares the grants, etc). Mr. Fosbrook mentioned there was a recent meeting with Patricia Tatich, Director of Planning & Community Development/Planning Board/Local Development Corporation, and Paul Dusek, County Attorney, wherein a list of items that needed to be addressed was comprised. Mr. Caimano added he recommended the Planning Department hire a grant writer in lieu of the GIS (geographic information system) Coordinator because it appeared the grant writing would be far more important. Mr. Stec said he asked Mr. Dusek at the last Planning Committee meeting to schedule a meeting with the appropriate parties to assure that the transition between the two LDC's ran smoothly. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Caimano relative to the existence of the QUEDC, Mr. Fosbrook apprised eventually they would go away in time but would operate parallel for a period of time. Providing flexibility in the contract between the Warren County EDC and the LDC was very important, added Mr. Monroe.

Mr. Fosbrook reviewed the list of referrals noting that he had spoken with William Lamy, Superintendent of Department of Public Works, who advised him there was nothing new to report about the Main Street project but he would update the committee in November. He reported the

only item left was the funding of the Adirondack Community College (ACC) Research Foundation/WIA (Workforce Investment Act). He stated the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) submitted a grant request for \$2 million for job training that included Warren County Economic Development Corporation (WCEDC), Saratoga County Economic Development Corporation (SCEDC) and Washington County Economic Development Corporation that focused on training people in nano technology. He apprised ACC was the applicant, the grant was written by Bob Hall, Executive Director of WIB, in cooperation with all agencies and also involved all K-12 schools, ACC and HVCC (Hudson Valley Community College). Mr. Fosbrook stated this was a huge opportunity to pull the educational expertise together to create an ongoing workforce for the nano technology industries.

Mr. Monroe reported a memo was received this morning from William Lamy that said they painted the footprint of the utility equipment located above ground on Corinth Road. Mr. Stec mentioned this same update was announced at the Town of Queensbury Planning Board meeting last night.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion by Mr. Mason and seconded by Mr. Stec, Mr. Monroe adjourned the meeting at 10:28 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra L. Schreiber
Legislative Office Specialist