

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: **PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

DATE: May 30, 2008

**Committee Members Present: Others Present:**

Supervisors

Sokol  
Belden  
Tessier  
Champagne  
Merlino  
Stec  
Taylor

Representing Planning & Community  
Development Department:

Patricia A. Tatich, Director  
Wayne E. LaMothe, Assistant Director  
Laura Moore, County Planning Board  
Jamie Y. White, Small Business  
Development Coordinator

Representing Economic Development  
Corporation:

Leonard Fosbrook, President  
Frederick Monroe, Chairman  
JoAnn McKinstry, Deputy Commissioner of  
Administrative & Fiscal Services  
Patricia C. Nenninger, Second Assistant County  
Attorney  
Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board  
Supervisor Thomas  
Supervisor Strainer  
Debra L. Schreiber, Sr. Legislative Office  
Specialist

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Mr. Sokol called the Planning & Community Development Committee meeting to order at 10:20 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Taylor, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the May 16, 2008 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Patricia A. Tatich, Director, Planning & Community Development Department, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of same is on file with the minutes.*

Commencing with Item 1 on the list of Pending Items, Ms. Tatich stated it was their understanding from the April Committee meeting that Mr. Champagne was facilitating a meeting with their Department and the Warren/Hamilton County Community Action Agency, although it was not reflected in the minutes of the previous Committee meeting. Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, said it was her recollection that Wayne E. LaMothe, Assistant Director of the Planning & Community Development Department, was reviewing the agreement between the two agencies. Mr. Champagne interjected that he thought a time line had been established when the two agencies met and,

therefore, he said, he anticipated scheduling a meeting upon the agreement being signed by all parties. Mr. Champagne indicated that he had been apprised that the Community Action Agency had not been invited to participate in a program that had occurred within the last thirty days. He suggested that the agreement be signed and given to him prior to his departure from this Committee meeting. Mr. Belden requested a copy of the agreement between the two agencies.

Continuing on with Item 2 on the Pending Item list, Ms. Tatich referred the Committee to the memorandum attached to the agenda regarding broadband services. She reviewed the memorandum in detail, as it was a condensed version of the application they submitted requesting funds from the Adirondack Park Smart Growth Program. Ms. Tatich explained that approximately twenty rural counties throughout New York State (NYS) had initiated these studies with local funds to improve the broadband services in their area. She asked the Committee to consider the option of Warren County funding a study that would determine the location and level of telecommunication infrastructure throughout the County and particularly in areas within the Adirondack Park. Although they were unsuccessful in their Smart Growth application, she said, they continued to have discussions amongst the three agencies. Ms. Tatich stated it was important for the municipalities throughout Warren County to understand the need to be technologically ready thereby being able to participate in future public programs for infrastructure development.

Based on conversations with Howard Lowe, Project Director of CBN Connect, and other representatives across NYS, Ms. Tatich informed the Committee there would soon be Federally funded grants for infrastructure purposes. However, she said, the County must assume a local initiative that would focus on the inventory of telecommunication carriers and services, the discussion and collection of information for businesses and organizations, as well as defining the options and benchmarks to achieve the most cost effective solution.

Ms. Tatich further apprised that the cost to hire a consultant to perform the necessary studies was approximately \$44,000. In discussions with Leonard Fosbrook, President of the Warren County Economic Development Corporation (EDC), and Rob Metthe, Information Technology (IT) Director, they recommended the County appropriate \$30,000; EDC would pledge \$10,000; and the remaining \$4,000 would be derived from unanticipated revenue in the IT Department Budget. She further explained the Planning & Community Development Department had committed to assisting the telecommunications consultant with inventory, mapping, etc., in their efforts to update the County Geographic Information System (GIS).

Ms. Tatich stated the time had come for the Committee to either commit to the broadband project and establish a time frame, or alternatively, revisit this matter at another time. While the Committee was disappointed to learn the County was not awarded any Smart Growth funds, Mr. Sokol said it was his understanding that in order to receive assistance, the County had to undergo the vital process of correctly

assessing the planning steps in order to make the municipality appear more favorable to NYS.

Mr. Belden commented that broadband services were the way of the future and Clinton, Franklin and Essex Counties had received Federal funds to improve the services in their area. If Warren and Washington Counties coordinated their efforts to increase telecommunication infrastructure, he said, he thought their chances of receiving grant funds would be significantly greater.

Mr. Thomas recommended the Committee invite Dan Corcoran from the NYS Office of Technology to attend a Planning & Community Development meeting, as he had a wealth of information that would be beneficial to the County. During a recent meeting, he said, Mr. Corcoran had alluded to a company that had installed broadband service over existing power lines, as well as comparing the various types of services, i.e., satellite, dial-up, etc. In addition, he stated, Mr. Corcoran had recently been advised that cell phone towers may become obsolete due to the advancements in technology.

Chairman Monroe stated it was critically important that Warren County undertake this study to improve the service and telecommunication infrastructure throughout the County, particularly in areas located within the Adirondack Park. He said Warren County had an excellent quality of life and this opportunity would assist the current and prospective entrepreneurs in promoting their business through broadband services. Chairman Monroe further commented that this study was the first step to enabling the County to obtain future grants.

With the help of an experienced fiber optic or telecommunication consultant, Ms. Tatich said she anticipated a map being created that depicted property ownership and the location of the various utility lines. Based on the collection of this information, together with the information obtained from Adirondack Community College (ACC), Hudson Headwaters and the Glens Falls Hospital, she said, they would determine the future needs of the County. While she acknowledged that they may not find the ultimate solution, she said, their goal was to determine the most reliable, cost-effective services for the County.

A brief discussion ensued during which Patricia A. Nenninger, Second Assistant County Attorney, entered the meeting at 10:40 a.m.

Once they determined who would perform the study, Ms. Tatich indicated the County then had the option of selecting a service provider. If the County chose not to undertake the study, she anticipated the County digressing in economic development. In response to a query by Mr. Sokol, Ms. Tatich replied that CBN Connect proposed installing a hard-wire fiber ring; however, she said, there were various models that could be reviewed to determine which option provided the best fit for the County.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously authorizing a telecommunications study be performed to determine the infrastructure development, as well as service throughout the County, with the source of funding to be determined; and to refer same to the Finance Committee for consideration. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Chairman Monroe asked Ms. Tatich to invite Mr. Corcoran to a subsequent Planning & Community Development Committee meeting.

With respect to Item 3 on the list of Pending Items, Ms. Tatich stated she would apprise the Committee at a subsequent meeting on the status of her discussions relating to the Adirondack Community Housing Trust.

Mr. LaMothe indicated that NYS had announced its funding round for the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP), as well as the Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Program. While their Department had no specific projects to appropriate the funds, he asked the Committee to approve their request to re-apply for these grant funds and suggested resubmitting those applications that were previously denied for reconsideration. In previous years, the County was required to partner with a local community in order to apply for NYS funds; however, Mr. LaMothe said the State had now granted permission for municipalities to submit their requests and receive the funds directly.

Motion was made by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously approving the request as outlined above; and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 20, 2008 Board Meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. LaMothe requested permission to apply for grant funds for the 2008 Environmental Protection Fund/2009 Land Water Conservation Fund for Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation activities. Mr. Belden asked that any local match be submitted by the municipality and not the County.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously approving the request as submitted; and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 20, 2008 Board Meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Continuing on with the Planning & Community Development agenda, C (1), Ms. Tatich articulated that on May 13, 2008 the NYS Division of Housing & Community Renewal (DHCR) sponsored a meeting with housing practitioners. She stated their Department provided the housing issues and needs within Warren County and subsequent to the meeting, Mr. LaMothe and Laura Moore, County Planning Board, prepared reports, which they would present to the Committee.

Mr. LaMothe stated there was a segment of the County population that due to income or age would never have their housing needs fully addressed, which should be considered for any grant assistance. In addition, he said, if the State of New York had what was known as "transfer development rights" when they purchased property, then there would be within Warren County for all State-owned property, an additional building capacity of 19,805 building lots, which had been removed from the housing market by the State. He explained that there was no mechanism in place transferring any building rights on property purchased by NYS, thereby making the land forever lost. During this meeting, Mr. LaMothe said it was recommended that they seek alternatives to transfer some of those development rights to each of the hamlets. It was further suggested that if there were better year-round jobs, it would enable people to address their own housing needs rather than rely on grant assistance, noted Mr. LaMothe. He said this option would require increasing economic development activities, as well as giving special consideration to those communities located within the Adirondack Park, due to the restrictions placed upon them by the APA when applying for grant funding.

Mr. LaMothe briefly outlined some of the topics included within his report, such as demographics and the various aspects of the housing market.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Mrs. Moore who explained that in 1990 the Community Office Development Program assisted 62 households with the First Time Home Ownership Program. In 2002, she said, they received approximately 150 responses to the 700 surveys that were distributed to mobile home owners indicating their interest in participating in the Trailer Replacement Program. During the Spring of 2004, she apprised, the County Planning Department submitted an application to the NYS Office for Small Cities and was awarded \$247,800 to assist seven mobile home units that were either unable to secure a mortgage or had other financial issues in their portfolio, thereby making it difficult for them to meet the guidelines.

Mrs. Moore stated that each applicant was required to have at least one person employed either year-round or seasonal, and the project sites were all suitable for removal of their current mobile home in lieu of a new residence on the site. She stated that many of the applicants were either discouraged or frustrated once they received a copy of their credit report.

In summation, Mrs. Moore said, the program for NYS Office of Small Cities was generally completed within two years; however, she noted, it was extremely difficult to complete seven units given the short time frame. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Belden, Mrs. Moore advised the funds from the program had been fully expended.

Ms. Tatich added that the administrative costs associated with the Trailer Replacement Program were incredibly high, thereby making it difficult to perform the hands-on tasks that were required. At the conclusion of this program, she said, they (Department) learned that a majority of the mobile home owners did not have a mortgage payment

and their only monthly expenses were phone, power, and taxes. Those individuals that did not have a mortgage on their mobile home were very hesitant to assume that added responsibility, noted Ms. Tatich. There were many mobile home owners throughout Warren County that required assistance; however, she said, many of the current programs offered by their Department specifically excluded pre-manufactured homes. Unless the County developed their own housing rehabilitation program and established their own guidelines, Ms. Tatich indicated she was doubtful they would be able to receive any Federal and State funds to improve or assist mobile home owners.

Moving along to Item C (2), Jamie White, Small Business Development Coordinator, reported that after attending the Association for Enterprise Opportunity conference in California, she learned alternative marketing strategies that would increase awareness and improve the program currently being offered by their Department. She said there was a substantial amount of funds available for her to market small businesses within the County.

Simultaneous with Ms. White's conference, Ms. Tatich informed the Committee that a group of local businesses sponsored a Partners for Public Spaces Program at the Queensbury Hotel. She said a representative of the *The Post Star* that attended this program and was familiar with their Small Business Assistance Program, requested a meeting with their editorial staff and the County Planning & Community Development Department. Ms. Tatich stated this was an opportunity for them to discuss what advancements the County had taken relative to this program and asked for the support of the Committee.

Continuing on with Item C (3), Mr. LaMothe explained there was a component in the First Wilderness Heritage Corridor (FWHC) Program to hire a technical assistant that would assist the communities with economic development activities and events in that area. The grant program under the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) financially supported the First Wilderness Heritage Corridor and had the necessary monies available on a matching basis; however, he said, the dilemma had always been finding the matching funds. He further advised that Luisa Craige-Sherman, Executive Director of the Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce (LGRCC), expressed a similar desire to offer this program in the Lake George Basin. During the course of their discussions, Mr. LaMothe said, the Chamber offered to provide a part-time technical assistant that would dedicate half of their time to community events if the FWHC (through its match) would fund the other half of that person's salary. Mr. LaMothe asked the Committee to consider the proposal put forth by Mrs. Craige-Sherman, as this was not a County position but rather a contractual arrangement with the LGRCC that was consistent with the goals and objectives identified in the FWHC plan. He further stated that the matching funds would be derived from an existing grant program. Mr. Sokol indicated that perhaps this individual could create some economic development opportunities by encouraging those sponsors that had previously hosted events in Warren County to return. Mr. Champagne asked that they

present to the Committee a work plan outlining their goals and objectives utilizing these grant funds. While they originally anticipated this program to be two to three years in duration, Mr. LaMothe indicated there were only sufficient grant funds to maintain the program for the first two years.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously authorizing a contract with the Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce, commencing June 30, 2008 and terminating June 30, 2010 for the purpose of providing technical assistant for regional tourism promotion at no cost to the County. The necessary resolution was authorized for the June 20, 2008 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. LaMothe informed the Committee that at the conclusion of a recent meeting that involved the potential uses of the Kellogg property, it was recommended that two additional meetings be scheduled; therefore, he requested to amend the contract with ELAN Planning & Design Group for an additional \$2,500. He further advised that the number of meeting attendees qualified them for the necessary match required so the additional cost would be funded through the grant program.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously authorizing the request as submitted; and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 20, 2008 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

A brief discussion ensued.

Chairman Monroe commented that Mr. LaMothe did an excellent job on the analysis he prepared relative to the Issues Affecting Housing Quality. He further articulated that representatives from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), Adirondack Park Agency (APA) and Governor Paterson's Office fully supported the transfer and development rights as they relate to affordable housing. He asked the Committee to authorize Mr. LaMothe to forward copies of his analysis to the APA and AARP (American Association of Retired People).

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Taylor and carried unanimously authorizing the request as outlined above.

Mr. Champagne asked Mrs. White whether Warren County had experienced any difficulty generating enough business for the micro-enterprise project and she responded that within the last three months there had been a dramatic increase in the number of calls received in her office. Although the number of residential foreclosures had not affected them, Mrs. White indicated the loans to small businesses increased despite the local banks establishing stringent guidelines on high risk loans. She said she felt it was their responsibility to portray a better picture of the services provided

to the community by their Department. Mr. Champagne asked Mrs. White to create a plan that would increase entrepreneurial services in Warren County utilizing the knowledge and information she obtained from the conference she recently attended.

Mr. Sokol advised that concluded the Planning & Community Development Department portion of the agenda.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Leonard Fosbrook, President of the Economic Development Corporation (EDC), who distributed copies of the agenda, *a copy of which is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Fosbrook began the meeting by updating the Committee on the EDC marketing plan. He apprised that approximately two months ago, members of their Department attended a biomedical show in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and just recently they visited a similar show in Boston, Massachusetts. Mr. Fosbrook explained these two shows focused on suppliers who manufactured medical device products that were ultimately sold and assembled by end users. He said the Boston show had representatives from China and Mexico recruiting U.S. companies, while two Massachusetts exhibitors performed retention work in their efforts to maintain companies within their home state. Mr. Fosbrook stated their Department was attempting to compile a marketing plan that would lure companies to relocate their operations within Warren County.

Mr. Fosbrook related that members of his Department would seek similar information from those organizations attending a similar show in New York City within the next couple of weeks. In addition, he said, their brochures would be displayed at a biomedical show in San Diego that Center for Economic Growth (CEG) would be attending.

Mr. Fosbrook briefly updated the Committee on the Queensbury Industrial Park (QIP), noting the steel had been installed on the National Guard building and the infrastructure was near completion.

Continuing on with Item II of the EDC agenda, Mr. Fosbrook articulated that he attended the annual New York State Economic Development Council (NYSEDC) meeting in Cooperstown, New York. He stated that each year the NYSEDC sponsored a competition relative to collateral information produced by economic development agencies throughout NYS. Mr. Fosbrook apprised their Department won first place (in class) for their Annual Report; second place for their Newsletter; and third place for their website.

As part of the NYSEDC annual meeting, Mr. Fosbrook commented the State had implemented the Five "I's:" infrastructure, innovation, intellectual, investment and international, to assist the counties in improving their efforts to obtain State funding. He briefly explained the Five "I's":

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Infrastructure -	roads, broadband, runway extension
Innovation -	future industries having an impact on the economy (i.e. renewable energy, green buildings, transportation)
Intellectual capital -	creative arts
Investment -	restore grants and city-by-city grants
International -	assist companies that wish to market or recruit internationally

At the conclusion of the NYSEDC presentation, Mr. Fosbrook stated they learned the funding criteria had not yet been established and, therefore, were unable to apply for the necessary grants in order to commence working on some of their programs that fell within the Five "I's". He further noted the \$1 million that former NYS Governor Spitzer had allocated for upstate economic development in the 2009 Budget had been reduced to \$700,000 and that no legislation had passed to fund any of these programs. He said he was concerned long-term whether Warren County would be able to take advantage of some of the opportunities the State had outlined.

Moving along to Item III, Mr. Fosbrook advised that members of their Department attended a nanotech meeting in Albany, which created another opportunity for them to introduce themselves to the various high-level entrepreneurs and to discuss their innovations and where they would exist in the future. In addition, he briefly related some of the organizations that had attended the Convergence of International Research & Commercialization in Albany (CIRCA) meeting.

Mr. Fosbrook apprised that his Department would soon commence their two-day strategic planning session, which he would present at a subsequent Committee meeting.

On the part of the efforts of Hudson Valley Community College (HVCC), Mr. Champagne said he recently learned a new "clean room" facility would be constructed in Malta, New York, and he asked whether Mr. Fosbrook was acquainted with the operation and what impact it would have on Adirondack Community College (ACC). Mr. Fosbrook stated that he had been advised by Dr. Ronald Heacock, President of ACC, that he had begun researching alternative programs to the technical training provided by HVCC. He said Warren County was fortunate to have a technical training facility located in close proximity thereby allowing a new company an additional resource that they might not have been afforded.

Relative to the last item on the agenda, Mr. Fosbrook spoke about a Post Star Editorial Board Meeting, which had been scheduled to clarify any misconception on a project that EDC had with the City of Glens Falls. He noted that Chairman Monroe spoke about the economic development initiatives inside the Adirondack Park, as well as asking him to serve on a panel in Lake Placid that discussed these same issues. Chairman Monroe commented that the State government and environmental groups had concurred that improving the economy and supporting affordable housing should be a top priority.

A brief discussion ensued after which Mr. Fosbrook emphasized the need for the local municipalities and County to support one another in their funding requests. Chairman Monroe suggested inviting Ken Green, a consultant with the City of Glens Falls, to the Planning & Community Development Committee meetings.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Sokol, Mr. Fosbrook indicated they had comprised a list of eligible candidates for the replacement of Dave Capron, who served on the Empire Zone Board; however, he said, he would like to receive an endorsement from the Board at their next meeting prior to presenting it to the Committee.

Mr. Champagne commented about the article in *The Post Star* relative to the lack of bids received on the building that was intended to house the Adirondack Regional Business Incubator (ARBI). He asked whether a minimum bid had been placed on the building and Mr. Fosbrook replied he was unfamiliar with the process that the Glens Falls Industrial Development Agency (IDA) had taken. He further added that he had some concerns since the County and Town of Queensbury had invested some monies in that building.

There being no further business to come before the committee, on motion by Mr. Belden and seconded by Mr. Merlino, Mr. Sokol adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra L. Schreiber  
Sr. Legislative Office Specialist