

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT / PLANNING COMMITTEE

February , 2012

PRESENT:

Richard Keaveney, Chairman
Elizabeth Young
William Hughes
Ronald Knott
Michael Benson
Richard Scalera
Sara Sterling
Ellen Thurston
Arthur Bassin
Robin Andrews
Arthur Baer
Matt Murell

ABSENT:

John Porreca - notified
Jeff Braley - notified

ALSO PRESENT:

Becky Vinchiarello, Dep. Clerk
Kenneth Flood
Ronald Caponera

Public: 1
Press: 1

Chairman R. Keaveney called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

Prior to the meeting the Committee toured the Columbia County Airport.

At 5 PM the Committee convened at the Columbia County Soil and Water Building for there monthly meeting.

Airport Future Development:

The Leasing out of T Hangers was discussed.

It was questioned if the County is ready to go ahead with the Airport Business Plan that had been reviewed by the Committee, and who would take the responsibility of implementing it. The plan may need one staff member dedicated to it.

If the committee agrees on the plan then K. Flood will put together recommendations of how it should be carried out.

95% of revenue for this project comes from State and Federal grant funding. It was questioned if it is realistic that they will receive this revenue.

It was also questioned if K. Flood has a staff member who could be 100% dedicated to this project.

K. Flood's plan would be to have a member of his staff commit an amount of their time to this project. The rest would be handled through the private sector.

K. Flood offered to spend time developing a plan with DPW if the Committee thought this idea was premature

He will need to be allowed to directly contact the FFA. He would not do this without coordination with DPW and the Board of Supervisors.

K. Flood would like a clear delineation of the responsibility to develop the airport.

Discussion ensued on giving this project to CRC, CEDC or the IDA.

The County's ten year lease with Richmore was discussed.

It was decided that at this point more research needs to be done, although K. Flood would like the supervisors to state that there is a dedication of resources to this project.

K. Flood plans to change the language of this resolution request and report back to the Committee. He will also have CEDC adopt a resolution dedicating the resources to this project.

The idea of privatizing the airport was looked into, but because Columbia County is a non-chartered County it would have to be put out to bid, which is very costly.

Soil and Water Building Update

This building is owned by the County and is underutilized. It is a resource that the County could potentially get something out of. A copy of the building plans were passed around.

It was announced that the County could go out to bid to sell the building, and could potentially reject all bids if they are not in the best interest of the community. There is a very large cost associated with going out to bid.

There have been rumors in the County that the Soil and Water Department would be kicked out of the building. This is not true.

He is not recommending at this time that we sell this building.

DEC said they would consider sale to a county affiliated organization as long as the functionality of a class room continued to exist.

K. Flood would like to take a look at consolidating his two offices into this building. He would also like to create a visitor center.

It was questioned if there was a potential for USDA offices in the area that are closing to relocate here. R. Knott and E. Young expressed their concern for agriculture in the County being kept at the for-front of K. Floods thoughts and plans. We do not want to displace anyone or affect any programs that currently exist.

Columbia County Rail Transloading –

This project received a commitment for 2.5 million from the NYS Regional Economic Development Council. Ginsburg's has expressed an interest in this. The IDA or CDC will have to own the tracks/ or the spur to ensure access by other businesses.

They are very close to having a final layout at this time. Cost estimates are expected to be finalized in the next two to three week. There have been concerns regarding the potential increase in trains in Hudson.

Agriculture

-Farmland Protection Plan – Notes of the recent meeting in Ancram were provided.

K. Flood applied for \$37,500.00 to carry out this plan. The plan is prepared for the Farm Land Protection Board and will then be sent to the BOS. They have a meeting with Claverack, Ancram, and Gallatin in the near future. The town of Ancram has their own plan and were therefore able to provide advice for the County plan. The sole purpose of this plan is to identify farmland in a system that can preserve lands for farming and agriculture.

Resolution Request - Additions to Agricultural District #10 – Detail Maps were made available. Every October a notice is handed out where they can add property to agricultural districts. Every application they received was for District No. 10. Autorizaotn be given that the addition of one parcel owned by Betty S. Holt and Franklin S. Fiero (New Lebanon 27.-1-63); one parcel owned by Samuel and Tracy Tassinari (Austerlitz 77.-1-27); two parcels owned by Timothy C. and Andrea McEachern (Austerlitz 77.-1-26, Austerlitz 77.-1-74); two parcels owned by Sharon Grubin and Deborah E. Lans (Austerlitz 77.-1-71, Austerlitz 77.-1-72); and one parcel owned by James and Lucinda Buckley (New Lebanon 15.-1-72) be added to Columbia County Agricultural District No. 10.

Resolution Request- that the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors is authorized to sign the SEQRA Environmental Assessment Form on behalf of the Columbia County Board of Supervisors for the above request. Motion to approve both requests by A. Bassin, seconded by S. Sterling, motion carried. Refer to Finance.

Two farms in the County received disaster assistance for operating assistance. A program now exists where farmers can also apply for capital losses.

Hudson Valley Creamery – After issues with building owners the company interceded and worked to make the town content. The town was very cooperative and they can now start operating.

Premiere Brands in Hudson purchased the former Hudson fabric on 2nd St. they will be creating 25 jobs.

R. Andrews announced that she received a call from a business in her town that is losing business due to the fact that they do not have high speed internet. She would like to work with K. Flood as to the best way to respond to this inquiry.

With no further business there was a motion to adjourn at 6:26 PM by E. Young seconded by R. Knott, motion carried.

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