

MINUTES OF THE 435th MEETING
OTSEGO COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Meadows Office Building
Cooperstown, NY

May 5, 2008
6:00 P.M.

1. The regular meeting of the Otsego County Planning Board, (CPB), opened at 6:00 pm in the Conference Room of the Meadows Office Building near Cooperstown. Chair, Ron Streek called the meeting to order.

2a. Members present were Tom Clarke, Mark Babilonia, Ron Streek, Flo Loomis, Joanna Ahern, Jeff House and Betty Anne Schwerd. Excused was Wendy Mitteager.

Also present were Terry Bliss, and Karen Sullivan– staff. B.J. O’Neill, P.E. was present representing an application from the Town of Hartwick and Ed Walker from the Town of Otsego.

3a. The minutes of the April 3, 2008 meeting were reviewed. P. Durkin identified a correction to 6e, third line to change “due” to “do”. M. Babilonia asked to rephrase paragraph 6d, line 10 from “a policy on alternative energy” to “*plan for wind power.*” M. Babilonia asked to restructure sentence 4 of paragraph 6e to read, “M. Babilonia emphasized the fact his plan has nothing to do with the *concept of “sustainability” as defined* and suggest we do not get involved with the sustainability committee but keep our focus on wind power. “Upon a motion by J. House, seconded by J. Ahern, and unanimously approved, the board agreed to approve the minutes with the amendment as noted and change the minutes of the April meeting.

4. T. Bliss informed the board of the resignation of Wendy Mitteager from the County Planning Board. Wendy regretfully is not able to commit to the County Planning Board due to her increase job responsibilities.

5. There were no committee reports.

6a. T. Bliss sent a letter to the Susquehanna River Basin with the board’s inquiries of the Dreams Park permit. There has been no response to date.

6b. Upon the suggestion of T. Bliss the board unanimously agreed to move to item eight Referrals at this time to accommodate the applicants.

8a. K. Sullivan presented referral # 10-08-01 from the Town of Hartwick Planning Board for a site plan application by Dennis Brockmann. The application is for a multi-family apartment building located across from the Cooperstown Dreams Park. This project was reviewed at the April 3, 2008 board meeting and tabled in order to clarify whether or not the applicant is required to file a federal wetlands permit and if the proposed stop light will be a four way light. K. Sullivan read a letter from Otsego County Soil and Water Conservation District (OCSW) to the US Army Corps of Engineers dated (12/13/06). B.J. O’Neill, P. E. presented a letter dated April 4, 2008, to the Army Corps of Engineers requesting confirmation a permit is or is not required. K. Sullivan read a memorandum from Psalm Wyckoff, Planner to Andrew Dangler of the Army Corps of Engineers; Mr. Dangler implied the applicant will have to submit an application, and will make a site visit either Thursday or Friday of this week to make a final determination. B.J. O’Neill confirmed the traffic light would be a four way stop. Upon a motion by M. Babilonia, seconded by F. Loomis, and unanimously approved, the board agreed to approved the project with the understanding the applicant will seek the necessary wetland permit as defined by the Army Corps of Engineers

8b. K. Sullivan presented referral # 24-08-01 from the Otsego Town Planning Board for an application by Edward

and Junice Walker for approval of a minor subdivision of 16 acres on Glimmerhill Lane (received 4/01/08). Mr. Walker informed the board he has an engineers report stating the road is built to Donovan standards according to the Town of Otsego subdivision regulations and he has asked for a waiver from the maximum of 15% slope requirement. Mr. Walker stated the road will not be offered to the Town and will forever be private due to the slope. Mr. Walker commented he has verification from the local fire chief stating there will not be a problem for emergency access. Upon a motion by P. Durkin, seconded by J. House, unanimously approved, the board found no countywide impacts and remanded the application to the town for local decision.

6b(i). The board continued to discuss the topic of sustainability and climate protection. A brief summary of comments follows:

B. Schwerd: *Energy reduction needs to begin on a personal level first. People need to know how they can reduce their energy consumption. Maybe a newsletter distributed with county taxes would be a start or something on the county web site.*

M. Babilonia: *The county planning board has not moved forward with this issue. I prefer the word "climate change" over "sustainability". People can disagree on both ends of the spectrum. This is about consumption, reduction, and reuse. We are trying to decide what the County wants this board to do. I feel it is the government that needs to set the objectives, who then delegates the responsibility to a committee who then returns the results to the administration.*

B Schwerd: *We need to rely on people who specialize in this topic to bring to the county representatives a plan with ideas, not ask for money to do a plan.*

T. Bliss: *The four members of the solid waste committee will remain the same; no new advisory committee will be created. The proposal is for the solid waste committee to be renamed the solid waste and environmental concerns committee. Anyone from this board is invited to attend the solid waste committee meetings.*

R. Streek: *Maybe we could have an informative approach by starting with simple things. Not sure if we should try to influence the county as a "whole" or by having a positive direct approach. We could outline simple steps for people to follow.*

B. Schwerd: *Maybe we could start with posting information on steps toward energy conservation on the county website, or through the office of the aging or the feel good committee.*

F. Loomis: *I feel it needs to be something from the top down.*

J. House: *We asked months ago about an energy audit, but never saw one. Maybe a good place to start is with a policy for new construction with the initiative of LEED certification. Rather than sit back, I feel we need to take a leadership role. Right now, nothing is moving forward.*

F. Loomis: *I feel it is the County's role to set policy, for example defining acceptable locations for wind turbines based on overlays for the county. I visited the wind farms and the representatives from the communities seemed pleased. They receive financial benefits for community projects.*

J. House: *I need to talk to people in other communities who have wind turbines in order to gain their perspective and the pros and cons of having a wind farm in your community and the stages of planning and process as well as the economic impact.*

T.Bliss: *Despite where we go with this discussion, this board needs to decide what it is going to do. Will it be written advice? We are still spinning our wheels. Maybe we should take off a small piece and provide a report.*

J. Ahern: *At the workshop, the state said they were developing a standard wind turbine ordinance. Terry, do you know if that is available.*

T. Bliss: *I will check.*

J. House: *We can look at recommendations for the siting of wind turbines and other ordinances. We need a deadline to move forward, possibly gather enough info from other people by the next meeting.*

M. Babilonia: *Overlay maps with a plan to show view sheds and suggestions as to where to and where not to site wind turbines.*

T. Bliss: *The County has the power to develop a comprehensive policy in regards to wind turbines and place this on the books.*

J. House: *Can the planning board make contact and gather information from municipalities with wind farms.*

6c. There was no other business to report.

7a. T. Bliss sent a notice to local officials (4/8/08) outlining the referral process.

7b (i). T. Bliss informed the board of a proposed baseball camp located in the Town of Richfield, Town of Warren, and Town of Springfield. Karen and Psalm attended an open discussion with representatives from the Town of Richfield last month. A summary of the proposal includes eight fields with on-site lodging for players and families, food and entertainment. According to K. Sullivan, the developers had not purchased any property to date, but were exploring their acceptance by each municipality.

7b (ii). T. Bliss and T. Clarke updated the board on the motorcycle track proposed in the Town of Springfield. T. Clarke explained this is a track for ultra expensive motorcycles. The review will probably be before the county planning board next month.

7c. No other business was brought by members.

9. T. Bliss reported the staff is working on a numerous projects including, but not limited to a housing plan, New York State Department of Transportation Consolidation plan, Solid Waste Management plan, and the administration of a Farmland Protection Grant for the Bartlett Farm. T. Bliss mentioned there now is a vacancy on the CPB and we currently do not have anyone interested. Please send recommendations to Terry. The board should keep in mind we have no representation from the Unadilla, Worcester, Exeter and Richfield areas.

10. Adjournment

Motion by R. Streek, seconded by F. Loomis, and unanimously approved to adjourn 8:03 pm.

10. a. The Board will meet on June 4, 2008 at 6:00 pm at the Meadows Office Building.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Sullivan