

MINUTES OF THE 424<sup>th</sup> MEETING  
OTSEGO COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Meadows Office Building  
Cooperstown, NY

June 7, 2007  
6:00 P.M.

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1. The regular meeting of the Otsego County Planning Board was called to order by Chairman Tom Pritchard at 6:00 pm in the Conference Room of the Meadows Office Building near Cooperstown.

2. Roll Call

a. Members present were T. Clarke, W. Mitteager, T. Pritchard, R. Streek, D. Gohde, P. Durkin and B. Dixon. Excused, J. Ahern, and R. Walker.

Also present were Terry Bliss, Psalm Wyckoff and Karen Sullivan– staff and several guests.

3. Reading of the minutes.

a. Upon a motion by R. Streek, seconded by B. Dixon, and unanimously approved (7-0 vote), the board waived the reading of the minutes of May 3, 2007 and accepted as is.

4a. Terry Bliss welcomed Flo Loomis, from the Town of New Lisbon and Marcia Membrino from the Town of Milford. Both Ms. Loomis and Ms. Membrino had submitted letters to the Board in May expressing interest in filling vacancies on the board.

4b. Ben Dixon distributed an official letter indicating that he will not pursue reappointment to the Board. Ben offered personal thanks to the Board and staff members for their work. The letter was received by the Chair with thanks and regret. Ben reiterated his statement of support for consideration of Jeff House to fill his vacant seat. The Chairman suggested that Ben send a letter to that effect to Don Lindberg.

4c. The Planning Department received the official communication from Laura Child in Don Lindberg's office notifying the Board of the reappointment of Phil Durkin to the Board.

5. There were no reports from the committees.

6a. The County Planning Department held local government training workshops in May and June for local Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals members. All workshops were well attended. The short term rental and property maintenance workshop on May 5 was attended by approximately 40 people. The workshop on stormwater issues related to site plan review on May 30 was attended by approximately 25 people. The most popular was the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals workshop on June 4 with approximately 60 attendees.

6b. Regarding alternative energy, Phil Durkin presented some booklets on green building standards in the US entitled "New Energy For Cities" by the Apollo Alliance provided by the Working Families Party in Syracuse.

Terry Bliss reminded the Board that the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee directed the Board to be an advisory board on alternative energy and on energy conservation.

Terry informed the board that NYSERDA has contacted the Planning Department in hopes of coming to a board meeting to give a presentation on wiser energy use.

6c. There was no other old business brought by members.

7a. Ben Dixon will not seek reappointment to the Board. Tom Pritchard will remain available for reappointment. Ron Streek will inform the Board of his decision to remain available or not by the end of the month.

7b. There was no new business brought by members.

8. Referrals – Referrals were presented out of order as shown on the agenda to allow attending applicants to present their projects.

8a. Referral with No Identified County Impacts.

8ai. Psalm Wyckoff presented referral # 14-07-01 from the Middlefield Town Board for the subdivision of property on County Route 33, also known as River Road. The applicant, Dean A. Roberts Sr., was present to answer questions. The property consists of a total of 209 acres. Applicant plans to divide the 209 acres into seventeen (17) parcels. The parcel is in a Planned Development District (PDD) and will require modification of the PDD. Eleven of the parcels will be accessed by a private road. The town has indicated that it will not take over the road. Therefore, a landowners association will be formed to share the costs of road maintenance. A road maintenance agreement was included in the referral. The lots have been perc tested. The applicant is considering a square footage limitation for buildings. Following discussion, upon a motion by Ron Streek, seconded by Wendy Mitteager and approved (6-0 vote, D. Ghode abstaining), the board found no countywide impact and remanded the application to the town for decision.

8b. Referral with Potential County Impacts

8bi. Fred Riordan, Project Manager for the proposed Springbrook NY, Inc. expansion project presented referral # 15-07-01 from the Milford Town Planning Board. The expansion project requires site plan approval for the construction of additions and renovations to the Springbrook property located at 2705 State Highway 28. This project is the result of a request for proposals issued by New York State seeking to increase capacity at facilities like Springbrook. SWBR is the architect and ME Engineering is the engineering firm for the project. The project will result in 103 new jobs and will accommodate 24 handicapped residential students from the Otsego County area. These students currently live out of state. This expansion is Phase 1 and will cost approximately \$14 million. Phase 2 will be approximately \$17 million. The project is paid for through an Otsego County IDA bond. The Town issued a Negative Declaration last month, concluding the SEQR review.

Mr. Riordan presented the campus master plan map, building elevations and details on the stormwater control structures. The additions include three residential buildings and one lodge on the hill, to be known as the residential campus, and one class room addition and a 5300 ft<sup>2</sup> cafetorium on the educational campus. New roads, parking areas (increasing from 177 lots to 300), and sidewalks will separate pedestrians from vehicular traffic and provide more parking spaces. Students from the residential campus walk or are transported via motor vehicle to the educational campus. Landscaping will include the addition of several trees and a visual screen for one residence on Route 44. The water supply system will include two wells and new storage tanks on the hill above the residential campus. A sanitary system will be installed on Springbrook property across Route 28. They will bore beneath the road to install the pipe work. The buildings will be over insulated and maximize natural light. There is potential for geothermal heating. Two detention ponds are planned. One pond is located beneath the residential campus and the other is planned between the educational campus and Rt 44.

At the Town's public hearing, four issues were raised. 1) Supervisory – neighbors wanted access to upper management. Springbrook has provided a direct phone number to Patricia Kennedy, Executive Director. 2) Lighting – existing exterior lighting was directed at homes on Rt 44. Springbrook immediately redirected existing lights. Those lights will be replaced when the Full Lighting Plan is implemented. The plan will be dark sky compliant with no lights higher than 20 ft. 3) Fencing – Springbrook will not fence the entire property as a suggested by one commenter. Fencing is contrary to Springbrook's philosophy. 4) Traffic – All access will be on Rt 44. The daily traffic increase will be approximately 60 to 70 cars spread out over three shifts. Springbrook will provide to the Planning Department a binder with all materials submitted to the town.

The Board commented that they thought that the design was considerate of residents of the facility and neighbors. The addition of trees is attractive. Fencing would not be appropriate. The Board suggested that the facility consider electric vehicles for onsite student transportation. Following discussion, upon a motion by Ben Dixon, seconded by Ron Streek and unanimously approved (7-0 vote), the board found no countywide impact and remanded the application to the town for decision.

8a (continued). Referral with No Identified County Impacts.

8a.ii. Karen Sullivan presented referral # 21-07-05 from the Oneonta Town Board for an application by Larry and Thelma Harrison for a use variance to allow a transient rental housing unit as a second principal use on property at 2937 County Highway 8. Following discussion, upon a motion by Ben Dixon, seconded by Wendy Mitteager and unanimously approved (7-0 vote), the board found no countywide impact and remanded the application to the town for decision.

8a.iii. Karen Sullivan presented referral # 30-07-02 from the Springfield Planning Board for an application by Henry Miller for approval of an 18 lot major subdivision of 308 acres on Koenig and Mt. Toms Roads near Summit Lake. The subdivision was originally submitted in 2006 and remanded back to the Town for lack of information. The new map shows the lot lines more

clearly, including the strips of land providing access to the public road. Lot lines follow treelines. SUNY-Oneonta is interested in obtaining one of the parcels which contains an outcrop of a lithified reef. Accumulation of snow on the road is significant. Assuming two cars per lot, it is expected that the subdivision might result in approximately 36 vehicle trips per day. The Board anticipates that the traffic will not result in wear on the roads beyond what currently occurs due to weather and heavy truck traffic.

Terry Bliss raised the concern that this project will permanently take a large farm, which most likely contains prime soils, out of agricultural production. The project may not be in accordance with the County's Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan. Recently, significant energy has been put into farmland protection projects in the county, including the process of engaging farmers interested in the 2007 NYS farmland protection grant program for purchase of development rights.

Tom Clarke indicated that the economics of farming, including increased fuel costs and taxes coupled with decreased revenues and dairy prices, has made the future of farming bleak.

Karen Sullivan suggested that the Board might recommend that Towns request information on the presence of prime farm soils on agricultural parcels when considering a subdivision. In that way, the Town would know if the parcel would be eligible for the NYS farmland protection grant program. Tom Clarke commented that agricultural conservation easements lower the tax base and shift the burden to others in the town.

Following discussion, upon a motion by Ben Dixon, seconded by Tom Pritchard and approved (6-1 vote), the board found no countywide impact and remanded the application to the Town for decision with the comment that the goals of the County's Farmland Protection Plan should be considered when making a decision regarding subdivision of large agricultural parcels.

#### 9. Report from the County Planning Director

Terry Bliss had nothing to add to the discussions of the workshops and the farmland protection program efforts discussed above.

Additional discussion of the open seats on the board was engaged. In the past, the Board has made recommendations to Don Lindberg, who has the power to appoint. The Board and the Planning Department engaged Marcia Membrino and Flo Loomis in discussion of the purposes, functions and policies of the Board. Marcia Membrino commented that without a County Comprehensive Plan, there is no guidance to "keep the eye on the prize". Ron Streek commented that although there is no Comprehensive Plan, the Board considers whether or not a project has the potential for county wide impacts. Terry Bliss read the two functions of a County Planning Board from the General Municipal Law and discussed how the Board is guided by County Policy and Plans such as the Farmland Protection Plan, the Economic Development Plan, and other draft plans that the Planning Department is currently engaged in.

10. The meeting was adjourned 8:15 pm.

a. Next meeting is scheduled for July 5, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

Psalm Wyckoff  
6/11/07

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