

MINUTES OF THE 428th MEETING
OTSEGO COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Meadows Office Building
Cooperstown, NY

October 04, 2007
6:00 P.M.

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

2. Roll Call

a. Members present were Ron Streek, Tom Clarke, Joanna Ahern, Wendy Mitteager, Doug Ghode and Flo Loomis. Philip Durkin was excused. Jeff House was absent.

Also present were Terry Bliss, and Psalm Wyckoff– staff.

Guests included Mark Babilonia, Tom Pritchard, and June Barwick.

3. Reading of the minutes.

a. Upon a motion by Joanna Ahern, seconded by Wendy Mitteager, and unanimously approved, the Board waived the reading of the minutes of September 6, 2007 and accepted as is.

4. Report of Communications

a. A letter from the City of Oneonta, with attached signed 239 review waiver, was received by the County Planning Department (the Department). The letter will be discussed further under Item 7.

5. Report of Committees

There were no standing committees to report.

6. Old Business

a. Recommendation for filling vacancy on the Board

The Board has four candidates for the position: Jacqueline Gibson, Mark Babilonia, Everett Miller, and Marcia Membrino. Terry Bliss summarized the procedure for recommendation to the County Board Chairman and appointment.

The Board asked Mark Babilonia to speak on his background as it relates to planning.

Mark has an international environmental background with the United Nations and the World Bank and is experienced with policy making. He has been involved in planning issues since 1989. He is interested in the local level of planning. He is a two year resident of the Town of Butternuts, and a local active attorney working on not-for-profit projects. He is a gentlemen farmer. He is originally from Illinois, with a family background in agribusiness.

Mark's issues of concern are climate change, loss of farmland, wetlands and rainforest, acid rain and carbon sinks. He is interested in the larger picture of development and sustainability but would like to focus his attention locally. The local governments will implement the treaties made at the federal level. Mark feels that he would be sensitive to all points of view. Mark feels that wind turbines and power lines are state issues. County issues should be loss of agriculture and wetlands.

The Board concluded the discussion with Mark and decided to table the discussion of recommendation for the end of the meeting in executive session. Tom Clarke noted that the Board should consider geographic diversity when

considering a candidate.

b. County Energy Policy

The Board discussed the IGA committee's request that the Board draft a County Energy Policy. The items of discussion included: time constraints, expertise of the Board, current energy consumption in county buildings, plans for the county fleet of vehicles, activities of other counties regarding energy, and the two connected issues of conservation and alternative energy generation.

Comments included:

- The Board does not have the expertise to assess all energy alternatives – FL
- The Board of Representatives should develop the policy – FL
- Does the County know how much energy is used in the buildings? We can't help them if they don't know where they are – DG
- There is no one at the County that has authority to make decisions regarding energy – RS
- Perhaps the Board should recommend that the Board of Representatives create a position that would be in charge of energy conservation - RS
- Does the Board want a document for guidance if they have to review a site plan approval application for an energy projects such as a wind mill or biomass – PW
- The County can't tell other people what to do if they keep making bad choices – DG
- The Clerk of the Board of Representatives would have electric bills to determine energy consumption in county buildings– TP
- The County should set goals such as reducing energy consumption by 20% in X years – FL

Other discussion included:

- Tompkins County Community Forum on Energy – Nov 17. Some Board members plan to attend – the Board considered inviting someone from Tompkins County to come to a board meeting. The Planning Department will pay for the registrations.
- Schoharie County hosting a NYS DOS workshop on Outdoor Wood Boilers and Municipal Regulation of Windmills – Oct 11

Upon a motion by Flo Loomis, seconded by Doug Ghode, and unanimously approved, the Board decided to invite the Director of Building Services, Doug Czerkies, and the Highway Superintendent, Ron Tiderencel, to discuss current and future policies regarding energy conservation.

c. There is a second presentation of "Peak Oil" at the County Court House.

7. New Business

a. The City of Oneonta has submitted a signed 239 review waiver. Upon a motion by Joanna Ahern, seconded by Tom Clarke, and unanimously approved, the Board approved the waiver, which was then signed by Ron Streek.

8. Referrals

a.i. Planner Psalm Wyckoff presented Referral #24-07-01 from the Town of Otsego for approval of the draft Comprehensive Plan, an update of the existing 1987 Master Plan. The Board discussed the summary of the project prepared by the Planning Department. The Board determined that the goals and strategies of the plan appeared very well thought out; however, the plan does not appear to take the final step of implementation. The Board recommends that the Town of Otsego should consider revising the plan to include specific actions to implement each strategy, and to adjust the formatting of the report for easier reference.

For example:

Goal: Promote development of diversified housing opportunities for both seasonal and year round residents.

Strategy: Implement or adopt public actions and policies to support affordable housing opportunities

Action: Consider Inclusionary zoning

Action: Consider expanding accessory uses to include dwellings

Action: Consider expedited permit and review policies for affordable housing projects

Action: Consider impact fees for developments

Action: Encourage ORHA and Habitat for Humanity projects

Action: Actively seek funding assistance from grant sources for housing and community development

Regarding the format of the plan, the Board suggests that the Town of Otsego consider an implementation schedule attached to the plan as an appendix with the following headings:

Strategy	Action	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Completion Date
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As an alternative to the above suggestions, the Board suggests that within the written body of the plan, each written strategy should have an indication of the goal that is met. In doing so, the Town can determine if some goals have been given adequate consideration. Goal 8 – Seek cooperation with other towns and the County – appears to have no strategies for implementation.

For example:

Strategy 18 – Evaluate water sufficiency and develop policies for ensuring water quality and quantity in parts of the Town where water sufficiency has historically posed challenges. (Goal 7)

Upon a motion by Wendy Mitteager, seconded by Joanna Ahern and unanimously approved, the Board found no county impacts and remanded the application to the town for local considerations with the comments as discussed above.

9. Report from the County Planning Director

Terry Bliss reported on up on department activities with the Towns of Burlington, Maryland, Milford and Cherry Valley. The department has been working on updating and modernizing zoning maps as a service to the towns. The NYS Ag and Markets Farmland Protection Implementation Grant application for the Ringwood Farm in the Town of Springfield has been completed and submitted. The FEMA approved Hazard Mitigation Plans have been distributed to the towns for adoption. Department staff will attend a workshop for the Shared Municipal Services Incentive Grant with the Telecommunications, Affordable Housing and Canadarago Lake projects in mind.

6.a. Having concluded all other items on the agenda, the Board went into executive session to discuss the candidates for the vacancy on the Board at approximately 7:20 pm.

The Board resumed the regular meeting at approximately 7:40 pm. Upon a motion by Flo Loomis, seconded by Wendy Mitteager, and approved (5:1:0 vote), the Board recommends that the County Chairman of the Board of Representatives appoint Mark Babilonia to fill the current vacancy.

10. Meeting Adjourned at 7:50 pm.

The Board will meet on November 1st at 6:00 pm at the Meadows Office Building.

Respectfully submitted,

Psalm Wyckoff

October 10, 2007

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