

MINUTES OF THE 441<sup>st</sup> MEETING  
OTSEGO COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Meadows Office Building  
Middlefield, NY

December 8, 2008  
6:00 P.M.

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1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ron Streek at 6:01 pm.

2. Roll Call was called and the following members were recorded as present: Ron Streek, Phil Durkin, Tom Clarke, Scott Fickbohm, and Flo Loomis. Mark Babilonia entered at 6:06 pm. Jeff House and Betty Ann Schwerd were absent.

Also present were Terry Bliss, Karen Sullivan, – staff.

Guests included David Parker, Jim Andela, Adrian Kuzminski, Cathy Rothenberger, Leon Kalmus, Ed Wesnofske, and Jim Simpson.

Ron Streek acknowledged he will be absent for the January and February 09 meetings.

3. Reading of Minutes

a. Minutes of November 10, 2008

Upon a motion by Tom Clarke, seconded by Flo Loomis, and unanimously approved (5-0 vote), the minutes of November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008 were approved.

4. Report of Communications

None

5. Report of Committees

None

6. Old Business

a. Filling board vacancy

Terry Bliss reported there is one (1) vacancy on the board not two (2). Betty Anne Schwerd currently wishes to remain on the board. Last month three interested individuals attended the meeting, Adrian Kuzminski, David Parker and John Bolin. Adrian and David were present at the meeting. Another individual, Tony Zappa from the Town of Exeter has also voiced an interest. Terry Bliss informed the board the final decision is made by James Powers, and the board may render a recommendation following tonight's meeting.

Terry Bliss reminded the board, the Otsego County Solid Waste and Environmental Concerns Committee has asked the County Board Chairman to appoint an Energy Authority Steering Committee and that the planning board might serve in that capacity. David Parker and Adrian Kuzminski previously expressed interested in serving on such a committee. This additional function of the planning board may affect the appointment of individuals to fill vacancies. The board needs to decide whether it wishes to act as the energy authority steering committee.

Terry Bliss read an e-mail from Jeff House stating concerns about the planning board acting as an energy authority steering committee. Jeff is supportive of the board taking responsibility as a steering committee, but has reservations of acting as an authority.

Ron Streek asked what the difference is between a steering committee and an authority. Ed

Wesnofske, Chairman of the MOSA Solid Waste Authority, explained to the board an authority is created by state legislation and not by a county action. Adrian Kuzminski agreed it is too early to be discussing the creation of an authority.

- b. Terry Bliss reported the county is currently waiting for a final audit report from the New York Power Authority. The Meadows Office Complex will be the focus of any energy improvements at this time. The county realized they can accomplish items without being a member of ICLEI. At last month's meeting, Cathy Rothenberger asked the planning board what role it wants to play in this study.

Terry Bliss explained NYSERDA money can be used for certain items toward the reduction of electricity. The State and the County are working in conjunction with the New York Power Authority and NYSERDA to improve the county's energy usage through implementation of energy efficient measures.

Mark Babilonia stated it is premature to talk about things until an audit is complete. Mark suggested the board not rule out the possibility of alternative forms of energy. Mark mentioned an anaerobic digester system is proposed in Cayuga County and he would sure like to see something like this here. Looking at efficiency is the first step, whether it is through an energy advisory board, citizen's advisory board or whatever. Cathy Rothenberger stated it was her original intentions to have a sub-committee of the planning board act as the energy steering committee. Mark Babilonia mentioned the bylaws of the county planning board allow for the establishment of committees and he proposed a resolution suggesting a sub-committee be created as the energy advisory committee.

- c. Scott Fickbohm agreed with the idea of creating a sub-committee to look at alternatives. Scott reported the recent discussion with the Huntington farm and the consideration of a new digester or revamping of the exiting one for the production of methane gas. The State legislation now allows a farm to sell back to the grid. This might be a project the subcommittee could focus on.

Further discussion continued on the establishment of a sub-committee. Terry Bliss read from the by-laws which state that the Chairman of the planning board may appoint special committees for any purpose, to assist in the functioning of the planning board in carrying out its powers and duties.

Discussion continued in regards to whether or not the planning board should seek a resolution from the full county board. Cathy Rothenberger stated that the Solid Waste and Environmental Concerns committee passed a motion to create an energy authority steering committee and that this is a window of opportunity. Cathy believes the support is there and now is the time to break away, prepare and move forward. Ron Streek suggested the board put this item on next months agenda and move forward with the establishment of a sub-committee.

- ci. Ed Wesnofske, Chairman of the MOSA Solid Waste Authority, distributed an outline that described the process to establish an authority in New York State. The County would present a request to the State that an authority to be created and be able to prove financial feasibility of such authority.
- d. Mark Babilonia requested opening the discussion on renewable energy and to bring forth the Otsego County Climate Protection Plan he has drafted for discussion. Mark Babilonia moved the board incorporate language from item #2 of the plan into a resolution to the Solid Waste and Environmental Concerns Committee, including the five bullets titled Renewable Energy Project(s) Plan, for adoption by the full board. Phil Durkin seconded. Following lengthy discussion, the following wording was read out loud and incorporated into the motion:

*WHEREAS, The County's Renewable energy Project(s) plan: will promote energy efficient*

*technology and alternative and renewable energy sources by using the county's contracting strength to put pressure on its energy vendors to create and expand renewable energy programs; taking appropriate actions to reduce energy usage in County owned facilities; explore and pursue the development of a county or corporate-owned industrial scale, alternative energy generating enterprise, including digester, bioenergy, wind geothermal and sun powered options, to meet all county-owned facility electricity needs, and:*

- *Take appropriate administrative, social and economic actions to develop and strengthen the County's human, scientific, technological, organizational, institutional and resource capabilities.*
- *Use environmental impact assessments, audits and other measures for sustainably integrating energy, environmental and economic policy decisions.*
- *Cooperate with local, state, federal, international officials and the independent sector in identifying economically viable, environmentally sound energy sources for sustainable development.*
- *Coordinate energy plans and studies to determine the feasibility of generating and distributing energy from new and renewable sources, giving particular attention to enterprises that will integrate a reliable, high-efficiency technology with a practical business model to addresses the unique needs of Otsego County residents and its animal and crop farming industries.*
- *Pursue the development of a community or outside owned industrial scale alternative energy facility that meets all of the county's public heating and power generation needs while striving to achieve carbon neutrality on any new generation units through lowest emission technologies, carbon sequestration and offsets.*

The motion failed (4-1; Scott Fickbohm voted no; Flo Loomis abstained)

Terry Bliss shared his thoughts on the failed motion, suggesting the language that was just read would require the Solid Waste and Environmental Concerns committee more time to read and absorb before acting upon. This would not happen at the meeting scheduled for December 11th. Scott Fickbohm stated he thought the language was too specific and the board needs to be more general. Ron Streek suggested that the board place the redrafting of the subcommittee status on next month's agenda.

- e. Mark Babilonia asked for a motion to include appendices to the minutes of November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008, that would address the 239 review of the Town of Otego's Comprehensive Plan. The appendices included comments by Mark Babilonia, but not incorporated fully into the minutes. Following further discussion and acknowledgement the Town has already received a notice of action, Mark withdrew his request and asked the appendices be attached to the November 10, 2008 minutes.

7. New Business

8. Referrals  
None

9. Report from County Planning Director

Terry Bliss reported on various projects the department is involved in. The Solid Waste Management plan is underway. The department is working on a coordinated transportation plan for the county. The amendment to the hazard mitigation plan, adding six new municipalities, has received a grant from the State and is currently moving along. The integrated housing needs and opportunity study was recently awarded to a consultant. The City of Oneonta is requesting help with revisions to the city's land use code. Terry reminded the board, with Ron being absent in January and February, nominations for chairman and vice chairman will occur in

February. Terry will call members who are on the nominating committee to remind them.

Ron Streek asked Mr. Simpson from Gilbertsville, a candidate for membership to the board, to introduce himself and briefly describe his involvement with planning. Jim Simpson introduced himself and stated he has lived in Gilbertsville for 30 years and has been a member of the local planning board for approximately 2 years. His background is in real estate and mortgage finance.

10. Adjournment 8:35

a. Next meeting – January 12, 2009

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Sullivan  
Sr. Planner