

**MINUTES
PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE
MARCH 13, 2008 3:00 P.M. SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM**

Present: M. Robertson, Chair; F. Proto; C. Chock; M. Sigler (arrived at 3:09 p.m.); P. Mackesey (arrived at 3:11 p.m.)

Staff: E. Marx, Commissioner of Planning and Public Works; C. Covert, Clerk of the Legislature; J. Kippola, Contracts Coordinator; F. de Aragon, Metropolitan Planning Organization; J. Jurkowich, Deputy Commissioner of Planning; K. Borgella, Planning Department

Guests: D. Kiefer, Legislator; M. Koplinka-Loehr, Chair of the Legislature; S. Johnson, local environmental activist

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:06 p.m.

Comments from the Public

Sylvester Johnson spoke to the Committee regarding the debate between carbon tax and emissions trading. He believes under the next President, legislation will likely be enacted to reduce fossil fuel emissions with the options being carbon tax or emissions trading. He said emissions trading is more expensive for the economy. An actual carbon tax is better for the economy because of its consistency.

Mr. Sigler arrived at this time.

Mr. Johnson said more information is available on the website: www.federalcarbontax.org. A sample resolution in support of a federal carbon tax will also be available on the website and hopes the County would consider approving it and sending it to elected officials representing Tompkins County both at the State and Federal levels.

Ms. Mackesey arrived at this time.

Ms. Robertson said the Environmental Management Council and the Energy Committee are both looking at this and suggested this Committee wait for their recommendation. Ms. Chock suggested this topic be added to this Committee's work plan for 2008.

Approval of Minutes

It was MOVED by Mr. Proto, seconded by Ms. Mackesey, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve the February 14, 2008, minutes as submitted.

2008 Committee Goals

Committee members reviewed the draft 2008 goals as prepared by Ms. Robertson. The goals are very similar to 2007, except goal 2 reflects the Planning Department's decision to develop the new component of the County's Comprehensive Plan.

A lengthy discussion followed concerning the action steps outlined in Goal 1 – Housing: Facilitate construction of affordable housing. Ms. Mackesey suggested that language be included that references and is consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan. A brief discussion followed

concerning the statement: "Impact of national housing issues." and members suggested the following wording: "conditions,...including local impact of national housing trends."

Ms. Robertson expressed interest in reviewing the 2006 needs assessment for housing as referenced in the action step of Goal 1. Mr. Marx said that the actions outlined in the 2006 study have not been implemented. The trends go up and down over time when talking about a ten-year horizon and the data used to assess have a time lag of two years. He said it is important to be aware of current conditions, but he did not believe it is the appropriate time to review the needs assessment or strategies. Mr. Sigler spoke of his concern with action step 1.c. of Goal 1 and the impact on the private market.

Further discussion followed concerning the language in the four action steps of Goal 1. Ms. Robertson asked Committee members to get any comments to her about the goals and she will revise them for the Committee's review at the next meeting.

Advisory Board Appointments

Planning Advisory Board

It was MOVED by Ms. Mackesey, seconded by Ms. Chock, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to add the appointment of Martha Armstrong to the agenda.

Mr. Proto asked if this position was advertised; Mr. Marx said it was not as most of the positions on this advisory board are not advertised. Mr. Proto said he would oppose this appointment as he objects to the way it was brought forward.

It was MOVED by Ms. Chock, seconded by Ms. Mackesey, to approve and submit to the full Legislature the appointment of Martha Armstrong to the Planning Advisory Board as the economic development representative for a term that expires December 31, 2008. A voice vote resulted as follows: Ayes – 4; Noes – 1 (Proto). MOTION CARRIED.

Fish and Wildlife Management Board and Regional Forest Practice Board

It was MOVED by Mr. Proto, seconded by Ms. Mackesey, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve and submit to the full Legislature the appointment of Duane Randall as the County Legislator representative on the Fish and Wildlife Management Board and Regional Forest Practice Board for a term that expires December 31, 2009. (This appointment is pending Mr. Randall's agreement to continue serving.)

Soil and Water Conservation District

It was MOVED by Ms. Mackesey, seconded by Ms. Chock, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve and submit to the full Legislature the appointment of Frank Proto as the County Legislator representative to the Soil and Water Conservation District for term that expires December 31, 2008.

South Central Resource Conservation and Development District

This recommendation for appointment is being discussed by the Environmental Management Committee.

Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit, Inc.

It was MOVED by Mr. Proto, seconded by Ms. Chock, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve and submit to the full Legislature the appointment of Pamela Mackesey to the Tompkins County Legislature representative to the Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit, Inc., for a term that expires December 31, 2010.

Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council

Resolution

It was MOVED by Mr. Proto, seconded by Ms. Mackesey, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature for approval:

RESOLUTION NO. APPROPRIATION OF 2008-2009 BUDGETS FOR THE ITHACA-TOMPKINS COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

WHEREAS, Tompkins County serves as the Host Agency for the Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council, the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Ithaca-Tompkins County area, and

WHEREAS, the County has a contract with the New York State Department of Transportation to provide funding for the Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council through grants provided by the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, and

WHEREAS, the Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council has grant authorizations for its 2008-2009 fiscal year, beginning April 1, 2008, and ending March 31, 2009, in the amounts of \$281,321 from the Federal Highway Administration and \$40,396 from the Federal Transit Administration, and

WHEREAS, the Policy Committee of the Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council has adopted Resolution No. 08-2, *APPROVAL OF THE 2008-2009 ITHACA-TOMPKINS COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL OPERATING BUDGET*, which requests that the Host Agency (Tompkins County) take the appropriate actions to fully implement said operating budget, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Planning, Development, and Environmental Quality Committee, That the budgets for the Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council, as presented in "ATTACHMENT A" to this resolution, be amended in the 2008 Tompkins County budget and that the County Finance Director be authorized to expend such funds for the period from April 1, 2008, through March 31, 2009.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

ATTACHMENT A

2008-2009 ITCTC OPERATING BUDGET

CODE	DESCRIPTION	08/09 FHWA A8675	08/09 FTA A8673	08/09 TOTAL
.4959	REVENUES: FEDERAL AID	281,321	40,396	321,717
	EXPENSES: COMBINED SALARIES	169,184	23,071	192,255
.8800	FRINGE	65,982	8,998	74,979
.2206	COMPUTER EQUIPMENT	2,500	0	2,500
.2210	OTHER EQUIPMENT	500	0	500
.2214	FURNITURE & FIXTURES	500	0	500
.2230	COMPUTER SOFTWARE	200	300	500
.4303	OFFICE SUPPLIES	700	800	1,500
.4330	PRINTING	700	500	1,200

.4332	BOOKS/PUBLICATIONS	800	0	800
.4400	PROGRAM EXPENSE	22,000	0	22,000
.4486	SCI PROJECT	2,500	0	2,500
.4402	LEGAL ADVERTISING	1,500		1,500
.4412	TRAVEL/TRAINING	723	1,177	1,900
.4414	LOCAL MILEAGE	1,000	1,000	2,000
.4416	PROFESSIONAL DUES	300	300	600
.4424	EQUIPMENT RENTAL	3,500	0	3,500
.4425	SERVICE CONTRACTS	1,000	0	1,000
.4432	RENT	1,000	0	1,000
.4442	PROFESSIONAL SERVICE FEES	1,250	1,250	2,500
.4452	POSTAGE SERVICES	1,500	1,500	3,000
.4472	TELEPHONE	1,550	1,000	2,550
.4618	INTERDEPARTMENTAL CHARGE	0	500	500
.4905	CENTRALLY DISTRIBUTED ITEMS	2,432	0	2,432
	TOTAL EXPENSES	281,321	40,396	321,717

“Complete Streets”

Mr. de Aragon distributed copies of a PowerPoint presentation entitled “Complete the Streets”, which is available at www.completestreets.org. A “Complete Street” is safe, comfortable, and convenient for travel via automobile, foot, bicycle, and transit. The increase in bike lanes in the City of Portland between 1990 and 2000 was highlighted. A brief discussion followed concerning the acceptance of the “Complete Street” concept by neighborhoods using the Coddington Road area as an example. Mr. de Aragon said the changes to that road being made by the County are moderate, as additional lanes are not being added. It can be difficult for a community when changing from a rural to suburban area. Ms. Mackesey said she is not convinced that widening roads and shoulders necessarily serves the purpose for creating a bicycle and pedestrian friendly areas.

Incorporating global warming concerns into long-range plans

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

Tompkins County Planning Department

Proposed Process for Evaluating Biggs Property

Mr. Marx said the Chair of the Legislature has indicated that initially this Committee should be the key committee for making a recommendation on the future of the Biggs property. One approach is to have a special committee of the Planning Advisory Board to put together a report and bring it back to this Committee for review and recommend a proposal(s) for proceeding to the full Legislature. The intent is to have a recommendation for the future of the Biggs property by the end of 2008. The charge for the special committee could be given by this Committee. It was clarified that the intent is to have the special committee lay out the options. The Committee agreed by consensus with this direction and asked to be informed of the meeting dates when established and who the members of the special committee will be.

Cayuga Lake Monitoring Planning – Update

Ms. Jurkowich provided an update on the Water Resources Council/Cornell University monitoring partnership for Cayuga Lake and the development of a water monitoring plan. Next Monday, this group will present two items to the Water Resources Council: one is the statement defining the purpose of the plan and the roles that the two partners will play; and the other is the monitoring plan itself. As soon as the drafts are available, this Committee will receive copies to allow time for review prior to any action being taken.

A brief overview of the monitoring plan was provided at this time. There are five principle organizations that monitor lake water quality at the southern basin regularly: Ithaca Area Wastewater Treatment Facility, Lake Source Cooling as regulated by the permit, Community Science City Institute, City of Ithaca Water Treatment Plant, and Cornell University's RUSS Unit. During this process, it was discovered that some of the same points were being monitored. It is hoped to reallocate the resources being duplicated and provide monitoring to additional areas in the basin as well as other ideas being considered.

Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emission Comprehensive Plan Element

Ms. Borgella updated the Committee on the Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emission project and said the goal is to develop an element of the Comprehensive Plan. Extensive information will be reviewed and condensed; the focus will be on what can be done at the local level. The Planning Advisory Board appointed a steering committee consisting of eight people. The first meeting of the steering committee will be March 21st and they will discuss how to proceed with this project. As with all the other Elements of the Comprehensive Plan, the goal is to identify major issues, existing conditions, and local and regional trends, and then come up with policies and action items that can be done and be effective on the local level. At this time Ms. Borgella distributed and reviewed the 2008 Anticipated Outreach as it relates to the process.

Ms. Kiefer commented that at the Environmental Management Council meeting last evening there was support for the County to declare March 29th, 8-9 p.m., as Earth Hour 2008. The proclamation will be presented at the next Legislature meeting.

Housing: Community – Cornell Partnership

Mr. Marx said they are trying to advance items from the Housing Strategy and three of those items relate to the Community Cornell Partnership and their contribution of \$10 million toward housing programs. The three items are: community housing trust, housing affordability fund, and employer assistance for housing. A group of people from several local organizations, lenders, developers, etc. have been meeting to discuss how each of these three items can be developed as described in the December 16, 2007 Ithaca – Tompkins County – Cornell Housing Collaboration document. This group is working with Cornell to commit to providing funds for the housing trust and the housing affordability fund, to match funds provided by the City and the County from HUD funding. This fund would be available for projects serving moderate to low-income people in the community, to assist developers with getting housing projects off the ground. The Housing Affordability Fund will provide grants for the development of the feasibility of projects. The Housing Trust will support permanent affordable housing by separating the ownership of the land from the ownership of the house. Mr. Marx hopes that Cornell will have made a decision by July 1 and that all the other pieces are also in place to begin.

Budget Adjustment

It was MOVED by Ms. Mackesey, seconded by Mr. Proto, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve and submit the following budget adjustment to the full Legislature for approval:

Revenue Acct	Title	Amt	Approp Acct	Title(s)
CD8688.44959	Federal Aid	\$600,000	CD8688.54400	Program Expense
CD8695.42411	CD Program Income	\$150,000	CD8695.54400	Program Expense

Explanation: HO 8 State Grant Funds, HO HUD Program Income Funds.

Strategic Tourism Planning Board -- Proposal for Direct Funding

Ms. Kippola presented the Committee with three options to consider that would change the process for approving room tax grants that are recommended by the Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB).

Option 1: All Room Tax grant resolutions are automatically placed on the Legislature's consent agenda, with the provision of having a five-minute meeting of PDEQ just before the Legislature meeting, in case there are questions. PDEQ will receive the grant summary and resolution well in advance of the Legislature meeting.

Option 2: All Room Tax grant resolutions are automatically placed on the Legislature's consent agenda, with no PDEQ approval needed. This move will require a change to Administrative Policy 01-10.

Option 3 (mirrors the Capital contracts): Room Tax contracts that are less than \$50,000 will be approved by County Administration and the Strategic Tourism Planning (STPB). The program committee will receive the grant summary.

Room Tax contracts that are between \$50,000 and \$300,000 will be approved by the program committee.

Room Tax contracts that are greater than \$300,000 will be approved by both the program committee and the full Legislature.

* * *

Ms. Chock asked if STPB provided an opinion on the option they preferred. Ms. Kippola said they have not weighed in on the proposals, but commented that the impact would be the grant money getting to the recipients sooner. Ms. Chock said she supports streamlining the process, but would like to continue with a schedule of reports similar to the monthly written reports provided by Tompkins County Area Development.

Mr. Proto said he would like to keep the process the same as it is. The Legislature is responsible for distribution of those funds. A lot of time is not spent discussing the individual projects. The funds are divided into many subcategories including capital allocations; it is not the same distribution method used for nonprofit agencies through the Human Services Coalition.

Copies of the current contract policy and the list of tourism programs were distributed by Ms. Kippola at this time.

Mr. Proto was excused at 5:05 p.m.

Discussion followed regarding the three proposals presented and the schedule for progress reports. The Committee requested the policy be revised as follows for consideration at a future meeting and that progress reports be given mid-year and at the end of the year.

Option 3 (mirrors the Capital contracts): Room Tax contracts that are less than \$30,000 will be approved by County Administration and the Strategic Tourism Planning (STPB). The program committee will receive the grant summary.

Room Tax contracts that are between \$31,000 and up to \$150,000 multi-year will be approved by the program committee.

Room Tax capital contracts will be approved by both the program committee and the full Legislature.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:16 p.m.