

**Facilities and Infrastructure Committee Special Meeting
April 17, 2008
Courthouse Conference Room**

Approved 5-15-08

Present: D. Randall, D. Kiefer, C. Chock
Excused: L. McBean-Clairborne, Chair; K. Luz Herrera, Vice Chair
Staff: R. Nicholas, Airport; A. LeMaro, Facilities; J. Wood, County Attorney; W. Sczesny, J. Lampman, Highway Division; S. Whicher, County Administrator; N. Jayne, Administration; C. Nelson, Public Works Administrator; K. Fuller, Deputy Clerk of the Legislature
Guest: M. Robertson, Legislator

Call to Order

Mr. Randall, Acting Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Additions to Agenda

- Mr. Whicher requested to be added to the agenda to discuss a proposed storage building at Bostwick Road.
- Ms. Kiefer requested an executive session to be held later in the meeting to discuss litigation; noting that Mr. Wood, County Attorney, was asked to be present.

Deletion from Agenda

There were no deletions from the agenda.

Persons Wishing to Address the Committee

No one was present.

Chair's Report

Mr. Randall reported there would be a meeting of residents and Highway Division staff on May 21st to provide a public information session regarding the McLean Road Bridge project and other highway projects in the area. He noted many residents are expressing concern regarding various projects that have taken place and are planned and the meeting should resolve some of their concerns.

Ms. Kiefer spoke of the Green Grand Prix that is scheduled to take place in Watkins Glen on May 3rd. This event is a time-speed-distance road rally for alternate fueled vehicles and hybrids. She hopes that perhaps the County could have representation at the event. The entry fee for the event is \$50.

Approval of Minutes

It was MOVED by Ms. Kiefer, seconded by Ms. Chock, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of January 15, 2008. MINUTES APPROVED.

It was MOVED by Ms. Kiefer, seconded by Mr. Randall, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of January 17, 2008, as amended. MINUTES APPROVED.

It was MOVED by Ms. Kiefer, seconded by Ms. Chock, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of February 21, 2008, as amended. MINUTES APPROVED.

It was MOVED by Ms. Kiefer, seconded by Mr. Randall, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of March 4, 2008. MINUTES APPROVED.

It was MOVED by Ms. Chock, seconded by Ms. Kiefer, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of March 20, 2008, as amended. MINUTES APPROVED.

Ms. Chock expressed appreciation for Ms. Kiefer's review of minutes.

Proposed Storage Building – Bostwick Road

Mr. Whicher spoke of his recommendation to construct a storage building at the Bostwick Road property to house the County's voting machines. He explained the new machines will cost the County approximately \$1 million and will require between 3,000 to 4,000 square feet for storage. He has reviewed all known storage areas within the City and outlying areas that would provide adequate storage, with spaces ranging between 1,750 and 4,400 square feet, which would cost approximately \$25,000 to \$40,000 to rent, plus additional charges for utilities and other expenses. Upon review, he believes it would better serve the County to construct a storage building at the Bostwick Road location, which the cost could be recovered within four years. The building would temporarily house the equipment, and in the future when storage needs may change, would provide the Facilities Division with needed storage space. The proposed structure would have a full concrete floor and approximately 1/3 would be heated. Mr. Whicher spoke of future needs as well, noting the years from 2008 to 2014 would be difficult for capital projects. The hope is to have the building complete in July 2008. Ms. Chock asked if all alternatives had been reviewed prior to the decision (Old Library, Biggs, etc.) and was notified that previous Committee work has reviewed many alternatives, however, the capital program at this time is unable to assume the expenses renovations to other buildings such as the Old Library would require. Mr. Whicher said to rent space would have a direct result on the tax levy. *Ms. Chock requested a list of all alternatives be provided.*

Ms. Kiefer asked for additional information regarding the heated area; Mr. Whicher said the equipment requirements make heat necessary. Ms. Kiefer then inquired whether any alternative heating source such as solar would be considered. *Mr. LeMaro will look into the feasibility of this suggestion.*

Airport

RESOLUTION NO. – MAKING A NEGATIVE DECLARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE RUNWAY SAFETY AREA IMPROVEMENTS AND OBSTRUCTION CLEARANCE PROJECT - ITHACA TOMPKINS REGIONAL AIRPORT

Mr. Nicholas reported the airport's engineering consultants, C&S Engineers of Syracuse, have been working with all stakeholders to mitigate, where possible, the effects of mandated obstruction clearance and runway safety area improvements. The final Environmental Assessment report was published last year and has been made available to the general public for comments. C&S Engineers have, in fact, just been awarded a silver medal by the Northeast Chapter of the Association of Civil Engineers (ACE Awards) for work on this sensitive project. The award was in recognition of working with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the FAA to find a compromise solution for a portion of Sapsucker Woods that protrudes into an area that the FAA normally likes to be clear of obstructions. C&S Engineers estimate was \$3.6 million. The four bids ranged from a low of \$3,197,872 to a high of \$3,986,855.

It was MOVED by Ms. Chock, seconded by Ms. Kiefer. Ms. Kiefer said she did not recall stakeholders having the ability to review the final specifications of the work to be done, and specifically questioned how work in wetland areas would be undertaken. Mr. Nicholas said the Army Corp of Engineers would be responsible for the work in the wetlands, which are approximately 18 acres. Further discussion occurred regarding the history of the project. Mr. Nicholas said he knows of meetings with the stakeholders to review details, however, would confirm that all parties had the opportunity to review the specifications. By consensus, the resolution was postponed until May 6, 2008, to allow time to review additional information.

WHEREAS, through Resolution No. 127 dated July 5, 2005 and Resolution No. 154 dated September 5, 2006 the Legislature approved agreements with C&S Engineers of Syracuse to conduct an Environmental Assessment for an Obstruction Removal project and a Runway Safety Area Improvement project, and

WHEREAS, said C&S Engineers have now conducted a full environmental assessment involving all stakeholders in the process, have completed Parts I, II, and III of the Full Environmental Assessment Form and have duly advertised the availability of the Environmental Assessment report for inspection by members of the general public, and

WHEREAS, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has also reviewed the likely effect of this project on the environmental and has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Facilities and Infrastructure Committee, That the Runway Safety Area Improvements and Obstruction Clearance Project is a Type 1 State Environmental Quality Review action,

RESOLVED, further, that the Tompkins County Legislature does hereby make a Negative Declaration of Environmental Significance for said project.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE 1

(Negative Declaration - Full Environmental Assessment Form is available in the Clerk's Office)

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RESOLUTION NO. – AWARD OF BID – RUNWAY SAFETY AREA IMPROVEMENTS AND OBSTRUCTION CLEARANCE PROJECT - ITHACA TOMPKINS REGIONAL AIRPORT

It was noted that the resolution would not be acted upon until May 6, 2008 as the negative declaration resolution would be required to be acted upon first. Mr. Nicholas reviewed the information, reporting that the airport's engineering consultants, C&S Engineers of Syracuse, have been working with all stakeholders to mitigate, where possible, the effects of mandated obstruction clearance and runway safety area improvements. The final Environmental Assessment report was published last year and has been made available to the general public for comments. C&S Engineers have, in fact, just been awarded a silver medal by the Northeast Chapter of the Association of Civil Engineers (ACE Awards) for work on this sensitive project. The award was in recognition of working with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the FAA to find a compromise solution for a portion of Sapsucker Woods that protrudes into an area that the FAA normally likes to be clear of obstructions. C&S Engineers estimate was \$3.6 million. The four bids ranged from a low of \$3,197,872 to a high of \$3,986,855. In addition, he noted that Sealand was the contractor for work at the Rochester airport and received a good recommendation. Mr. Nicholas said that the bid coming in approximately \$400,000 lower than anticipated would assist in completing other projects as well.

WHEREAS, the Finance Department advertised and received four bids to make mandated improvements to the runway safety area and clear obstructions from land owned by the Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport, and

WHEREAS, the airport's engineering consultants, C&S Engineers of Syracuse, have reviewed all the bids and found the lowest responsible bidder is Sealand Contractors of Rush, New York, with a bid of \$ 3,197,872, and

WHEREAS, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has reviewed the likely effect of this project on the environmental and has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Facilities and Infrastructure Committee, That the bid be awarded to Sealand Contractors of Rush, New York as the lowest responsible bidder with a bid of \$ 3,197,872,

RESOLVED, further, That the funding sources for this project are as follows:

FAA Share	(95.0%)	\$3,037,978
NYSDOT Share	(2.5%)	\$ 79,947
Local Share (Airline Rates & Charges)	(2.5%)	\$ 79,947
TOTAL		\$3,197,872

RESOLVED, further, That the County Administrator be and hereby is authorized to execute a contract with Sealand Contractors of Rush, New York,

RESOLVED, further, That the Finance Director be authorized to borrow monies if necessary, until reimbursement is received from the FAA and New York State Department of Transportation.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE 1

(Negative Declaration - Copy of the Full Environmental Assessment Form is available in the Legislative Clerk's office)

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Northwest/Delta Proposed Merger

Ms. Chock inquired if the proposed merger would create any impact on the Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport. Mr. Nicholas said that there is concern regarding the potential size of the company should the merger occur. He stated that only Northwest presently operates at the airport and he believes it would take a long period of time for any potential impact to affect the operations due to the limited service locally.

Approval to Seek Bids and Level of Committee Involvement

Following discussion, the Committee requested to be informed of the results of the bids and the award of contract.

- Five-year Contract for Airport Ambassadors (present expires June 18, 2008) – Mr. Nicholas reported these positions are mandated by the Transportation Security Administration to ensure passenger safety. Locally, the airport utilizes the individuals as much as possible to help with luggage, directions, etc. It is being recommended that the wage be increased to \$10 per hour plus benefits in order to hire and maintain quality staffing. The last contract had two bidders.
- Demolition of old County-owned Taughannock Aviation Building (Federal funds) – the project bid specifications will be created by C&S Engineers; an estimated cost of the project is \$175,000 and will involve hazardous waste mitigation.
- Refurbishment of Old Snow Plow – this item was withdrawn due to the lack of contractors to maintain this particular item. He anticipates the plow will need to be replaced prior to the next winter.

Executive Session

It was MOVED by Ms. Kiefer, seconded by Ms. Chock, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to enter into an executive session to discuss litigation.

An executive session was held from 4:22 p.m. to 4:43 p.m. On motion, regular session resumed at 4:43 p.m.

Highway Division

Cornell University Transportation Investment Initiative

The Committee reviewed the draft report of proposed transportation initiatives, showing various projects to undertake over the course of a ten-year period. These projects will share costs between Cornell University, local municipalities, and Federal/State Transportation. Members briefly reviewed the proposed projects. Ms. Chock spoke of the need to provide additional information that would show the project is a result of lengthy discussions that requested Cornell share in the cost of maintaining gateways to the campus and will assist in reducing County funding responsibilities on these projects, thus providing additional funding on other projects that are undertaken. *Ms. Jayne requested the various sponsors be clearly identified in order to more accurately understand the level of involvement the County has.* In response to Ms. Kiefer's question, it is not known if the shared cost on the Ellis Hollow Road project would lead to covered ditches. Ms. Kiefer asked if the design could include covered ditches. Mr. Lampman indicated it is based upon the cost at the time of design. *Ms. Chock requested that the Pine Tree Road project description should include language that clearly indicates the improvements will benefit pedestrians, bicyclists, etc., not just fall into the Cornell University Master Plan.* It was noted that at this time the County is not obligated to any of the proposals. Ms. Jayne spoke of the capital expense will be extremely high for several years. It is \$890,000 for 2009, and will level off in future years. It is anticipated it would be \$200,000 in 2010, with the first substantial drop in 2014.

Highway Project Status Report

The Committee reviewed the report and noted the following:

- McLean-Peruville Road Bridge - Due to the recent information of rescission of Federal funds for projects, an amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that would provide funding from other projects. It is hoped that within two weeks funds will be in place to allow projects to move forward.
- Red Mill Bridge – Ms. Kiefer expressed a desire to determine whether it is time to make a determination on the status of the bridge. Mr. Sczesny said that other alternatives are being reviewed; a request has been made to the Soil and Water Conservation District urging them to provide partial assistance for a structure.
- Forest Home Bridge – Ms. Kiefer would like to be informed when it will occur.

2008 Highway Work Plan

The Committee reviewed the five-year plan, noting adjustments were made to the plan based as a result of winter-wear on roads. Ms. Chock asked if the workload is comparable to previous years and was informed it is; based on need and expense. Mr. Sczesny said that due to increased costs for materials, there would not be the ability to complete as much work as initially planned. Ms. Chock then asked of the feasibility of developing a graph that would assist in providing explanations of how work is to be completed. She would like to be able to educate the public so they better understand the limitations the County faces in completing road projects. Mr. Sczesny said there is a \$225,000 contingent fund within their budget to assist with cost overrun and emergency road repair.

Ms. Kiefer expressed her desire to have an informational meeting with the division to provide information prior to budget decisions.

Adjournment

On motion the meeting adjourned at 5:24 p.m.