

Dutchess County Planning Board
DRAFT - MINUTES – January 14, 2015

Present

Colleen Cruikshank
Joel Diemond
Michael Dupree
Edward Hauser
Hans Klingzahn
James Nelson
Warren Smith
Rick Wilhelm
Gerald Hutchings, *Legislative Liaison*
Jill Rose, *Guest*
Deanna Mancuso, *Guest*
Noela Hooper, *Staff*
Brian Kehoe, *Staff*
Mary McFarlane, *Staff*
Eoin Wrafter, *Staff*

Absent

Jill Way
John Weisman
Randall Williams
Carol Bogle, *County Attorney Liaison*

Joel Diemond, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 3:33 PM. A motion to accept without change the minutes from October, 2014, was made by Michael Dupree and seconded by Ed Hauser. There were no objections, and the minutes were accepted.

Commissioner's Update, Eoin Wrafter

Eoin reported that in 2014, the Department completed 441 referrals, 92% of which were completed within 21 days. This amounted to 56 more referrals than the projected 385.

The Poughkeepsie Waterfront Transit-Oriented Development District was adopted by the City Council.

Planning staff has been adjusted to be able to collaborate more with local communities to identify and prepare properties for economic development. Eoin noted some of those changes, including the retirement of Noela Hooper and John Clarke in 2015 and the appointment of Jennifer Coccozza as Deputy Commissioner. Depending on the community, there are several opportunities for assistance by our Department, including review of Comprehensive Plans to determine where and what kind of economic development should occur at identified sites. Also intended are review of Comprehensive Plans and Zoning Laws to ensure the zoning will allow plans to be implemented, and collaborating on the development of environmental reviews and Generic Environmental Impact Statements (GEIS) to help reduce approval time for appropriate development proposals.

The Division of Public Transit will be under the administration of the Department of Public Works beginning in January, which will consolidate the three areas of transportation in the County – roads, airport and public transportation.

The Agency Partner Grant Program for 2015-16 continues. We received 39 applications from 25 agencies (more than last year), requesting over \$1.5 million in funding. The available amount in the budget is \$780,000.

In addition, the Municipal Consolidation and Shared Services Grant Program was funded for \$1 million for the next round.

The Legislature has approved \$1 million for the Partnership for Manageable Growth Program, and the main focus this year will be on agricultural preservation.

Hiddenbrooke Project, Noela Hooper

Noela was pleased to report that the City of Beacon has received its State funding and resolutions are being prepared for the County to close out the project, including a public hearing and a final vote in March.

Noela added that, thanks to the Planning Board and support from the County Executive and Legislature, we have completed 14 easements on farmland and seven open space projects resulting in 3,263 acres of good farmland and public spaces that are functioning as intended, either as productive farms or public recreational spaces. Joel Diamond added that every project that came before the Board was an excellent one and there were none that anyone would regret.

At this point, the two guests, Jill Rose and Deanna Mancuso requested to speak for a few minutes regarding their horse rescue program. Deanna is the founder and explained about the work they do with 46 horses and therapy programs, juvenile programs and suicide prevention, all with volunteers as staff. They would like to expand their therapy services. Currently, they rent seven acres but are looking for 65-100 acres to expand the programs and have room for the horses. They have spoken with Cornell Cooperative Extension, Dutchess Land Conservancy and Scenic Hudson. They asked the Board Members to take their business cards in case there were any opportunities for a project like theirs or thoughts on properties or resources that could help them achieve their goal. Their website is www.luckyorphanshorserescue.org.

Noela reported that the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan has been completed in a collaborative effort among the County, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Soil & Water Conservation District and the Farmland Protection Board with a grant from the NY State Department of Agriculture and Markets. The next step is to request that the Legislature set a public hearing in March and then consider adoption of the plan, which will ultimately be forwarded to Albany for final approval. A copy of the Executive Summary of the plan was distributed and a brief review and discussion followed. Joel Diamond asked for a motion to move ahead with the resolutions. Michael Dupree motioned to approve and Rick Wilhelm seconded. Approval was unanimous.

Agricultural District Eight-Year Review, Brian Kehoe, Planner

Brian spoke about the Agricultural District Eight-Year Review. There are approximately 164,000 acres in Dutchess County in agricultural districts, mostly concentrated in the northeast section of the County, although every town does have parcels in the District. Brian explained the benefits of being part of the District, which must be recertified every eight years. He described the process, which is beginning now; the “soft deadline” is March, 2016. Brian will manage the program and work with partners (Cornell Cooperative Extension and Soil & Water Conservation District) through the recertification process.

The 2015 Planning Board meeting dates were distributed. The only change was to move the November meeting from the 11th (holiday) to the 4th.

Each January, the Planning Board By-Laws are revisited and re-adopted. Noela provided copies; Ed Hauser moved to accept them as written; Michael Dupree seconded, and the By-Laws were approved with no revisions for 2015.

This is the last Planning Board meeting before the retirement of Noela Hooper, who has been the department’s representative to the Planning Board for many years. Several Board Members, including Warren Temple Smith, Michael Dupree, Hans Klingzahn and Joel Diemond expressed thanks to Noela for her exceptional work with the Board.

With no further business, Hans Klingzahn motioned to adjourn and Rick Wilhelm seconded. The meeting ended at 5:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary McFarlane