

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
WESTCHESTER COUNTY PLANNING BOARD**

Cassella Conference Room
Michaelian Office Building
White Plains, New York
Tuesday, August 4, 2009

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Cheryl Winter Lewy, Chair (Village)
Dwight Douglas, Vice Chair (City)
Marcus Griffith (City)
Doug Hocking (City)
David Menken (Town)
Clinton Smith (Town)
Neil Sullivan (City)
Bernard Thombs (Town)
Thomas Lauro, Commissioner, Department of Environmental Facilities
Robert Reno for Joseph Stout, Commissioner, Department of Parks, Recreation and
Conservation
Ralph Butler, Commissioner, Department of Public Works

STAFF PRESENT:

Jerry Mulligan, Commissioner
Patrick Natarelli, Chief Planner
William Brady, Associate Planner
Christopher Gomez, Associate Planner
Ed Hoffmeister, Associate Planner
Peter Feroe, Intern
Michael Vernon, Intern
Ellen Brief, Program Specialist

GUESTS:

Anthony Sutton, Commissioner, Emergency Services
Barbara Dodds, Westchester County Board of Legislators
Christopher Crane, Westchester County Board of Legislators

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 a.m. by the Chair, Cheryl Winter Lewy.

II. Meeting Dates and Announcements

The next Planning Board meetings are:

- Tuesday, September 1, 8 a.m.
- Tuesday, October 6, 8 a.m.

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- Tuesday, November 10, 8 a.m. (second Tuesday)
- Tuesday, December 8, 8 a.m. (second Tuesday)
- Tuesday, January 5, 8 a.m.

III. Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of July 9 were adopted on a motion by Mr. Douglas seconded by Mr. Lauro and approved by the Board.

IV. Chairman's Remarks

In order to accommodate scheduled meetings that Mr. Sutton and Mr. Lauro needed to attend, Ms. Lewy rearranged the agenda to first address the New Rochelle Wastewater treatment Plant and the Capital Project BES07 Food Storage and Distribution Warehouse items. Ms. Lewy canvassed members for their preferred date for the September meeting of the Planning Board; the consensus of members was for September 1.

V. Commissioner's Remarks

Mr. Mulligan informed the board that, later today, the County Executive and department heads will welcome emissaries from Bahrain who are visiting the United States to learn about best government practices and tools. On Wednesday, the emissaries will conduct separate visits with several departments including Public Works, Environmental Facilities and Planning. He reported that Planning staff has worked with Ms. Lewy to create a special presentation on Department initiatives that will set out the framework for the discussion. The visitors then plan to visit Albany to view another example of regional government.

Mr. Mulligan remarked that he was hopeful that by next week he will be able to report to the board on the status of a final settlement regarding the housing law suit, that has been consuming a good portion of his and Deputy Commissioner Drummond's time, .

VI. Referrals

Ratification of Actions Taken by Staff in Response to Planning and Zoning Actions Referred to the County Planning Board

- June 16, 2009 through July 15, 2009

Ms. Lewy solicited questions and comments from board members on the referrals. She raised a concern about the HAR 09-009 referral, the amended site plan application for the implementation of a Master Plan for the 152-acre PepsiCo, Inc. campus in Harrison. Ms. Lewy remarked that the department's response letter recommending that bicycle pathways and bike parking be provided on the campus may not be adequate and inquired if further encouragement would be possible. Mr. Natarelli replied that, as this referral was the beginning point of the review as lead agency designation, the proposal will return to the

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board for further review. Mr. Mulligan added that, as part of the East Coast Greenway, bicycle paths could be an important feature on the PepsiCo campus.

Ms. Lewy stated that, currently, the corporation does not welcome bicyclists onto the PepsiCo campus and stressed that the grounds are an important destination for county residents. She suggested that to better address the corporation's concerns about bike riders on their campus, a phone call should be placed to learn the nature of any objections.

A motion to accept the referrals report was made by Mr. Griffith, seconded by Mr. Hocking and approved by the Board. Mr. Smith abstained from the vote on referrals from New Castle: NWC 09-003, Chappaqua Crossing Draft EIS; NWC 09-004, Upper Westchester Muslim Society; and the YTN 09-002, Yorktown Comprehensive Plan and Proposed Zoning Amendments.

VII. Matters for Board Information

A. New Rochelle Wastewater Treatment Plant – Proposed elevations

Mr. Lauro, augmented by a PowerPoint presentation which included aerial-view images of the site and seasonal lateral-view artist renderings, described the proposed wastewater treatment plant in New Rochelle. He remarked that the colors and textures in the renderings were not accurate, but conveyed the general look of the facility.

Responding to a question from Mr. Mulligan, Mr. Lauro stated that there is approximately a 10 to 15 foot change in elevation and that the bank is 50 feet high. Responding to an inquiry from Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Lauro replied that the bank is stable. To Mr. Hocking's question about whether the roof was flat, he answered yes; to his question about whether there is a landscaping plan, Mr. Lauro replied that there will be one.

Mr. Douglas asked if there was a walkway and Mr. Lauro indicated its route on a slide projected on the screen. In his reply to Mr. Sullivan's inquiry, Mr. Lauro stated that there will be fencing around some areas of the site.

Mr. Thombs inquired if there were any issues with noise. Mr. Lauro explained that most of the equipment on the site is low speed, and that noisy high-speed equipment is enclosed to muffle sound. The one noise complaint received was resolved by enclosing the equipment.

In response to a comment by Mr. Douglas, Mr. Lauro explained that because louvers will be utilized, the space will not need to be ventilated.

Mr. Hocking asked if, after completion, there will be any available land and was told that little land will be available after the project is built. Mr. Hocking inquired if the project's landscape buffering would be adequate. Mr. Lauro stated that the buffer is compromised because there is not much available land for a buffer; that a 25 foot buffer was originally requested by New Rochelle and this subsequent compromise was reached.

Mr. Lauro stated that the wastewater treatment capacity is sufficient to handle the need. He then passed around color and texture samples proposed for the building. Mr. Hocking requested that bold color be avoided and that a variety of colors be used.

Ms. Lewy raised concerns about the square box look of the proposal, and asked that an attempt be made to “crack-open” the box and investigate other architectural looks - such as the lighthouse tower in Mamaroneck with its varied elevations. She asked if architectural details can be added to the corners of the building.

Mr. Thombs inquired whether the municipality or the county is responsible for the maintenance of the pathway. Mr. Lauro replied that the municipality is responsible for maintaining everything located on the outside of the fenced area.

Mr. Hocking agreed to provide examples of sites that utilized green walls, as this may work for this project.

Mr. Griffith expressed interest in learning what New Rochelle’s reaction to the renderings would be, as he was not impressed with the architect’s work.

VIII. Matters for Board Action

A. Capital Project BES07 Food Storage and Distribution Warehouse, 2009 Capital Budget Amendment

Accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation that included schematic drawings of three options for a food storage warehouse, Mr. Hoffmeister described the project to be funded by this budget amendment and delineated the three options. Based on the results of the study to determine the needs, size and location of the warehouse, a location between Woods Road and the Sprain Brook Parkway at the Valhalla Campus at Grasslands was recommended and the mid-range option was indicated as preferred. He stated that this design for the warehouse calls for a facility of 30,000 square feet. It will require the addition of an appropriation of \$7,275,000 to the 2009 Capital Budget.

Mr. Hoffmeister mentioned that one of the documents e-mailed to the board members prior to the meeting had been updated and he projected an image of the revised July 30, 2009 Planning Board report and resolution documents on the screen. At the request of Ms. Levy, he read the content aloud.

Mr. Sutton commented on the county’s emergency services and noted the importance of the Valhalla Campus. In the event of a large-scale disaster or emergency situation the proposed facility would serve as a large central hub for food distribution in the county.

Mr. Griffith asked if any existing buildings could be utilized for a food storage and distribution warehouse. Mr. Sutton answered that no existing structure meets the

requirements better than this plan. Mr. Griffith expressed concern about the box-like design, and remarked that it reminded him of the Con Ed building on the Grasslands Campus. Mr. Butler responded that the building would be built into the hill, that there were two different roofline elevations and that the buildings would be buffered.

Mr. Sutton apologized for needing to leave and departed to attend another meeting.

Ms. Lewy remarked that there was space for plantings along the Sprain Brook Parkway. Mr. Butler commented that a landscape plan for plantings around the building would be developed. Mr. Hocking inquired about an area in the schematic plan projected on the screen and asked what it will be used for. Mr. Butler informed him that it will be a staging area for trucks. Mr. Thombs asked if there will be an onsite garage and was informed by Mr. Butler that there are no plans for an interior garage.

Mr. Douglas asked for clarification on the differences of the recommended plan from the third option. Mr. Hoffmeister stated that the cost for the third option was less, \$5.9 million, and that it was 5,000 square feet smaller. He said that the mid-priced option was recommended because it would have a less invasive impact on the site, less paving and grading would be needed and that about ¼ acre more would remain undisturbed.

Mr. Smith asked who will manage the emergency services provided at the facility. Mr. Butler replied that the day-to-day operations will be cohabitated, that the county's operational role is in the long-term storage and that an outside contractor will manage the day-to-day operations.

Mr. Thombs asked what type of trucks the facility will receive. Mr. Sutton answered: box trucks, vans and an estimated one-or-two tractor trailer trucks a week.

Ms. Lewy remarked that, although convinced of the location and the need for a storage facility, she would like the architectural design to continue to evolve towards a more pleasing visual approach for the campus. She requested that alternative designs be submitted for the board's input and indicated that she would welcome the early e-mailing of digital versions to the members for comment. She called for a vote on the resolution.

Mr. Menken asked that the resolution be amended to include the important reasons why the mid-priced option was selected and why the location for the site is appropriate.

A motion to adopt a resolution approving the Planning Board report supporting the 2009 capital budget amendment, as amended, was made by Mr. Griffith, seconded by Mr. Smith and approved by the Board.

B. Report of the County Planning Board on the 2010 Capital Budget Requests

Ms. Lewy solicited comments from the board on the draft Planning Board report. She also requested that that the report's cover letter to the County Executive be circulated for approval.

Mr. Sullivan inquired if there were plans to widen the Bronx River Parkway at around the 13.9 mile mark - between the sign for exit 18 and the exit in Scarsdale. Mr. Natarelli

answered that due to its location on a historic portion of the reservation this overpass could not be expanded.

A motion to adopt a resolution approving the “Planning Board Report on the Capital Projects Review 2010 Requests” was made by Mr. Douglas seconded by Mr. Hocking and approved by the Board.

As an update, Mr. Natarelli reported that as mandated by a member vote during the July 7 meeting of the board, the complete planting plans have been included in the Tree Removal Permit for Phase 6 of the South County Trailway.

IX. Matters for Board Discussion

A. Downtown Zoning Analysis for Village of Port Chester

Mr. Gomez reported that staff has been working with the Village of Port Chester for 1.5 months addressing density questions raised in the Village’s draft Comprehensive Plan. Staff has illustrated the issue with the aid of zoning build-out analysis software and 3-D visualization technologies. A presentation illustrating the zoning and planning possibilities and comparing density scenarios for the downtown area was made to the Village Board and the Mayor and was well received. Mr. Gomez showed segments of this presentation to board.

Mr. Gomez, in response to a comment on the presentation by Mr. Hocking, stated that the build-outs assumed a mix of residential and commercial use. Ms. Lewy remarked that officials of the village were excited by the presentation. Mr. Mulligan commented that this was the also the reaction of the Starwood Group which is drafting plans for the former United Hospital site. Ms. Lewy and Mr. Butler expressed interest in the amount of time needed to create the presentation. Mr. Brady stated that the technology is a good planning tool and is applicable to other city and villages, such as Irvington, and can be plugged into a county-wide view.

B. I-287 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Alignments and Station Visioning

Mr. Feroe reported that the I-287 study team is starting to move forward on defining bus rapid transit routes across Westchester. However, the team has also moved the deadlines back one year with the draft EIS including the Tier One Transit analysis now due in summer 2010; the previously announced schedule had it scheduled for release this September. The team has initiated a financial study to be conducted by Merrill Lynch and rather than issue one report, this analysis will consist of multiple reports throughout the year. The financing study will recommend what entity will be targeted to operate the BRT system.

Screening a presentation that utilized 3-D visualization software, Mr. Feroe illustrated the alternative options for the BRT bus ways and lanes that Planning staff has designed. Incorporating technology from Google Earth, he also displayed examples of some of the

locations along the entire RBT corridor that could be targeted for possible development. He stated that the route options have the potential to strongly impact future land use. He also displayed 3-D examples of developed sites onto which the details of surface textures were modeled; this demonstrated the extent to which the landscape views of the buildings appeared lifelike. He said the presentations created can spark discussions in the I-287 communities.

Mr. Feroe informed the board that approximately 96 fact sheets containing information on bus routes, bus connections, station locations, routing constraints and comments generated from the communities along the I-287 corridor will supplement the 3-D presentation and will be given to the Study Team as a comprehensive package.

C. Westchester 2025 Website Enhancement

Mr. Brady reported that the preferred consultant for the Westchester 2025 3-D Website had submitted the requested updates to their original proposal, and that due to budget restraints some scaling back of the updated proposal was required. He explained that free open source 3-D tools, such as Bling, are available for use and will be incorporated into the GIS layers. He added that the consultant understood that the users of this Web tool will be 43 distinct municipalities and not one department.

Mr. Brady commented about the established milestones that the consultant will need to meet along the way, and stated that sample location areas will be developed first. Mr. Gomez added that because open source software will be used, the prior work of planning staff will be able to be utilized by the Web 3-D 2025 consultant.

D. Westchester 2025 Corridor Analysis

Mr. Brady informed the board that a local planning consultant firm has been selected to develop a *Westchester 2025* corridor analysis for the 2025 website, which will describe existing characteristics, land use issues and opportunities for 16 transportation corridors with significant adjacent land development. The analysis will help local officials, residents and regional agencies to plan for future land uses, target design opportunities, and pilot the characteristics of these corridors.

Mr. Hocking asked if there are established guidelines for items such as parking and sidewalk width. Mr. Brady answered that guidelines are planned for publication on the website. Mr. Thombs inquired if the consultant is a developer or planner. Mr. Brady responded that the selected consultant is a planning firm.

Ms. Lewy commented that the information gathered from the corridor analysis will provide the information needed to unify many locations throughout the county.

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E. Additional Westchester 2025 Municipal Assistance

Using a PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Brady informed the board that department staff had met with the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson staff and volunteer committee members to discuss the ways the department's development of a village-wide zoning build-out analysis can assist in the update of the village Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Brady also reported that department staff had met with Village of Irvington officials to demonstrate and discuss the technical tools, such as a build-out analysis and 3-D imaging, which are available for visualizing the options for the zoning and development of portions of the village's waterfront. The officials expressed interest in the department creating a waterfront analysis for them.

Mr. Brady reported that a presentation was made in Eastchester that touched on the lessons learned by other municipalities who developed Comprehensive Plans. He added that Ossining is interested in development possibilities for its waterfront and requested the department's assistance. He stated that the department had outreached to 27 of the 43 municipalities on *Westchester 2025*.

X. Other Business

Ms. Lewy asked if the board members would like to schedule a field trip for the next Planning Board meeting, perhaps to New Rochelle. Mr. Sullivan suggested that the board revisit Grasslands, since development projects are planned for this area. Ms. Lewy concluded that an e-mail canvassing of the members would determine the location of the next meeting.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.