

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING/PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

Monday, March 21, 2022 - 10:00 AM

Ike Tyler, Chairperson
Roy Holzer, Vice-Chairperson

Chairman Tyler called this Economic Development/Planning/Publicity Meeting to order at 10:00 am with the following Supervisors in attendance: Clayton Barber, Stephanie DeZalia, Derek Doty, Shaun Gilliland, Steve McNally, Noel Merrihew, Jim Monty, Matthew Stanley, Ike Tyler, Joe Pete Wilson, Margaret Wood and Mark Wright. Robin DeLoria, Charlie Harrington, Roy Holzer, Ken Hughes, Tom Scozzafava, Davina Winemiller had been previously excused.

Department Heads present: Dan Palmer, and Mike Mascarenas. Dan Manning was absent. Anna Reynolds had been previously excused.

Deputies present: Dina Garvey

Also present: Jody Olcott - IDA, Mary Jane Lawrence - ROOST, and Linda Gilliland - Cornell Cooperative Extension and Aurora McCaffery, Essex County Historian. Bruce Misarski had been previously excused.

TYLER: Economic Development, good morning.

The first item on the agenda was Industrial Development was Jody Olcott reporting as follows:

OLCOTT: Morning, morning, regular monthly report. What's on the table today is the Brown Swan Resort, which is the Word of Life reuse. Exciting project, I kind of summarized it, Kate Jarosh with Spring City Development is here with me to answer any questions that are above and beyond my knowledge of the project. Great project, as you can see, reuse of existing buildings that haven't been used since 2019, exciting for the community. The developer will be using a 3rd party operator; which is Hay Creek Hotels, you can go on their website and look at some of the unique other projects that they've done around the US.

They're requesting two exemptions from the IDA. One is the sales and use tax exemption; which is our IDA exemption for them to purchase and renovate materials, FF&E, furniture, fixture, equipment and the second is a mortgage recording tax abatement. The mortgage will be filed in an amount of a little over \$14 million; which will exempt them from paying 1.25%. I gave you some specifics, these three parcels all off the tax rolls right now. Word of Life is exempt. It brings them on the tax rolls. I did a very quick calculation on the bottom of the second page, on the summary of what it means to taxing entities, which is huge. Get it back on the tax rolls, everybody's, it's a win/win, obviously we're generating property tax revenue. Jobs; 18 full-time, 24 part-time

estimated. Questions, that's a lot of information, but you get the idea.

TYLER: I don't see any.

OLCOTT: It's significant. I don't know, Meg if you want to talk about it. I mean we're excited to see.

WOOD: The Town's very excited, too, but we'll be more so when it's out in the open.

OLCOTT: Yes, it has been hush, hush. The IDA Board approved it at their meeting two weeks ago. I am sure after this meeting is will be kind of be more public then at the IDA level.

TYLER: Looking for a resolution for authorizing financial assistance?

WOOD: I'll move.

TYLER: Second? Mr. Doty

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN THE FORM OF SALES TAX AND MORTGAGE TAX ABATEMENT AUTHORIZED BY THE ESSEX COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY IN CONNECTION WITH A PROJECT FOR THE LODGE AT SCHROON LLC.

Wood, Doty

TYLER: All in favor, opposed, I'm sorry.

DEZALIA: Did you say who the developer was?

OLCOTT: The developer is Spring City Development and the operator will be Hay Creek Hotels and if you go on their website they have, Meg and I were just talking about this, there's fantastic reuses of old, existing castle that they've turned in hotels. They're looking for old structures, it's not like a new building type, so it's exciting. So, we're excited to be a part of it.

PALMER: So, you need two resolutions?

OLCOTT: I just need one resolution, just doing the sales tax and the mortgage together. I think I sent Judy the thing, I'll send you the actually word document you can input it in, so you don't have to retype it. Yeah, we're excited.

DOTY: Jody, I'm looking forward to sitting down with you soon on our project in North Elba.

OLCOTT: Yes

DOTY: Do you envision rising interest rates to slowing any of these major things down?

OLCOTT: Most of the projects that you see, that I bring before you have already received financial commitment.

DOTY: Okay

OLCOTT: We've had a couple, we had a couple project last year, hospitality projects that were on hold, but really everything is full steam ahead, right now.

DOTY: So, you're saying we're the exception in North Elba?

OLCOTT: No, well, I mean your project is going before the IDA Board on Thursday.

DOTY: For the first phase?

OLCOTT: For the first phase, yeah.

DOTY: Okay

OLCOTT: So, a lot going on. All the projects that we didn't see that were on hold in '20, '21 are really, last year was one of our biggest years, I think. Everybody is just out and ready to do what they've been waiting to do, so it's exciting.

TYLER: Anything else?

OLCOTT: You guys are easy this morning.

TYLER: Thank you.

The next item on the agenda was Community Resources with Anna Reynolds having been previously excused.

TYLER: We have Community Resources and Anna's not here, but there is a couple of resolutions that we need to do. Both in the Town of Willsboro. One is a project for Seville Development, LLC, AKA Dollar General, a letter of no comment is recommended. Mr. Merrihew, second? Meg

**ACTION OF THE ESSEX COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
ON REFERRAL RECEIVED FROM THE TOWN WILLSBORO**

The following motion was made by Supervisor Merrihew.

Where, the Essex County Planning Board has considered the following GML 239 referrals at its regular meeting on March 21, 2022.

REFERRAL
Town of Willsboro - Seville Development, LLC

PROPOSED ACTION
site plan review

Whereas, none of the referred, proposed actions directly impacts a county road or county property.

Be It adopted by the Essex County Planning Board that no recommendation or comment on the said referrals shall be or hereby is made, and the respective referring bodies may take such final action as they deem appropriate.

This motion was seconded by Supervisor Wood and passed on a vote of 5 in favor, 4 absent and none opposed.

TYLER: Any more discussion? All in favor?

And the second one is the Town of Willsboro, Special Use Permit, bottle redemption, building a home is proposed on 43 Mountain View Drive. The project does not impact the County and therefore a letter of no impact is recommended. Mr. Merrihew and a second by Stephanie.

**ACTION OF THE ESSEX COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
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The following motion was made by Supervisor Merrihew.

Where, the Essex County Planning Board has considered the following GML 239 referrals at its regular meeting on March 21, 2022.

REFERRAL
Town of Willsboro - Jason Sweatt

PROPOSED ACTION
Special Use Permit

Whereas, none of the referred, proposed actions directly impacts a county road or county property.

Be It adopted by the Essex County Planning Board that no recommendation or comment on the said referrals shall be or hereby is made, and the respective referring bodies may take such final action as they deem appropriate.

This motion was seconded by Supervisor DeZAlia and passed on a vote of 5 in favor, 4 absent and none opposed.

TYLER: Any other discussion? All in favor?

The next item on the agenda was the Essex County Historian, Aurora McCaffrey reporting as follows:

MCCAFFREY: Good morning, first of all, pardon my appearance. It's baseball season and I was playing catch with my son and caught the ball with my eye.

TYLER: You kept your eye on the ball.

MCCAFFREY: As a friend said, maybe I should reevaluate my athletic ability.

Anyway you have my report for March. We are buckling down getting ready to open. We open May 28th, Memorial Day weekend. So, we're getting excited about that. We have a couple of new exhibits opening. We have the 1922 Centennial, Evolution of the Adirondack Wilderness and we also have Paul Matthews, an Adirondack Artist. We will be updating our fire tower exhibit and the High Peaks. We will also have additions to the Suffrage Exhibit and the Fishing Exhibit.

Our program and event schedule is still being finalized. I just have a couple of last dates and we will have films and lectures offered every week throughout the summer and we do have several larger events scheduled.

The Antique and Classic Car Show is on and it will be the first event on June 11th, shortly after we open. So, I will have a full schedule in print for the next month for you.

That's all I have.

TYLER: Any questions? I don't see any, thank you Aurora.

MCCAFFREY: Thank you.

The next item on the agenda was Cornell Cooperative Extension, with Linda Gilliland reporting as follows:

GILLILLAND: Good morning, you have our report and I am handing out some HPAI, about the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza. We don't, in Essex County we don't have big commercial poultry farms, but we tons of people keeping backyard chickens and should they start dying, let us know and we'll get you to the appropriate resources to have those tested. Our technician from Ag and Markets, so she covers quite a wide area and if I can't get ahold of her, I'll have somebody from Albany come up.

You have a report of all kinds of fun stuff in here. Does anybody have any questions about that? Okay and this is, today is the beginning of Ag Literacy Week, where we go to all the schools in the counties and do a reading on a book that focuses on agriculture and this year's selection is, *Farmer Will Alan and the Growing Table*. So, he's actually a farmer in the Detroit and got into urban farming. His neighborhood area was food desert. So, that's the title this year. We're in every school this year. We thought everybody was going to be remote, so we hadn't planned on our loyal book readers, usually the books are sponsored by Farm Bureau and so we didn't ask anybody to volunteer to read, and at the last minute everybody changed to in-person reading. So, that's very exciting, we're happy to be back in the schools after two years.

So, if anybody has questions, otherwise I'll leave it at that.

TYLER: I don't see anything.

GILLILLAND: Thank you very much.

The next item was the Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism (ROOST), with Mary Jane Lawrence reporting as follows:

LAWRENCE: Good morning, I don't have Jim, today.

So, I have a couple of marketing updates and then I have, you know, I am here to answer any questions on the Community Tourism Enhancement Fund from 2021, but before we do that, I just want to give you a couple of updates.

The Lake Champlain Guide is at the printers, so we're excited. That will be in everybody's hands by May for the travelers.

We have our Lake Champlain Community Committee meeting, tomorrow. That is the last meeting before we start actually coding the Lake Champlain Website, so again that will be ready for summer.

Adirondack Day is back. Adirondack Day 2022 will be May 9th in the Legislative Building in Albany. That's where we highlight the Adirondack Region to the legislatures and all other government bodies that are there. That's going to be a little bit different. We haven't done it in a couple of years. In the years past, for those of you that may or may not know, we have an exhibit from 11:00-4:00, it's highlighting all the different sectors in the region from tourism to agriculture to business to schools to health care and then from 4:00-6:00 we would have a reception and we would invite all the, you know, of course the Governor, I don't remember them ever coming, and all the other elected officials and we would have food catered from the Adirondacks, as well as refreshments, beer and wine. This year there is no food allowed or beverage in the legislative building for this type of exhibits, so we're just going to have work around that a little bit and figure out, possibly saying a thank you to the elected officials and we have Garry Douglas are working on that piece of it.

We have the new branding is launching for the Whiteface region, which is really exciting. We've been working on that for a while and we have pop-ups and stickers and postcards and all the social media is going to change to this new brand for the Whiteface Region, as well as on the website.

So, those are some big projects that we have underway and are actually completing and then we are hosting Ironman for 2022. We're in the process of working on a three-year agreement with Ironman and this year that will be July 24th.

All very exciting, we're also going to be putting together, getting a meeting together to talk about the shuttles and for the hiking shuttles and what's going to happening this year around the town and the county shuttles, the Town of Keene and the surrounding area and how we communicate that to the travelers and the community members in the most effective away and we need to get on that really soon so everybody knows what's happening, before they actually get here.

WILSON: Yeah, I don't know what's happening, I'm sorry.

LAWRENCE: And last but not least we have the 2021 Community Tourism distribution by town that Mr. Palmer distributed to all the Supervisors.; just a couple of highlights. One; the check should be cut and sent by the end of this week, so everybody should be receiving their balances from 2021. Just to take note, the agreement was that each town would be distributed \$20,000.00

annually, above and beyond the occupancy tax that was based on 1%. We projected \$2 million collection with the CTEF Fund. It came in at \$2.5; which then made the 1%, \$25,000.00 instead of \$20,000.00. So, you will all be receiving that \$5,000.00 balance in addition to the occupancy tax. So, one other thing that I just want to point out is when we originally calculated for each of the towns, the occupancy tax, we had no way of tracking the short term rentals or the private vacation rentals, there was not a software out there the way AirBnB does it, specifically, because they just give you a lump sum for county. So, originally we were using the same percentage as the hotel collection. So, obviously some of the towns in Essex County don't have as many lodging properties as others, so we really wanted to pull that apart, because we were looking to get more of the money infused into the towns that specifically, to North Elba which we have the largest amount of lodging properties. So, after searching and working with one company called Air DNA and they really worked with us to pull apart of the, you know to the best that we could, I would say 95% accurate, so each of the towns, now we can tell what your occupancy tax is with the AirBnB and so it's a most more accurate number. So, more money will be distributed to your towns, which is exciting. Any questions?

TYLER: I don't see anything, kiddo.

LAWRENCE: Nobody looks very excited, I'm excited.

DEZALIA: Does that program work for VRBO, also or any they recorded individually?

LAWRENCE: No VRBO, AirBnB are all one. So, the one thing that we can track individually is the short-term rentals, but it's under the AirBnB and VRBO are the same, so we won't be able to them. Alrighty, that was easy, it's an easy Monday.

TYLER: Thank you.

The next item was the Housing Assistance Program with Bruce Misarski having been previously excused and no report given.

TYLER: Anything else to come before this Committee? We are adjourned.

AS THERE WAS NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THIS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING/PUBLICITY COMMITTEE IT WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:20 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dina Garvey, Deputy
Clerk of the Board