

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING/PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

Monday, March 11, 2024 - 10:00 AM

Ike Tyler, Chairperson
Clayton Barber, Vice-Chairperson

Supervisor Tyler called this Economic Development/Planning/Publicity Meeting to order at 10:34 am with the following Supervisors in attendance: Clayton Barber, Matt Brassard, Chris Clark, Shaun Gilliland, Charlie Harrington, Ken Hughes, Steve McNally, Jim Monty, Cathleen Reusser, Favor Smith, Matthew Stanley, Ike Tyler, Joe Pete Wilson, Margaret Wood and Mark Wright. Robin DeLoria, Derek Doty and Davina Thurston had been previously excused.

Department Heads present: Anna Reynolds had been previously excused.

Deputies present: Dina Garvey

News Media: Alania Penny

Also Present: Elizabeth Lee - Cornell Cooperative Extension, Mary Jane Lawrence and Jim McKenna - ROOST, Megan Murphy and Caitlyn Wargo - Adirondack Roots, Nicole Justice-Green - Essex County Land Bank and Aurora McCaffrey - Essex County Historian. Carol Calabrese and Jody Olcott had been previously excused - IDA

TYLER: Economic Development Committee will be started.

The first item on the agenda was the Industrial Development Committee with Carol Calabrese and Jody Olcott having been previously excused.

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

MASCARENAS: I do have resolutions from Anna for the Planning Board. So, resolution number one, Town of Ticonderoga, 481 Baldwin Road, site plan and review and area variance, 2-story addition on existing structure, letter of no impact would be appropriate.

TYLER: We need a motion, please. Moved by Mr. Clark, second by Mr. Hughes.

**ACTION OF THE ESSEX COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
ON REFERRALS RECEIVED FROM THE TOWN OF TICONDEROGA**

The following motion was made by Supervisor Clark.

Whereas, the Essex County Planning board has considered the following GML 239 referrals at its regular meeting on March 11, 2024;

<u>REFERRAL</u>	<u>PROPOSED ACTION</u>
Town of Ticonderoga - 481 Baldwin Rd.	Site Plan Review & area variance

And 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 referral 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 Hughes and passed on a vote of 7 in favor, 2 excused and none opposed.

TYLER: Any discussion? All in favor? Opposed?

MASCARENAS: Okay, another one, Town of Ticonderoga, 2964 NYS Rte. 74, another site plan review for a home reconstruction, no impact to Essex County property and a letter of no impact is recommended.

TYLER: Moved by Mr. Barber, seconded by Mr. Clark.

**ACTION OF THE ESSEX COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
ON REFERRALS RECEIVED FROM THE TOWN OF TICONDEROGA**

The following motion was made by Supervisor Barber.

Whereas, the Essex County Planning board has considered the following GML 239 referrals at its regular meeting on March 11, 2024;

<u>REFERRAL</u>	<u>PROPOSED ACTION</u>
Town of Ticonderoga - 2964 NYS Rte. 74	site plan review

And 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 Clark and passed on a vote of 7 in favor, 2 excused and none opposed.

TYLER: Any discussion? All in favor? Opposed? Carried

MASCARENAS: Town of Essex, 2748 Essex Road, special use permit, barriers at Barn Door Tavern for State Road separation, no impact to Essex County.

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

The following motion was made by Supervisor Clark.

Whereas, the Essex County Planning board has considered the following GML 239 referrals at its regular meeting on March 11, 2024;

<u>REFERRAL</u>	<u>PROPOSED ACTION</u>
Town of Essex - 2748 Essex Rd.	Special Use Permit - barriers

And 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 Harrington and passed on a vote of 7 in favor, 2 excused and none opposed.

TYLER: Discussion? All in favor? Carried

MASCARENAS: Town of Essex, 2748 Essex Road, special use permit, signage for the tavern, no impact to Essex County.

TYLER: Ms. Reusser, Mr. Hughes second.

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

The following motion was made by Supervisor Reusser.

Whereas, the Essex County Planning board has considered the following GML 239 referrals at its regular meeting on March 11, 2024;

<u>REFERRAL</u>	<u>PROPOSED ACTION</u>
Town of Essex - 2748 Essex Rd.	Special Use Permit - signage

And 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 Hughes and passed on a vote of 7 in

favor, 2 excused and none opposed.

TYLER: All in favor? Opposed?

MASCARENAS: And Town of Essex, 2204 Lake Shore, Special Use Permit, second story expansion, no impact to Essex County.

TYLER: Mr. Hughes, second, Mr. Clark.

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

The following motion was made by Supervisor Hughes.

Whereas, the Essex County Planning board has considered the following GML 239 referrals at its regular meeting on March 11, 2024;

REFERRAL
Town of Essex - 2204 Lake Shore Rd.

PROPOSED ACTION
Special Use Permit - second story expansion

And 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 Clark and passed on a vote of 7 in favor, 2 excused and none opposed.

TYLER: All in favor? Opposed?

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

MCCAFFREY: Good morning, so you have my submitted written report. Since we're kind of running behind, I will just say that, since I went over our exhibit, developments and plans last month, this month, I just wanted to share some of our other projects that we have planned, which for the most part are a lot of buildings and grounds projects. So, I have listed those in my report for you. They include, creating a new exhibit room, building a new outdoor collection storage building, continuing the Colonial Garden Restoration and the front entrance renovation. So, that's of those, so I will just answer questions.

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

MCCAFFREY: Actually, I have a really quick question. I have had two historians ask me how to update the county list, you know there's a historian list on the county website.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, if you just get us that update and Jonathan Ferguson in the IT Department hands the county website, but if you send it to me, I'll give it to him.

MCCAFFREY: Thank you

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

LEE: Good morning, everyone, welcome back to winter. I have sent in a report, if anyone has any questions I am happy to answer at this time and I have two updates. The first one that I'll do is that, is from, some of you met with Matt Ploufe, who is our energy advisor, which he was a CCE employee from Jefferson County. He has sent moved on another position and we have a new energy advisor for Essex County who will be coming to meet with you and he has been working for just less than a month, so he's been doing a lot of onboarding, but he also plans to reach out to all of the organizations working in housing and energy efficiency. So, Pride of Ticonderoga, ACAP, Adirondack Roots, Department of Social Services, Office of the Aging, so he will be making the rounds and his name is Carson Schweinsberg, so look for him and I am just meeting him for the first time, also.

The other really exciting news in our office, is this Jen Guimaraes, she is our new Senior Team Leader for Community Vitality and so she will be, in her portfolio, for now, 4H and all of our senior wellness programs and to be continued, what else might happen, thank you.

MASCARENAS: Thank you.

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

LAWRENCE: Good morning, I'll make it short. I have a couple of things in regards to the occupancy tax. We ended 2023 with the collections just a little bit under 1% compared to 2022. So, in like of a very rainy summer and a lack of snow, other than today, we faired pretty well. In 2023, we saw 7.5% increase in the availability of room supply over 2022, so that's very significant, with some renovations and those renovations, including additional rooms, so that's a significant number of additional room supply.

In 2023, the short term rental occupancy tax collections were up 11.5% over 2022, so that's what is happening with short term rentals.

On to marketing; we are, actually in the process of switching all of our websites to spring/summer,

so the weather's not quite cooperating, but it's okay, there will be spring, tomorrow. We are continuing to focus, which we are on the countdown for the solar eclipse 2024. This week, boxes will go out to all of our towns, they will have glasses, posters, stickers, tip cards and we're also sending maps. So, everybody will get that box. It's going out this week, so probably early next week. We also had our second call, we have one more call at the end of this month with the first responders, state agencies, locals, county and state police in regards to the solar eclipse, so we're trying to really keep the communication flowing and everybody knows what's going on and how we can best support this event. It's going to be sunny and 80, so that will be good. No, you know what's going to happen? It's going to be this, right? We're continuing to work with Adirondack Mountain Club and our regional partners on the 100th Year of Northville Placid Trail, which is really significant. It's one of the longest trails in the Northeast, so there's a lot of work that needs to be done on the trail, but there's also a lot of interest in the trail, so that's exciting. We are also continuing to work with the communities around all of Essex County on the UCI and Mountain Bike World Championships, which is in 2024. Just to give you a quick review on that, that is a world championships, there's four disciplines. We'll be housing two of the four disciplines at the last weekend in September. There's not that many competitors, but there's a tremendous amount of spectators. So, they're anticipating between 5,000-8,000 spectators for this event and there's like 100-200 competitors, but because of its international exposure and marketing through Warner Bros., we expect to see a lot of, a significant increase in mountain biking starting in the early spring through the summer and into the fall for the whole region and we are working on BETA on that. They are helping identify specific trails and parking so that we don't, again, have everybody everywhere.

MONTY: I am just wonder where the location of those races are going to be.

LAWRENCE: Mt. Van Hoevenberg, of the two races, but the spectators will be everywhere and we're promoting them to reach throughout the whole region. So, there's a great economic impact opportunity for the whole region, which we're really excited about.

Then of course, Adirondack Day is in Albany, May 6th, so we're dialing in on that. Designation Management, we are continuing to meet with our town supervisor's all through the county. Some of you have been nice enough to meet with us and Adam DeSantis, our economic development person is continuing to setup those meetings.

Then, Jim was in Albany visiting with the legislators and administrative officials around housing, broadband, cell service, and downtown revitalization, last week, for two days, Monday and Tuesday. I think that's it for today.

MONTY: How many spectators are you expecting or people to come and view the eclipse are you expecting in the area? Do you have a rough estimate?

LAWRENCE: We know that the lodging properties are, for the majority, full. So, we, the way that we're looking at it is a busy summer day, like it's going to be that type of volume. Now, there's a couple of unknowns, one is the weather, which will then impact the daytrippers, but we expect to see significant activity throughout the whole region on those two days, so Sunday/Monday, people will be exiting on Tuesday, we're trying to get more to stay on Tuesday and leave on Wednesday.

MONTY: So, that leads me to my next question, the University Games arrangements were made to bring portable cell towers into areas within the Adirondack Park to provide safety redundancy for this event for the University Games. Is anything like that in the planning for this event, because it sounds like to me there's going to be as many spectators?

LAWRENCE: So, we did bring that up on our call with the first responders and the State, not last week, but the week before and they said that they were not planning on those towers being available for the cell service.

MONTY: So, there's going to be more stress and stuff put on our local responders, because it's probably going to be a number of calls.

LAWRENCE: Exactly and they said that they are beefing up their phone lines and the people working the phone lines for the 911. We will be having a significant amount of our staff, we're putting out a number, promoting a number for people to call that are not emergency questions, but we do anticipate that there's going to be a significant impact. So, if anybody has any influence on that.

MONTY: I think they have as much influence as they had for the University Games for something of this magnitude, somewhere.

MCNALLY: I think they learned their lesson on that, that was a slap in the face to the locals that live here and work here, have those portable towers for just the University Games and I don't think that they'll make that mistake twice.

TYLER: I just want to show some concerns, not you guys, I have a committee in Westport that are trying to organize something and not knowing, the unknown and they're asking me to do things that, you know, EMS, police, all this and I can't do any more than I have already notified them. They know what's going on, my hands are tied. I don't know what else to do.

LAWRENCE: You know, we continue to tell our communities when we meet with them on all of our calls and in person, that to have a contingency of volunteers that are designed to the designed viewing areas will be very helpful, with traffic alone, just to get people, this is the way to go, take the right up there, there is parking up there. That in itself is really going to help alleviate some of the congestion and stress and again, it's not, people are going to be setting up, you know throughout the day, they're not going to wait until 5 minutes before the eclipse. So, they're going to be settled in wherever they're going to be, early in the day and they're going to stay, the concern is, what happens when the eclipse is over? Now, everybody is trying to get out and so that's where we're hoping, you know, if you can walk to the designed viewing area, to walk to any of the events that your community is hosting, safely, of course, will help keep it has calm and you know the flow going as well.

MCNALLY: The majority of the town in the Adirondack Park that are going to be visited for this,

our seasonal businesses are not open. So, it's nice to see people come, but it's sort of a drawback that they're not coming when we're vibrant and our stores and shops and open. So, when they come and say, there's nothing to do here.

TYLER: You want us to change that to June?

LAWRENCE: We do know that some of the small businesses that are not traditionally opened are opening. We have heard of small businesses opening and then we are encouraging the restaurants that maybe traditionally aren't open, that are going to open, just do a very limited menu and keep it so you can get a lot of things out the door quickly.

MCNALLY: This goes back to the first impression, so new visitors, they come here and there are no services, there's no restaurants, they're going to say, I'm not going back.

LAWRENCE: But, I will tell you that the research that we've done, that people that really find this eclipse to be the most memorial experience is those that are in quiet places, enjoying it with just, so it's not, we're underrating the experience of the eclipse, itself and that's what they'll remember and if the people in the community are friendly and welcoming and we're as well organized as we can be, I think that will have a very lastly, positive impression.

TYLER: Thank you, anything else?

GILLILLAND: This is somewhat related to ROOST and stuff, I passed an email, over the weekend to all the Supervisors from Greg Borzalri, 19th of July, the reception for the Ironman, we will all get invitations for that and the Empire State Games, vests, promotional materials, but this year we did not get invited to the opening ceremonies and things, which I kind of addressed a little bit, I know everybody, next year, will be invited, so we will all able to wear your red Empire State Games vest that are there, I need to email back what everybody's sizes are or else Mr. Tyler will get a small.

TYLER: Thank you.

The next item was the Essex County Land Bank with Nicole Justice-Green reporting as follows:

JUSTICE-GREEN: My report is attached, I want to keep this pretty brief, because I know we've run over. A quick update on 14 Springfield is that they are now putting drywall in the home, so the mitigation, electrical, plumbing, roof, site work is mostly done, so that is incredibly exciting for us, so we're on track for being able to put that home on the market this spring and for our pre-planning, really permitting, site feasibility study for the Winebrook parcel in Newcomb, we've already completed 30% of that research, which has been going really well and I really appreciate all the

collaborative support that we've received from our regional non-profits, especially ROOST and the Planning Board has given us a lot of really valuable information and just to reiterate, the study is really looking at the correct mix of homes, the price of the homes, the look that the homes need to be built in, a rental development mix, as well as all the funding sources needed. So, it's not a feasibility study in essence. We've really identified this land, we know that this is good land to build homes and potentially rental units on, so what does that actually look like? So, when you go to apply to do this development, we're not suggesting we build more homes that we can actually put people in and that we're not listing those homes at prices that are unattainable for the community that's already working there. So, hopefully this model works well, especially in light of Tyler vs. Hennepin, we can continue to work with other supervisors on smaller parcels of land and maybe larger ones, too, to really build these new homes and rental units throughout the County.

TYLER: Any questions? Thank you

The next item was Adirondack Roots with Megan Murphy reporting as follows:

MURPHY: You have my report, I don't know if anyone has any questions? I just want to point out one thing in the report; under rental assistance, New York State has temporarily suspended issuing new housing choice vouchers. This is a budgetary issue, we don't have any idea when they will reopen new vouchers. Our clients that are currently on housing choice vouchers will continue to receive assistance and we are able to still keep putting people on the waitlist, but we really, we have no indication from New York State as to when it will reopen. We're hoping that is, it appears that it might be sort of a cash flow issue for them and so my hope is, that in a month or so that it will reopen, but I will keep you updated, because you know we've had quite a few people on the waitlist and we've also had, as we've discussed here, a larger number of people coming to us that are already homeless and so we are not able to serve them at this time with new vouchers. What we do hope is because we are a smaller county and we don't impact the budget as much, is that if we know of people that in extreme hardship situation that we may be able to make an appeal and so we would urge, if any of you know of anyone like that, that we would love to be communicated with, because we would to try and make that argument with them, if we need to. So, just keep us informed, let us know and we will let you know as soon that opens back up.

HUGHES; Good morning, quick question, you had shared with the Adirondack Roots Board about the Neighbor Works funding from Congress and their proposed cuts to funding to Neighbor Works, which would most likely trickledown. Can you speak to that a little bit, just inform the Board what you know and what might, I know there are a lot of unknowns.

MURPHY: Yeah, there are and so basically, so we are a Neighbor Works organization and Neighbor Works is an umbrella national organization and to be an Neighbor Works organization we need to meet certain standards and what happens is being part of Neighbor Works, Neighbor

Works receives appropriations from Congress, this is actually something that was started in Congress, historically to serve underserved neighborhoods from a housing standpoint to ensure that there were good, quality housing organizations working to serve communities and so there was a surprise, actually, in the mini-bus funding that has now come through the Federal Government, in that the Neighbor Works appropriation, itself, was cut by \$12 million, which in its overall appropriation is not a hugely significant amount, but it does make a difference and the other thing that was significantly cut is Senator Leahy had been able to get a special appropriation for Neighbor Works for shared equity projects and so that \$4 million, which is what Neighbor Works gets every year was cut out of the budget all together and so there will somewhat of an impact to us. We do see, right now, they're saying that they're going to continue to fund their shared equity projects and what they do every year, is we get an appropriation from Neighbor Works and so that will probably be reduced this year. We have a lot of hope that next year these things will be, we'll be able to move the ball back and so you never know, it's been, as we've heard from Neighbor Works, it's just been a very different year at the Federal Government, as we've seen, as far as funding and this was a surprised that happened and so they're hoping we'll continue to work with our elected officials on the Federal side and get all that funding restored for next year.

HUGHES: And just one more quick follow-up, I attended a webinar, last week, Megan, you were actually one of the presenters, ADK Action had put it on, it was related to conversion of short term rentals to long term rental and what ADK Action is doing to identify ways to develop a toolkit, so that that toolkit can be provided to landlords and property owners to help incentivize them to transition from short term rentals to long term rentals and Mike I would like to work with you on some ideas that I have to see what we can do to provide some potential funding that this Board can consider for funding that toolkit to help support the non-profits in the area who might be working to make that happen, so I will be in touch with you.

MURPHY: We have been working with ADK Action and Living ADK, out in Herkimer County and so you may or may not be aware that Living ADK has a deed restriction program that they have, it's called Indeed, which can be a little confusing with the job search thing, but anyway, Living ADK, we're talking about potentially piloting it here in Elizabethtown and then possibly in Wells and so we have applied for various funding for this. We haven't heard anything, yet, so that's why we haven't brought it up, but what we have been doing is working altogether to create things like the toolkit, they're looking to us as the entity that's worked with landlords and renters in the past, so that we can help create informed landlords and so that they have a readymade way of moving towards becoming a landlord. You know, there's a lot to it and one of the things that we think it can be a barrier for folks that are doing short term rentals to think about what are all the things I need to know about to become a landlord? What are my legal responsibilities? What kind of lease do I use? That's lots of questions and so, but we also want to create informed renters, as well and what are their responsibilities on both sides and so we've been working on that and then with them so that we can create this kind of informed group and then we would have a small incentive program and we have been talking to folks that are in short term rental now and even some folks that have gone already, themselves, short term rental owners to become long term landlords and what we found is that they see that there's a lot of hidden costs to short term rental and so you

know, you can go, there's a website out there and you can find out how many short term rentals there are in a community and what the averages are per night and then the average per year and when you look at, you can also sort of think about what you then get financially as a long term renter and we're not going to fill that whole gap, that's not what we're looking to do. What we're really looking to do is to repeal to, what we're calling heart aligned community members, who might really just be thinking that short term rentals, being a short term rental landlord is a lot of hassle, you know, turning over that place all the time and doing all these things, so maybe they're ready and heard about the idea that we need more housing for workforce here and so those are really the folks that we we're kind of thinking might be interested in a program like this.

MCNALLY: I have owned rental properties for 30-years and it sounds, it's good to convert those, but the way the State has the rules set for landlords and tenants, the reason why the short term rental is so appealing is if you have a bad tenant, you have them for 1-3 days, if you have a bad tenant in a long term, you're stuck with them 3-4 months without any revenue and you have no recourse to recoup any of that money. It's more to it than, I can make a \$1,000.00 a month rental, there's a lot to it and I can see, the way the laws are set in New York State, it's not conducive to be a long term rental owner.

GILLILLAND: I've got landlords in my town who will never go back to long term rentals, because they lost their shirts in the pandemic, people just stopped paying and never started and then some of them took 4-years to evict. So, the State of New York has got to change the way that they look the business relationship between landlord and tenant, if we're going to solve this problem.

MCNALLY: And after Covid, the rules aren't much better. I mean I am thinking it would be 3-4 months, minimum to get a non-paying tenant out, with good cause.

MURPHY: Correct and we see, with rental assistance, we see all sides of this, both renters and landlords and so part of it is, that's why we would want to help long term landlords be sure that they a good lease, be sure that they check references and they do their due diligence and understand and I agree, being a long term landlord is not for everybody and I think those are the things that they need to consider and so that's why we do want to talk with them first about doing this.

MCNALLY: On the referrals, what happens in the marketplace and my facilities are in Glens Falls, what happens, you have a bad tenant, you get a call from another landlord saying, are they a good tenant? You say, yes, they are, come get them. So, the referral thing doesn't check out, as well as you think it would.

HARRINGTON: I know in your report that there were two mobile home replacements in Crown Point. One is wonderfully maintained, the other one is a trash hole and I do believe that you need to have some oversight here. I mean this was a sad cause gift to this family and they've been allowed to trash it.

MURPHY: Oh, I would like to talk with you about that, because I hadn't heard anything about that.

I can give you a call.

HARRINGTON: I do believe that there should be some follow-up, some regimentation to this program.

MURPHY: Okay and we can talk more about that.

TYLER: Thank you, anything else? Thank you, Megan.

MURPHY: Sure, thanks.

TYLER: Anything else from this committee? We are adjourned, thank you.

AS THERE WAS NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THIS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING/PUBLICITY COMMITTEE, IT WAS ADJOURNED AT 11:05 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dina Garvey, Deputy
Clerk of the Board