

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT / PLANNING COMMITTEE

September 26, 2011

PRESENT:

**Richard Keaveney, Chairman
Jeffrey Braley
Patrick Grattan
Margaret Robertson
Arthur Bassin
Robin Andrews**

ABSENT:

**Arthur Baer, notified
Edward Nabozny**

ALSO PRESENT:

**Becky Vinchiarello, Dep. Clerk
Ronald Caponera
Ann Cooper
Kenneth Flood
Patrice Perry
James Waterhouse**

Public: 1

Press: 1

Chairman R. Keaveney called the meeting to order at 5:03 P.M.

Tourism – A. Cooper

New York University Case Study – Next Steps. Columbia County is being used as a case study for this project. K. Flood and A. Cooper traveled to the city and presented to the class. It is there hope that a good product will come out of this project.

K. Flood announced that the State has released the report of taxes generated in the County. He would like time to analyze it at this time. He will then report back to the Committee.

From May to September hits on the website were up by 62%.

The Garlic Festival as well as the Chili Cook Off and Columbia County Bounty were briefly discussed.

Agriculture – J. Waterhouse

Farmland Protection Plan Update – A draft plan update was handed out. They are currently working on the Strategies and Recommendations portion of the plan and are on track. The results for the survey have come back and there was a 20% return. Charts were also handed out showing the percent of purchases by farmers in the County and the average gross annual sales for the past five years. Discussion ensued on taxes and tax exemptions as they pertain to farmers in the County. A draft plan of the Farmland Protection Plan should be available in a month. J. Waterhouse plans to extend an invitation to Supervisors to an upcoming Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board meeting.

Transportation – K. Flood

Public Bus Service Status –

Coxsackie Transport uses Columbia County busses 95% of the time. The County owns four busses that need to be pulled of the road from time to time.

Bus Inventory Condition Report –

The two busses that are currently in the garage are passed rehabbing. It was discussed if they should be added to surplus inventory. DOT would not allow these busses back on the road.

Transportation Advisory Committee –

There was a meeting a few months ago. They will start holding quarterly meetings. They will also be contacting Town Highway Superintendents for these meetings.

Geographic Information System (GIS) –

A grant is available to help selected people learn how to read the GIS. It is only for training purposes. A meeting took place between a GIS consultant, K. Flood, S. Booy, and R. Wheeler. They are asking departments to update sections of the questionnaire that pertains to them and to make recommendations.

MIS will be able to support the hardware for this system. They would like to get the equipment in MIS and then have Planning and Real Property have access with to start with. They will also be contacting Rob Lopez of E-911 for direction as he has used this system for years.

Economic Development – K. Flood

New Projects Economic Update –

A chart was handed out summarizing the current projects in the County. It mentioned Greenport Crossings, Camphill Ghent, Eurial, Flanders Cop, and RISA Management. A handout was also passed around that contained a press release of the ribbon cutting at Greenport Crossings.

Project Updates-

Eurial – An application was submitted to the State. It has been delayed because of regional councils.

Flanders is running behind schedule but progressing well. Production should start in October.

Disaster Front – There is \$7 million available for farms that have been devastated by the recent storms. They County will have to apply for the grant.

New Lebanon Hannaford –

They met with the town and are currently looking into why Hannaford has decided not to pursue opening at this time. They will be looking to have another grocery store open in the town if Hannaford does not change their mind. K. Flood commended M. Robertson for her efforts in trying to get the Supermarket to open a location in New Lebanon.

Planning – P. Perry

Columbia County Planning Board SEQRA Training Session – This took place September 21st at the College. It was well attended. She will email the Power Point presentation to Supervisors.

Conference Objective Form – NYS Data Center Affiliate Meeting, October 24th – 26th in Latham, NY. Total cost \$125.00 with one person attending. Motion to approve by M. Robertson, seconded by A. Bassin, motion carried.

Regional Economic Development Council – there will be a statewide meeting tomorrow which President Clinton will speak at and the Governor will attend.

With no further business there was motion to adjourn at 6:04 P.M. by M. Roberson, seconded by A. Bassin, motion carried.

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