

Economic Development Committee Minutes
April 3, 2013 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Lawler; Supervisors Daly, A. Johnson, Kinowski, Richardson, Sausville, M. Johnson, Barrett, and Collyer; Spencer Hellwig, Administrator; Ryan Moore, Mgmt. Analyst; Julie Stokes, Peter Leitchfield, Saratoga PLAN; Felipe Moon, Veterans; Peter Bardunias, Southern Saratoga Chamber; Press.

Chairman Lawler called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

On a motion made by Mr. Sausville, seconded by Mr. Kinowski the minutes of the March 11, 2013 meeting were approved unanimously.

Mrs. Stokes said region 5 includes Saratoga and Washington county and into the Adirondacks where they have always taken the lead and made sure that if you get into PLAN that no property is going to be taken by eminent domain. All acquisitions done by the State have to have approval by the local government, requiring the State to demonstrate that they will restore the property. An item that has been discussed for the past five years is when the City buys properties where do the development rights go.

Mrs. Stokes said the real meat of the plan is the projects list. One of the important things about it is that the State can't acquire property for open space or recreational use unless it is in the States' Open Space Program.

Mrs. Stokes briefly outlined the following Open Space Plan projects:

HUDSON RIVER PROJECTS

Champlain Canal/Hudson River Corridor – From Waterford to Whitehall, the Champlain Canal is an underused resource serving Saratoga and Washington Counties.

Hudson River Access & Wildlife Habitat – lands that will improve public access to the Hudson River and its shoreline, as well as, protect wildlife habitat in the river corridor.

SARATOGA COUNTY

Dwaaskill Natural Area and Watershed – This nature preserve features a complex of aquatic, wetland, and upland habitat associated with the middle reaches of the Dwaaskill stream system and its tributaries.

Kayderosseras on Fish Creek Corridor/Saratoga Lake – One of the major tributaries of the Hudson River is the Kayderosseras, Saratoga Lake and Fish Creek. They flow through five towns, three villages and the City of Saratoga Springs.

Mid County Trail System – The Zim Smith Mid County Trail System is now fully constructed from the Village of Ballston Spa to Coons Crossing in Halfmoon. Saratoga County has allocated resources and begun Right of Way acquisition to extend the trail into the City of Mechanicville and connect with the trails that run along the Hudson River Corridor.

Vischer Ferry Preserve/Mohawk Corridor – Located in the Southern portion of Saratoga County, the Vischer Ferry Preserve is a priority open space area for the Town of Clifton Park as well as designated as an Important Bird Area by Audubon and NYS DEC Bird Conservation Area.

Saratoga County Agricultural Lands – Throughout Saratoga County, an active farmland conservation easement program has been created with assistance from the County Farmland Preservation and Open Space Fund. Important farmland protection projects have been initiated under the county wide program, maintaining the character of the county and also providing vital grassland habitats.

Wilton Wildlife Preserve and Park – The town of Wilton has developed a plan to create a 2,300 acre park in the center of the town which will provide recreational and aesthetic open space to complement future development in the fastest growing county (Saratoga) in New York State.

Blandings Turtle Recovery Area – Blandings turtles are a threatened species in New York that have recently been found in areas in central and eastern Saratoga County.

Karner Blue Butterfly Recovery Units – These areas in Region 5 support by far the majority of the remaining populations of the state and federally endangered Karner Blue Butterfly. These areas have been designated recovery units in a draft state recovery plan and are also sites for recovery goals under the draft federal recovery plan for this species.

Southeastern Adirondack Foothills – The Palmertown and Luzerne ranges lie immediately west of the “Northway Corridor” towns such as Wilton and Queensbury, and in close proximity to the tourism centers of Saratoga and Lake George.

Mr. Bardunias gave a brief outline on the Chamber of Southern Saratoga County Community Development Program as follows:

Tec Smart Event – the audience was charged with finding a good Education/Business partnership effort and enthusiastically getting involved. The CSSC’s Community Development Program provides just those types of efforts.

Historic Lock 19 – The Prototype Model for the Community Development Program: Zero government investment, \$150,000 in kind services from CSSC members and sponsors. Ten month project, involving 80 students, major corporations including GE, Momentive and Turner, preserved and stabilized the Lock structure, built student designed bridge for access and maintenance equipment. There will be a dedication of the bridge on April 29, 2013.

Brookside Museum – ongoing meetings to plan restoration work in the “long” room, RPI students to assist with catalog of historic fixtures, Ballston Spa and Shen students to video, and interview newcomers to Tech Valley from around the world, for new exhibit.

Mechanicville Train Station – work in conjunction with City of Mechanicville and Mechanicville Chamber of Commerce to stabilize and restore the building, coordinate and volunteer effort.

Waterford and Charlton Meetings – meet to determine wants/needs of local business communities and develop an action plan for 2014.

Utilize CSSC resources – Chamber operated rest area information center at exit 9 can display information. County can promote historic Lock 19 right away since the project is completed. The CSSC will be present at the Saratoga County Fair to promote Brookside Museum.

County Investment – Twenty thousand dollars, as follows: Five thousand for construction materials to augment those donated by the business community, \$10,000 for administrative costs, \$5,000 for supplies, software, promotion, other items as needed.

A motion was made by Mr. Sausville, seconded by Mr. Richardson to authorize the Chairman to enter into an agreement with the Southern Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce to draft and implement a Community Development Plan to promote tourism and other economic benefits at a cost not to exceed \$20,000. No Budget Impact. Unanimous.

Mr. Lawler stated that the County has budgeted \$100,000 for unidentified Economic Development efforts, and the \$20,000 is budgeted and would be appropriated from that \$100,000 line item in the budget.

Mr. Lawler requested that Mr. Bardunias attend the Law and Finance Committee meeting scheduled for April 10th at 4:00 p.m. in order to be available to answer any questions that may arise.

Ms. Daly said it was brought to her attention, and has received national attention about Veterans coming home and looking for employment with tremendous experience in what they have done while in the service, but their job skills were not necessarily aligned with the skills needed by employers.

Mr. Moon said the Lucas group is a fortune 500 company that has a military section to it with a head hunter who takes resumes and translates the language into what a company might need. This is done by a military specific recruiter, focused at both the enlisted and officer level, with hiring conferences held every quarter. To make this work you have to detect what the needs are by putting together a survey to figure out what the demographics are of Veterans in Saratoga County which would include what kind of job skills they have; analyzing the data, and then figuring out what employers could use that job skill set.

Mr. Lawler said as far as identifying and surveying the business community, he suggested that it might be helpful to use the Chambers to conduct the survey.

Mr. Lawler asked for the committee's consideration to have a subcommittee appointed to include some members from the Veterans Committee and Economic Development Committee to work with Mr. Moon.

Mrs. Johnson said that the Veterans Committee wants to do whatever they can for Veteran's needs.

On a motion made by Mr. Richardson, seconded by Mr. Johnson the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sansom