

## Economic Development Committee Minutes

December 11, 2006 – 2:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Peck; Supervisors DeCerce, A. Johnson, Lawler, Sausville, Yepsen, Richardson and Wood; Dave Wickerham, County Administrator; Mark Rider, County Attorney; George Hodgson, Environmental Services; Shelby Schneider, SEDC; Jason Kemper, Planning; Blue Neils, Cornell Cooperative Extension; Anne Magnuson, League of Women Voters; Press.

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

**On a motion made by Mr. DeCerce, seconded by Mr. Sausville the minutes of the November 9, 2006 meeting were approved unanimously.**

Mr. Peck said there were bids taken in a couple of months ago for Forestry in the Town of Providence, which were lower than expected.

Mr. Hodgson said the bids were re-bid at the end of October with seven bids returned. The highest bid was from Dave Ambrosino Timber Harvesting in the amount of \$50,879. Forest Solutions, the county consultants, have reviewed the bids along with Mr. Hodgson.

Mr. Hodgson is requesting a resolution to award the sale of the timber on county owned land of a 120-acre area in the Town of Providence for a total of \$50,879.

**A motion was made by Mr. Decerce, seconded by Ms. Yepsen to approve a resolution to approve the sale of timber on a county owned parcel in the Town of Providence to Ambrosino Timber Harvesting in the amount of \$50,879. Unanimous.**

Mr. Hodgson distributed a letter he received from the Maple Avenue Fire Department to all committee members for their review. He said he was contacted by Mr. Woodcock, Highway Superintendent in the Town of Wilton, concerning the use of a 100' x 100' area on county forest land referred to as the "Jones Lot" for emergency helipad evacuation. The matter has been referred to the County Attorney, he said.

Mrs. Schneider distributed a rough draft of a proposed local law with regard to Momentive Performance Materials, Inc. They are requesting to be included in the Saratoga County Empire Zone as a regionally significant project, she said. They are the former GE Silicones, located in the Town of Waterford on 800 acres of land with over 60 buildings.

Mrs. Schneider said Momentive Performance Materials Inc., intends to create at least fifty new jobs in the next three years.

Mr. Peck said this local law would be to include them in the empire zone program.

Mrs. Schneider said once Momentive Performance Materials, Inc. becomes certified than nothing else there can be re-certified unless they qualify as a regionally significant project.

**A motion was made by Mr. Lawler, seconded by Mr. DeCerce to approve a resolution allowing Momentive Performance Materials, Inc. to apply for Saratoga County Empire Zone credit as a regionally significant project. Unanimous.**

Mr. Lawler said this is a perfect example of what the empire zone retention program is all about. Momentive Performance Materials, Inc. is one of the largest employers and taxpayers in Saratoga County. The addition of fifty new high paying manufacturing sector jobs is certainly a worthwhile investment.

Mr. Richardson said this is also very significant for the City of Mechanicville. Many of the residents of Mechanicville are employees at the former GE plant.

Mr. Lawler said this is economically good for the county from a tax perspective and long-term employment opportunities.

Mrs. Schneider said Momentive Performance Materials, Inc. will have to meet job creation thresholds. If they promise fifty jobs, they will have to make those jobs over the next five years. If they don't they will be de-certified.

Mrs. Schneider distributed a letter from SEDC announcing a Foreign Trade Zone Informational Breakfast to be held at the Holiday Inn in Saratoga Springs on Thursday, December 14, 2006 at 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. All supervisors are invited to attend.

Mrs. Schneider said the Capital District Regional Planning Commission has had the Foreign Trade Zone for quite a few years, with quite a few spot zones all around the capital district. They have recently contracted with a new administrator, Capital District Trade Strategies to discuss expanding the zoning in Saratoga County. Saratoga County has been approached as well as Rensselaer, Albany and Schenectady County, to create a one time Sub-zone expansion.

Mr. Peck said the savings would be on tariffs or duties into or out of the county.

Mrs. Schneider said Capital District Trade Strategies has contracted with the Capital District Regional Planning Commission to administer the Foreign Trade Zone Program for CDRPC (Capital District Regional Planning Commission). They would assist businesses in getting into the zone and then each business would have to apply for activation of their site.

Mrs. Schneider said it is an informational breakfast to provide information to manufacturers and different property owners.

Mr. Lawler asked who initiates the application to get into the zone and who approves it?

Mrs. Schneider said in this case SEDC is working with Capital District Trade Strategies to initiate the application. SEDC will be working with Capital District Trade Strategies to gather up prospects for an application. From there it will go to the Capital District Regional Planning Commission board, which will review and approve an application, and from there it would go to the federal government who would review and approve an application. Once those sites were approved in Saratoga County those sites would have Foreign Trade Zone status. Within that if a business wanted to begin the process of collecting the benefits then they would have to apply for activation.

Mr. Lawler asked if the county government has a role? Mrs. Schneider said SEDC is coming to the county government to solicit the county's participation and ideas for sites.

Mr. Peck said there isn't an active county roll, except, as a town supervisor you may have businesses that may or may not qualify for this federal program. If you do, then you need to get them to contact SEDC to work with CDRPC.

Mr. Wickerham said the original federal free trade zone was in Schenectady. CDRPC is looking to see if there are other viable spots. Saratoga County does have five members on the 20-person board, he said.

Mr. Lawler asked if CDRPC was a government body? Mr. Wickerham said yes. CRDPC is a planning board for the regional area. It is covered under state law as a regional planning board and was created by an agreement between the four counties.

Mr. Neils requested an amendment to the MS4 Stormwater grant. He said an amendment was filed to the original application for Stormwater grants for an additional \$96,000 in funding. The amendment would be from \$248,000 to \$344,000, which is now the lump sum total of state aid. The additional \$96,000 is pass through money that will be used for MS4 communities to adopt their local Stormwater Management Funds.

**A motion was made by Mr. DeCerce, seconded by Ms. Yepsen to approve a resolution to amend the MS4 Stormwater grant funding in the amount of \$96,000 amending the funds from \$248,000 to \$344,000. Unanimous.**

Mr. Peck thanked the committee for their support and for all partners that worked with the committee, i.e. SEDC and the planning department.

Mr. Peck said Saratoga County continues to thrive as a showcase of upstate New York as an economic driver.

Respectfully submitted,  
Chris Sansom