

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

December 8, 2009 – 4:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman Daly; Supervisors Jenkins, Veitch, Wright; Yepsen; Spencer Hellwig, Mgmt. Analyst; Jason Kemper, Planning; Dennis Brobston, Shelby Schneider, SEDC; Maria Trabka, Julie Stokes, Saratoga P.L.A.N.; LWV Rep.; Daily Gazette

Chairman Daly called the meeting to order.

Mr. Jenkins moved to approve the minutes of the October 13th meeting. Mr. Wright seconded. Unanimous.

Chairman Daly thanked everyone who made last month's presentation.

Chairman Daly stated back in October, Saratoga P.L.A.N. presented to the Planning Department the fruits of the efforts of Supervisors Wormuth and Richardson who obtained an easement from Norfolk Southern Railroad for the extension of the Zim Smith Trail. Mr. Kemper distributed copies of a map showing P.L.A.N.'s right of way options, and he briefly discussed them. He said right now, we end at Coon's Crossing, and we lack of couple of miles getting us into Mechanicville. Mrs. Stokes said the Railroad will not give them property unless they can demonstrate they can complete the right of way. Mr. Kemper said either way, if you go along the existing tracks, you have 5 to 6 landowners to deal with. He said we have to figure out if money is needed to reach out to the landowners, or should we explore this further. He stated he has been working with Greenman Pedersen, and a rough construction cost would be \$2.5 million from Coons Crossing to Elizabeth Street Ext. and \$450,000 for the engineering.

Mrs. Stokes said they were thrilled when Norfolk Southern agreed to give them the right of way, but this is something that Saratoga P.L.A.N. cannot take on by themselves. She requested that Mr. Kemper be allowed to work closely with them to reach out to property owners, and when they have the right of way, they will apply for grant money. She said this will make connection from the City of Mechanicville to LFTC and the City of Saratoga Springs. Ms. Trabka stated they have a potential source of funding to help with the land acquisition side of things.

Chairman Daly said we took what was offered to Saratoga P.L.A.N. and did the research. It is my recommendation, because we are in December, we take what has been done and send this on to next year's Economic Development Committee and ask them to place this high on their priority list, she said. She stated she is not comfortable to take a position to give more authority to Planning or anyone else. We have done what we can do at this point, she said. We know we are dealing with some landowners and a broad understanding of what the price tag will be, she said. This Committee, as well as the Board of Supervisors, has stood behind the trail system and put quite a bit of money in developing a trail system, she stated. Sending this on to the next year's Committee is the recommendation I would like to make for a top priority in 2010, she added. Mr. Veitch said he would like to thank Greenman Pedersen for their volume of time in this. He mentioned Fred Mastrianni is a wonderful guy committed to trail projects.

Chairman Daly said she underscores the value of obtaining the easement under this railroad. This is truly an asset, and hopefully, we can find a way of continuing to move it forward in 2010, she added.

Chairman Daly said SEDC is here to give the Committee a glimpse of what was presented at our presentation last month. Copies of this presentation, "Preparing for the Future in Saratoga County" were distributed to the Committee. Mr. Jenkins thanked SEDC for the great job they did preparing the program and presentation. He said he was impressed.

Mr. Brobston pointed out on the third page of this presentation, we need to educate, adapt, innovate and collaborate. This is a way we can grow, and this is just not a County participation piece, he said. You lived the Water project, so you know how it is, he said. He mentioned the State and County have been working hard on this project, and the Federal government is getting involved in the training end. He stated that Mike Relyea talked about State and Federal government roles, and SEDC talked about its County role and their role in implementing County initiatives. From the Green Infrastructure Plan to trails, we know what people want to see, he said. We are maximizing LFTC into the region, he said. We are the marketers, he added.

Mr. Brobston discussed the economic impact of Saxony. Mr. Brobston stated Luther Forest workers will be making an average of \$60,000, and training is important. He said they want to do municipality visits. There are

assets to the communities, and we want to get a good list of them, he said. We want to put together a map on the GIS system. We will go each Town Supervisor and/or Planning Chairman. We will work together to grasp information to put together a job market, he stated. There will be a memo going out from us to you, he said. This is an asset gathering that we have not done at this level, he stated. At the end, we will educate, adapt, innovate and collaborate, he added.

Mr. Jenkins said Saxony went from what we are now to a gain in population. How did they adjust, he asked. Mr. Brobston said they are very much a hamlet center. They have agriculture and pockets of housing. With the Audubon, they can get anywhere in 20 – 25 minutes. They live small without acres of land, he said. He mentioned Chairman Daly is working heavily with the workforce development piece.

Mr. Brobston stated in January, TechSmart will open next to LFTC. This process is something everybody gets a piece of. He stated they talked to Warren County a lot and have started a new relationship with Washington County. He said he meets quarterly with Albany, Rensselaer and Schenectady Counties' economic development people, and we share leads.

Chairman Daly distributed copies of an article from Spirit Magazine, that Supervisor Rowland obtained on a Southwest Airline flight, that focuses on Albany.

Chairman Daly said it is her recommendation to this Committee and the Board of Supervisors that quarterly meetings be established between the Committee, SEDC, and LFTC for a progress update; to come to the table on what is and what is not going well. She said she will put this recommendation in her year-end report.

Chairman Daly thanked everyone for serving this year. I valued everyone's input from day one, she said.

On a motion by Ms. Wright, seconded by Mr. Jenkins, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine M. Sodemann

