

Legislative and Research Committee Minutes

April 4, 2011 – 3:30 p.m.

Present: Chairman Veitch; Supervisors A. Johnson, Raymond, Rowland, Wormuth, Wright, Yepsen, Collyer, and Southworth; Spencer Hellwig, Administrator; Ryan Moore, Mgmt. Analyst.

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

On a motion made by Ms. Raymond, seconded by Mr. Wright the minutes of the March 7, 2011 meeting were approved unanimously.

Mr. Veitch said he received an email from Mr. Farber who is involved with the Adirondack Partnership, an organization of different groups interested in the Adirondacks along with economic development, and has coordinated efforts to move things along in some of the towns within the Adirondack Park. The Towns of Hadley, Edinburg and Day have joined the partnership, and he suggested that Saratoga County join the partnership as well.

Ms. Raymond said approximately three or four years ago the Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages in cooperation with the Adirondack Park Association applied for and received a grant of \$112,000. With that grant they hired the LA Group in Saratoga to do a very in-depth demographic report of the condition of the Adirondacks, called the APRAP (Adirondack Park Regional Assessment Project). This reports talks about the population of the towns, the population over time of the schools and how it has dropped, the demographic of the residents of the park and the fact that it is the second oldest population in the country. The report painted a rather bleak picture of the Adirondacks and where it had been thirty years ago and where it is going. Out of the APRAP report came a series of discussions at the time facilitated and lead by Mr. Farber who was Chairman of the Hamilton County Board, and Supervisor of the Town of Arietta. He had a series of discussions that started with the Department of State and moved on with some discussions with the DEC. The end result was that it became very obvious that the Adirondack Park Project needed to look at its economic future as a whole and come up with some strategies that were important and appropriate, and that would work within the confines of the blue line. At the same time the DEC created another round of smart growth funding, particularly geared toward collaborative efforts. They received a small grant from Adirondack Community Trust, which helped them look at a series of different collaborations. They picked a collaboration that began in Lake George as a model, refined it, and came up with a partnership. What they are doing now to help create membership in the partnership, which is free, is to have membership open to local government, towns, counties or villages, and not-for-profits. There have been discussions as to whether they will be members or affiliate members that bring in educational institutions. Right now in addition to local government they have four

IDA's, four Chambers, the ARISE group out of Tupper Lake and the CEG (Center for Economic Growth) out of Albany, and they are continuing to reach out. A week ago the partnership, on behalf of the collaboration, submitted a \$190,000 grant application to the Smart Growth Partnership done by the LA Group, and is hopeful and believes it will be a very successful application. They are now looking to bring in more groups so that whatever comes out of this will show that there is concern for the economic future of the Adirondacks, the communities and the park as a whole.

Mr. Veitch said from the county's perspective, we have several towns that are within the blue line. Mrs. Raymond said there are three towns that are totally in and three that are partially in. Mr. Veitch said it is good for a growing county like Saratoga County to support something like this to show that we are behind economic development even though it is in our county and beyond. There are three counties that are currently members, Warren, Hamilton and Essex, and the following counties are in the process of considering joining or are joining, Saratoga, Herkimer, Washington, Franklin, St. Lawrence and Fulton. Mr. Veitch said, a request was made to send a letter of support for the grant application. He requested a resolution to approve Saratoga County's joining of the partnership and submitting a letter of support for the grant application going forward. Mr. Veitch said the Adirondack's need some economic development help, and a coordinated effort will only benefit everyone in the end.

A motion was made by Mr. Rowland, seconded by Ms. Raymond to approve Saratoga County joining the Smart Growth Partnership and sending a letter of support for the grant application. Unanimous.

Mr. Veitch said the Mohawk Valley Heritage Corridor Commission was established in 1995 to facilitate and encourage historical tourism and recreation along the central portion of the Mohawk Valley from the western part of Saratoga County to Oneida County. Mr. Veitch said there is a representative on the commission, and a resolution came from Fulton County asking for the State to decommission the Mohawk Valley Heritage Corridor Commission.

Mr. Hellwig said the commission still has its official capacity as it was originally commissioned. In the attached letter, the Fulton County Board of Supervisors spells out all of the failings that have occurred over the recent history. Mr. Hellwig said he spoke with Mr. Stead from Fulton County asking if there was any other movement with other commissioners or other representatives on the Board. He said, no, Fulton County was the first, but he said this has been such an ineffective group for so long that it was felt that at this point it was time to do something about it.

Ms. Raymond suggested that the committee vote to decommission the Mohawk Valley Heritage Corridor Commission, and that the county resign from the commission officially.

A motion was made by Ms. Raymond, seconded by Mr. Wright to approve the decommission of the Mohawk Valley Heritage Corridor Commission and to submit

a letter to the commission stating that Saratoga County is officially resigning from the commission. Unanimous.

On a motion made by Mr. Rowland, seconded by Mr. Wright the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sansom