

**City of Norwich
Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
One Court Plaza**

**September 17, 2007
7:00pm**

Present: R. Mirabito, K. Zaia, J. Deierlein, B. Pedersen, S. Pelosi

Absent: J. Bazarnik, F. Goldby, Jr., H. Reediger, A. Testani, E. Bunce

Alternates*: * - Alternates that are noted in bold had voting power

Also: Mayor Maiurano, Ald. T. Bresina, Ald. R. Jeffrey, A. Donnison, T. Dreyer

I. Call to Order:

Chairman R. Mirabito called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

II. Approval of minutes:

J. Deierlein made the motion to approve the Planning Commission minutes of August 20, 2007. Seconded by K. Zaia. Ayes all. Carried.

III. Brownfield Opportunities Area Program:

Chairman R. Mirabito stated that there would be a presentation and discussion regarding the Brownfield Opportunities Program and turned the meeting over to Todd Dreyer. T. Dreyer stated that the program is designed with the goal of revitalizing Norwich in mind. T. Dreyer introduced Scott LaMountain of Shelter Planning who will be making the presentation and also noted that Shelter Planning is the organization the wrote the grant on our behalf for phase 1 as well as implementing same.

Scott LaMountain stated that the grant program is provided through New York State and the first step is to identify sites for potential redevelopment and to clearly define a manageable study area. Once a clear and realistic plan has been developed the next steps will be to get it off the paper. T. Dreyer distributed copies which showed the progression of each step and what is involved. We are

currently on step 1. S. LaMountain showed a powerpoint presentation indicating the areas identified to date.

Borden Avenue site – it was noted that there are city wells located in the vicinity. Mayor Maiurano stated that these wells were located well north of the area noted on the map. S. Pelosi suggested that there is likely a minimum setback for any type of development from a city water supply. This property is owned by Westcott out of Sherburne, T. Dreyer stated that he sent a notice of this evenings meeting to him and it was returned as undeliverable. Mayor Maiurano stated that the address used was incorrect.

DPW site – This property is owned and used by the Chenango County Highway Department. S. Pelosi asked if there any site limitations for developments? S. La Mountain noted that this would be dictated by the Zoning Ordinance and would vary by zone.

Lee Avenue – T. Dreyer noted that several residential properties in this area have had a vacuum system installed in their basements for the contamination in that area. S. LaMountain stated that he should be able to obtain information from the NYSDEC on this as well as other sites.

Mitchell Street – this site is largely in use and across the street is located CWS and is entirely currently in use. Making this site an unlikely development site.

State Street – as indicated on the map there is a large vacant lot located on both sides of the street. T. Dreyer noted that on the west side the lot is now larger than the map indicates because the old shoe factory facility was demolished a few years ago but due to the age of the aerial photographs it shows the structure as still intact.

East Main Street School – this building is on a main corridor as well as being close to downtown making it an important parcel.

Midland Drive – there is a large parcel that appears to be used as a parking lot at this time. T. Dreyer stated that the city owns a small sliver of that which looks like one parcel on the west side of the lot. The large portion of the lot is owned by CWS.

NYSEG – which is located at the south end of the P & C Plaza may be a good location to extend retail stored to since there is already a shopping plaza within feet.

Hosbach Trail area – this area has already been targeted to be used for trails.

Railroads – these have not been identified on the maps.

Chairman R. Mirabito inquired if this program was strictly targeting contaminated sites or other under utilized sites as well. S. LaMountain stated that it is to target any potential site. S. Pelosi noted that is was mostly a plan for revitalization. A member of the audience asked what the maximum amount of funds are that are available for this project. S. LaMountain stated the funds are for the planning of this step only, not development. Once the next step is complete then you are able to pursue funding such as private funding, banks, etc. Limited grant opportunities are available since most of these sites are privately held. Ald. Jeffrey noted that were are coming to the end of the baby boom age and many closing in on retirement and those people are looking for a safe and secure location to retire to.

The State Street location may be a good location for a senior home as it is close to the YMCA and downtown shopping. J. Lawrence suggested the former Board of Education building be added to list. T. Dreyer stated that this program is only for parcels located on the east side of Route 12 as was indicated in the grant application. J. Lawrence then suggested the unguentine building and a residential parcel on Prentice Street be added then. The Prentice street parcel was severely damaged by flooding.

A member of the audience inquired if any of these parcels were viable for any type of agriculture, even renewable energy. It was suggested that a facility could be listed as a learning center while actually producing something of an energy nature at the same time. S. LaMountain does not believe there are any agriculture areas in the city. B. Pederson noted that in order to bring business back to Norwich the community must be appealing and a niche market is needed because she didn't feel any other larger stores would come to this area to compete with Wal-Mart. Mayor Maiurano noted that the Hoscach Trail area is in a flood plain and asked if the uses looked at for that area would be suitable for a flood plain. S. LaMountain stated that yes, flood factors would indeed be considered.

A member of the audience asked if he could give a summary or recap of how he perceives this program. We are making plans so we can go and ask for more money to go and make more plans. S. LaMountain stated yes and that this program was started in 2004. T. Dreyer noted that this is a part of a 3 step process. S. LaMountain does not want to see sites picked randomly, there should be a theme or a plan that ties or strings as many of the parcels together as is possible. Ald. Jeffrey stated that the intent of this program is to identify and suggest to property owners of identified sites of their potential, it would be for private development and perhaps the city may be able to assist in some ways.

A member of the audience inquired if there was a timeline for completion of this project set. S. LaMountain stated that date is unknown as there are multiple factors which will dictate the end and it could be several years.

A member of the audience inquired if the owners of the identified properties on the presented map have been contacted with a deadline indicating that if they are interested in being included on this list they must notify the city by X date. Even if they are not interested and are content with how their property is being utilized to also notify the city by X date. How much energy should be expended to analyze private property if the owner is perfectly happy with the way their property is being used. S. LaMountain noted that will be the case in many parcels and that is fine but we can make them aware of the property potential if they have any interest. A deadline should be set for a property owner to express interest or not. S. LaMountain agreed and thought that this could be accomplished at the next meeting which is expected to be held in about a month.

T. Dreyer noted that notices of this program and meeting were placed in the Evening Sun as well as being on the radio. Mayor Maiurano stated that this info would also be on our website which should be up in about a month. It was also

noted that the fairgrounds and school lots were not included on the list of potential properties since there is no anticipated change of use for these lots. It was asked if a list of all the properties discussed this evening could be created showing all their peculiarities. S. LaMountain stated the hopefully by the next meeting such a list could be created.

B. Pedersen stated that she also is an advocate of people with disabilities and hops that whatever plans are made they include the disabled in the design and use. S. LaMountain stated that he believes any new construction must be ADA compliant.

V. Adjournment:

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:11 pm on a motion by S. Pelosi, seconded by J. Deierlein . Ayes all. Carried.