

ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING, PLANNING & TRANSIT COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES - April 23, 2008
MEETING HELD AT: UCAT – One Danny Circle, Kingston, NY

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PRESENT: Hector Rodriguez – Chair
Joseph P. Roberti, Jr. – Deputy Chair
Gary Bischoff
Wayne Harris
Cathy Terrizzi
Peter Loughran

ABSENT OR EXCUSED: Mary Sheeley

OTHERS ATTENDING: Dennis Doyle, Director, UC Planning
Cynthia Ruiz, Director, UCAT
Patrick Sheehan, UCDC
Lance Matteson, UCDC

Chairman Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 6:02pm and asked for a motion to approve the March minutes.

Motion was made by Legislator Roberti, seconded by Legislator Harris. All were in favor.

Chairman Rodriguez directs Cynthia Ruiz, UCAT Director, to take the floor with her departmental reports:

Cynthia Ruiz – UC Area Transit

- Announces promotions of Jane Carroll to Grants & Procurement Specialist and Jennifer Buton to Administrative Assistant within UCAT.
- Request for Special Services:
 - Southern Ulster Public Safety Assoc in conjunction with Kerhonkson Fire Co. to host the 2008 HV Volunteer Firemen’s Assoc. Prevention Parade
 - Hurley Reformed Church for Hurley Stone House Day

Chairman Rodriguez states that without any objection from the committee, both requests will be approved.

- Conference attendance approval for Sandy Closi, who is a 19A examiner to attend a 19A Refresher course in Albany on May 6, 2008 to comply with DOT regulations. This course will be fully reimbursed by RTAP.
- Request to Fill a vacant position re: Dawn Smith who was hired for the Metro North bus run but put her resignation in on 4/23/08 after one week of employment and training. She accepted another job elsewhere.
- Request to Fill re: William Patchin. He is currently a bus driver but applied for a bus driver/dispatcher position that we had available. Therefore, we need to fill his bus driver position to maintain our schedule.
- Conference attendance approval for Jane Carroll and Cynthia Ruiz re: FTA Grantee & Training Conference on May 28, 2008 in NYC which will be generously reimbursed by RTAP. This is a requirement by FTA because it is in conjunction with the Triannual Review which is on June 2, 2008.

Other UCAT Updates:

- Time testing the routes for Ulster Poughkeepsie service. Metro North is going to pay to have two cutaway buses painted because they are not the right colors and the logos need to be put on.
- Gravity feed tank for the fuel station due to the inflated costs of fuel, it is cheaper to purchase fuel in bulk. Because project is under \$40,000, we can hire same contractors to install gravity fed tank as the fuel facility. Architect & engineer are working on cost estimate. Money is currently in federal funds and will cover 90% of costs. The property at UCAT extends past the parking lot and a tank can be placed by the storage building.

Chairman Rodriguez and Legislator Loughran asked about a completion date on this project. Cynthia Ruiz stated that when all is said and done, we plan on filling the gravity fed tank as of January 2, 2009.

Dennis Doyle stated to Cynthia that the Technical Committee meeting in June will have this on the table for approval.

Chairman Rodriguez stated to Cynthia that she can bring a resolution for the gravity fed tank to the committee next month as a Capital Project. *There was no objection from the committee regarding this statement*

Legislator Loughran asked Cynthia about the GPS System. She stated that it is a project that is already in the budget and in the works. It's a routing system and scheduling system software that we can purchase on a piggy back contract with another county agency that is willing to follow the FTA rules as UCAT does.

Chairman Rodriguez states to the committee that there will be two resolutions regarding the gravity fed tank and GPS system from Cynthia at next month's meeting.

Legislator Bischoff handed "Discover Saugerties" brochures done by the Saugerties Economical Development Committee. All were impressed with their work.

Lance Matteson – Ulster County Development Corporation

- Saugerties EDC will be implementing their Shovel Ready Program and their goal is to get it done this year.

Chairman Rodriguez asked Lance where Saugerties EDC were at with the GEIS. He is not sure what stage it is in but he will be having Patrick Sheehan's help in getting those findings.

- Introduced Patrick Sheehan as his Business Development Director. He will be working on the staff support for the Business Development Committee of UCDC in regards to the Shovel Ready Program sites in Ulster County.
- Patrick Sheehan gives a background on himself to the committee both personally and professionally.
- Lance states that they have hired 2 more people as of May 1, 2008 because they have been running the office on 3 employees. He gives names of these new people, their professional backgrounds and how they can help at UCDC.
- Briefed committee on the IDA business. They had their first meeting with the new board members which went well. There are some contracts being drafted up with Bea Havranek and her staff at the County Attorney's office.
- The IDA had approved \$125,000 to keep them afloat and would increase up to \$125,000 if they raised money from other counties.

- Grants strategic update will be a next meeting
- Lance & Patrick will be attending a conference in Cooperstown, NY regarding coordination with IDA's
- Lance will be attending a conference in San Diego, CA regarding solar energy planning.

Update on the Gillette Creamery:

UCDC is hopeful that they will be able to keep this in the Ellenville/Warwarsing community through grants. There is a trucking study that is going on that will help Gillette Creamery make their decision. This will also document the off set cost of being close to the Thruway as opposed to Ellenville. This study will have the help of HVADC (Hudson Vly Agricultural Development Committee). There will be more updates on this to come as it gets closer to fruition.

Lance questioned if there is good support in the state budget for solar energy.

Chairman Rodriguez said yes, then asked about the old money/new money issue.

Lance said there is 5 million old money and 1.5 million new. The new money needs to be worked out but will be more flexible than the 5 million.

- Lance would like for Economic Development to be "Upstate" because under the Empire State Development Corporation, under Gov. Spitzer, they were not. There is a reassessment of that going on and they want to weigh in on it.

Chairman Rodriguez agreed because there are significant advantages.

Legislator Bischoff asked if this would have more clout if there was a resolution rather than a letter from the Chairman.

Lance thought it was a good idea except for the fact that it could be time critical because there are conversation going on now with the EDC and the Governor's staff.

Upon Lance's suggestion and Chairman Rodriguez's approval, a draft resolution requesting the Governor and the Empire State Economic Development Corporation consider Ulster County in its upstate region as opposed to its downstate region is created during this meeting.

- Moved by Legislator Harris, seconded by Legislator Terrizi. All were in favor

Dennis Doyle – Planning Dept

1st Resolution: Setting a Public Hearing for June 4, 2008 regarding the Agricultural Markets Law

- Moved by Legislator Roberti, seconded by Legislator Loughran. All were in favor

2nd Resolution: Authorizing the UC Chairman to form an Open Space Partnership as Implementation of Strategic Recommendation #1 of the UC Adopted OS Plan & Providing for the Legislature to confirm the Appointments of Members.

- **Legislator Bischoff** spoke of a concern that was raised in regards to committees being formed by the Chairman without knowledge to the Legislature as well as a suggestion being made that it either be done by the Chairman with Legislative approval or by the Legislature.
- **Chairman Rodriguez** expressed that one of his fears is that he doesn't want this to become a politicized board with Legislative approval. He does want to support this resolution but he is fearful on some of its outcomes.
- **Legislator Bischoff** stated to Chairman Rodriguez that it can be changed and crafted into something he would be satisfied with.

- **Chairman Rodriguez** asked Dennis if there was a sense of how many people would need to be appointed. Dennis responded that there is a list of representative groups that should be appointed but not a definite number.
- **Chairman Rodriguez** stated that considering Dennis and Amanda are the two co-chairs, he feels comfortable supporting this but wants it known and understood why he has a fear of a small group having control over an important area concerning the County.
- Moved by Legislator Roberti, seconded by Legislator Loughran. All were in favor

Information Items:

- ✓ UC Housing Strategy Study: Public Information meetings were held in Ellenville, New Paltz, Marlboro & Saugerties as part of adopting this study as an element of the County's Comprehensive Plan. This was not a great turnout but there will be a public hearing on May 7, 2008. Dennis comments on affordable housing and the impact on residents.
- ✓ Portions of the study are being implemented and they met as a Public Info Campaign Committee. There will be a sponsorship kit for the campaign which was already authorized by the Legislature. There is work to be done with the other two Counties on the Fair Share Housing Provisions.
- ✓ 2007 Rental Housing Survey: There were nearly 150 managers or owners of non-subsidized rental units surveyed. They represent about 2,300 units. The average vacancy rates have gone up slightly but not significantly. The average cost of studio rental has gone up 2.4%, 3 BR up 3.1% in the past year. There is softness for the non-subsidized market, not the subsidized.
- ✓ Town of Ulster has voted to join the Greenway.
- ✓ Main Street grants – RUPCO has submitted applications for Milton & Port Ewen. They also reached out to Rosendale, Gardiner, Stone Ridge, Highland & Wallkill. Transportation work is being done in Milton and Marlboro.
- ✓ Patterns for Progress has submitted a request to the County Planning Board to fund \$10,000 of their efforts within the region in this year. There is little support from Dennis' board so Patterns for Progress suggested two conferences. One on shared cost initiatives and one on the housing conference.
- ✓ Looking into a couple of sites in City of Kingston for the relocation of the Inter-Modal Center.
- ✓ Park & Ride Lots – It's being pressed to have them developed and expanded in Ulster County. In the past, municipalities were relied on but as of now the park & rides are being operated at over 100% in capacity. The County may be asked to take on some responsibility in regards to contractual & rental operations.
 - Cynthia Ruiz commented on the need for improvements ie: lighting & landscaping at the Town of Ulster Park & Ride. Nick Werner never submitted a survey back to the NYS DOT so that these improvements can be made. NYS DOT will fund these improvements for the Town of Ulster. Legislator Loughran told Cynthia to get the information to him and he will see Nick Werner personally. Chairman Rodriguez suggested to Legislator Loughran that when he speaks to Nick, to offer to have Dorothy transmit the information to NYS DOT.
- ✓ Dennis believes a Planner has been hired regarding the Planning position as of 4/22/08.

Kathy Nolan – Representative of Catskill LIVE!

Catskill Railroad is in the process of putting together an application for a Transportation Enhancement Project. There is a parallel effort going on with the development of the Rail Width Trail. UC Planning did a feasible study which approved the placement of a hiking, biking trail along the railway corridor. She formed Catskills Live as a non-profit way of getting a Railway Corridor Committee together to promote healthy activities in the Catskills. This would not only be an advantage to Tourism, Economic Development but to Housing in the sense that if people could find an alternative route to work and/or school with the rising energy costs. Catskill Railroads proposal is for Sections 5 & 6 of Ulster County but didn't include any pedestrian or bicycle aspect to their bridge plans. She would like to see the Legislature decide which committee would be appropriate in recommending the creation of the Railway Corridor Committee to include Catskills LIVE or some other appropriate group.

Chairman Rodriguez asked Legislator Loughran if Catskill Railroad came to the Public Work committee meeting and he confirmed that they did. They need \$5 million to complete project which would separate into \$3 million for bridge and \$2 million for tracks. They are putting together an application for the \$2 million because they need funding. Legislator Loughran and Mike Berardi will be going to Congressman Hinchey's office to see if they can secure funds to make up the difference for the 20%.

Chairman Rodriguez asked Dennis to follow with the DEP. Chairman Rodriguez and Legislator Loughran will follow up with the Catskill Railroad in regards to their application that has to include some sort of paved surfaced to allow either pedestrian and/or bicycle use in the County's non-motorized plan. There will also be a follow up with Deitrich and Michael Berardi since they are on the Railroad Advisory Board.

Meeting adjourned 7:58pm

Moved by Legislator Berardi, seconded by Legislator Loughran. All were in favor.