

**MINUTES OF THE ULSTER COUNTY
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
December 4, 2007**

PRESENT: Brian Shapiro, William McAfee, Richard Parete, Hector Rodriguez, Leonard Distel

ABSENT: Tracey Bartels, Dean Fabiano

Also present: Dennis Doyle, Jennifer Schwartz, County Planning; Miriam Strouse; Ann Brandt, Woodstock; Dr. David Strause; Hank Bardock; Laura Petit, Secretary

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 5:30PM by Chairman Shapiro.

Hydromulcher Discussion

The Committee discussed the hydromulcher purchase and contract with Lower Esopus River Watch. The contract will expire December 31, 2007.

Resolution 424 – Authorization to Adopt the Open Space Plan for Ulster County

Doyle gave an update of the Open Space Plan (Resolution No. 424) and the need to adopt it. He said the Plan could be updated as needed and as part of the “cycle updates”.

MOTION was made to approve Resolution 424 by Hector Rodriguez and seconded by Leonard Distel. All present in favor.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Doyle said that in order for a Comprehensive Plan to be adopted, it would have to go to the public as a draft. He said the staff’s recommendation is to endorse the Plan. He urged the Environmental Committee to immediately take action to appoint representatives to create partnerships. Dr. Strause felt that a partnership should be started as soon as possible but they must be careful in determining that the stakeholders were interested. He also warned that the Committees shouldn’t be too big.

Doyle wanted to thank the Legislature in taking part in this development task. He said that the Plan was one to be proud of. Dr. Strause reminded the Committee that the Plan wouldn’t work unless it was funded. He offered to keep offsetting the costs by polling, etc.

Parete said he was okay with the resolution but thought that it was supposed to go back to the Legislature after public comment.

MOTION to approve Resolution No. 425 Requesting an Extension of Public Comment for Wild Acres Resort and Highmount was made by Hector Rodriguez and seconded by William McAfee.

Shapiro brought the issue of the DEC scoping session to the attention of the Committee. He said that public comment time would run out in December. He had drafted a resolution asking that the DEC extend the public comment period.

Doyle remarked that there is a need to work forward from the scoping to decision making. The Governor's Representative spoke at a recent community breakfast event, and was asked if the Governor's office would replicate what went on at Bellaire for other projects. They were looking at creating a SEQRA "Swat Team" so that projects are moved forward and deadlines for resolutions and budgets are met. He said that the State has been making more mandates as far as action.

OTHER BUSINESS

Parete said he met with Bruce Duffy and Roger Walters for stabilization of the creek. They said that FEMA was creating plans to remediate and Duffy didn't feel that the architect currently being used by Soil and Water had stream experience. Parete was concerned about the next FEMA funding and felt DEP and other Agencies should be aware of what is going on.

Shapiro said it is important the towns be proactive but they weren't given any public notice. Parete said the work didn't seem like it was spec'd right and if more FEMA funding was needed, they might not give it to Ulster County.

Doyle said he had attended a Pattern for Progress dinner where he learned the Port Authority had invested substantial amounts of money into Stewart Airport so it would become part of a "carbon Neutral" project, and a test bed for future expansion of the next generation of airports. He said it was part of the Smart Growth plan. He felt Smart Growth is the way to go, and hoped the Governor would consider including Marlboro, Shawangunk, and Plattekill in the planning communities since they weren't far from Orange County. Shapiro asked if anyone could help. He said that someone should talk to Congressman Hinchey and he would appreciate the Congressman being reminded of Ulster County.

ADJOURN

MOTION to adjourn the December 4, 2007 Environmental Committee meeting was made by Hector Rodriguez and seconded by William McAfee.

ADJOURNED 6:50pm

Submitted by Laura Petit, Secretary