

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
WESTCHESTER COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
Webex Online Video Conference
Tuesday, February 2, 2021

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT BY VIDEO CONFERENCE:

Richard Hyman, Chair (Village)
Bernie Thombs (Town)
Dwight Douglas (City)
Holly Hasbrouck (Town)
James Arndt (City)
Renee Toback (City)
Robert Baron (Village)
Kathleen O'Connor, Commissioner, Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation
Gayle Katzman for Hugh Greechan, Department of Public Works & Transportation
Nat Federici for Vincent Kopicki, Department of Environmental Facilities

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Daniel Finger (Town)
Ximena Francella (City)

STAFF PRESENT BY VIDEO CONFERENCE:

Norma Drummond, Commissioner
Anthony Zaino, Assistant Commissioner
David Kvinge, Director of Environmental Planning
Naomi Klein, Director of Transportation Planning
William Brady, Chief Planner
Margaret Egiziaco, Housing Program Administrator
Lukas Herbert, Associate Planner
Ted Leimbach, Associate Planner
Michael Vernon, Planner

VISITORS PRESENT BY VIDEO CONFERENCE:

Ken Jenkins, Deputy County Executive
Damon Maher, County Legislator, District 10
Gregory Casciato, County Board of Legislators
Lisa Hochman, County Board of Legislators
Peter Tartaglia, Westchester County Department of Parks, Recreation, and Conservation
Robert Abbamont, Westchester County Department of Public Works and Transportation
Anthony Scordino, Westchester Community College
Robert Cirillo, Westchester Community College
Marjorie Hsu, Village of Sleepy Hollow

I. Call to Order

Richard Hyman, Chair, called the meeting of the Planning Board to order at 8:34 a.m.

MINUTES
Westchester County Planning Board Meeting
February 2, 2021
Page 2

II. Meeting Dates

Mr. Hyman stated that the next meetings of the County Planning Board are scheduled for Tuesday, March 2; Tuesday, April 6; and Tuesday, May 4, 2021, all at 8:30 a.m.

III. Adoption of Minutes

Mr. Hyman asked if there were any edits or comments to the draft minutes of the Board meeting of January 5, 2021. There being no edits recommended, a motion to approve the minutes of the January 5, 2020 meeting of the Planning Board was made by Mr. Baron, seconded by Ms. O'Connor, and approved unanimously by the Board.

IV. Chairman's Remarks

Mr. Hyman stated his displeasure that Con Edison has not responded to the Board's comments regarding the proposed tree trimming along the Sprain Brook Parkway in Mount Pleasant, and the utility's general tree trimming practices across Westchester.

V. Commissioner's Remarks

Ms. Drummond stated that the Federal Housing Monitor filed his report with the court last week regarding the Housing Settlement, finding the County in Substantial Compliance with the housing requirements. She stated that comments regarding the report will be accepted by the court until February 10. She stated that 723 fair and affordable housing units have been completed, with over 100 additional units currently under construction.

Ms. Drummond stated that \$22.7 million in federal stimulus money has been granted to the County to assist in eviction prevention of households impacted by COVID-19. She stressed that all of the money must be spent by December 31, 2021. An RFP has been issued to get some nonprofit agencies on board to assist in qualifying households for the funding.

Ms. Drummond requested Ms. Katzman update the Board on the status of the capital project for renovations to Memorial Field in Mount Vernon. Ms. Katzman stated that construction is ongoing; Demolition and excavation are completed. Foundation pile driving is the next stage of the project. Mr. Hyman asked for the projected project completion date. Ms. Katzman stated October 2021.

VI. Referrals

A. Ratification of actions taken by staff in response to planning and zoning actions referred to the County Planning Board January 1, 2021 through January 15, 2021

Ms. Hasbrouck said that townhouses within the Eagle Ridge development, NOC-21-001, should include affordable AFFH units, and that AFFH units should not be congregated solely within the condominium building.

MINUTES
Westchester County Planning Board Meeting
February 2, 2021
Page 3

Mr. Hyman noted that the Port Chester zoning code amendment, reviewed in PCH 21-001, was intended to restrict the width of new buildings to avoid massive new developments like the big box development at the waterfront. The original law to restrict maximum lot width was eliminated by the Village Board. Concerned citizens recommended a maximum building width of 150 feet. The Village Board proposed a limit of 325 feet, which Mr. Hyman believes is too wide which places downtown Port Chester at risk as new proposed projects could result in the demolition of many older historic buildings in the Village center.

A motion to adopt the referrals report was made by Mr. Baron, seconded by Mr. Arndt, and unanimously approved by the Board.

VII. Matters for Planning Board Action

A. Adoption of the Planning Board Report on the 2021/2022 Westchester Community College Capital Budget

Mr. Brady introduced Mr. Scordino and Mr. Cirillo from Westchester Community College. Mr. Scordino presented a briefing from the WCC President regarding the College's COVID requirements and prevention initiatives, as well as enrollment statistics from the past year. He stated that the proposed capital projects focus on the Valhalla Campus, but that the satellite campuses are to receive resources to help further facilitate remote learning capabilities. Ms. O'Connor asked if the college is conducting COVID vaccinations for its students and staff. Mr. Scordino stated that preparations are underway to facilitate vaccinations at the College. Mr. Jenkins clarified that the College, while being prepared to administer vaccinations on site, is a potential site for vaccination. He stated that preparation is the first step, and does not oblige future distribution.

Mr. Brady presented the College's six proposed capital projects for 2021/2022 with a total request of \$3 million in funding. Approximately half of the funding will be funded by the State. Projects at the Valhalla campus include roof replacements at various buildings, site upgrades to pathways and parking lots, infrastructure upgrades for various buildings, technology upgrades, and funds for planning studies for future capital projects. Technology upgrades are proposed for off-campus sites. Mr. Thombs asked if solar panels are included. Mr. Cirillo responded, saying that the campus plan includes solar power, and that a new parking lot with solar panels is currently being constructed. Mr. Baron stated that a Transit Demand Management Plan should be created for Westchester Community College.

A motion to approve the resolution adopting Planning Board Report was made by Mr. Douglas, seconded by Mr. Thombs, and unanimously approved by the Board.

B. Amendment of FY 2019-2023 Consolidated Plan, FY 2021 Action Plan

Mr. Zaino presented the Amendment to the FY 2019-2023 Consolidated Plan for the Westchester Urban County Consortium for the 2021 Action Plan for the county's HUD community development program and affordable housing grants, stating that the comment period ends February 11. The 2021 Action Plan determines activities and projects that receive HUD-granted funding through the year.

MINUTES
Westchester County Planning Board Meeting
February 2, 2021
Page 4

The FY 2021 HUD grants are not yet known, but are expected to be approximately \$1 million to the HOME Investment Partnership Program, \$325,000 to the Emergency Solutions Grant, and \$4 million to the Community Development Block Grant. He stated that Peekskill, New Castle, and Tuckahoe have all joined the Westchester County Consortium for FY 2021, bringing the total Consortium communities to 30. Mr. Hyman asked if ESG funding goes to non-profits or directly to individuals. Mr. Zaino said that the ESG grant goes to non-profits, and the County works with the eviction prevention program to coordinate funding. Ms. Drummond added that the eviction prevention fund is countywide, while ESG funding is only applicable to Consortium communities.

Mr. Zaino continued, stating that the HUD grant money is focused on communities with the highest rates of low-income residents in the consortium. Four new projects were added to the 2021 plan: phase one and two of the Hollowbrook Dam improvement in Peekskill, playground upgrades in Tuckahoe, and upgrades to Columbus Park in Port Chester. Mr. Zaino concluded stating that the 2021 fiscal year starts May 1, and that the application deadline for the FY 2022-2024 CDBG applications is June 26.

A motion to approve the resolution adopting the amendment was made by Ms. Hasbrouck, seconded by Mr. Douglas, and unanimously approved by the Board.

C. Draft Supplemental Planning Board Report of the 2021 Capital Projects Requests

Mr. Brady presented twelve projects that the County Board of Legislators added to the 2021 Capital Projects Requests, totaling an addition of approximately \$32 million. Projects specific to the Planning Department include \$2 million to the Housing Implementation Fund for broadband infrastructure, \$200,000 for the Sprain Brook Channel Access in Yonkers, and \$250,000 for the Bronx River Hydrology Study. The Parkland and Historical Preservation Program is also receiving \$10 million for a new park in Ludlow Park adjacent to the Yonkers Wastewater Treatment Plant, \$5 million for the Riverwalk in Yonkers, and \$2 million for the 4th Street Playground in Mount Vernon.

Mr. Brady also described other additions to the budget, including funding for criminal discovery systems, a traffic noise detection pilot program, traffic safety enhancements on Farragut Avenue in Hastings, and five new Parks Department projects.

During the presentation, various Board members stated their concern that not enough detail was presented for the Board on a few projects to make a decision to send a recommendation of support. Mr. Hyman stated he believed that the Board should hold their recommendations until more details are provided. Ms. Drummond stated that the Planning Board is meant to provide recommendations to the Board of Legislators regarding general Planning concerns for these projects. Mr. Jenkins stated that the projects have already been approved by the BOL, and that comments are being requested from the Planning Board. He said that more information will be provided, but funding allocations were approved to begin the budget process. County Legislator Maher stated that the Planning Board's comments are much appreciated and considered by the BOL.

Mr. Baron asked that the report highlight the Planning Board's July report in which we proposed putting a path around the river side of the Yonkers treatment plant. In addition, he requested that any

MINUTES
Westchester County Planning Board Meeting
February 2, 2021
Page 5

future sections of Riverwalk have adequate width for cyclists and pedestrians. The V.E. Macy Park study should include bicycle infrastructure within the park and along Route 9A. He also recommended that access from the route of the Old Croton Aqueduct be improved at Tibbetts Brook Park with better signage and wayfinding.. He also requested bicycle safety initiatives be added to the Farragut Avenue project.

A motion to approve the resolution adopting the draft report including the stated comments was made by Ms. O'Connor, seconded by Ms. Hasbrouck, and unanimously approved by the Board.

IX. Adjournment

On a motion made by Mr. Baron, which was seconded by Ms. O'Connor and unanimously approved by the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:51 a.m.