

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
WESTCHESTER COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
Webex Online Video Conference
Tuesday, February 1, 2022

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT BY VIDEO CONFERENCE:

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

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

James Arndt (City)

STAFF PRESENT BY VIDEO CONFERENCE:

Norma Drummond, Commissioner
David Kvinge, Assistant Commissioner
Kelly Sheehan, Assistant Commissioner
Naomi Klein, Director of Transportation Planning
Bill Brady, Chief Planner
Lukas Herbert, Associate Planner
Michael Lipkin, Associate Planner
Pamela Tarlow, Program Administrator, Housing and Community Development
Ted Leimbach, Associate Planner
Michael Vernon, Planner

VISITORS PRESENT BY VIDEO CONFERENCE:

Aviva Meyer, Office of the County Executive
Blanca Lopez, Office of the County Executive
Gregory Casciato, County Board of Legislators
Lisa Hochman, County Board of Legislators
Nat Federici, Department of Environmental Facilities
Vanessa Morest, Westchester Community College
Anthony Scordino, Westchester Community College
Brian Murphy, Westchester Community College
Robert Cirillo, Westchester Community College

I. Call to Order

Richard Hyman, Chair, called the meeting of the Planning Board to order at 9:00 a.m.

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II. Meeting Dates

Mr. Hyman stated that the next meetings of the County Planning Board are scheduled for Tuesday, March 1, Tuesday, April 5, and Tuesday, May 3, 2022. He asked how long virtual meetings will be permitted. Ms. Drummond responded that the NYS Executive Order on the State of Emergency regarding online public meetings has been extended a few months until the State of Emergency ends.

III. Adoption of Minutes

Mr. Hyman asked if there were any edits or comments to the minutes of the Board meeting of January 4, 2022. He then noted an edit to remove references to Con Edison's street tree replacement policy as being "new." A motion to approve the amended minutes of the January 4, 2022 meeting of the Planning Board was made by Ms. Toback, seconded by Mr. Finger, and approved unanimously by the Board, with Mr. Douglas abstaining.

IV. Chairman's Remarks

Mr. Hyman stated that he would appreciate Con Edison to attend a Board meeting to discuss their tree trimming practices. He then congratulated Mr. Douglas for the continuation of his tenure as Vice Chair.

V. Commissioner's Remarks

Ms. Drummond informed the Board that the eviction moratorium has expired. She stated that the State's emergency rental assistance program is still accepting applicants, but that funding for the program is currently depleted. She stated that persons who file for the grant create a legal record which provides some protection from eviction. She also stated that the County's Emergency Solutions grant is a local program that could help limit some evictions. Mr. Hyman asked when eligibility for the grant is determined. Ms. Drummond responded that funding eligibility begins when a household is within 21 days of eviction.

She then introduced Kelly Sheehan, a new Assistant Commissioner in the Planning Department. She stated that a new Deputy Commissioner and a new Rehabilitation Specialist will be introduced at the next Board meeting. She also reminded the Board that Mr. Zaino will be retiring in March.

VI. Referrals

- A. Ratification of actions taken by staff in response to planning and zoning actions referred to the County Planning Board January 1, 2022 through January 15, 2022

Mr. Hyman asked if there were any comments regarding the Referrals report. He stated his displeasure with the resident shuttle removal proposal in GRB 22-001. Ms. Toback agreed, and added that shuttle removal proposals have been a perpetual problem. Mr. Herbert stated that he met with the Town and the applicant, and a solution is being developed and the application will be re-referred,

possibly with a proposal similar to that implemented in Ossining, where residents are able to receive rideshare discounts from the development company.

A motion to adopt the Referrals report was made by Mr. Finger, seconded by Ms. Toback, and unanimously approved by the Board.

VII. Matters for Board Action

A. Adoption of the Planning Board Report on the 2022/2023 Westchester Community College Capital Budget

Mr. Scordino delivered a message from WCC President Belinda Miles highlighting the status of the College and goals for the future. Mr. Brady then presented six Capital projects requested for 2022/23.

The first project, CC104 Campus Infrastructure, would install a gas line along Knollwood Road to provide natural gas to buildings located along Knollwood Gate Access Road. Mr. Hyman asked if those buildings were currently connected to gas. Mr. Cirillo responded no, and that they currently use oil heating. Mr. Hyman then asked if the Con Edison moratorium would affect the project. Mr. Cirillo stated that the college is attempting to navigate the moratorium, as the oil capabilities would not be removed so the buildings would be dual fuel as required by Con Edison. Mr. Baron asked if electric heating or geothermal capabilities could be installed instead. Mr. Cirillo responded that the buildings are very large and electric heating would be expensive, but they are considering electric opportunities. Ms. Toback agrees that alternative energy solutions would be preferable, including constructing solar canopies over the parking lots. Ms. Cirillo stated that the College will consider green energy sources in the future. Mr. Hyman asked if a report could be presented to the Board after the College conducts this green energy study.

Mr. Brady continued his presentation with CC105 Off-Campus Technology Upgrades, and CC106 On-Campus Technology Upgrades. Mr. Scordino stated that the College has asked the State to contribute funding for half of the project, which is commonly granted but this year has been delayed. Mr. Hyman asked if the state's possible contribution should be reflected in the bond report. Mr. Brady responded that it will be reflected when the State funding is secured. Mr. Hyman stated that it should still be noted on the forms to clarify all funding sources. Mr. Thombs asked if Wi-Fi capabilities are being extended throughout the campus. Mr. Scordino responded yes, and that guest passes are available for visitors, while students and faculty have access at all times.

Mr. Brady then presented CC107 Planning Studies 2022/23 – 2026/27, funding for future Capital project studies, and WCC82 Site Upgrade – Campus Wide, funding for campus-wide site upgrades. He stated that parking lots are to be upgraded and would include electric vehicle charging stations. Mr. Baron asked if the upgrades would increase the number of parking spaces. Mr. Brady noted that the County has stated that parking should not be increased until a full parking utilization analysis is conducted. Ms. Toback mentioned parking centralization or a campus bus system could be utilized to reduce intra-campus driving. Mr. Brady noted that the ongoing Grasslands Transportation Demand Management study could serve as a model for the College. Ms. Klein stated that a toolkit is being developed for the County as part of the Grasslands study which could benefit the College. Mr. Baron

stated that the true costs of parking should be reflected in the TDM study, especially if parking is free for drivers. He also stated that bus riders from various locations around the County often have unpleasant trips to WCC due to low service amenities like shelters, benches, or sidewalks. Mr. Murphy stated that establishing parking fees was analyzed, but the pandemic placed that study's findings on hold. Mr. Hyman noted that subsidies could be provided to promote mass transit usage. Mr. Murphy stated that is also being considered. Ms. Toback stated that transit supplements are more favorable than parking charges in her opinion, as there are ADA and affordability issues with parking charges.

Mr. Brady continued, presenting WCC88 Maintenance Building Infrastructure Upgrade, funding for maintenance building upgrades. Mr. Hyman asked if the building is historic. Mr. Brady responded no. Mr. Cirillo stated that the building is used to store electrical equipment and most of the upgrades are related to climate control, but façade rehabilitation will also take place.

Mr. Hyman asked if the Board should review the full five-year budget instead of just for one year. Mr. Brady stated that the current report is only for the first-year of the five year budget. Mr. Hyman stated that the five-year report should be presented at a future meeting. Mr. Brady said that he will make available a budget summary of the WCC 5-year Capital Budget to the Board. Mr. Baron asked if the TDM study would be ready next year, when the College budget is again discussed. Ms. Klein stated that the study should be finalized by the summer. She noted that the MTA's OMNY program has also been delayed which will provide an easier fare payment system for transit in Westchester. Mr. Hyman asked if student enrolment at the College is steady. Ms. Morest stated that enrollment decreased due to the pandemic, but the College is expecting a rebound in the fall.

A motion to approve the resolution adopting the Report was made by Ms. Hasbrouck, seconded by Ms. Francella, and unanimously approved by the Board.

B. Adoption of the FY 2019-2023 Consolidated Plan and FY 2022 Action Plan

Ms. Tarlow presented an overview of the Consolidated Plan for FY 2019 to 2023 and the Action Plan for FY 2022, which provides funding for projects requested by the 31 municipalities that form the Westchester County Consortium. The funding totals for the grants are estimates and won't be final until Congress passes the national budget. She overviewed the three programs that comprise of the plan: the HOME affordable housing program, the ESG homeless prevention program, and the CDBG program. She also noted that the Village of Bronxville is proposed to be added to the Consortium.

Mr. Baron asked if the Board could be provided the locations of all the projects proposed. Ms. Tarlow said that can be provided, though Ms. Drummond clarified that some projects are not site specific such as funding to regional social service agencies.

Mr. Hyman asked if all the consortium communities receiving funding have adopted the County's Affordable AFFH model ordinance. Ms. Tarlow responded that Tuckahoe has not but is presenting the ordinance to their Village Board this month. In addition, the Town of Yorktown Town Board is currently in discussion to reinstate the ordinance. Mr. Hyman stated that funding from the Consolidated Plan should be frozen to all municipalities that have not adopted the Model Ordinance

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or an equivalent. Norma responded that funding cannot be released unless the Municipalities comply with the County's discretionary funding policy.

Mr. Hyman asked if the full five-year Consolidated Plan could be discussed, rather than only the current year. He questioned if the Board is approving future year allocations. Ms. Tarlow responded that the only change to the Consolidated Plan is the addition of one community to the Consortium. She said that only the FY 2022 Action Plan is being voted on today and that projects and funding recommended for 2023 are subject to change.

Mr. Baron asked if Tuckahoe has a separate housing authority. Ms. Drummond responded yes. Ms. Tarlow then explained the difference between low and moderate income clientele and low and moderate income area projects. Mr. Hyman said that Tuckahoe is receiving funding for an area project benefit project but have yet to adopt the Model Ordinance. Ms. Drummond and Ms. Tarlow restated that the Village Board is holding hearings regarding the Model Ordinance and they are aware of this requirement.

A motion to approve the resolution adopting the Plan was made by Mr. Douglas, seconded by Ms. Toback, and unanimously approved by the Board with Mr. Thombs abstaining. Mr. Hyman and Ms. Toback stated that their approval is conditional to all the municipalities receiving funds adopting the Model Ordinance or an equivalent.

VIII. Adjournment

On a motion made by Mr. Finger, which was seconded by Ms. Toback and unanimously approved by the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:13 a.m.