

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
WESTCHESTER COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
Cassella Conference Room
Michaelian Office Building
White Plains, New York
Tuesday, February 7, 2017

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dwight Douglas, Vice Chair (City)
James Arndt (City)
Michael Camoia (Village)
Holly Hasbrouck (Town)
Andrea Carapella Rendo (Town)
Mark Rosen (Town)
Dennis Starr (City)
Neil Sullivan (City)
Vincent Kopicki, Commissioner of Department of Public Works & Transportation
Lou Vetrone for Thomas Lauro, Commissioner, Department of Environmental Facilities
Kathleen O'Connor, Commissioner, Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jeremiah Lynch, Chair (Village)

STAFF PRESENT:

Eileen Mildenerger, Acting Commissioner
Patrick Natarelli, Chief Planner
William Brady, Associate Planner
Kim Holland, Program Administrator
Lukas Herbert, Associate Planner
Anthony Zaino, Director of Design
Kay Eisenman, Planner

GUESTS:

Kevin Plunkett, Deputy County Executive
George Oros, Chief of Staff
Belinda Miles, President, Westchester Community College
Pat D' Imperio, WCC
Peggy Bradford, WCC
Dawn Gillins, WCC
Anthony Scordino, WCC
Robert Cirillo, WCC
Teresita Wisell, WCC
Dante Daly, Board of Legislators

I. Call to Order

Dwight Douglas Vice-Chair, in the absence of Jeremiah Lynch, Chair, called the meeting of the Planning Board to order at 8:10 a.m.

MINUTES
Westchester County Planning Board
Meeting February 7, 2017
Page 2

- II. Mr. Plunkett introduced Ms. Mildenberger to the Board and welcomed her to the Planning Department as the Acting Commissioner. He talked briefly about her background saying she had been Chief Advisor to the County Executive for a number of years as well as liaison to the Planning Department. He also spoke about a planned commendation for recently retired Commissioner Ed Burroughs, after 22 years in the Planning Department, but as he is travelling the recognition will have to wait until a later date. He thanked Planning Board members for their services and for helping to achieve the completion of the mandated 750 units of affordable housing which the County recently reached. There are still some matters pending, such as the Analysis of Impediments which the County is working on with a consultant, but he said that there is hope that all of these matters will soon be resolved. He again thanked members for their service and welcomed Dr. Belinda Miles, President of WCC.

Mr. Oros then said a few words about federal funding received by the County, such as the airport and bus lines. He talked about Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) which applies to minority or women-owned businesses, saying that the County wants to do more to help such enterprises. The County is doing outreach to these groups and would value the Board's help in this regard. He asked members to pass the word along to help with this effort. Mr. Plunkett and Mr. Oros left the meeting following their comments.

III. Meeting Dates

Mr. Douglas announced the upcoming dates of the Planning Board meetings. The Board approved these dates on a motion of Mr. Camoia seconded by Mr. Rosen.

IV. Adoption of Minutes

Mr. Douglas said he had reviewed the minutes of the Board meeting of October 25, 2016 and asked if members had any comments on the draft. There were no corrections or revisions. The minutes of the October 25, 2016 meeting of the Planning Board were adopted unanimously.

IV. Chairman's Remarks

None

V. Acting Commissioner's Remarks

Ms. Mildenberger thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve them and said she is looking forward to working with the Planning Department.

VI. Matters for Board Discussion

- A. Presentation by Westchester Community College (WCC) of their 2017/2018 Capital Project Requests and five year capital program.

Dr. Miles introduced members of the staff in attendance and said that there are four projects for which the college is asking for funds in fiscal year 2017/2018. The requests focus on technology upgrades, a future planning study and the rehabilitation of parking areas at the Valhalla Campus. She used a power point presentation to show the projects, beginning with Site Upgrade – Campus Wide which addresses parking lot issues and site improvements, including repaving, curbing and upgrading of storm drains, lighting, signs, walkways and landscaping.

Next Dr. Miles discussed Technology Upgrades for off-and on-campus sites. This will include computer and printer replacements and wireless access. On campus there are plans for a 5-year replacement cycle which includes wireless access and classroom technology in order to provide state of the art technology at the Valhalla campus.

The third request centers on Planning Studies as required or needed to assist in the planning and development of capital projects. This ensures that the college can do studies, when necessary, during the year in order to protect the infrastructure and keep the college up to code. This would include using green technology for any new or existing structures undergoing construction. Dr. Miles discussed the fact that not all jobs require a four year college degree, such as hospitality or healthcare jobs, but require skills which the college teaches at its extension centers. Students can more easily access these extensions within their own communities, such as in Ossining, Mount Vernon, Peekskill and Yonkers. They learn life sciences for careers in health care, general education courses, English as a Second Language courses or high school equivalencies, as well as digital skills. Dr. Miles passed around examples of the 3-D printers employed by students by giving members plastic Viking helmets made by a 3-D printer. Students can also learn animation and art education at the White Plains extension center at the County Center. This extension also teaches photography, art technology and studio based art. She ended her discussion saying that one of the goals of the Community College is to keep tuition affordable and thanked the Planning Board and Planning Department for their support.

Members then asked questions, beginning with a query about safety for pedestrians around the college, which is an ongoing concern. Dr. Miles replied that the state owns the roads around the campus but that they are taking seriously the push to provide a sidewalk. The college has improved lighting on the campus and is updating with LED lights which are brighter and energy efficient. WCC will gradually replace all lighting with LED lighting.

In response to a question regarding WCC as a feeder school for four year colleges, Dr. Miles said that they have expanded their outreach to four year colleges and have agreements with over 200 colleges, which accept all of WCC's credits and in some cases provide scholarships for students with good grade point averages.

Mr. Douglas praised the WCC staff for submitting a modest budget and noted that a draft County Planning Board Report on the WCC 2017/2018 Capital Budget had been prepared by the Planning Department staff for the Board's consideration. There also was a draft resolution adopting the County Planning Board's Report enclosed in the Board members' day-of-meeting packets for their consideration. Mr. Rosen made a motion to adopt the resolution which was seconded by Mr. Arndt and approved.

A. VII. Referrals Ratification of actions by staff in response to planning and zoning actions referred to the County Planning Board October 16, 2016 to December 31, 2016.

Mr. Douglas asked the Board if there were any questions or comments about the Report of County Planning Board Referrals. In response to a question regarding Use and Area Variances in Mount Vernon, Mr. Herbert said that instead of developing a comprehensive plan or adopting new zoning, the City has been using variances as a way to allow development to progress in the city. Mr. Camoia made a motion to ratify the referral letters which was seconded by Mr. Rosen and approved.

B. Ratification of actions by staff in response to planning and zoning actions referred to the County Planning Board January 1, 2017 to January 15, 2017. In discussion of the referrals Mr. Starr asked why the number of bedrooms for the 200-unit, 10 Commerce Drive apartment building in New Rochelle is not included in the plans and whether the parking is adequate. Mr. Herbert said that the plans could be conceptual at this stage and will probably be re-submitted with more details. He will ask New Rochelle about the bedroom count.

Mr. Camoia made a motion to ratify the referral letters which was seconded by Ms. Hasbrouck and approved.

VIII. Matters for Planning Board Action

B. Tree Removal Permit, Native Plant Center, Westchester Community College, Valhalla Campus

Mr. Natarelli told members that three trees need to be removed at the Native Plant Center which necessitates a permit because one is a specimen tree. They are all in poor condition and two, Norway maples, are an invasive species. Mr. Natarelli and Mr. Zaino inspected the trees and concurred with the assessment. They are rotted out in several cases and limbs are in danger of falling. Removal of the trees will open up the area and allow the creation of a more natural forest. A motion to approve the tree removal was made by Mr. Sullivan, seconded by Ms. O'Connor and approved.

IX. Matters for Board Information

Overview of Progress on Housing Settlement to Date

This item was held over for the next meeting due to the absence of Ms. Drummond.

X. Other Business

None.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 a.m. on a motion of Commissioner O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Starr.