



MINUTES
PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Wednesday, July 8, 2020 – 5:30PM
Live streamed – https://youtu.be/PB499Oxll_c

CALL TO ORDER: By Hon. Keith Batman, Chairman opened the live streamed meeting at 5:33 p.m.

MEMBERS: Legislators - Michael Didio, Tricia Kerr (Vice Chair), Heidi Nightengale, Paul Pinckney, Charlie Ripley

EXCUSED: Legislator Christopher Petrus

OTHERS: Legislators: Ben Vitale, Chair Aileen McNabb-Coleman, Hans Pecher, Elane Daly, Timothy Lattimore, Ryan Foley, County Attorney Christopher Palermo, Assistant County Attorney Brittany Massi, Cayuga Economic Development Director, Tracy Verrier, Cayuga Cooperative Extension Associate Director Dan Welch, Cayuga County Soil and Water District Doug Kierst, Tourism Executive Director, Karen Kuhl, 9-1-1 Administrator Denise Spingler, Any Russett, EMP Director, District Attorney Jon Budelmann, Jay DeWispelaere, Probation Director, Kelly King, Employment and Training, Sheriff Brian Schenck, Planning Economic Development, Bruce Natale, Environmental Engineer, Suzanne Gauthier, Administrative Assistant

APPOINTMENTS: none

MINUTES TO APPROVE: May 13, 2020 and June 10, 2020

Charlie Ripley motioned to approve the minutes of May 13 and June 10, 2020, 2nd by Paul Pinckney. All members present voted in favor, passed. July 8, 2020.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES FOR COMMITTEE:

Steve Lynch (Planning & Economic Development) –

- 1) COVID-19 staffing: All planning staff will continue to work remotely through Friday, July 3. Beginning Monday, July 6, we will begin bringing approximately one-half of the staff to work in the department office on the 5th floor of the COB one week at a time with the balance of the staff continuing to work remotely. The two work groups will alternate weeks in the office/remote until the COB is full open. This capacity for planning staff to work remotely should help maintain the a reduced number of county staff within the County Office Building at required levels until full re-opening is available.
- 2) Staff have been successfully advancing open projects and participating in regularly scheduled staff meetings via 8x8.
- 3) In addition to daily assistance to Town and Village elected officials, appointed board members and the public, the following land use, park and resource protection planning efforts currently underway. Each of the projects below are being advanced by staff:
 - a) Comprehensive Plan for Town of Moravia
 - b) Comprehensive Plan for Village of Moravia
 - c) Town of Victory Agriculture & Farmland Protection Plan
 - d) Joint Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan for Town of Sterling & Village of Fair Haven
 - i) Please Check out the LWRP Project Website prepared by staff: <https://sterlingfairhaven.wixsite.com/lwrp>
 - e) Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan for the Village of Cayuga
 - i) Please Check out the LWRP Project Website prepared by staff: <https://villageofcayuga.wixsite.com/lwrp>
 - f) Sterling Nature Center Facility & Trail Restoration Project
 - i) Contracts for the Engineering and Design work for these projects have been executed and site archeology and well water/septic assessments are underway.
 - ii) We are working with the NYSDOS and DASNY to finalize and execute Grant Disbursement Agreements
 - iii) The SEQRA for the project is moving forward in coordination with a number of permitting agencies and the NYSDOS.
 - g) Erie Canal Re-watering and Trail Planning Project (with Town of Brutus)
 - i) The Request for Qualifications process, with a review committee consisting of county project staff, elected officials from the Town of Brutus, the NYS Canal Society and American Canal Society, has been completed and a team assembled and led by Bergmann Associates (Rochester NY) was selected as the most qualified candidate, due to extensive experience on similar canal projects, community trail and recreation work and knowledge of this complex site. Staff is working with the Bergman team to finalize a scope of work and associated fee for the Phase I Flood Impact Assessment and Analysis.
 - h) Emerson Park Capital Improvements and Deauville Island Engineering Project.

- i) Project meetings with the engineering and design teams have commenced and the project is moving forward.
 - i) Town of Ira Zoning Ordinance Revisions Project
 - j) Cayuga Lake Blueway Project (with Tompkins & Seneca Counties – 95% complete)
 - k) Owasco Lake Watershed 9E Plan & Watershed Modeling Project.
 - i) The 9-E Watershed Models are being finalized following delays associated with the pandemic and access to the supercomputers at Cornell University. The NYS DOS has recommended a 1-year contract extension which will be submitted with the monthly project report in June. Please note that although the extension is for 1-year, staff is still planning on finalizing the project in about 1/3 that time.
 - l) Owasco Flats Wetlands and Riparian Buffer Project, Phase II (See Resolution Notes)
 - m) Owasco Lake Watershed Rules & Regulations Project (pending ability to schedule a joint Public Presentation/Meeting with City of Auburn and Town of Owasco)
 - n) Household Hazardous Waste (“HHW”) Program conducted the annual Tire Recycling Event on Saturday June 27, an event made possible by the combined efforts of Planning, Health and Soil & Water Conservation District staffs. Due to the Pandemic, the event was scaled down with required preregistration and a range of site precautions to limit person-to-person contact. The HHW team processed approximately 115-120 vehicles on Saturday and collected about 1800 tires; a preliminary total as Parks and Motor Pool still need to bring their tires to S&W.
 - o) Cayuga County Local Solid Waste Management Plan Update
 - p) CCPUSA Strategic Organization and Operations Plan (two meetings in May and June)
 - i) The CCPUSA Board has been meeting regularly with the Hometown Connections project team (<https://www.hometownconnections.com/>) - remotely, to build board consensus on CCPUSA’s vision and mission and align these with a strategic direction that will enable the agency to build capacity, visibility and credibility as it matures into an operational entity.
 - ii) Hometown connections are now assessing operational models and gathering the quantitative data needed to build a sound business case for operations.
 - iii) Staff is targeting September for completion of the Strategic Planning Process and presentation to the Legislature and stakeholders.
 - q) Cayuga County Clean Energy Community Grant Lighting Upgrades at County Jail. Despite two separate public bidding efforts, the County has not received a single bid for this approximate \$90K lighting upgrade project. Planning staff has requested the Building and Grounds Department work with Purchasing to split the bid into two separate bids – one for purchasing the materials and equipment and a second, stand-alone bid to install the materials to spec.
- **Additional Updates**
 - Legislator Kerr inquired on the status of the Owasco Watershed Rules and Regulations. Bruce Natale responded the City of Auburn and Town of Owasco were coordinating on deciding on a date for a joint meeting.

PLANNING:

7-20-PL-1 Authorizing award of bid and execution of contracts for construction of the Owasco Flats Wetland Restoration and Riparian Buffers Initiative Project Phase 2

Bruce Natale updated the committee on the upcoming bid to complete the additional basin in the Owasco Flats. The bids are due back on July 16th and will update the results of the bid prior to the Ways and Means committee. Depending on the outcome of the bids, construction should be able to start the first week in August. The committee discussed the current funds available in the grant and the work to be completed.

Trish Kerr motioned to move draft resolution 7-20-PL-1, 2nd by Charlie Ripley. Discussion: Legislator Kerr inquired whether this construction phase will complete the project. Bruce Natale explained that this will complete the construction of the three wetland basins, however additional parcels may become available to duplicate the work to further reduce sediment going into the lake. The work is proposed to be complete in November. All members present voted in favor, passed.

Karen Kuhl (Tourism) –

Director Kuhl stated staff continues to work with the local lodging community on marketing and outreach programs to assist in developing business from the surrounding area. The current occupancy rate is at 23% compared to 53% last year. The Sweet Trail just launched for this season and most of the partners are open and operational. Outreach and marketing continues to be focused on a regional approach within the Finger Lakes to areas within a three hour drive. Fishing has been identified as a plentiful activity within in the area which be used with a social distancing approach. A new video is being developed to promote the area.

Vacant (Employment & Training) –

Tracy Verrier (CEDA) –

- Metric Snapshot through June 25, 2020 (does not include COVID response):
 - Existing businesses met with: 58 (including 16 first-time contacts)
 - Entrepreneurs met with: 23
 - See supplemental document for additional metrics and economic indicators.
 - In addition to prior COVID response metrics, CEDA staff did proactive outreach to businesses regarding the City of Auburn COVID-19 Economic Recovery Support Program grant opportunity. This and other outreach resulted in 64 business and entrepreneurial applications, as well as 8 applications for arts & cultural organizations. CEDA also processed all of these applications for review by a City of Auburn committee. Most applications will receive some level of funding.
 - CCIDA authorized two incentive packages:
 - Cayuga Milk Ingredients for sales and use tax exemption for their project installing another evaporator (\$27m+ project).
 - Global Common Energy sales & use tax and mortgage recording tax abatements to install a renewable natural gas system at Spruce Haven Farms (\$8m+ project).
 - CEDA released a new Cayuga County quality of life video on social media: <https://youtu.be/EjWzKxjicL8>. We intend to release a series of similar videos focused on attracting new residents and workers to the area.
 - Samantha Frugé has moved on to a new position. CEDA is currently seeking a new Technical Specialist to staff the IDAs and work on loan/incentive applications, underwriting, etc.
- Additional Updates:
 - Legislator Kerr inquired whether Cayuga Milk Ingredients' (CMI) expansion includes any additional job creation and also asked if any information is available on their apprenticeship program. Tracy Verrier stated the current expansion will create one new job along with CMI continuing to add positions throughout the plant. No updated information on their apprenticeship program.
 - Legislator Lattimore inquire whether any new job creation at Tessa's new plant. Tracy stated the plant is still in the construction phase and not in full out hiring at this time.

Doug Kierst (Soil & Water Conservation District) –

- The Natural Resources Center continues to be closed to public visitors. The members of the Cayuga County SWCD Office and Technical Staff now report to the office while a few team members continue to work from home until further notice.

AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

- Cayuga SWCD worked with landowners to prepare funding proposals for submission to the Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Grant Program for the implementation of Best Management Practices on their farms.
- Cayuga SWCD Staff continues to complete weekly construction site inspections on SPDES permitted construction sites at 2 agricultural operations.
- Cayuga County Staff continues to complete construction oversight on two Agricultural operations' BMP implementation projects. One additional Agricultural BMP implementation project has completed the bidding process and will commence work after the bid is approved and awarded to the contractor.

NON-AGRICULTURAL & MUNICIPAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

- Cayuga County SWCD Operations Staff continues to complete projects associated with streambank protection. We have been able to assist with stabilization projects in the Town of Moravia and on a property on the Town of Owasco and City of Auburn line.
- The Cayuga SWCD Hydroseeder has been used to stabilize exposed soils on several projects throughout Cayuga County.
- The Cayuga SWCD Operations Staff completed the first phase of the flood mitigation project in the Village of Moravia. Approximately 200 feet of drainage ditch was daylighted by the removal of a previously installed pipe. The next phase will consist of the installation of a cleanout basin located within the culvert system. The materials have been ordered and we are awaiting the delivery.
- The Cayuga SWCD Operations Staff completed a drainage swale cleanout in the City of Auburn to alleviate flooding pressure following storm events.
- The Cayuga SWCD Operations Staff completed mowing and no-till seeding establishment on a parcel of land recently acquired by The Nature Conservancy.

OTHER SWCD NEWS, WORKSHOPS & TRAININGS:

- Cayuga SWCD Staff worked in conjunction with the County Solid Waste Management Program and Cornell Cooperative Extension to carry out the County's Annual Tire Round-up that was held at the SWCD offices on June 27th. Special thanks goes to the Cayuga County Highway Dept. for assisting with the transport of the tires to NUCOR Steel and to NUCOR for creating availability to receive them for further recycling and for providing volunteers to assist in the event as well. Over 1,700 tires were collected and recycled during the event.
- Additional Updates
 - Director Kierst stated staff has started weed harvesting on Owasco Lake. However due to the dry weather conditions, the lake level is over a foot lower than usual making it difficult for the equipment to move in closer to shore.
 - Legislator Lattimore inquired about a project on Mobbs road. Doug explained the project is a pipe drainage system for a local farm. The drainage will be tied into the control structures built last year.

Dan Welch (Director Cornell Cooperative Extension) –

- CCE Cayuga is partnering with the Food Bank of Central New York on mobile food pantry food distributions for families in need in Auburn, Port Byron, and Cato. The most recent distribution in Cato helped 120 families.
- We worked closely with County Planning and the Soil and Water Conservation District on the tire recycling event on June 27.
- Virtual shows and exhibits will take the place of the 4-H Youth Fair/County fair for our 4-H Youth. Judges are being lined up to evaluate video and photo submissions for the youth.
- Next week, Kimberly Oswald starts as the part-time 4-H STEM Educator. Kim is a recent graduate of SUNY ESF in Environmental Science, and will be working on 4-H after school programs and creating more opportunities for youth to engage in environmental issues in Cayuga County.
- Our agriculture educator is reaching out to farmers to let them know about the availability of payments from the USDA through the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP). The farm side of the program is designed to provide payments to many types of farms to make up for lost revenue due to the pandemic. Much needed rain over the last 10 days kept drought conditions from forming.
- Additional Updates
 - Dan Welch added that dry weather conditions along with the continuing heat may be a problem for some of the crops. The University of Nebraska has classified the County as abnormally dry and these classifications are updated every Thursday morning. Legislator Kerr asked which agency would make a drought designation if needed and whether such a designation comes with resources for the farmer. Director Welch stated the University of Nebraska will look at the soil conditions then USDA would be the agency to declare a disaster. The USDA would then do further research to document the soil conditions, the amount of crop loss, etc. in the area in order to provide resources to the farmers.
 - Legislator Lattimore inquired about the reduction in milk production due to the heat conditions. Dan Welch stated that most of dairy farms are trying to reduce their milk production due to the lower prices from the spring Milk Marketing Order.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Charlie Ripley motioned to go into Executive Session at 6:05 p.m. to discuss the employment history of a particular person, 2nd by Paul Pinckney. All members present voted in favor, passed.

Paul Pinckney motioned to come out of executive session at 6:49 p.m., 2nd by Charlie Ripley. All members present voted in favor, passed.

ADJOURNMENT:

Tricia Kerr motioned to adjourn the Planning and Economic Development Meeting at 6:50 p.m., 2nd by Paul Pinckney. All members present voted in favor of the motion, passed.

Next Planning and Economic Development is scheduled for August 12, 2020, at the Cayuga County Office Building, Sixth Floor County Chambers, 160 Genesee Street, Auburn, New York 13021, via remote access.

Respectfully submitted, Suzanne Gauthier, Administrative Assistant
Cayuga County Department of Planning and Economic Development