

**PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
JANUARY 23, 2013**

**** NOT APPROVED ****

Committee Members Present: F. Sinclair, D. Pullen, P. Curran, D. Healy, K. LaForge, C. Crandall (Absent: K. Graves, T. Hopkins)

Others Present: M. Alger, L. Ballengee, C. Braack, D. Burdick, G. Hanchett, J. Margeson, T. Miner, B. Riehle, C. Santora, R. Sobeck-Lynch

Media Present: B. Clark, *Olean Times Herald*

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Planning & Economic Development Committee Chairman Frederick Sinclair.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Legislator LaForge, seconded by Legislator Curran, and carried to approve the Planning & Economic Development Committee minutes of December 19, 2012.

New York Rising

Legislator Sinclair directed the Committee members' attention to "New York Rising," a handout distributed with the agenda, dealing with the Governor's economic development plans for the state for 2013. He informed the group that it is crucial that the County pay attention to this document which he likened to the Governor's "playbook." Mr. Sinclair noted that the Governor wants to create 10 "Innovation Hot Spots" in the state which will "create or designate 10 higher education-private sector high-tech innovation incubators for start-up companies through a competition. Each Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) will designate a newly created or existing incubator program as the Innovation Hot Spot for the region, and five winners among the REDC regions will be designated annually for two years and receive benefits and support." It was further noted that [the] "winning Innovation Hot Spots will be tax-free zones, where start-ups and other businesses will not be subject to business, real property, and sales taxes. To help keep entrepreneurs and companies in New York as they grow, any company that emerges from the incubator will be considered part of tax-free Innovation Hot Spots under which neither these companies nor their full-time employees will pay designated taxes for the first five years of the companies' existence."

The report went on to say, "The knowledge-based economy and global competition make it more important than ever that New York State becomes the leader in innovation and new business creation. New York possesses one of the best-educated workforces, due to the state's many colleges, universities and other research institutions that lead the nation.

"New York has all of the ingredients to make this state the leader in economic opportunity if we harness our assets more effectively by facilitating the process of commercializing academic ideas or inventions and building companies around them. This is a process that can be broadly described as 'technology transfer' or 'tech transfer.'

"Many of the country's most significant high-tech economic clusters owe their success to technology transfer. The economic strength is the direct result of the creation of a comprehensive technology transfer infrastructure, which includes state-of-the-art research and development, the licensing of patented inventions, pilot prototyping, workforce training, and partnership with industry."

Additionally, the Governor's plan will "foster investment through a NYS innovation venture capital fund. The state will foster these hot spots and other commercialization efforts through a \$50 million Innovation Venture Capital Fund. This fund will provide incentives for successful start-ups to stay in the state and grow, including small 'angel' investments to overcome the 'valley of death' issue many of these companies face. Support from the Innovation Venture Capital Fund will help these entrepreneurs make the transition from research and other ideas through prototyping and ultimately to the creation of marketable products by providing critical seed and early-stage funding to bridge the gap to a point where these entrepreneurs can attract institutional venture capital."

Legislator Sinclair urged the Committee to support and lobby for Allegany County's hosting one of the 10 proposed Innovation Hot Spots. The Committee agreed, and on a motion by Legislator LaForge, seconded by Legislator Curran, and carried, declared that the Planning and Economic Development Committee fully supports and initiates County efforts to have an Innovation Hot Spot designated in Allegany County and to work closely with Alfred University and Alfred State College in requesting that the Western Regional Economic Development Council consider establishment of a New York State Innovation Hot Spot in Allegany County. **Prepare Resolution**

Genesee River Wilds-Bill Hart

Legislator Sinclair informed the group that Genesee River Wilds had not yet received the RFP they were waiting for. However, he said, when they do receive it, the group will address the Committee.

I Love NY Matching Fund Grant-Gretchen Hanchett

Greater Allegany County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Gretchen Hanchett requested a resolution for the acceptance of the New York State Tourism Matching Funds grant. Allegany County has budgeted \$60,000 as its share for match funds for this grant for 2013, and has been awarded \$58,135. The funding appears under Appropriation Account A6989.476 and Revenue Account A6989.3715.00 in our 2013 Budget. The request was approved on a motion by Legislator Healy, seconded by Legislator Pullen, and carried. **Prepare Resolution**

Agreement between Allegany County & the Greater Allegany County Chamber of Commerce to Administer County Tourism-Gretchen Hanchett

Ms. Hanchett also requested a resolution renewing the agreement between Allegany County and the Greater Allegany County Chamber of Commerce to administer County tourism development services such agreement (attached) to be signed by Chairman Crandall. The agreement shall commence on January 1, 2013, and terminate on December 31, 2013. The County agrees to pay the Contractor for the services of the agreement the sum of \$80,000, to be paid as follows: \$40,000 upon execution of the agreement, \$20,000 on June 1, 2013, and the balance of \$20,000 on September 1, 2013. The request was approved on a motion by Legislator Healy, seconded by Legislator Pullen, and carried. **Prepare Resolution**

Departmental Reports:

Employment & Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch

Employment & Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch distributed her monthly report for December 2012. She noted that front door traffic was down a little for the month. She informed the group that E&T is revamping some of its programs and that the

Office continues to work closely with the Department of Social Services. In fact, 301 DSS clients obtained jobs in 2012. Finally, Ms. Lynch also told the group that there would be a Department of Labor auditor in her area today.

Economic Development/IDA—John Foels

Economic Development/IDA Director John Foels was unable to attend the meeting as he was attending Sam Hoyt's (Regional President, Empire State Development) presentation of Governor Cuomo's 2013 State of the State Address and 2013-14 Budget in Wellsville.

County Planner-Kier Dirlam

County Planner Kier Dirlam was unable to attend due to illness.

County Historian Craig Braack

County Historian Craig Braack gave a brief update on his recent move to the former Support Collection Building, saying he is 98 percent settled and happy with his new accommodations. In his role as County Records Manager, Mr. Braack indicated that he has made several trips to the County records storage facilities, and that he will soon be checking with the various departments regarding the end of the term of retention for select records. The ability to dispose of these records will certainly free up some room in the storage facilities. He also noted, however, that in the not-too-distant future, the need for record storage will once again be paramount as the new facility is filling rapidly.

Cornell Cooperative Extension-Lynn Bliven

Cornell Cooperative Extension Representative Lynn Bliven was not in attendance. Prior to the meeting, Legislator Sinclair had contacted Ms. Bliven regarding any urgent matter to be brought before the Committee. There being none, he requested that, in the interest of time in order to allow Legislative members to attend Empire State Development Regional President Sam Hoyt's presentation in Wellsville, she hold her monthly report until the February meeting.

Soil & Water Conservation Executive Director Scott Torrey

Soil & Water Conservation Executive Director Scott Torrey was not in attendance. Prior to the meeting, Legislator Sinclair had contacted Mr. Torrey regarding any urgent matter to be brought before the Committee. There being none, Mr. Sinclair requested that, in the interest of time in order to allow Legislative members to attend Empire State Development Regional President Sam Hoyt's presentation in Wellsville, he hold his monthly report until the February meeting.

Greater Allegany County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Gretchen Hanchett

Ms. Hanchett informed the group that her Manufacturing Council was making a great deal of progress. In fact, she said, it has fostered a platform whereby BOCES, Alfred State College, and Lufkin can work together, creating a curriculum allowing BOCES students to earn college credits at Alfred State and then work at an internship at Lufkin. Nine students began this program this month.

Good of the Order

Legislator LaForge requested that Ms. Lynch investigate the impact the Governor's plan to increase the minimum wage could have on E&T as well as on Allegany County in general.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:24 a.m. following a motion by Legislator LaForge, seconded by Legislator Curran, and carried

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Santora, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board
Allegany County Board of Legislators

**PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 20, 2013**

**** NOT APPROVED ****

Committee Members Present: F. Sinclair, D. Pullen, P. Curran, D. Healy, T. Hopkins, K. LaForge, C. Crandall (Absent: K. Graves)

Others Present: M. Alger, S. Alsworth, L. Bliven, C. Braack, D. Burdick, K. Dirlam, J. Foels, J. Margeson, T. Miner, C. Santora, R. Sobeck-Lynch

Media Present: No media present

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Planning & Economic Development Committee Chairman Frederick Sinclair.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Legislator Pullen, seconded by Legislator Curran, and carried to approve the Planning & Economic Development Committee minutes of January 23, 2013.

Acceptance of the Snowmobile Grant

A resolution was requested approving a contract between Allegany County and the Allegany County Federation of Snowmobilers whereby the County acts as sponsor for applications for snowmobile trail development and maintenance assistance grants through the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The 2012-13 application was approved for \$81,440. Allegany County will operate as a pass-through to the Federation of Snowmobilers. Sufficient funding was appropriated in the 2013 Budget to A7185.483 with a like sum credited to revenue account A7185.3089.00. No budget adjustments are necessary at this time. Prior to the vote, it was noted that this is an annual arrangement and that the wording of the agreement has remained the same. Approval was granted on a motion by Legislator Healy, seconded by Legislator Hopkins, and carried. **Prepare Resolution**

Proposed Sale of Timber/Weir Lot

Soil and Water Conservation District Agricultural Environmental Planner Scott Alsworth requested permission to seek bids for the sale of County forest products at the Weir Lot, located in the town of Angelica, north of County Road 16, east of the Village of Angelica. Also referred to as Management Area VI, the Weir Lot is 176 acres of mixed hardwood and softwood timber. This is a sale of both hardwoods and softwoods. Two bids are requested: one bid requiring Allegany County to be responsible for the access road; the second bid requiring the purchaser to be responsible for the access road. Approval was granted on a motion by Legislator Hopkins, seconded by Legislator Pullen, and carried.

Support for the Establishment of an Innovation Hot Spot in the County

Legislator Sinclair noted that the resolution in support of establishing an Innovation Hot Spot within the County had been withdrawn from the Board meeting and referred back to Committee. Citing lack of sufficient information regarding how to apply to the State for an Innovation Hot Spot, Mr. Sinclair indicated that over the next few months the Committee would determine how best to approach this issue.

Departmental Reports:

Employment & Training-Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch

Employment & Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch distributed her report for January 2013, noting that front-door traffic was up over December's numbers. She pointed out that 15 DSS recipients found jobs at an average hourly wage of \$8.87, and seven non-DSS clients

found employment in January at an average hourly wage of \$13.84. She also said there were 49 new Unemployment Insurance claims in January. In addition to her report, Ms. Lynch noted that Lufkin is up to 69 employees and has openings for six machinists. She also told the group that there is a new protocol for returning veterans to follow in order to receive benefits which includes a series of three appointments and tasks to be completed between appointments. However, most vets are going to the Department of Labor in Olean or Hornell because there are dedicated veterans' representatives there. Although the Allegany County E&T Office does not have a person dedicated to veterans' issues, Ms. Lynch felt such a position could be beneficial. Ms. Lynch also informed the group about the research she had done regarding the impact a higher minimum wage would have on the County. Her findings indicated that the only employees on the County payroll who would be affected by the raise would be OFA luncheon site managers and drivers. The Summer Youth Employment Program would also be affected; she indicated that would result in fewer hires or fewer hours for those hires. However, statewide, 6.4 percent of all employees earn minimum wage or below. In Allegany County, that percentage is closer to 10 percent of the working population. Legislator Sinclair requested that Ms. Lynch prepare a summary of these findings for next month's meeting. Ms. Lynch also informed the group that her Office continues to work closely with the Department of Social Services and thus needed to restructure its job readiness training program to meet the requirements DSS has for applicants, so E&T is engaging these people upon application. She indicated that this is the Safety Net population (individuals without dependent children who are applying for benefits). These folks must make an appointment with E&T immediately (before the 45-day approval period with DSS) in order to be eligible for benefits. These applicants must also attend 10 days of classes. If they miss even one, they must begin the process again.

Economic Development/IDA Director John E. Foels

Economic Development/IDA Director John E. Foels told the group that within the last 30 days, the Empire State Development funded the Western Region Corporation with \$2 million for downtown revitalization programs. The IDA directors in the involved counties are all members of that board. Details on the rules and regulations governing that funding are being worked on. It will be headquartered at Southern Tier West. Mr. Foels expects it to be ready for the July round of Consolidated Funding Applications (CFA). The good part of this is that the decisions will be made locally instead of in Albany or by the "feds" which, in the past, had been problematic for the locals. When the control was so far away, those in control didn't understand the needs and personalities of the involved communities. And, there are plans to re-fund it at a later date. Mr. Foels called this grant a "a shot in the arm" for the Southern Tier. He also said he expects the funding distribution to be fair; that is, no one county will receive all the money. (The five-county members include Niagara, Erie, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, and Allegany.) When queried about the County's matching funds responsibility, Mr. Foels noted that at this time, it is 50-50, but he would like to see the County's match be lower. Those are the details that are still being worked out, he said. Mr. Foels also informed the group that Ken Adams, President of Empire State Development will be visiting our area next week, though details have not yet been worked out. Mr. Foels noted that over the past two months County Planner Kier Dirlam and he have been talking with local mayors and supervisors; these people want to take back their Main Streets. He noted that some municipalities face more challenges than others with buildings that need repair, etc. He noted he and Mr. Dirlam would return next month with a more concrete plan. He envisions the County Development Office acting as a partner or clearinghouse, to help these communities access the services they need. He also feels it's time to focus more intently on small businesses in the County to help repopulate our Main Streets. He noted that currently they are working with Canaseraga to help revitalize its Main Street.

Legislator Healy questioned Mr. Foels about the status of the Crossroads project, saying his constituents frequently ask him about it. Mr. Foels responded that over the past two months some things have been upgraded and other businesses from outside our area have expressed a desire to be included. However, due to confidentiality issues, he could only provide an overview, saying the project is still on track. He also indicated that the County needs to go for the best possible project and leave no stone unturned as far as who our partners will be. We are not just going to settle. That being said, he also noted that a key component in this delay has been the financing, or lack thereof. Mr. Foels said that there is not a huge desire among commercial lenders to participate in projects like the Crossroads and the Development Office having to look for alternative financing. He added that when you put a project like this together, a half point or a point of interest means a lot to the project's ability to move forward. The long and the short of it, he said, is the project is not moving along as fast as we wanted, but it is still alive. "Not a week goes by that we are not doing something in that regard," he said. This type of project is extremely complex, he added, saying he has been in contact with other folks in the Southern Tier involved in similar (hospitality, lodging, travel) projects, and they are having similar, if not more severe, difficulty in getting their projects off the ground. He mentioned Bonaventure Square in Allegany, NY, as an example. He also noted that dealing with the Army Corps of Engineers and the DEC, to name just two, is very time consuming. Mr. Foels is very aware that the County needs the tax revenue (sales tax, bed tax, property tax) that would be generated by this project. However, noting that as the only undeveloped exit on I-86, this is a natural location for development, but he continues to seek the best outcome possible. He also went on to underscore the fact that the Crossroads is not the only project the office is working on.

Legislator Healy noted that many of his constituents are fearful that this project will fall by the wayside and that nothing will happen. Chairman Crandall says he is often asked those same questions and his answer is that things have moved ahead in leaps and bounds over the last couple of years. He said there has been a call for something to be done in the Belvidere area since the 1970s and that nothing came of that except talk until we (Allegany County) was able to take some dollars from nuclear waste monies that had been set aside (and which Pat McGee helped free up). Mr. Crandall continued, "and we ended up with a few dollars we could invest there for engineering and so forth and in just a few years we got the engineering done and ended up with acreage out there that can be developed and brought to the table to move things forward. I tell them to take a look at the calendar and see what's been done in the past couple of years. A year ago this very Committee voted to set money aside to actually put the pipe in the ground. Positive things have happened and decisions and commitments have been made. Now it's a case of getting the pieces together on the private side."

Legislator Sinclair advised Mr. Foels to work together closely with our engineering people to ensure there will be no glitches when it comes time to put the waterline in—that is something we have control over at present without waiting for partners. "We don't want any engineering or permitting snafus," he cautioned.

County Planner Kier Dirlam

County Planner Kier Dirlam informed the group that he is attending meetings relative to the update of the *Open Space Conservation Plan* which focuses on "conserving vital natural and recreational areas: small, large, urban, suburban, rural, or wilderness. These areas can be protected with a combination of public land protection and thoughtful use of our own land." (Information in quotes is taken from the *2009 Open Space Conservation Plan* website.) Mr. Dirlam indicated that the plan needs to be in Albany by May and that in addition to county representatives, 12 appointed members from the State Parks and the DEC attend these meetings, but do not have a vote. He noted that there are 12 broad categories in the plan such as woodlands, wetlands, and trails, to name just a few. He also said that the group is planning

to meet in each of the six involved counties and that the Allegany County meeting would take place April 10, 2013, at 6:30 p.m. at the Crossroads. He also noted that the Regional Director of the DEC is scheduled to attend that meeting and that he has invited her to arrive early so they can discuss "where they are headed with the property (55,000 acres of state forest land) the DEC holds in Allegany County."

Additionally, Mr. Dirlam noted that the Landmark Society of which he has spoken in previous meetings, has been back in the County this month. Representatives have been meeting with people involved in three projects in Allegany County. The estimated cost to do these projects is around \$5 million. If funding can be obtained, these projects will bring buildings which have been out of use back "on line" to house businesses. The projects would employ contractors and put businesses and employees into the buildings. The example Mr. Dirlam used is the Kingston Hotel in Canaseraga. The group involved in its revitalization has been given a grant for a small engineering/structural review of the Kingston Hotel. It was noted that these projects related to the Main Street Revitalization Plan mentioned earlier by Mr. Foels.

County Historian Craig Braack

County Historian Craig Braack said he had no report other than to say the move continues to progress nicely.

Cornell Cooperative Extension Representative Lynn Bliven

Cornell Cooperative Extension Representative Lynn Bliven explained that this is the time of year that a lot of programming takes place. Feed and forage has been a concern to those farmers in areas which experienced a drought last year, so her office has been fielding a lot of calls on how to extend forage values and how to make feeding systems work. Her area has also been receiving calls regarding the aflatoxin fungus in milk, noting that if a load of milk tests positive for the fungus, it cannot be sold and must be dumped. Therefore, the Office has been maintaining a dairy list in order to get information out in a timely manner. Ms. Bliven also reiterated information on the Farm Disaster Preparedness Certificate Program which would help farmers with such a problem as well as many others. Additional programs include the Rural Landowners Workshop which brings in resource consultant firms to address forestry management, water quality, invasive plant and insect impacts, agro-forestry, and ecosystem management. A Rural Forestry Program is scheduled for March, as is a Business Transfer and Planning session which will help farmers, particularly dairy farmers, plan the transfer of acreage to family members (succession). Ms. Bliven also told the group that the Office has received an award from Cornell University so there will be funding for summer interns to work with the beef project which is a program to help farmers identify ways to maximize carcass yield. She said that Cornell Cooperative Extension is actively working in the horticulture area and will have a workshop addressing season extension and how production can be expanded to meet local demand. Additionally, Ms. Bliven said that every four years Cornell Cooperative Extension hosts the Master Gardener Training Program and this is the year in that rotation. She noted that they identify 20 volunteers to go through an intensive 12-week training, saying that these volunteers help extend the Office outreach to both professional growers (floral and vegetable) as well as those who wish to produce food for their families. When queried about the status of the search for a new employee, Ms. Bliven noted that she and the search committee will conduct a "round 2" interview of two candidates for the new position; each was given a choice of four scenarios on which to give a presentation. She will give the Committee an update next month. Legislator Burdick asked about the Pesticide Certification Program; Ms. Bliven said there used to be such a program, but it fell to budget cuts. However, she noted, they are looking to the new hire to have some expertise in that area. She also explained that there are options available for interested parties; these include workshops and online options. Realizing that not all people have the inclination or access to computers, they are invited to the Office to use a computer there.

**Soil and Water Conservation District Agricultural/Environmental Management Planner
Scott Alsworth**

Soil & Water Conservation District Agricultural/Environmental Management Planner Scott Alsworth informed the group that the Office is waiting for official word from Albany regarding Round 19 Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program ranking; he noted that it seems as if we are borderline on getting funding. He also indicated that the Office is working on the 2008-09 FL-LOWPA (Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance) grant closeout, and that the Office should be receiving 2010-11 grant funds in time for summer construction projects. The Office is also working on surveys and designs for several private landowners; assisting Town of Friendship with its FEMA project to protect the sewer line that crosses Van Campen Creek for which the Office will be doing the engineering, permit work, and assisting with implementation. Mr. Alsworth also noted that the Office has one Alfred State student working there one day per week. Finally, Mr. Alsworth informed the group that the District had been approached by Dennis Vespucci and John Tucker asking if County-owned lands could be used for the release of pheasants per the County's pheasant program. Mr. Alsworth told the group there are multiple lots that would be appropriate for this use if the Committee approved. Support to move ahead on the issue of using County-owned lands for the release of pheasants for hunting purposes was given on a motion by Legislator Sinclair, seconded by Legislator Healy, and carried.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m., following a motion by Legislator Pullen, seconded by Legislator Curran, and carried

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Santora, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board
Allegany County Board of Legislators

**PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MARCH 20, 2013**

**** NOT APPROVED ****

Committee Members Present: F. Sinclair, D. Pullen, P. Curran, K. Graves, D. Healy, K. LaForge, C. Crandall (Absent: T. Hopkins)

Others Present: M. Alger, L. Bliven, D. Burdick, C. Criss, K. Dirlam, D. Fanton, J. Foels, G. Hanchett, J. Margeson, T. Miner, B. Riehle, T. Ross, C. Santora, R. Sobeck-Lynch, S. Strickley, S. Torrey, B. Zacher, R. Zink

Media Present: B. Quinn, *Wellsville Daily Reporter*

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Planning & Economic Development Committee Chairman Frederick Sinclair.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Healy, and carried to approve the Planning & Economic Development Committee minutes of February 20, 2013.

Status of Agricultural Economic Development, Cooperative Extension

Cooperative Extension Representative Lynn Bliven informed the group that Cooperative Extension has identified a candidate for the Agricultural Community Educator position, but because no formal offer had been made, she was not at liberty to disclose a name. However, she did indicate that this candidate is an Allegany County resident returning from school and that s/he seems good for the team.

Monthly Report

Ms. Bliven informed the Committee that she has been working with Southern Tier West on a food hub feasibility study. Surveys have been sent to farms to identify where they're at, what types of economic development would be most beneficial to them, and how the group can best serve County producers on a regional basis. Eight farms participated in a Vegetable Team meeting last week which focused on direct sales, marketing, and season extension to allow for year-round production to make farms more sustainable on a year-round basis as some of these producers strive to move from part-time to full-time production. There is continuing involvement with the Vegetable Team because Cooperative Extension is seeing more challenges with insect and pest management as well as more interest in natural/organic production. This being the case, the office is doing a lot of programming with IPM (Integrated Pest Management). Ms. Bliven noted that her office is receiving more requests for information on growing small fruits. Monthly meetings are planned for that audience to be held at different farms in the region to help establish cohesiveness between producers without feeling they are in competition with each other. Cooperative Extension continues to support the dairy industry because it's an important part of agriculture in the County. The *Dairy Market Watch* mailing continues to be sent to farmers in order to get timely information to producers. Cooperative Extension tries to balance the needs of both small and large dairy producers. A farm disaster training program was scheduled for the next day to identify areas where farmers can learn to manage disasters safely for themselves and employees, including bio-security issues that 15 or 20 years ago weren't thought about on the farm. Ms. Bliven noted that the Dairy Reproduction class was very successful—14 dairy farms participated. The idea was to help producers understand genetics and the value of crossbreeding and planning to help dairy farms diversify to add value as well as to make informed decisions about production. Ms. Bliven reported on the Southern Tier West

meeting last week with Kim Lamendola. The group is working on the feasibility study for a food hub across a three-county area which will work toward building a system together that makes sense. Allegany County had good representation at the meeting, she said, and it was a good opportunity to share concerns with the consultant. The goal of the project is to look at what we have and how to build on it together, not to plunk a system down from another area and make it “fit” in Allegany County. This system should be able to feed the folks in Allegany County and not have to look for markets outside the County.

Planning for Broadband Communications

Legislator Sinclair told the group that Allegany County is now at a point in its program to develop access to the Internet and to improve access to communications as an economic development tool. The County has been working on this for three-four years, he explained. The first step was production of an Allegany County Communications Report in 2011. The second was an application to New York State for the Connect NY Program which would allow us to do some things identified in the report. Finally, we contracted with CONXX Smart Technologies to produce a report on communication in the County which is more detailed, outlining where we are, what infrastructure exists (fiber optic cables, towers, etc.), what we could do, people’s perception of need, and how to plug into the ION fiber optic system. The County has invested in consultants and engaged in research over the past few years in terms of current status, what’s going on out there—what is the perception of need in the County. The good news is we have been approved for \$800,000 from New York State to plug into the ION cable and develop a network which will distribute access to that network further out into our communities. We hope to then have last-mile providers plugging into that extended network and offering improved service to communities, private landowners, etc. Parallel to that, the structure we put into place will augment and serve as a redundant backup to our 911 Emergency Services. Legislator Sinclair requested that the committee members read carefully the CONXX report and submit any questions, comments, etc. to himself and Legislator Pullen (Chairman of the Facilities and Communications Committee) because it will be necessary to make some vital decisions in the not-too-distant future. Legislator Sinclair went on to say, “We want to have conversations about the next steps which will involve commitment by the County to begin the process.” Legislator Pullen noted that these upcoming decisions will affect several County committees—not only Planning & Economic Development, but also Facilities & Communications as well as Public Safety, and those decisions must help us get the biggest “bang for the buck” as possible.

Guest Richard Zink—Southern Tier West

Richard Zink, Executive Director of the Southern Tier West Regional Planning and Development Board, gave a brief overview of what Southern Tier West has been doing in the communications arena. Mr. Zink noted that when they put the grant together, they focused on Cattaraugus and Chautauqua counties. However, they did address issues at the libraries and health care providers (mainly Jones Memorial Hospital) in Allegany County, to determine the need for hardware and software. They worked with a number of libraries to upgrade hardware and software and paid 80 percent of the cost of new servers, computers, and tablets. It was left up to the individual organizations to determine their needs. At Jones, they offered to offset the cost of a patient portal to allow patients to access their electronic medical records over the Internet. The total project was \$800,000; Southern Tier West received funding of just over \$600,000. Mr. Zink commented that he felt it will “make some tangible differences across the area we serve.”

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Employment & Training**Monthly Report**

Employment & Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch distributed her report for February 2013, indicating that the most significant change is the increase in the unemployment rate: 10 percent, up from 8.4 percent in December. She noted that the rate has been at 10 percent in January for the past three years due to the drop off in seasonal work. The good news is that the unemployment insurance claims that opened in February (19) were down from January (49). Mr. LaForge commented on the ripple effect of the proposed minimum wage hike, which triggered the question if that effect could be tracked. Ms. Lynch noted that it is hard to track, but she has a call in to the Department of Labor although it was noted that perhaps better information could be obtained from a small business association. Ms. Lynch noted that she has received no information regarding the impact sequestration would have on the E&T budget. However, E&T had received supplemental funding of approximately \$7,000 for dislocated workers. Ms. Lynch reminded the Committee to save the date for the Greater Allegany County Chamber's Business Conference scheduled for April 10. The conference, she said, piggy-backs on a Career Day which will be held at the Wellsville campus of Alfred State for area students. The afternoon will offer workshops, networking opportunities, and a keynote speaker. She also told the group that there was a Business after Hours scheduled for that evening from 5-7 p.m. at Literacy West.

Economic Development/IDA**Monthly Report**

Economic Development/IDA Director John Foels began his report with an update on the Crossroads project, noting that there had been some interesting developments over the last few weeks. The financing is starting to gel, he said, and there has been increased interest by other parties who would like to become part of the second/third phases of the project. He noted that Belmont is the only undeveloped exit off I-86 between Erie, PA, and Bath. He attributes that to the fact that there have been no utilities at that spot and no secured land, so developers could not move forward. That, however, is starting to change, he said. The County has committed to the infrastructure at that location. From the utilities standpoint, he said, we have a great relationship and an inter-municipal agreement with Friendship. From the County standpoint, we have a commitment for infrastructure (from about a year ago). Now it is time to "gel out" the commitments with the people who are going to be "on the ground." And there are others who want to get in the picture also. The content of this project has always been based on travel-related services, hospitality, and lodging, he reminded the group. It is not planned as an industrial park. Based on the travel-related services, revenues for the County could be significant as regards sales, bed, and property taxes. He went on to say that financing has been terrible due to the current economic conditions and that has put us back about two years. Developers are, of course, looking for the most favorable percentage points. This, however, has caused the financing to take longer than had been hoped. But, he reiterated, there is increased interest in this project from partners and future partners. "We are doing the best we can on behalf of Allegany County," he said, "so it is sustainable for the next 20-25 years. We want to create revenue streams long into the future."

The second project Mr. Foels addressed was Broadband. Mr. Foels told the assemblage that the fiber goes directly over the Crossroads campus. That being the case, the County began the construction of a Point of Presence location about 18 months ago which is now about 80 percent complete. "We are just waiting for ION to tap in with their fiber," he said. "We are now looking for second-mile and last-mile providers who will occupy the Point of Presence and be able to distribute Broadband to companies, residences, etc. This should bring competition in Broadband to Allegany County so current providers will know there are other suppliers possible."

Right now, the Development Office is serving as a sort of clearinghouse for information and intent,” he said.

Another issue Mr. Foels talked about was the plan to enhance the brand of the County. This is being done through the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Group. “We need to continue to market ourselves in the most positive way possible. We need to attract the best and the brightest to our businesses, hospitals, and educational institutions while continuing to retain our seniors and veterans. We will do this, in part, through our County websites and the Chamber website.”

Mr. Foels informed the Committee that the Regional Economic Development Council meets Friday in Buffalo. He informed the group that he will be sitting in for Curt Crandall at that meeting. The focus of the meeting will be to review the development incentives that have been done through that Council over the past year-and-a-half. Everything that goes through for grants all goes through this group (Consolidated Funding Application). The review will include the projects that have made it, as well as the ones that have been delayed or cancelled. Eighty-three projects were up in that timeframe, and our communities had a remarkable number approved in a lot of different areas, such as Broadband, housing, and business. We have probably generated more grant money in the past year-and-a-half, he said, than in the last six.

Finally, Mr. Foels spoke to the fact that the IDA has been tagged as an organization that works on big projects. It is now seeking to assist in smaller projects and opportunities. He cited an example in Fillmore, whereby, Sweetwater Media, a small inbound service-based telemarketing company, recently took over a vacant building and has plans to employ up to 25 people in the next two-and-a-half year time span. Patrick Barry, the president of the company, shared his desire to enhance Fillmore with the IDA,

When queried by Friendship Supervisor Susan Strickley about the timeline for the proposed waterline, Mr. Foels responded that a certain amount of critical mass of end users is necessary at the end of the waterline before it can be started. Allegany County’s commitment to the project, he said, was to put money aside, but we must ensure that we don’t build this for something that might happen years from now. But, he continued, “We will do this as quickly as we can with the best possible outcome so Friendship can generate income from this also. We will work with your community and Belmont,” he said, “because both are primary townships involved so we want to continue for you to have good information sent to you on a regular basis. The bottom line is, however, that at this time there is no definitive timeline—but we’re working hard.” Mr. Foels promised to be more proactive with Friendship and Belmont leaders about the progress being made at the Crossroads.

Chairman Crandall repeated his perspective which he had shared at the prior month’s PED meeting. “From the Legislative perspective,” he said, “We’re in the chute ready to go. The County has been talking about development for the past 20-plus years, but it was just a few years ago that the inter-municipal agreements were put into place and that money was spent to get engineering studies done, and the project started to move in the right direction. Only one year ago in January that this Board committed County fund balance dollars which we never had before and committed these dollars into the waterline from Friendship to this development. Now there needs to be private development, private dollars invested. Others need to step forward and that’s what our Development Office is working toward. But we don’t want to see a pipeline built that goes to nobody or nobody that can sustain that kind of investment that we have committed on behalf of the people of Allegany County. I am optimistic that things will move forward, but the timeline is still unclear.”

Ms. Strickley also noted that she would like to see a District 2 representative on the IDA Board.

Legislator Healy asked Mr. Foels if developers have closed on the property at the Crossroads. Mr. Foels responded that that has not yet occurred. He told the group that two parcels of land are in play. The former truck stop is 11 acres, and initially, developers had a commitment in principle with the owners to purchase the site at auction after it came out of default; however, the closing has been delayed because it sat in litigation for five-and-a-half years, and there are DEC issues that need to be resolved. There are another 18.5 acres behind that owned by the IDA.

County Planner

Monthly Report

County Planner Kier Dirlam invited members interested in open space, trails, recreation, forests, etc., to attend an Open Space state-wide meeting for Allegany County on April 10 at 6:30 p.m. at the Crossroads. This would be Allegany County's one chance to be heard. He also noted that the Hazard Mitigation Group has convened and is looking over the plan and starting the process of changes/updates. Legislator Sinclair added that 42 participating municipalities have been contacted to participate in the process.

Soil & Water Conservation

Monthly Report

Soil & Water Conservation Director Scott Torrey distributed a document highlighting his area's activities. The report noted that some of the Round 18 grant money had been received and there are plans to complete three of the grant projects during summer 2013. It was also noted that the District will receive Round 19 grant money for the Cryder Creek Watershed. The grant total is \$256,675 with \$191,975 coming from the State. The 2008-09 FL-LOWPA close-out will be finished by the end of the week. The District has received 2010-11 grant funds and will soon receive the 2011-12 funding. The total grant funds will be \$76,000 with an additional \$17,000 coming from landowners. Additionally, state operation reimbursement funds totaling \$59,324.73 have been received; this represents an increase from \$30,000 in 2012.

Greater Allegany County Chamber of Commerce

Monthly Report

Greater Allegany County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Gretchen Hanchett gave the group an overview of upcoming activities. The Greater Allegany County Chamber of Commerce Annual Business Conference will offer workshops and keynote speakers, she said. The Business Conference follows the Allegany County College and Career Readiness Day to be held at the Wellsville campus of Alfred State College. Michael Hess, CEO of Scooba Design, is scheduled to speak on "PR on a Small Budget." Ms. Hanchett noted that preparations for July's "Tough Mudders" competition at Kent Farms is progressing and that there will be a meeting on April 11 at 10 a.m. at the Crossroads which will deal with EMTs, police, security, volunteers, lodging, and other necessary logistics for the event.

She informed the group that the Chamber has a new website which can be accessed at www.Alleganychamber.org. This site will support the County and its businesses. Ms. Hanchett also said that the tourism travel guide this year will present a better and more comprehensive view of Allegany County. Most of the smaller brochures will still be published, while some of the others may be consolidated. Finally, Ms. Hanchett reminded the group of the Fifth Annual Greater Allegany County Chamber Dinner, honoring local business and organizations, at 6 p.m. on Friday, March 22, at Moonwinks Restaurant.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was

adjourned at 12:05 p.m. following a motion by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Healy, and carried

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Santora, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board
Allegany County Board of Legislators

**PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
APRIL 17, 2013**

**** NOT APPROVED ****

Committee Members Present: F. Sinclair, D. Pullen, K. Graves, D. Healy, T. Hopkins, K. LaForge, C. Crandall (Absent: P. Curran)

Others Present: M. Alger, L. Bliven, C. Braack, K. Dirlam, D. Fanton, J. Foels, G. Hanchett, J. Luckey, T. Miner, B. Riehle, T. Ross, C. Santora, R. Sobeck-Lynch, S. Torrey

Media Present: No media present

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Planning & Economic Development Committee Chairman Frederick Sinclair.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Hopkins, and carried to approve the Planning & Economic Development Committee minutes of March 20, 2013.

Historic Artifacts in Storage—Craig Braack, Historian

Legislator Sinclair led off the discussion by talking about the fate of the County Museum based on discussion at the previous Facilities & Communications Committee meeting. He noted that the County is coming to a point to be able to issue RFPs for dismantling, reclamation, and selling of any valuable parts and pieces of the building. The Department of Public Works is creating the RFPs because Public Works is the principal committee responsible for the building and its ultimate fate. The articles inside, and County Historian Craig Braack, however, fall under the jurisdiction of this Committee. Because those articles will be included in the RFP looking to dispose of those items, there is a need to have a comprehensive inventory in order to determine what is there and what might be of value or what could be lent out to other museums or saved for future County use.

County Historian Craig Braack addressed the Committee, saying that all valuables of a paper nature have been moved and are safe in the new facility. Since the move, he has been creating an inventory, although that, as well as removing items, has been challenging. He predicted that he would have a rough draft of the inventory within the week. Some of the items, he said, have gone “home” from whence they came. He also said that the vast majority of the items stored in the cellar were in residence prior to his becoming the County Historian. He went on to say that his predecessor kept anything “old,” and that many of the items were not intrinsically valuable. He added that humidity problems and standing water in the basement had exacted a terrible toll on the artifacts stored there. He felt that a majority of the items might end up in the landfill. He conceded that a few things might be of good value, and if it became an issue, those items could be brought to the main floor for an assessment and/or for the public to review them should there be an auction. If the County were to decide to sell these items via a sealed bid process, then a timeline would need to be determined for bid submission, and there would also be a need for people to monitor the display, allowing interested parties the opportunity to review and decide if and what to bid. Mr. Braack went on to say that the windows are his biggest concern. It was his opinion that the windows should not be razed with the building, as that might upset the locals who grew up with the church and have strong sentiment for the building. He did note that there are two companies in Rochester that buy large stained glass windows from various structures, but because the windows are too large to be retailed intact, the company will “break” them at the leading, frame them in age appropriate frames, and sell individually for several hundred dollars according to the quality of the glass, colors, and

patterns. The windows are not rare or valuable, but should be put up for sale—not destroyed. It should also be made abundantly clear, he said, that there have been Herculean efforts made to alleviate the water problems in the building, but there has been water coming in from a crack in the middle of the concrete floor, and drainage of that water has been spotty despite our best efforts. As a result, many of the items in the cellar are rusted piles and some items are unidentifiable. He did say he would have a preliminary inventory the following week. Mr. Sinclair requested that the pieces that had been sent “home” be included in that list. Discussion followed, with a number of auction houses/assessors mentioned as possibilities for help in this endeavor. It was noted that the County couldn’t ask just one, but they must all be asked. County Attorney Tom Miner asked the group if the RFP should give the County the right to reject any offer that might be received if it does not approach the appraised value of an item. The consensus of the group was that was a good idea. Mr. Braack noted that one of the items in question is a large fanning mill from the 1800s which was either made or sold by someone in Rockville. Commenting that it is very large, he could not immediately come up with an organization that might have room to display it. Legislator Healy noted that in addition to contacting any municipalities to ascertain if there were any items they might like for their local museums, that perhaps the Fair Board should also be contacted. Legislator Sinclair informed Mr. Braack that Linda Smith of Cuba has volunteered to help with the inventory work. Finally, Legislator Pullen commended and thanked Mr. Braack for the outstanding presentation he gave at the recent senior forum.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Employment & Training

Monthly Report

Employment & Training-Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch distributed her monthly report, saying that it had been an uneventful month with no major problems. Ms. Lynch brought with her copies of the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) test for those who might like to see what their skill level might be. She added that anyone seeking training or public assistance is required to take this test which measures skill levels in adults. Legislator Fanton noted that Ms. Lynch has been attending the Manufacturing Council meetings and that Alstom will be hiring 100+ employees in the next few months. He added that hopefully, some of the folks taking the TABE and going to E&T might be among those hired. Ms. Lynch added that she has been working with Alstom’s HR Office during this phasing in of new employees. The Department of Labor from Buffalo has been working with her on this project, including bringing laptops so that applicants have the necessary tools for whatever needs to be done online. Ms. Lynch said she is prepared to do whatever they can onsite to make the process more efficient. In other “news,” she said that Lufkin would be moving its office into the main building later this week. She added that Lufkin is going to be purchased by GE.

Economic Development/IDA

Monthly Report

Economic Development/IDA Director John Foels told the group he was gratified by the seemingly heightened level of discussion about our locale’s major employers. He said we have great working relationships with Greg Muscato and John Mulryan at RMT. We are more aware of successes, but also, we need to be candid....there are things that don’t work out, but right now, the County is doing extremely well, in no small part thanks to the support of the Legislators, Empire State Development, New York State, and our offices and services. Mr. Foels went on to discuss the Manufacturing Council, noting that Legislator Fanton co-chairs that body with Joe Hart from RIT. He went on to say, referring to the recent career day held at Alfred

State, that it is good to get these people in the same room because they understand common things. He sees the group as growing and commended the College for doing a great job.

Mr. Foels said that the members of the Committee should each have received an invitation from Genesee River Wilds for April 26 for a ribbon cutting at the access point at the transit bridge. This, he said, is the first access point by Genesee River Wilds on the river. Two more are planned. The signage is in place as are trees, boulders, and picnic tables. This opens up the river for recreation, which he characterized as a good thing.

Mr. Foels informed the group that about a week prior, Chairman Crandall held a logistics meeting regarding the Broadband Project which dealt with contracts, who will do what, and similar issues. This meeting did not deal with last mile providers because the foundation needs to be in place first. He went on to say that they anticipate a contract from New York State in the next week or so, and then more activity will occur. He reminded the group that there will be careful consideration regarding the way we move forward. He added that County Administrator Mitch Alger will be the "go-to" contact. He also cautioned the group about what we say about the project and how we say it, particularly to the media and to constituents. He said it would be safe to say that the Broadband Project is a process that will begin this summer and will take a year-and-a-half to complete. Mr. Foels indicated that one of the factors contributing to the County's success in being awarded the Broadband grant is because we had fashioned a well-thought-out plan and had partners in place. He also said that most policy discussion will be done in the Facilities and Communications Committee.

County Planner **Monthly Report**

County Planner Kier Dirlam reported on his recent attendance at a GIS conference in Rochester the previous day, noting that it is amazing how fast technology changes. The things that were in vogue two years ago are not "it" any more. The mapping world is using new software, techniques, and methods of getting information out. He added that New York State has reorganized its technology-related areas into an ITS Department (Information Technology Services). Anyone who did any computer, mapping, or data work, including cyber security has been rolled into this division. He also said that new commissions have been authorized by NYS to make all data across all state agencies more open to the public and usable by our groups as well as other people. There has been a GIS clearinghouse for about a decade, he added, but most people don't know it exists or how to use it. They're trying to fix that whole process. He went on to say that 12 years ago, the County signed an agreement to provide data to a state clearinghouse, but the only thing from Allegany County that sits on there is our parcel data. That's all we're submitting. Mr. Dirlam feels that we should probably think about how we can do that more effectively and what information belongs out there. Mr. Dirlam went on to tell the group that last July, a public safety project "SAM" began which, in conjunction with Fire & Emergency Services, Real Property Services, and the Sheriff's Office is working on an addressing map for the State which will include accurate information regarding what number goes with what house. This is a statewide project to create a state map. Allegany County still has a long way to go. SAM is bringing in its resources to help, using aerials, to put the points on the houses and put the right numbers on them. One of the issues is that Allegany County data has been weak, noting that it would be helpful if assessors would enter the address numbers into the system. Mr. Dirlam went on to talk about the prior week's Open Space meeting, noting that one topic that "came up out of the blue" is equestrian needs. The equestrian representatives want us to step up to the plate and be more proactive in making trails and places to connect the trails. They talked to the State forest folks about it. He informed the group that there will be a Landmark Society event in Cuba that Thursday at the Opera House. People from Indiana will discuss their experience in restoring an old courthouse. Mr. Dirlam invited the

group to attend this event being handled by the Cuba Chamber. Mr. Dirlam went on to say that his office had assisted the Board of Elections to get the redistricting maps done and gave them every address they needed. He was hopeful that this would help alleviate some of the problems experienced during the last election. Finally, Mr. Dirlam invited the Committee to a Local Government Conference on May 8 in Houghton where they could meet with town and village representatives in a casual atmosphere. Mr. Dirlam characterized this as a great networking opportunity.

Soil & Water Conservation

Monthly Report

Soil & Water Conservation Director Scott Torrey told the group that the district has been fortunate that New York State has been coming through with the grant monies it has been awarded. That has been his group's main focus, getting surveys and designs done. Mr. Torrey told the Committee that they had begun construction the previous day on the first project of the summer. Additionally, he said, they have been answering technical calls from landowners. He added that there is a lot going on, but not a lot to report. Legislator Sinclair questioned him on a project in the Town of Friendship. Mr. Torrey responded that his area is helping the Town of Friendship with a FEMA project to protect its sewer lines. All design work has been completed and they are now waiting for permits from the DEC, and the Army Corps of Engineers as well as for FEMA approval. It's a \$75,000 project, he added. He said he expects the project to be completed in a month or two. It was announced that Gloria Meese, the district secretary, will retire July 12.

Cornell Cooperative Extension

Monthly Report

Cornell Cooperative Extension Representative Lynn Bliven prepared a PowerPoint presentation to illustrate and bring the group up-to-date where we are regarding agricultural economic development in the County. Because of time constraints, Ms. Bliven was unable to complete the presentation, so Legislator Sinclair asked her to return and continue at next month's meeting. However, among the salient points in the presentation:

Cornell University Cooperative Extension Mission:

- The Cornell Cooperative Extension educational system enables people to improve their lives and communities through partnerships that put experiences and research knowledge to work.
- Cooperative Extension programs in every county of New York State are linked back to our state's land grant university, Cornell University. Our educators tap into that expertise to help the citizens in Allegany and Cattaraugus counties make informed choices, develop character and competence skills, improve health, become good stewards of our environment, and strengthen our economy.

CCE Program Outreach

- CCE offers agricultural programs and resources targeting diverse audiences in areas of dairy and livestock production; field crops and nutrient management; horticulture; natural resources; direct marketing, farm management, economics, and policy.
- CCE Agriculture and Food Systems programs promote profitability; sustainability; environmental stewardship; a safe, reliable, and healthy food supply; and agricultural tourism.

Additionally, Ms. Bliven presented the following statistics:

Allegany County Agriculture/Livestock

- Beef cows: 221 farms; 5,067 head (nearly double between 2002-07—second in state in beef cow numbers)
- Milk cows: 115 farms, 8,850 head
- Hogs: 73 farms
- Sheep: 29 farms; 1,500 head (small decline, but expect to see rebound)
- Poultry: 77 farms
- Horses: 265 farms

Allegany County Agriculture/Crops

- Field corn (grain/silage): 11,087 acres
- Wheat: (D) acres
- Barley: 146 acres
- Oats: 1,089 acres
- Hay/haylage: 44,367 acres
- Vegetables: 81 acres
- Orchards: 53 acres
- Maple: 53,275 taps (in the top 10 in state in number of taps)

Ms. Bliven concluded this portion of her presentation with employment opportunities in the areas of dairy farms, livestock, forestry, and horticulture.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 12:03 p.m. following a motion by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Hopkins, and carried

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Santora, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board
Allegany County Board of Legislators

**PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MAY 15, 2013**

**** NOT APPROVED ****

Committee Members Present: F. Sinclair, D. Pullen, P. Curran, K. Graves, T. Hopkins, K. LaForge, C. Crandall (Absent: D. Healy)

Others Present: M. Alger, L. Bliven, C. Braack, D. Burdick, D. Fanton, J. Foels, G. Hanchett, T. Miner, B. Riehle, C. Santora, A. Santangelo, R. Sobeck-Lynch, S. Torrey, B. Webb (Houghton College)

Media Present: B. Clark, *Olean Times Herald*

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 11:05 a.m. by Planning & Economic Development Committee Chairman Frederick Sinclair.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Curran, and carried to approve the Planning & Economic Development Committee minutes of April 17, 2013.

Status of Agricultural Economic Development, Cooperative Extension

(continued from last month)

Before resuming her PowerPoint presentation which she began at the last meeting, Cornell Cooperative Extension Representative Lynn Bliven introduced Aaron Santangelo as the new Agriculture Community Educator. Mr. Santangelo said a few words about his background, including that he is a Cuba native completing his undergraduate degree in Agriculture Education and Animal Science at Cornell University. Following the introduction, Ms. Bliven continued her PowerPoint presentation. Much of the presentation focused on keeping agriculture in Allegany County viable and sustainable. She also illustrated the number of professions that are in some way related to agriculture—many in ways people might not realize. Ms. Bliven spoke about the initiative to bring healthier, ideally locally grown, products to our schools and other institutions. She went on to say that education, even of rural residents, is an important step in meeting the Cooperative Extension mission.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Projects

Legislator Sinclair distributed a list of economic development projects. Discussion followed, recognizing a number of projects in the County that merit review. Legislator Curran promoted the installation of sewer lines for Swain as being one of the two top priorities. That community is in the process of building 23 homes which would provide immediate potential payback. Legislator Sinclair agreed that Swain is an important issue in view of the County's economic development as is Cuba Hospital's planned Retirement Community. He also indicated that each of these worthy projects would find support in Allegany County's future planning. Rehabilitation of empty school buildings was also discussed. It was noted that the Development Office is still actively seeking funding for the current two top priorities, and that each had been awarded \$150,000 from ARC (Allegany Regional Commission) and the 417 projects had been awarded an additional \$186,000 from Empire State Development. Mr. Sinclair felt confident that by the time the County is ready to break ground on that project, the lion's share of funding on behalf of the town would be provided to them. After listening to the discussion, Legislator Sinclair proposed that the two top projects that have been the top priorities, the development of the Crossroads Project (County Route 20 Water System Project) and the Route 417 Waterline

Extension in Wellsville, remain so. The proposal that these projects remain priorities 1 and 2 was approved on a motion by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Pullen, and carried.

Southern Tier West Regional Planning Board Appointments

The Chairman of the Board appointed Kier Dirlam, Almond; and re-appointed Jerry Scott, Cuba, and Frederick Sinclair, Town of Ward, as members of the Southern Tier West Regional Planning Board for a three-year term commencing June 1, 2013, and expiring May 31, 2016. In addition, the Chairman is re-appointing the current ex-officio members as follows: Public Works Superintendent Guy R. James, Chairman of the Board Curtis W. Crandall, and Chairman of the Planning Board Lee Gridley. The appointments and reappointments were approved on a motion by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Curran, and carried.

Prepare Resolution

Houghton College NYSERDA Grant for Photovoltaic Arrays

Guest Speaker Brian Webb, Sustainability Coordinator at Houghton College, addressed the Committee to inform it about a NYSERDA (New York State Energy Research and Development Authority) grant and a partnership with Smart Energy Capital which will allow Houghton College to utilize 11 acres of its property in order to construct a large-scale photovoltaic (PV) array in order to generate electricity which Houghton College will buy back from Smart Energy Capital for 25 years in exchange for Smart Energy Capital's having constructed and maintained the PV array. He informed the group that Houghton College has been committed to environmental sustainability for the past six or seven years. ("Creation Care" is the terminology used by Houghton College to inject theological language into the commitment to take care of the Earth.) Houghton's President is among more than 600 other college and university presidents across the Country who have agreed to move their campuses toward becoming carbon neutral by signing the Presidents' Climate Commitment. Houghton's goal is to be carbon neutral by 2050. This PV project ("fuel switching" going from using fossil fuels to renewable energy options) is a big step in that direction. Mr. Webb noted that this array will be the largest on any NYS college campus, perhaps in all of Western New York. The one obstacle the project faces is that the zoning for that property, which is designated a land conservation district, prohibits structures to be built due to the possibility of flooding. However, because such structures as those needed for these PV arrays were not thought of when the zoning went into effect, and because they will not have a large "on-the-ground footprint," there is belief that this obstacle can be overcome through an amendment to the current zoning law, particularly as the structure is not a traditional dwelling or office complex and the arrays will be situated on poles above ground level. The Caneadea Town Board has agreed to work through this contingent on the plan's passing muster with the DEC, SEQ, and the Army Corps of Engineers in time to meet the NYSERDA grant deadline which requires that the project be operational within eight months of Houghton College's receiving the grant. This restriction requires everything to be in place and operational by late fall. The Caneadea Town Planning Board and the County Planning Board must also approve the plan. Mr. Webb sought support from the Committee for the project and for the amendment of the zoning law. A motion was made by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Curran, and carried to fully support the solar energy project at Houghton College to include the modification of the land conservation district for solar array usage.

Prepare Resolution

Departmental Reports:

Employment & Training Monthly Report

Employment & Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch distributed her report for April 2013. She highlighted the success of the programming being done in conjunction with the Department of Social Services whereby applicants seeking benefits from DSS are seen immediately by E&T in order to assess skills and have the applicants attend two weeks of training modules. Should an applicant miss a session, s/he is required to re-apply for DSS benefits and the process begins again. Ms. Lynch noted that in April the program resulted in a cost avoidance to the County of \$360,000.

Additionally, Ms. Lynch requested that the Committee approve the Cattaraugus-Allegany Workforce Investment Board (WIB) Local Plan for the period July 1, 2013, through June 30, 2014, noting that it is very similar to the current plan, and to authorize Allegany County Board of Legislators Chairman Curtis Crandall to sign the local plan when it is finalized. Although Ms. Lynch did not know the exact amount of the funding, she did indicate it would be less than last year. The Plan was approved on a motion by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Pullen, and carried. **Prepare Resolution**

Economic Development/IDA Monthly Report

Economic Development/IDA Director John Foels updated the Committee on the status of the Comprehensive Plan, saying it is in its final edits stage and that it would be distributed in draft form for review in order to go before the Board in June, allowing the plan to go to print on schedule. Mr. Foels went on to say that he had been among those who had attended a meeting with the USDA, learning that funding options are available through Rural Development, the Small Business Association, and individual banks, to name a few. He reiterated that financing is always the greatest challenge of a project because investors want the lowest interest rate for the longest time. He stated that he had also attended the regional Development Council meetings for Chairman Crandall and believes Allegany County should be able to access Empire State Development monies in the next round which will be announced in June or July. Mr. Foels also told the group that the next day would be a full day of meetings with Southern Tier West regarding the railroad crossings. Despite the volume of trains going through Allegany County has decreased, the RR continues to make major investments in the system. Finally, Mr. Foels indicated that there has been some coordination with Southern Tier West as regards the Broadband grants and the two groups will continue to stay in contact for a coordination of efforts.

County Planner

County Planner Kier Dirlam was unable to attend the meeting.

County Historian

County Historian Craig Braack told the group that he had nothing new to report this month, but that the warmer weather was making accessibility to the artifacts in the basement of the old museum easier. He also wanted to go "on record" as saying that all paper artifacts and all small items donated by residents have been retained.

Soil & Water Conservation

Soil & Water Conservation Executive Director Scott Torrey informed the Committee of the projects his Office has been working on recently. Last month, the District assisted the Town of Genesee with a mining permit for its newly purchased gravel pit; assisted Town of Bolivar with a stream bank permit; completed design work for a tile drainage system in Independence; completed design work for a farmer-funded concrete manure storage facility; is working with

DPW on permits for stream bank protection at Cold Creek; and is working on surveys and designs for summer projects.

Greater Allegany County Chamber of Commerce

Greater Allegany Co. Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Gretchen Hanchett reported that she had attended the Governor's Tourism Summit where he announced he was committing \$60 million to create jobs through tourism. Some of this includes I Love NY advertising on subways and buses and on cooperating airlines. Additionally a Sports and Special Events Commission will be created to recruit sporting and other events in venues across the State. Ms. Hanchett informed the group that a 30-second television ad "All in a Day's Drive," highlighting summer activities in Allegany County (such as hiking, canoeing, fishing, atv-ing, etc.) will run 15 times a month for five months via FOX and WROC of Rochester. Legislator Sinclair requested that Ms. Hanchett bring a copy to next month's meeting for viewing. Total cost for the five months will be \$4,000. Ms. Hanchett went on to say that the 24-page, glossy Allegany County Travel Guide is being resurrected. She added that the majority of the smaller brochures will be retained, but it was felt that we were missing a target audience without this larger piece. Because it has not been done since 2009, there are updates that need to be completed. Rick McLay is the designer on the project. Ms. Hanchett projects a press run of between 50 and 60,000, for an estimated cost of \$9,927. Ms. Hanchett said she is investigating the possibility of a phone app for the scenic driving tours which will alleviate the issues regarding sign placement and cost for about \$1,500 per year. Finally, Ms. Hanchett noted that there is no tourism specialist on board as yet, but there is a person in the position temporarily.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:59 a.m. following a motion by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Curran, and carried

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Santora, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board
Allegany County Board of Legislators

**PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
JUNE 19, 2013**

**** NOT APPROVED ****

Committee Members Present: F. Sinclair, D. Pullen, P. Curran, K. Graves, D. Healy, K. LaForge, (Absent: T. Hopkins, C. Crandall)

Others Present: M. Alger, S. Alsworth, L. Bliven, C. Braack, N. Carnes, S. Decker, K. Dirlam, D. Fanton, J. Foels, G. Hanchett, B. Riehle, C. Santora, R. Sobeck-Lynch

Media Present: B. Quinn, *Wellsville Daily Reporter*

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Planning & Economic Development Committee Chairman Frederick Sinclair.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Pullen, and carried to approve the Planning & Economic Development Committee minutes of May 15, 2013.

Introduction of New Journal Clerk

Clerk of the Board Brenda Rigby Riehle introduced Sarah Decker who succeeds Adele Finnemore (who is retiring, effective June 30) as Journal Clerk. Ms. Decker began her duties June 17.

Briefing on NY Tax Free Zone Legislation

Legislator Sinclair informed the Committee that he had recently attended a meeting in Alfred where NYS Lieutenant Governor Robert Duffy gave a briefing and PowerPoint presentation on "Tax-Free NY: Transforming University Communities into Magnets for New Businesses and Investment." He went on to say that the event was well attended and participants included mayors, local college and university officials, and business people from the local area. It was noted, however, that the current CSEA (Civil Service Employees Association) radio ad calls Tax-Free NY a "bad idea." Although feelings were mixed among attendees regarding this new initiative, Legislator Sinclair feels this could be an opportunity to get some venture capitalists together and attract business to the area. He went on to highlight some of the basic points, including: "SUNY campuses and community colleges and up to 200,000 square feet adjoining the campus, 3,000,000 square feet designated for private colleges and 20 strategically located state-owned properties will be Tax-Free Communities (no sales, property, or business/corporate taxes) with employees exempt from paying income taxes." Mr. Sinclair said that during his presentation, Lt. Gov. Duffy also highlighted prison sites that had been deleted from the State inventory. He went on to say that Alfred State had acquired the Sonyea property (about 300 acres of good farmland) and that although it is not located in Allegany County, it would be eligible and would be an easy commute if businesses located there. He added that Alfred State holds several hundred acres in Alfred. Houghton College was also present and interested in learning about the process. SUNY campuses are hoping that Foundation-owned properties (such as the Alfred State Wellsville campus which is owned by the Educational Foundation of Alfred) will also be eligible to become tax-free zones. This is something NYS Senator Cathy Young is supporting. Returning to the NYS document, Mr. Sinclair registered surprise at the facts that "93 percent of New Yorkers are within just 15 miles of a SUNY Campus, enabling millions of New Yorkers to benefit from the increased job-creating and economy-boosting potential of Tax-Free NY." This led to discussion about students being able to work as interns or at summer jobs at the businesses that might crop up at these sites.

Additionally, as summer jobs and internships often lead to full-time job offers, this plan has the potential to result in stemming the migration of New York State's best and brightest to sunnier (economic) climes.

Legislator Pullen, also read from the NYS document: "This proposal, designed to boost the upstate economy, is an innovative approach, and illustrates that we can and should do more to make the State's overall economic climate more competitive," noting that this quote clearly indicates that New York State taxes are too high. He stated that it might just be better to lower taxes and reduce the regulatory burden on the entire state—not just select communities. He also indicated the initiative has his support because even though it doesn't go far enough, it is better than nothing.

Legislator Healy voiced his agreement. However, he also said that once government subsidies dry up, the beneficiaries of such subsidies often cannot survive on their own merits. But, he added, it would be foolish not to try to take advantage of the opportunity. He added that the State would be better served if it used the money it spent on studies to lower the tax burdens of its residents and businesses.

Legislator Graves agreed with what had been said previously, but would prefer a "wait-and-see" approach to determine if this initiative truly develops into something that we should pursue.

Legislator LaForge noted that "you can't get much closer to giving it away than this," but wondered where we go if this doesn't work.

Legislator Sinclair went on to say that the document uses the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering in partnership with the University at Albany and the State as an example of success. It has grown to become a preeminent research college for nanoscale technology and has attracted billions of dollars in private sector investment creating New York State's own "Silicon Valley." He added that the Tax-Free NY idea is an outgrowth of what occurred in Albany. It stands to reason that jobs and revenues have increased in that area, and the Governor hopes that similar positive impacts can occur at some of the State's other campuses.

Legislator Pullen pointed out that the tax relief that is part of this initiative could end up placing larger (tax) burdens on the citizenry not involved in these growth industries. Additionally, he wondered how a potential influx of people to a developing area would affect local services such as water, police, etc. How does a municipality expand services without additional tax revenue? Not all change, even if well intentioned, is beneficial, he added.

Legislator Sinclair, however, noted that a "rising tide floats all boats," and that more business would stimulate activity at the airport and at local hotels.

Legislator Healy asked whether the Lt. Governor had indicated just how this initiative would be subsidized. Legislator Sinclair replied that he said there would be no fiscal impact to the State. It was noted that the \$50 million in venture capital would need to come from somewhere, but there would not need to be an immediate major outlay of funding.

Development/IDA Director John Foels noted that this is an interesting concept whose details have yet to be worked out. However, as a small community (under 50,000 people) with four college campuses, coupled with the talent that we're graduating, we should be able to capture some of that venture capital money; this is a creative way to move forward. Addressing the issue of the \$50 million in venture capital, he said, the State will not place a huge sum of money in an account all at once, but that it is a process that will occur over time.

Legislator Sinclair thanked the group for a lively discussion and noted that monitoring the progress of this initiative may prove to be important to the County.

Discussion with County Records Officer Re: System Development

Legislator Sinclair invited County Records Management Officer Craig Braack to join the Committee at the table to discuss the current and projected future needs for records storage. The discussion began with a recap of the tour several legislators and the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent of Public Works took of the Cattaraugus County records storage facility. Some of the information reviewed included: one full-time and one part-time employee work in the records storage facility. The system that Cattaraugus County has set up includes forms to be filled out by people requesting files and forms for the disposition of files. Additionally, there is an annual pro-rated fee charged to each department based on the amount of space it uses. The fees pay for the operation and maintenance (including staff) of the record storage area. The fee schedule also serves as an incentive for departments to cull their records on a regular basis. Jim Griffith, the Cattaraugus County Clerk, believes that the County will never need to build another facility; in fact, he thinks that the system that is currently in place will allow for the facility to work into perpetuity. Mr. Braack indicated that Allegany County, too, has a system in place whereby old files are culled from the storage facilities. He gave a brief overview of file retrieval procedures: each department storing records has a key to the outside door of the facility. For those departments whose records require confidentiality, such as the Department of Social Services, for example, there are secured areas within each building, and those departments have an additional key which works solely on the area within which its records are stored. This system, said Mr. Braack, has worked well for over 20 years. Mr. Braack went on to say that he always keeps up to date on records that need to be purged. He said he requires a "disposal date" on each box (where applicable) before it goes into storage. One problem, Mr. Braack notes, is that boxes are not put into storage all at the same time, so dates are not contiguous. This is a task that he's working on, and he will enlist the Job Trak folks to help him consolidate the space. It was Mr. Braack's opinion that a new storage facility with a computerized system was not necessary in the immediate future, and that he did not feel there is justification for a full-time records person. Saying that "if it ain't broke, don't fix it," Mr. Braack believes the system is functional as it is. That doesn't preclude any need for improvement, but to "do it right," would require a full-time person with excellent computer skills who would stay with the system for many years; sufficient office space, probably at the Landfill; and scanners that could handle large documents (because all are not 8 ½ by 11 inches). Mr. Braack also went on to say he believes some departments continue to keep records that do not need to be kept into perpetuity and, for example, that the former County Clerk seemed to have an aversion to disposing of records, even those that did not need to be retained. He added that it would be time well spent for departments to cull through some of those records. He also reminded the Committee members that the Records Retention and Disposition Schedule CO-2 should be available in every department. Legislator Sinclair reiterated his hope that Southern Tier West could assist us in this endeavor. Legislator Pullen commended Mr. Braack on his efforts in this area. Legislator Graves concurred.

Weir Lot Timber Bid

Soil & Water Conservation Agricultural/Environmental Management Planner Scott Alsworth requested approval for acceptance of the Weir Lot Timber Bid from R.T. Chamberlain Logging and Trucking, Belfast. He told the group that he had prepared and sent 32 bid packets out and received only one in return. Because there were issues with access (which Mr. Alsworth postulated might have been a reason for the lack of bids), the bid came in lower than he had anticipated at \$49,501. The bids, he said, had been sent out two ways: DPW would work on the access road or the buyer would take on the responsibility of getting the logs out. Mr. Alsworth estimated that there would be 160,000 board feet of hardwood and 16 tons of softwood to be

harvested on 157 acres from this cutting. He also said that this was simply a management cut or “thinning” and that it would need to be done again in about 10 years. There was discussion on access possibilities. One of the issues was the Department of Public Works did not have the time/manpower to groom the approximately 3,000-foot access road and was not sure it was worth it to contract that out. The possibility of bidders contracting with the local landowners for access also arose. Legislator Sinclair recalled a time when that road had been damaged by a storm, and the resulting gully had been filled in by brush, saying that the base may not be stable. Legislator LaForge asked if the thinning could wait a year for a potentially improved market. Other legislators agreed that this might not be the optimal time to sell that wood. It was decided to not accept the bid at this time on a motion by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Healy, and carried. In the meantime, Mr. Alsworth would research road access possibilities, surveys, etc. as well as some other issues he alluded to that he would bring back before the Committee.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Employment & Training

Monthly Report

Employment & Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch distributed her monthly report, saying that May was a quiet month, numbers about average. She went on to point out that the unemployment rate is down to 7.7 percent, the lowest it has been since 2008. Ms. Lynch also said that her office has been busy with the Summer Youth Employment Program which will provide work experience for 60 (out of 100 applications) youth, ages 14-21. A lot of businesses are signing on, she said, and her hope is that there will be young people placed throughout the County. The big deal, she added, is the Federal funding. Ms. Lynch noted that E&T cannot use any WIA funding for PY (Program Year) 13 until October 1, 2013. The WIA funding for PY13 is \$314,344 which is a decrease of \$23,000.

County Planner

Monthly Report

County Planner Kier Dirlam informed the group that he had recently met with Genesee Valley Greenway and NYS Parks to develop a plan for the Greenway which will run from Letchworth to Belfast to Cuba to Hinsdale. He added that there is a fair amount of work to do in Allegany County. The hope is to have a draft plan ready by August and to finalize it in October. Any comments should be made to the Office of Parks within the next 30 days. He also updated the group on the progress of the Open Space Plan saying that from many meetings a plan for the eight western counties, written primarily by the DEC, has been sent to Albany. Now it is a matter of waiting to see where that goes. He noted that he had included several projects such as trails and forests, etc. He said that he had provided the Greater Allegany County Chamber of Commerce with a map for its Tourism Guide. He informed the group that the next round of Consolidated Funding Applications has been released with a deadline of August. He also said the Comprehensive Plan is online (except for the appendices thus far) and that he is seeking comments through mid-July. Finally he noted that he’s met with people from the Town of Alma to discuss creation of a strategic plan as well as a comprehensive plan. He encouraged people to go by the Allentown School to see the changes that some money and a lot of effort produce to improve its appearance considerably; these changes include a clever cover-up of the windows and replacement of the clock tower circles with stylized “A”s.

Economic Development/IDA

Monthly Report

Economic Development/IDA Director John Foels commended the work Mr. Dirlam has been doing with the communities, especially Allentown, which, he said, is an example of how a few people can make a big difference. He added that the Development Office serves as a resource, and when asked for assistance, provides it. He reiterated the information about the Consolidated Funding Applications and he indicated that from meetings he has attended (such as Empire State Development and the Regional Development Council which he attends (in Chairman Crandall's absence), when entities apply for government funding, the Governor wants to see these projects conclude within 18-24 months. He reminded the Legislators that they have been invited to attend the grand opening of Lufkin RMT (which was recently acquired by GE) on July 9 to tour the new facility. Mr. Foels noted that Lufkin is one of the highest quality projects in the County. It has increased its workforce by 15 percent and looks to double its workforce in three-five years, keeping in line with the goals identified to Empire State Development. He noted that GE, Alstom, and Dresser Rand are some of Lufkin's biggest customers, so the Company is deeply rooted in the Southern Tier. However, he added, Lufkin would be the first to say that about 90 percent of its product is exported out of New York State. He added that he was very pleased that Lufkin decided to do its expansion here.

Cornell Cooperative Extension**Monthly Report**

Cornell Cooperative Extension Representative Lynn Bliven began by saying that there is a new staff person in Ellicottville to help with the crossover calls. Mark Holt began his duties as Community Educator earlier this month. Ms. Bliven went on to say that the Youth Tractor School is in session this week from Wednesday through Friday. This course differs from others in that students receive not only classroom instruction, but also spend time on tractors learning skills and safety lessons. Youth need to be 14+ to be certified, but 12- and 13-year-olds may take the course if they are going to be working on the family farm. She indicated that at this time, there was not much interest in an adult session, but would offer it again in the hopes of preventing farm tractor accidents. The Genesee Valley Land Conservancy which has not traditionally done projects in Allegany County, has been looking at local projects such as easements and the Greenway trails as part of the Genesee Watershed. Ms. Bliven has been in conversation with those folks regarding the County's resources and potential future projects. They are looking for opportunities to work together. The Food System Initiative, through a Southern Tier West grant, is scaling up to enhance local food systems. A report has just been released, done by a grant-funded consultant who looked at our capacity to enhance the local food system. Cornell Cooperative Extension is currently looking at the recommendations. Ms. Bliven added that she had been greatly involved in the process, and that the report does reflect a lot of what we knew about the area, but it's good to have that reaffirmed by an outside source. "We are looking at what our resources are and what our potential is and how we can fit those into possible funding sources that might be available to help us enhance our local food system," she said.

Legislator Sinclair inquired of Mr. Foels if there was a comprehensive list of CFA projects that could help us determine if this project would be eligible. Mr. Foels responded that such a list doesn't exist for 2013. It won't be known what types of projects might be funded until the requests are filed in August. However, he said he would prepare a list of 2011-12 Consolidated Funding Application projects which had been funded, delayed, or cancelled, so the group could get a feel for the types of projects that might be funded.

Soil & Water Conservation**Monthly Report**

Mr. Alsworth, reporting for Scott Torrey, told the group that the Ag Nonpoint Source Grants have three projects out to bid for work to be completed this summer; one project is in the design stage. The AEM (Agricultural Environmental Management) Program completed two Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans and is assisting NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) with grant applications and grazing plans. Mr. Alsworth added that he is working with an NRCS soil conservationist to devise a Soil Health Program to put out this fall. The District received DEC approval for the Town of Friendship FEMA project and the County DPW bank stabilization project on County Route 3. They met with Town of Wellsville to provide a tree evaluation at Island Park.

Greater Allegany County Chamber of Commerce Monthly Report

Greater Allegany County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Gretchen Hanchett began her presentation with a “viewing” of the new 30-second “All in a Day’s Drive” commercial which is currently airing in the Rochester market (FOX channel 8). The ad can also be tracked in order to determine its value. She also said she is working with a videographer to capture video clips on subjects such as industry, the community, the colleges, real estate, etc. that can be switched in and out of seasonal ads and to appear on FOX’s web site. She indicated that when the Office receives an inquiry, a clip can be sent out to answer the query. Ms. Hanchett lauded the Manufacturing Council, which, she says, has made huge progress during its short life. It has created a scholarship program that boasts \$7,500 so far, and she believes more is expected from Dresser Rand. The fund is managed by the Allegany County Area Foundation and is available for students in the machining program who will stay and work in the area. She said that this venture is creating a template for other careers such as nursing, construction, etc., and is bringing together local BOCES, colleges, and businesses to work with the County to develop internship programs. She added that the Travel Guide will go to the printer by the end of the week and the map from Mr. Dirlam was very helpful.

Good of the Order

Legislator Healy returned to the Tax Free New York discussion, saying that in the (recent) past, the State legislated a 2 percent tax cap, which on its surface, sounded good, but the promised mandate relief did not follow. So, all the cap has done is push the burden onto the local governments with no mandate relief. This, he explains, is the source of his skepticism regarding Tax Free New York. Mr. Healy added, however, that “if they go ahead with this, I wish them well.”

Legislator Sinclair, on a different topic, noted that the State of New York has received \$500 million in hazard mitigation funding attached to three different hurricanes: Irene, Ann, and Sandy. He announced that there would be a meeting later in the day at Emergency Services so that all participating municipalities in the Hazard Mitigation Program are notified as Allegany County was declared for at least one of those disasters and will be able to apply for funding. He added that he hoped the County could be competitive as it will be up against many larger municipalities. “This is a direct result of our having persevered and having a Hazard Mitigation Plan in place,” he said.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:36 a.m. following a motion by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator LaForge, and carried

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Santora, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board

Allegany County Board of Legislators

**PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
JULY 17, 2013**

**** NOT APPROVED ****

Committee Members Present: F. Sinclair, P. Curran, K. Graves, D. Healy, T. Hopkins, K. LaForge (Absent: D. Pullen, C. Crandall)

Others Present: M. Alger, D. Burdick, R. Christman, D. Fanton, J. Foels, T. Miner, B. Riehle, C. Santora, R. Sobeck-Lynch, S. Torrey

Media Present: No media present

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 10:08 a.m. by Planning & Economic Development Committee Chairman Frederick Sinclair.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Curran, and carried to approve the Planning & Economic Development Committee minutes of June 19, 2013.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

**Employment & Training
Monthly Report**

Employment & Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch told the Committee that June had been a quiet month, with visits down by about 100. She noted that a quiet June was not unique to Allegany County. She reviewed some of the figures on her monthly report, noting that although not a lot of people found jobs, one nursing graduate had found employment at Noyes Hospital (Dansville) at \$24.90 per hour. She said unemployment figures were down for the month again. She said that the Summer Youth Employment Program began in early July. She explained that this year they had conducted an orientation session for youth under age 18 and their parents as well as a job readiness training session before the youth started working. She also told the story of one of the youths who had so pleased his employer that he went from 28 to 40 hours. However, because of a petty theft incident, the youth was terminated. Ms. Lynch hoped that this would be a life-long lesson for the young worker. Ms. Lynch added that when she goes to job fairs, she brings along brochures about job opportunities in Allegany County, and information on Civil Service employment which has recently increased in popularity. There were 35 new job listings in Allegany County which were posted with the Department of Labor, she said. She was asked to bring a sample of these postings along to next month's meeting. Ms. Lynch then relayed a story about Argentieri's Laundry in Wellsville and its search for workers. E&T referred three people to Argentieri's, but since that just happened during the week, she could not project the success of the referrals. Because the referrals are people receiving Public Assistance, they are eligible for Work Opportunity Tax Credit, which is appealing to the employers. Ms. Lynch noted that there is still Trade Act Adjustment money available which is for people who lose their jobs to foreign trade. There's no money left for the project with Literacy West for people released from Jail. She noted that E&T had sent several County employees to the Offender Workforce Training Specialist three-week intensive study course. The Department of Labor is tracking veterans using the Jobs for Veterans Program. Legislator Healy suggested that we do all we can to assist our veterans, especially as those numbers are bound to increase as the military downsizes. Legislator Curran questioned Ms. Lynch about an unsolicited post card he had received at his business encouraging people to apply for SNAP food stamps. He felt this problem should be addressed in the opposite way; that

is, get people off food stamps, not encourage more to apply. Legislator Sinclair requested that Ms. Lynch track down additional information regarding the NOEP Coordinator Allegany County through Cattaraugus County Community Action, Inc., Main Street, Wellsville, the source of the postcard. Ms. Lynch added that SNAP food stamps cannot be used as a sanction for those who fail to comply with re-certifying. Legislator Healy commented that SNAP does not guarantee that it is used to feed children nutritionally and there is room for misuse. Legislator Sinclair asked about TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) scores which Ms. Lynch said haven't been bad. She added that anyone who applies for Public Assistance must take a TABE Test—it's a part of the employment assessment class.

Economic Development/IDA **Monthly Report**

Economic Development/IDA Director John Foels began his report by commenting on the recent ribbon cutting at Lufkin-RMT in Wellsville, saying that the company's success, and the County's by association, had been widely publicized through print and broadcast media. He felt certain that this positive look at Allegany County would yield dividends in the future. He also noted that Lufkin has relationships with the local BOCES and Alfred State, and offers internship programs to their students, which in turn, often results in an addition to their permanent workforce. Legislator Sinclair told the group that the following day he would attend a meeting at Southern Tier West where they would review applications for ARC (Appalachian Regional Commission) funding. One of the applications is in support of further development of advanced manufacturing training at Alfred State's Wellsville campus which is looking to move the operation from Dresser Rand to the campus; it would also like to upgrade the machinery and software to enhance the overall training program.

Mr. Foels went on to remind the group that the Consolidated Funding Applications (CFA) are due to Empire State Development (ESD) in mid-August. He also said that he had received an update regarding overall funding for Western New York, and that the "Buffalo Billion" does not come at the expense of the other Western New York counties.

He continued that he had attended meetings with the Small Business Administration (SBA) regarding its financing programs and explained that it guarantees 75 percent of the financing done by various commercial lenders. This guarantee, he said, works like an insulator against defaults on loans. He added that approximately \$16,000,000 had been lent through the SBA over a five-year period of time to entities in Allegany County. He added that he had plans to meet with ESD on JDA (Job Development Authority) lending which has had some changes made to it.

He noted that he had met with NYS Senator Catharine Young, updating her on the activity in the County.

He reminded the Committee that the Comprehensive Plan is online; it still needs to go through a public hearing, SEQR, etc. He indicated that the material is now out to the towns and villages, and now there is a 30-day period for comments/responses. He said there will be a status update next month.

He said that Genesee River Wilds will soon open its second access point within the next three weeks or so, and the third a few weeks after that (Transit Bridge, Caneadea, Belfast).

When asked about the Route 417 waterline, Mr. Foels said that as everyone is aware, we have successfully captured two grants so far: one for \$150,000 and one for \$168,000 from ESD. We have applied to EDA for a \$450,000 grant which, if received, would make the local share of the project around 15-20 percent which is doable from the town's perspective. The businesses (e.g., Preheater) are very positive about a positive outcome because they really need the water.

Legislator Healy then inquired about the Crossroads Project. Mr. Foels said there are interested parties who are currently out of the County pursuing financing, because foreign lending is more available at this time. He also noted that the hospitality and lodging project is separate from the fuel piece because of the associated potential environmental issues and often those two things can't be done in the same project. However, because he is bound by confidentiality, he couldn't say anymore, other than to reiterate that the project is frequently on his mind and that he is fierce about obtaining the right (quality) project with the right partners for the County. He said his office is also fierce about protecting the investment that was made just over a year by the County which is being held in separate accounts for the waterline. He said we won't go ahead with that unless we have something very positive at the end. This is something that would be brought to Committee before we move forward on anything. The County money is separate and apart in a secure interest-bearing account not to be touched. The interest is about 1.58 percent, and the payback to the County over time will be two percent on the money expended. "But here again," he said, "as we go for grants, we continue to want to crush that number down from what it takes to what we actually need, and the less we need the better it is for the County."

Discussion went on to include the development occurring at Houghton College with its new \$20 million sports complex. Mr. Foels says that with the local colleges either in, or going into Division III, more visitors will be coming to the County. Legislator Sinclair inquired if this development has been added to the prospectus on the development at the Crossroads for the potential investors. Mr. Foels answered in the affirmative. This will necessitate more available lodging and hospitality services which should make the County attractive to investors.

Legislator Healy said, while he appreciated Mr. Foels' efforts for the perfect project, he felt that sometimes you just had to get something done and the rest would follow. Mr. Foels noted that the folks who will be investing at the Crossroads will be "pioneers" in a sense and will bear additional risk by being the first ones. But, he added, he agrees with Legislator Healy.

County Planner

County Planner Kier Dirlam was not present for the July meeting.

Cornell Cooperative Extension

Cornell Cooperative Extension Representative Lynn Bliven was not present for the July meeting.

Soil & Water Conservation

Monthly Report

Soil & Water Conservation Director Scott Torrey updated the Committee on his Department's activities, including: the Friendship FEMA project started on the 17th for the protection of its sewer line. The Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) is doing construction inspections and assisting with layout. SWCD sent a letter of intent to FEMA for the next stream bank stabilization project in Belfast (\$500,000). SWCD is assisting Town of Cuba residents on Keller Road who have had their homes threatened by a stream following a localized storm in June. SWCD is continuing to work on access for the Weir Lot as well as the Horner and Coleman lots. Legislator Sinclair added that Allegany County has asked Senator Young to look into getting a more equitable distribution of the \$500,000,000 in FEMA money throughout the state as opposed to have it go primarily to pay for people's beachside property that got destroyed. He noted that there are other State Senators also looking for a more equitable distribution of these hazard mitigation funds, so he hopes that Allegany County can ally itself with those other counties to influence FEMA for more equitable distribution of the Stafford Act money.

County Historian

County Historian Craig Braack was not present for the July meeting.

Greater Allegany Chamber of Commerce

Greater Allegany Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Gretchen Hanchett was not present for the July meeting.

Good of the Order

Legislator Sinclair initiated a discussion on the prospect of Cornell Cooperative Extension buying the building in which it is currently housed. He wondered why the County wants to rid itself of the building. County Administrator Mitch Alger noted that the building requires maintenance and we no longer have County employees housed there. This fact might also lead to liability issues. Legislator Fanton said that the option to sell the building seemed a natural outgrowth of recent events, those being the move of the County offices that were once housed there which have moved to new quarters. However, he also said that if we retain the building, then we can control the repairs and their costs. The group was in agreement that Cornell Cooperative Extension is of great benefit to Allegany County and it would continue to support it; additionally, Cooperative Extension should continue to seek a better facility for its offices.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m. following a motion by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Hopkins, and carried

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Santora, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board
Allegany County Board of Legislators

**PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
AUGUST 21, 2013**

**** NOT APPROVED ****

Committee Members Present: F. Sinclair, D. Pullen, K. Graves, D. Healy, T. Hopkins, K. LaForge (Absent: P. Curran, C. Crandall)

Others Present: L. Bliven, C. Braack, D. Burdick, K. Dirlam, J. Foels, G. Hanchett, T. Miner, B. Riehle, C. Santora, R. Sobeck-Lynch, S. Torrey

Media Present: B. Quinn, *Wellsville Daily Reporter*

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at approximately 10:10 a.m. by Planning & Economic Development Committee Chairman Frederick Sinclair.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Hopkins, and carried to approve the Planning & Economic Development Committee minutes of July 17, 2013.

Appointment to Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Allegany, & Steuben Southern Tier Extension Railroad Authority

Chairman Crandall appointed Timothy J. O'Grady of Wellsville, NY, to the Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Allegany, and Steuben Southern Tier Extension Railroad Authority for a three-year term commencing August 28, 2013, and expiring August 27, 2016, at the Board meeting on August 12, 2013. The appointment was confirmed and approved on a motion by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator LaForge, and carried. **Prepare Resolution**

Planning & Economic Development Committee to Act as Tourism Promotion Agency

Director of Development John E. Foels requested a resolution authorizing the Planning & Economic Development Committee to Act as the Tourism Promotion Agency and apply for State funds up to \$218,000 for tourism promotion purposes. The resolution should also include the proviso that if state funding is approved, the Tourism Promotion Agency will submit the grant agreement to the Board of Legislators for approval and appropriation of funds and that the Clerk of the Board will send a certified copy of the resolution to the NYS Commissioner of Economic Development. The request was approved on a motion by Legislator Hopkins, seconded by Legislator Healy, and carried. **Refer to Ways & Means**

Departmental Reports:

**Employment & Training
Monthly Report**

Employment & Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch began her report with a follow-up to a question that arose last month regarding postcards that had been sent to County residents regarding SNAP eligibility. She said she had spoken with Alan, a Nutritional Outreach Coordinator for Allegany County, who informed her that Cattaraugus County Community Action had sent out a direct mailing to targeted areas of the County to increase awareness of the SNAP. He told her that many people who are eligible do not apply because they don't know they are eligible or are hesitant to apply at DSS. He reviews the guidelines, assists with the application process, and submits the paperwork to DSS for the applicants. DSS then follows up with the applicant. Ms. Lynch indicated that Commissioner of Social Services is aware of this

program and works with it to help applicants. Then Ms. Lynch reviewed her July report with the Committee, noting that front door traffic numbers were higher than the previous month's. Notable was the fact that June unemployment was 7.8 percent, up from 7.4 percent in May. Additionally, she noted that E&T provided 866 services to DSS customers; Ms. Lynch reiterated the process through which public assistance applicants must pass, including the two weeks (10 days) of classes before they can receive benefits. Because there is a great deal of attrition, she noted that although she was not ready to report specifics, the partnership that E&T formed with DSS beginning in January has resulted in a cost avoidance to the County of hundreds of thousands of dollars. Other points of note: the Summer Youth Employment Program winds up in August (and a problem with one youth noted in a prior month's meeting and minutes had been resolved and the youth was re-hired and doing well), and was proud to note that the Program had been highlighted in the Genesee Valley Central School publication *The Jag*. She added that the school has been a big supporter of the program. TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) scores were not very good in July; in fact, the average scores (10.8 in Reading and 8.8 in Math) were too low for applicants to be hired at Dresser Rand. Clients are referred to Literacy West and Southern Tier Traveling Teachers for assistance in improving their scores. The Veterans' initiative is working; three vets visited the E&T Office in July for a total of four vets enrolled in the Jobs for Veterans Initiative. Ms. Lynch also talked about computer classes being offered through JobLink thanks to a grant from United Way and the Southern Tier Library System. She added that classes are offered in the Annex every Monday and every other Tuesday. Legislator Sinclair indicated that during the Budget review process it was noted that E&T turns a \$100,000 budget into nearly \$1million of services and that is a great "multiplier." Ms. Lynch noted that E&T had requested \$30,000 from the County for 2014 and that the remainder is received from DSS and WIA.

County Planner **Monthly Report**

County Planner Kier Dirlam informed the Committee that on Friday, August 23, Genesee River Wilds will open the Caneadea River Access Site with a brief ceremony. He added that he had recently assisted the Greater Allegany County Chamber of Commerce with maps for its new brochures (driving trails, hunting and fishing, and guide maps); he has been working with CONXX and TVGA on the paperwork that needs to be submitted soon for the Broadband Connect NY Grant. Mr. Dirlam also recounted meeting with various communities to assist with their comprehensive plans. He commented on his amazement at the turnout at the fire hall in Alma in July and commended them for their interest in their community. Mr. Dirlam added that the analysis for the Kingston Hotel in Canaseraga has been wrapped up, and he is helping with their comprehensive plan, doing maps for it. The County is investigating ways to get the blue signs posted on the highways to draw more people to Angelica. He indicated that they have applied to the Department of Transportation whose purview that type of signage falls under. Additionally, there is some confusion regarding who will foot the bill (\$14,000) for the panel if the State DoT doesn't have the right one. Finally, Mr. Dirlam said he is also working with Houghton to determine ways to bring new business to the community.

Cornell Cooperative Extension **Monthly Report**

Cornell Cooperative Extension Representative Lynn Bliven updated the Committee on Cooperative Extension activities, saying that despite the heat, the Fair visits went well. She went on to say that her office has submitted two grants, one through CFA (Consolidated Funding Application) and one through NY Farm Viability in order to secure funding to support additional training for GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) training and certification. There are only two GAP

educators in the state, and that's not enough. All farms, she said, will need training (if not certification) as a result of the Food Modernization Act. It is a matter of "when," she said, not "if." The importance of this training, she told the group, is that in order to grow the local food system in our five-county region, growers need additional outlets for their products and they won't be "allowed" into different market channels (such as Wegmans and Tops) without that certification. Many larger retailers currently expect farms to have that certification. Ms. Bliven also distinguished between good agricultural practices vs. good handling practices which is another level of certification. The former relates to the field to the packing house; the latter relates to storage, handling, and packaging. When asked, Ms. Bliven told the Committee that home preservation of products is still a component of Cooperative Extension's Nutrition Program and includes freezing, canning, dehydration, etc. She said handouts are usually available at farmers' markets and the Cooperative Extension offers canning classes. When queried, Ms. Bliven confirmed that hiring the Community Educator has allowed her time to write grants and respond to inquiries about ways to make farming viable and help individual farms create business plans. Other items Ms. Bliven highlighted included the upcoming Grazing Field Days, a multi-agency project (in conjunction with NRCS, Soil and Water Conservation, and the Grasslands Conservation), which will bring in Troy Bishopp to do presentations. The program, slated for September, is designed for producers who want to focus more on forage management as a means of enhancing profitability. Additionally, she said she is working on a couple of marketing channel projects with direct market vegetable producers to help the producer understand which market outlet is the best (most profitable) for them. Governor Cuomo's Dairy Acceleration Program was released this week and will be facilitated through Cornell Cooperative Extension. The program is designed to assist farms with planning for profitability as well as environmental management. The main focus is on smaller farms, under 300 cows, to help them do a better job in planning. The initiative has just been launched and Cooperative Extension will be sharing that information with dairy producers. Finally, when queried, Ms. Bliven confirmed that the new community educator enjoys what he's doing and is working out well.

Soil & Water Conservation

Monthly Report

Soil & Water Conservation District Executive Director Scott Torrey reported that the planning and design work for current grants is in place right now although some projects have been delayed until next year due to the financial situations on some of the farms. He also said that the Friendship FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) project has been completed with a protection of their sewer line with the assistance of the County DPW. Another round of grants for this fall is in the early stages of selecting farms for those projects. The eight-year review of Ag District #2, which encompasses Allen, Amity, Angelica, Andover, Belfast, Birdsall, Clarksville, Cuba, Friendship, Scio, Ward, Wellsville, West Almond, and Wirt, has begun; Mr. Torrey noted that his office is putting together a list of landowners who need to be contacted. Three fencing projects, slated to be completed this fall, are moving forward; there is a possibility of a feed pad for a farm in Independence as well. When asked, Mr. Torrey confirmed that fencing, watering systems, and development of pastures continues to be an active part of SWCD programs. He added that there are always people who want to put in new grazing systems. In fact, a 200-acre rotation grazing system will be put in this fall, and more are slated for next year. Legislator Sinclair asked Mr. Torrey to comment on a FEMA hazard mitigation grant application for a project in Belfast. Mr. Torrey told the group that the site in question is north of the last Belfast project where the bank is within less than 100 feet of Route 19, threatening waterlines and houses. The design work had been done last year through a grant, but SWCD has applied for about \$500,000 from FEMA for this project. Mr. Sinclair asked if Mr. Torrey had been in contact with the DEC, DoT, or Army Corps of Engineers regarding this

project. Mr. Torrey said they had not yet been contacted, but having Leonard Preston on board at SWCD who is PE certified in New York State has been a real asset and has led to the aforementioned organizations being very cooperative as the engineering designs have met requirements in the past.

Greater Allegany Chamber of Commerce **Monthly Report**

Greater Allegany Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Gretchen Hanchett began her presentation by talking about the Manufacturing Council's golf outing which had taken place earlier in the month to raise money to support the Ian Gregory Bole Scholarship, raising nearly \$5,000 as a match for the scholarship fund. The scholarship is targeted for Allegany County residents studying machining at Alfred State. The intent of the scholarship is to train "our own" locals for jobs that are available in "our own" County. She went on to report on the Tough Mudders event, noting that it had been very successful. Visitors were estimated at 18,000 on Saturday and 6,000 on Sunday. Tough Mudders has a five-year contract with Tall Pines in Andover and plans to do two events per year. Tall Pines owner Joe Kent informed her that thanks to the success of the event, other organizations have approached him regarding hosting other events at Tall Pines. Ms. Hanchett reported that the hotels and campgrounds were full in Allegany and surrounding counties as a result of Tough Mudders, and that restaurants reported a big increase in their business that weekend. Ms. Hanchett went on to say that travel writers have been visiting the County; among the publications represented are *AAA World*, *Postmedia News*, *GO Magazine*, *Moon Travel Guide*, as well as a freelance travel and lifestyle writer. The result of a recent Path through History Regional Meeting is that the NYS Governor's Office has decided to stop any further development of the Path through History website that the committee has been working on; however, the group has purchased the domain name of www.WNYPTH/cpom for a regional website. So the project will continue on a five-county regional, rather than state-wide, scale. Ms. Hanchett distributed copies of the new *Allegany County Travel Guide* and the *Explore New York* booklet which features Allegany County on the back cover. She added that the hunting and fishing brochures are being printed. She commented on the County's presence at the Allegany County Fair and at the Erie County Fair. She went on to talk about the upcoming Fireball Run and the many positive networking experiences that occurred as a result of last year's Run: a \$20,000 scholarship for the Automotive Program and a Rolls Royce to work on every year for Alfred State; the chair of the Automotive Trades Department at Alfred State was sent for training by the Rolls Royce Foundation; and Henry Kissinger's limousine is on display at Alfred State, to name just a few. She reminded the group that the Legislative Breakfast will be Friday, September 13, 2013, from 8:30 until 11:30 a.m. at Houghton College and reminded the group members to RSVP if they planned to attend. Finally, it was noted that a Tourism Specialist, Roxanne Jedraszczak, has been hired.

County Historian **Monthly Report**

County Historian Craig Braack reported on his progress with the inventory of artifacts still remaining in the basement of the old museum. He assured the Committee (and the public) that any artifact, whether paper or physical item, with any relevance to Allegany County will be kept or put on permanent loan to appropriate venues. He indicated that much of the material in the basement is not salvageable due to the dampness, etc. of being stored there for so long. He commended the JobTrak volunteers who are assisting him in moving the many boxes and bins from the basement. Once the inventory is complete, decisions regarding storing or divesting the items not particularly relevant to the County can be made.

**Economic Development/IDA
Monthly Report**

Economic Development/IDA Director John Foels began his report by praising the summer intern placed in his office by E&T Director Reita Lynch, citing the intern as an example of the extraordinary young talent in Allegany County. Mr. Foels went on to say that as far as the Crossroads Project is concerned, [County] government has done all it can do to prepare. "We are ready," he said, adding that "government will not hold up development" of the project. As he's stated previously, his office is seeking the right partners and the right money. He added that he continues to interact with prospects and brokers. Mr. Foels went on to address the "Start-Up New York" and "Hotspots" programs which are alive and well. Mr. Foels noted that he has been engaged with New York State local legislative people to promote the County for those opportunities, in one spot or multiples. He added that he has been working with the colleges and the universities regarding potential opportunities. Mr. Foels added that it hasn't "been written" yet, so the people he's been talking to don't necessarily know the details of the proposals. However, he noted, he had a meeting later that day with Alan Rea, the new director of the Ceramics Corridor in Alfred. He added that there is now increased potential for exciting things to happen at the incubator as Mr. Rea has great experience and connections. Legislator Sinclair informed the Committee that he has invited Mr. Rea to attend next month's (September) Planning & Economic Development Committee meeting. He added that the incubator is currently full of research and product development organizations, and the hope is that we can help spearhead turning that into technology transfer and from there into local jobs. Finally, Mr. Foels said that his office as well as Mr. Dirlam's have made measurable progress in the past few weeks as regards the Broadband initiative.

Attorney/Client Session

Economic Development/IDA Director John Foels requested an attorney/client session to address Legislator Healy's concerns regarding the Crossroads Project. The Committee entered attorney/client session at 11:40 a.m. on a motion by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator LaForge, and carried. The Committee exited attorney/client session at 12:05 p.m. on a motion by Legislator Hopkins, seconded by Legislator Graves, and carried.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m. following a motion by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Pullen, and carried

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Santora, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board
Allegany County Board of Legislators

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
September 18, 2013

**** NOT APPROVED ****

Committee Members Present: F. Sinclair, D. Pullen, P. Curran, K. Graves, D. Healy, T. Hopkins, K. LaForge, C. Crandall

Others Present: M. Alger, L. Bliven, C. Braack, H. Budinger, K. Dirlam, D. Fanton, J. Foels, T. Miner, B. Riehle, C. Santora, R. Soback-Lynch, S. Torrey, N. Ungermann

Media Present: B. Quinn, *Wellsville Daily Reporter*

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Planning & Economic Development Committee Chairman Frederick Sinclair.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Curran, and carried to approve the Planning & Economic Development Committee minutes of August 21, 2013.

Executive Session

A motion to go into executive session to discuss the employment history of a particular individual was made at 10:01 a.m. by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Hopkins, and carried.

A motion to leave executive session at 10:25 a.m. was made by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator LaForge, and carried.

Dr. Alan Rae, Executive Director, Alfred Technology Resources, Inc./Ceramic Corridor Innovation Centers

Dr. Rae began his presentation by giving the Committee a brief history of his background, including his experience in establishing companies. He noted that he had his own research and consulting business and has a fair amount of experience as a customer of incubators, having operated out of incubators in Buffalo, the Buffalo/Niagara Medical Center, and Fayetteville, Arkansas. He accepted the position of Executive Director of the Ceramic Corridor (18 months ago) because of the challenges in getting the incubator system right in an area that does not have the same eco system as an urban area, such as Boston or San Francisco, boasts. "It's not easy for people to start businesses," he said. He indicated he has seen incubators done well and done not-so-well, but his feeling is that the Alfred/Painted Post incubator can take on the challenge. He told the Committee that he had been looking at and talking to a variety of groups and different incubator systems to determine how we get people to not only start a business, but to stay in the area and prosper. One of the things he's been working on, and which is promising, is Governor Cuomo's "incubator hot spot" initiative. However, he noted, the incubator itself is only part of the system. It needs a climate where people want to start a business; it needs professional support such as accountants and lawyers, capital, training, physical space to grow once they "graduate" from the incubator. These "collateral" services have not been available in Alfred, he said. He said he is keen to work with the stakeholders in Allegany County to move this initiative forward. He noted he's been in conversation with folks at Alfred State and Alfred University, saying he's yet to touch base with Houghton College, although that's on the list. He's also been talking to the Sugar Hill folks, successful graduates of the Alfred incubator. He added that the incubator is not solely for people associated with the local universities, but for anybody who wants to start a business

because small businesses create jobs and incubators help create and retain small businesses. Dr. Rae lauded the County's updated Comprehensive Plan saying he is impressed with the thought put into the development plans. He said it was a really excellent, sophisticated plan.

He went on to say that a Resource Center in the Wellsville/Alfred area is a brilliant idea, saving new entrepreneurs from having to drive to Jamestown, Olean, or Corning to locate basic resources such as accounting or legal services; a place where, perhaps, these young businesses could pay for part-time services or which could serve as a concierge, linking businesses to different NYS agencies.

Dr. Rae noted that most incubators are attached to universities and heavily subsidized by them, but the Painted Post/Alfred incubator is one of the very few self-supporting incubators. In order to stay solvent, the Alfred incubator has started a for-profit business in order to push funding back into the incubator. In answer to a query, Dr. Rae said that the amount of time that a fledgling business would reside in an incubator would vary: for example, in the Silicon Valley, there might be an incubator with "half-a-dozen programmers in a dark room, cases of monster energy drinks, and six weeks and \$50,000 later, there might be a new app for release. On the other hand, a start-up specializing in medical products could be in the incubator for 10 years, what with clinical trials, etc."

Dr. Rae recommended the book *The Rainforest: The Secret to Building the Next Silicon Valley* by Victor Hwang and Greg Horowitz which talks about creating all the things that will help people get to the stage where their business will be up and running. But, Dr. Rae cautioned, to be successful, an incubator must have new businesses coming in and moving out, and if there is no place for the businesses to move into, that's a problem. If there are no new people moving into the incubator, that is also a problem.

When asked if Allegany County has the essential components to have companies locate here, Dr. Rae said that there is a strong quality of life attraction to this area. When he meets alumni from the local colleges, they often tell him they wish there was a way to return to the area. The County has tremendous resources in Alfred University and Alfred State, he said, and the Wellsville Campus of Alfred State, in particular, is very impressive.

Dr. Rae indicated that he would never have started his own business if he hadn't seen it done and if there hadn't been people to talk to about where to get business insurance, for example, or where to get payroll services, or how to deal with other issues that arise. It is necessary, he said, for new business owners to have a system of mentors to call upon. And this is one of the challenges facing the local incubator, he said. He added that there is a lot going on in the area, but everyone is in his own "silo" and nobody knows about the activity.

The start-up zones, he said, are basically for companies that will graduate from the incubators.

Small business concepts often begin in a garage or a lab, he said, and they need to get out of the university setting and into an incubator where they can pursue grants and investments, and then move out. That's where Start Up New York has an advantage. It's attractive because it's near the colleges (which could translate into availability of equipment, mentors, trainees, etc.). Of course, he said, the details have yet to be worked out.

When queried regarding the composition of the Board of Directors, Dr. Rae noted that it has been extended to be more inclusive. There are three members from Corning, one from Corning Community College, Alfred State, and Alfred University, Three Rivers Development Corporation, and the Center for Advanced Materials Processing, Clarkson University.

Chairman Crandall expressed his concern about keeping business in the County. Dr. Rae said that first, people need to be convinced they want to start a business. The professors, he said, have jobs, so they typically won't be looking to start a business. However, the grad students are the ones who might start a business, but they need to know they can do it here,

and they will find support as well. There was a big burst of business generation about 10-15 years ago, said Dr. Rae, but the climate isn't there right now, and we need to recreate it. The incubator should serve as a "lubricant," to get start-ups off the ground in two-five years, depending on the type of business. We need to determine how to get businesses in that will create the most jobs the fastest.

Some of the current incubator tenants include CeraGen, LLC which deals in medical and other ceramics; Electrical Power worX (EPX) which develops super capacitors; Saxon Glass Technologies which develops toughened glass for products like epi pens; and Xylon Ceramic Materials which is involved in developing knee joints. Dr. Rae noted that both incubators are full; in fact, he had to rent out his office in Alfred to accommodate one.

"We need to create more space and would like then to see our clients graduate into Sugar Hill," he said.

When asked how the County could help, Dr. Rae said to make sure people are involved and connected and not stuck in their "silos;" facilitate connections between different parties. He also said he was excited about the idea of setting up a business development center, seeing it as a step forward, but also saying that it needed to be done carefully because you don't want to make an investment in equipment that won't be used. He added that a basic tool and die prototype shop would be mandatory because it would be nice to have a resource where people could make prototypes. He noted that he's been hearing that that is a real need.

Legislator Sinclair noted that he had recently been at an event where he met two gentlemen from the SUNY Environmental and Forestry College at Syracuse who are entering into a relationship with the Alfred State School of Applied Technology at Wellsville where they have been working with Craig Clark planning for the campus to become a biomass energy refinery. He added that their momentum is impressive and that the implications to agriculture in the County are great, envisioning County farmers growing and harvesting the grasses that can be used in this industry. He said it will stimulate our loggers in the harvesting and thinning industry. So multifaceted, he said, that it will dovetail with Alfred State and its Center for Organic and Sustainable Agriculture (COSA) as well as other areas of the college. He added that good jobs are associated with this type of endeavor, and that its potential is far-reaching.

Comprehensive Plan Referral

A resolution was requested accepting the environmental impact study (SEQR) determining that there is no significant negative environmental impact with respect to the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment on a motion by Legislator Hopkins, seconded by Legislator Graves, and carried. **Prepare Resolution**

Additionally, a resolution was requested to tentatively approve the proposed amendment to the Comprehensive Plan subject to the scheduled public hearing September 23, 2013; Chairman Crandall noted that the resulting resolution will be pre-filed for the October 15 Board meeting in order to adopt the updated Comprehensive Plan. Approval was granted on a motion by Legislator Pullen, seconded by Legislator Curran, and carried. **Prepare Resolution**

Employment & Training

Monthly Report

Employment & Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch informed the Committee about the death of Carl Peterson, Director of Employment & Training from 1984 to 1999.

She then distributed her monthly report, pointing out the following items: front door traffic was up over last month. Twenty-three people found jobs: five full-time and 18 part-time. However, she said, jobs are exhibiting a pattern of low wages. The main companies hiring in the County are Dollar General, Kmart, and Pizza Hut. Additionally, she said, many of the E&T clients finding work have no college education. There are fewer non-DSS clients finding jobs as well. Many companies are keeping employees under 50 and part-time because of the

impending start of Obamacare. A brief discussion on the County's "underground economy" followed. Ms. Lynch confirmed that there is a lot of "unreported" income activity, including scrappers, flea marketers, firewood cutters/sellers. She did say, however, that although she is aware of this phenomenon, clients do not generally talk to her or her staff about these activities. Ms. Lynch went on to say that the E&T Office is required by law to offer information on the health insurance exchange which begins October 1, but that the state has provided no training thus far. So her office will work with facilitated enrollers and have someone in the office one day per week to provide the necessary resource. Legislator Sinclair requested that Ms. Lynch meet with Dr. Rae. Finally, when questioned about the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) scores, Ms. Lynch agreed that they are deplorably low and that clients are referred to Literacy West or the Southern Tier Traveling Teacher or to online practice sites. She added that clients may take the test as many times as they want. She will begin to sort the test results by those having earned high school diplomas, GEDs, or no high school certification. She added that students at Alfred State will take the test next month and that she will report on how they perform.

County Planner **Monthly Report**

County Planner Kier Dirlam noted that the Comprehensive Plan needs to have its typos fixed and needs to be slightly reformatted as well as printed and bound by the October 15 Board meeting. Then his office will continue to print copies as needed for distribution to County employees. Mr. Dirlam said that he had been working on the Broadband paperwork this month, answering questions posed by the state, and that he had submitted his responses. Now he is waiting for an updated coverage map. He told the Committee that the coverage map had been incorrect because Time Warner did not want to give out specific proprietary information. So in any block of "real estate" where it served even a sole customer, that block was "painted" as having coverage, resulting in a map that appeared as if the region had sufficient coverage. Subsequently, Mr. Dirlam has arranged for the NYS Office of Information Technology Services, GIS Program Office to survey selected residents regarding their level of coverage in order to capture more accurate coverage information. Allegany County is planned as the pilot in a state-wide effort to create more accurate coverage maps. Mr. Dirlam went on to say that he also recently completed a project with the NYS Office of Information Technology Services, GIS Program Office that will help the County with its 911 System. His office now has address points for pretty much every single house, apartment, and business in Allegany County. He plans to meet with the Sheriff's Office to see what format it would like to receive that information. The NYS Office of Information Technology Services, GIS Program Office processed the data sets we provided, converted that data, and then picked roof tops on all the parcels and applied dots to the roof tops. All data sets are built into it: 911, parcel data, tax maps, and information Mr. Dirlam had in house. They merged it all and picked roof tops. If they couldn't tell, they dropped the dot on the parcel. It will be an ongoing process to clean it up, but Allegany County has never had point data for its properties before. Mr. Dirlam told the Committee that he continues to receive several map requests. The Towns of Burns and Canaseraga Comprehensive Plans are virtually complete (and he's done maps for them); the Town of Alma is writing its plan and need maps; the Town and Village of Almond are completing their Plans and would like their maps. Mr. Dirlam said he is also helping with an Eagle Scout project for a historic trail in Wellsville's Island Park by providing a map for that project. Mr. Dirlam told the group that he recently re-convened a group to revisit sustainability projects in the County Plan and to determine how to move forward with them. He added that there is a lot of preparation work to be done in order to go after the right grants. Finally, Mr. Dirlam said there will be a storm water training session in Ellicottville on October 17, for municipal officials as part of Southern Tier West's storm water project.

Chairman Crandall took this opportunity to commend Mr. Dirlam and the Comprehensive Planning Board on not only updating the County Comprehensive Plan without a budget, but also on printing and binding the Plan in house, which saved approximately \$11,000. Thanks to Mr. Dirlam's efforts as well as all of the volunteer hours put in by the Board, the County got a first-class plan at a bargain basement price. He reminded the group that just a few moments ago Dr. Rae indicated how impressed he had been with the Plan. Chairman Crandall noted that he would continue to extol the great work, the dedication, and the frugality of this accomplishment.

Cornell Cooperative Extension

Monthly Report

Cooperative Extension Representative Lynn Bliven updated the Committee on the Dairy Acceleration Program, saying that two farms have expressed an interest and that Cooperative Extension is working with them on that project. Ms. Bliven went on to say that Cooperative Extension is working with farms to do soil testing as well as working with large producers on forage quality and analysis. The quantity, she said, seems plentiful, but a few locations are struggling with quality forage, so she wants to work with those farms now to plan for the winter storage season. Ms. Bliven noted that there seems to be an increased interest among vegetable farmers in direct marketing vegetable farming, so some winter meetings are being conducted. She said last year they held summer meetings that were well received. This is an area in which they have worked with the Amish community, primarily in the dairy sector, and now they are seeing increased interest and need for services in the production of vegetable crops. Ms. Bliven went on to say that the Master Gardener Program is very vital and that the volunteers do tremendous outreach to consumers regarding vegetable and flower garden questions. Without that level of volunteer engagement, she said, Cooperative Extension would not be able to provide that high a level of service to our residents on general gardening questions. There are 22 active members. The Master Forest Owner Program, however, is run a little differently. The goal is to work with forest and land owners to identify thinning, upgrades, and to manage resources based on farm family goals. Some of that has to do with succession planning. Last year, two residents participated in the training, and one has expressed interest this year. Cooperative Extension would like to increase efforts to identify and bring this group up to the level of engagement it has with the Master Gardener Program. We do feel that forestry is a tremendous asset to our community, and as Legislator Sinclair alluded to earlier, a lot of small farms or individuals are buying small acreages (25-50 acres) looking for how to manage that resource and ways to increase the value of the land, but also looking for ways to generate resources in order to pay taxes and increase the value of their land and upgrade buildings. Ms. Bliven distributed copies of the most recent Ag News. Finally, Ms. Bliven told the Committee that the new executive director begins her duties November 4. She is Laura Hunsberger, and her background is in horticulture and plant science.

Soil & Water Conservation

Monthly Report

Soil & Water Conservation Executive Director-Scott Torrey told the Committee that he had received an e-mail from FEMA informing him that the letter of intent for the Belfast River Project had been approved. He was asked to submit a full grant application which is due October 30. That request is for \$500,000. The District is assisting the Town of Willing with a hydrologic study for a possible FEMA project for replacing culverts/culvert sizing. The District is completing a Town of Genesee project replacing sluices on Wolf Creek, another FEMA project. It has been assisting the Town of Clarksville with gravel pit permitting. The District has wrapped up an ag project grant in Scio and has two others lined up for the fall. The District is also working on the eight-year review of Ag District #2, which encompasses Allen, Amity, Angelica,

Andover, Belfast, Birdsall, Clarksville, Cuba, Friendship, Scio, Ward, Wellsville, West Almond, and Wirt. Mr. Torrey requested a resolution issuing a public notice for a 30-day public comment period on the eight-year review. The request was granted on a motion by Legislator Hopkins, seconded by Legislator Pullen, and carried. **Prepare Resolution**

Greater Allegany Chamber of Commerce

Monthly Report

Greater Allegany Co. Chamber of Commerce Ex. Dir.-Gretchen Hanchett was away participating in the Fireball Run and unable to attend the meeting.

County Historian

Monthly Report

County Historian Craig Braack indicated there is not a lot to report. However, the previous Friday, six Job-Trakkers and he had created a "bucket brigade" down the stairway into the bell tower; extremely steep and shallow; worked for over 2 hours cleaning out the basement and moved several hundred boxes into the museum. He reported that there had been water damage to some of the material, so he is sifting through it to salvage any valuables. He did say that he could always use additional storage space because there is too much material for the available space. He added that he is doing a lot of "thinning."

Economic Development/IDA

Monthly Report

Economic Development/IDA Director John E. Foels gave a brief overview/summary of the Empire Zone statistics: The 73 Friendship Empire Zone businesses had the following results for 2010: Capital Investment: \$12.6 million; Capital Investment Cumulative Growth over 17 years is now \$167 million; Local Employment of 2,400 full-time jobs; Local Employment Payroll of \$119.8 million; New York State Tax Credits of \$2.2 million returned to these Allegany County businesses. The average wage for full-time jobs was \$49,000 per year. The point is, he said, we have tools and we strive to use the right tool at the right time for the benefit of our specific client. Mr. Foels cited the example of the \$20 million Alstom expansion of several years ago. "We used the Empire Zone for that project and it paid off handsomely," he said. "We used the tools that were best for the client and the best for the community and we made a difference."

Mr. Foels then responded to several questions, including rumors:

- the Belmont School, which Mr. Foels said were only rumors at this time;
- nothing has changed at the Crossroads;
- there are projects going on in District 2, but nothing the Development Office can report on until the client wishes to speak about the project;
- Cuba Hospital: all due diligence has been done; the planning and architectural work, land and soil evaluations, designs and market studies have been completed. The demand for assisted living is there; it's simply a question of raising the \$12.5 million necessary to complete the project.
- the Development Office is in regular contact with Roger Mitchell, the owner of Saputo Foods (former Friendship Dairy);
- the Seneca Nation proposal to go ahead with a plan for some type of gambling operation at Cuba Lake remains a rumor at this time;
- banks are still looking to make loans, but due to restrictions put in place five years ago, expectations regarding borrowers are much higher.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 12:03 p.m. following a motion by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Pullen, and carried

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Santora, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board
Allegany County Board of Legislators

**PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 16, 2013**

**** NOT APPROVED ****

Committee Members Present: F. Sinclair, C. Jessup, D. Pullen, K. Graves, D. Healy, T. Hopkins, K. LaForge, C. Crandall (Absent: P. Curran)

Others Present: M. Alger, L. Bliven, K. Dirlam, J. Foels, G. Hanchett, T. Miner, B. Riehle, C. Santora, R. Sobeck-Lynch

Media Present: B. Quinn, *Wellsville Daily Reporter*

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Planning & Economic Development Committee Chairman Frederick Sinclair.

Amendment & Approval of Minutes

Legislator Healy requested that last month's minutes reflect that he was the person who posed many of the questions to Mr. Foels. So instead of reading:

"Mr. Foels then responded to several questions, including rumors:"

It will be changed to read:

"Mr. Foels then responded to several questions posed by Legislator Healy and others."

A motion was made by Legislator Hopkins, seconded by Legislator Pullen, and carried to amend and approve the Planning & Economic Development Committee minutes of September 18, 2013.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Employment & Training

Monthly Report

Employment & Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch distributed her report for September 2013, saying there is nothing unusual to report thanks to a quiet month. She went on to say that there has been no federal funding since July 1 and that WIB is funded until the end of the month. If the federal shutdown continues beyond the end of October, The three WIB employees will be laid off. Thanks to sequestration, they couldn't use federal dollars because when the money comes through in October, it's retroactive to July 1, but because of sequestration, there was no money available for the first three months (fiscal year begins July 1). Ms. Lynch will contact Tom Reed's Office regarding these concerns. Additionally, if the government shutdown continues, it will affect E&T customers because E&T is not paying for any training right now; money is being spent only on staff. Ms. Lynch did say that E&T continues to administer the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) tests, to do resumes, to conduct employment assessment and computer classes, and of course still doing JobLink. However, should the shutdown continue much longer, she indicated she will need to look at staffing and how to continue to provide services to customers. At this time, she said, her office is using County funding and DSS funding. They are still billing for WIA funds, but don't know if there will be reimbursement. She indicated E&T also has a Fund Balance it can fall back on if necessary, but something will have to give if there is no federal funding. They cannot continue to maintain

the current staff size. She went on to say that not many people found jobs in September and those who did found entry-level, low-paying jobs, many of which were part-time. Forty new jobs in Allegany County were listed by the Department of Labor in September. Ms. Lynch said her office will begin tracking people who don't officially register with her office, but just phone in some questions. When asked how many people are unemployed in the County, Ms. Lynch reported a figure of 1,700. She reminded the Committee that her office works closely with the Department of Social Services and that she and Commissioner of Social Services Vicki Grant will report to their respective committees next month. Legislator Sinclair requested a brief report for next month's meeting on special initiatives for veterans.

County Planner **Monthly Report**

County Planner Kier Dirlam said the big news is that the proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan were approved and his office is now in "production mode." The initial 20 copies were distributed to the Legislators, the Clerk of the Board, and various other County officials. An additional 20 have been printed, but need to be bound. One hundred thirty bindings have been ordered, and once more copies have been printed and bound, the Plan will be distributed to the County libraries, Towns and Villages, County Departments, and the general public. The Plan is available online at www.AlleganyPlanning.com. He did commend Patience Reagan and Lee Gridley for their tireless help in getting these reports printed and assembled.

Mr. Dirlam went on to say that his office will be running a class for the Towns and Villages called "Site Plan Review for Municipalities with or without Zoning" on November 20 at 7 p.m. at the CrossRoads. The doors will open at 6:30, and he expects the class to run for about two hours. A professional planner from URS Corporation will conduct the class. Mr. Dirlam alluded to the furor in Amity over the summer when its Planning Board proposed putting out a site plan review law and the populace believed the Board wanted to institute zoning which it currently does not have. This issue also came up a few years ago, he said, when fracking first came into the public consciousness, regarding road use agreements. What it boils down to, he said, is best practices of what people could do on a particular property. If the numbers of people wishing to attend that class swell, Mr. Dirlam indicated either he will run it again or change venues this time.

Mr. Dirlam said he had attended a meeting regarding "Complete Streets" in Almond. He noted that this program has done work in Alfred, Wellsville, Cuba, Angelica, and Whitesville. This program is done by Cornell Cooperative Extension with funding through the Americans with Disabilities Act, and is a free service to the municipality. A report was prepared after a walking tour of the town, surveying things such as bicycle paths, sidewalks, crosswalks, etc. Following that tour, recommendations, in the form of a report, are made. Then the municipality is given a mini-grant of \$3,000 to do some of the work in the recommendations such as painting crosswalks consistently, or new signage, etc. The next step is to develop a letter with the recommendations to send to the Department of Transportation because Main Street, Almond is a state road.

Cornell Cooperative Extension **Monthly Report**

Cornell Cooperative Extension Representative Lynn Bliven gave the Committee a brief overview of current Extension activities. Before she began, however, Ms. Bliven thanked the Committee for recommending the additional funding which allowed Cooperative Extension to hire another person so Ms. Bliven could focus more on agricultural economic development.

Community Educator Aaron Santangelo is planning a post-harvest field day for October 24 which will offer pesticide certification credits which had previously been identified as a need.

He also prepared a mini-grant application through the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets to conduct a Winter Crop Congress which will offer a component on risk management that deals with crop insurance among other things. She noted that Mr. Santangelo has been using his connections to bring in speakers from Cornell University and other Extension offices across the state to enhance local offerings. "He has been a real asset," she said.

Ms. Bliven went on to say she had received a mini-grant to offer a series of workshops directed toward beef producers to try to address how to produce quality beef that consumers want, as well as how to find appropriate market channels. These workshops could help producers make changes in production to increase profitability of their enterprises and utilize more of the underutilized acreage in the County. That series will kick off on November 4 with a dinner meeting. Another goal is to work on carcass evaluation to help producers understand that regardless of where they are in the system, ultimately they are producing a product. Some discussion on the presence of heritage breeds such as Highlanders, Devons, Dexters, etc., followed. There are some opportunities with the heritage breeds, as long as the producer knows how to properly finish it. Ms. Bliven also explained that there is very little nutritional difference between breeds. However, she said, there may be a flavor difference based on what they are fed and to what age they are raised. It was noted that the price of corn is half of what it was a year ago and that it will probably have more of a beneficial effect on small scale operations than on the larger ones because some larger producers do look at global trends.

Legislator Sinclair pointed out that the development of the market niches has been entered into our Western Region Economic Development Plan, identified in the Sustainable Community Plan for the Western Region, and in the CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy) document from Southern Tier West. He added that Southern Tier West has been working with Cooperative Extension to develop markets for agricultural products.

Other scheduled programs include programs for larger dairies regarding OSHA visit concerns, especially for those producers with more than 10 employees or for those farms hiring Mexican laborers. They will also be addressing the Affordable Care Act and will begin hosting regional meetings.

Ms. Bliven also noted that they are seeing a bit of an increase in folks stopping in Cooperative Extension office as the Farm Services Agency and NRCS Offices have been closed as a result of government shutdown. In addition to these government offices being closed their websites are down, hindering access to information.

Finally, Ms. Bliven said that the annual Cooperative Extension meeting is scheduled for November 12 at the Catholic Church in Cuba at 6:30 p.m. and will feature the new Executive Director's vision for the future of Cooperative Extension.

Legislator Sinclair noted that agriculture is alive and well and will grow according to the effort we put into it.

Soil & Water Conservation

Monthly Report

Soil & Water Conservation Director Scott Torrey was unable to attend the meeting.

Greater Allegany Chamber of Commerce

Greater Allegany Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Gretchen Hanchett told the Committee that the international travel writer had visited the area and had taken a hike around Moss Lake and kayaked down the Genesee River. Although she hadn't seen the resulting article yet, she would share it with the Committee when she receives it. She also said that she had participated in the Fireball Run, leaving from Alfred State and ending up in Riverside, CA. Both sides of the car had "Discover Allegany County" emblazoned on them, and they had opportunities to be called up and recognized at many of the cities in between. She hopes to

have some video soon. Tall Pines has informed her that Tough Mudders will return July 12-13, 2014. Also, coming up on October 29, there will be a ribbon cutting and bus tour of four of the Scenic Tours for which signage had been erected last year. Senator Cathy Young is expected to be in attendance.

Economic Development/IDA **Monthly Report**

Economic Development/IDA Director John Foels noted that the Comprehensive Plan is the big news of the day. In addition to the recipients Mr. Dirlam named earlier, Mr. Foels said that local media, Buffalo and Rochester media, trade publications, and business journals had also been contacted regarding the Plan. Also state and federal representatives, Congressman Reed, NYS Senator Young, and Assemblyman Giglio as well as our two U.S. Senators, the Department of State and other funding entities have been alerted that our new Plan is in place. It is a useful tool when we apply for grants, he said. Additionally, a copy will go to each member of the Development Council in Buffalo.

Mr. Foels said he'd met with Dr. Alan Rae regarding various initiatives with the incubators and connections with the local colleges. There's no "name" for it yet, but the work is ongoing.

There will be a free seminar in November sponsored by NYSERDA (New York State Energy Research and Development Authority) on energy savings and how to improve things in your operation. This is strictly for commercial enterprises, not residential. Details are TBD.

There will be an inventory taken of the businesses in the County regarding Broadband: who needs more, who's got enough, etc., to get a clearer picture of what is needed.

Legislator Sinclair noted that we need to continue to work on the development potential that exists surrounding the ceramic corridor and take advantage of the proposed opportunity the Governor is formulating in the form of Start Up New York. This is an opportunity that should not be missed as it is a good function for the County and its mission, he said. "We should do all we can to facilitate and ensure the rules are clearly understood. There is a potential for jobs in a highly technical, research-based incubator in Alfred and Painted Post. In the past, businesses did not locate locally, but this new program could be an incentive."

Mr. Foels added that they're still working through it and that not all the details are completed. The County's strong relationships with Alfred University, Alfred State, and Houghton College will weigh heavily in this because the premise is that they get this tax break close to an educational facility. It should also work for the Sugar Hill development in Alfred to be utilized as a potential industrial park.

When asked, Legislator Jessup said that Sugar Hill is an 88-acre park developed for incubation. It boasts water, electricity, natural gas, fiber optics, sewage, and roads. Lot number 1 has a factory, and lot number 2 has a building shell.

Legislator Sinclair added that we are on the verge of a program to give us good, clean jobs for the future. Add that to our tourism efforts, progress in agriculture, and overall programs for education, employment and training, workforce development, and there is very good program potential here which is really going to blossom soon.

Chairman Crandall said he had recently had occasion to talk to Ken Adams (Empire State Development) at a meeting in Saratoga, and he says Mr. Adams is well aware of the good things happening in Allegany County. It's not news that businesses that start up in the Ceramic Corridor relocate someplace else, but that the difference here is, that perhaps this new program will level the playing field somewhat and encourage fledgling businesses to stay local.

Legislator Graves voiced his concern that all the regulations New York State places on business will act as deterrents to private enterprise, industry, and commerce.

A brief discussion followed regarding the difficulties caused by NYS regulations.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m. following a motion by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Healy, and carried

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Santora, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board
Allegany County Board of Legislators

**PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 20, 2013**

**** NOT APPROVED ****

Committee Members Present: F. Sinclair, C. Jessup, P. Curran, K. Graves, D. Healy, T. Hopkins, K. LaForge, D. Pullen, C. Crandall

Others Present: M. Alger, L. Bliven, D. Decker, D. Fanton, J. Foels, V. Grant, J. Hopkins, L. Hunsberger, T. Miner, B. Riehle, T. Ross, C. Santora, R. Sobeck-Lynch, S. Torrey

Media Present: D. Donahue, *Olean Times Herald*

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Planning & Economic Development Committee Chairman Frederick Sinclair.

Amendment & Approval of Minutes

Legislator Healy requests that last month's minutes include the names of the five principals in Sugar Hill. The sentence in bold, below, should be added.

Under Economic Development/IDA

Monthly Report

When asked, Legislator Jessup said that Sugar Hill is an 88-acre park developed for incubation. It boasts water, electricity, natural gas, fiber optics, sewage, and roads. Lot number 1 has a factory, and lot number 2 has a building shell. **The current five principals are Legislator Jessup, Brent Reynolds, Charles Nissler, Larry Shilling, and the late Doug Burdick.**

A motion was made by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Curran, and carried to amend and approve the Planning & Economic Development Committee minutes of October 16, 2013.

Appointment of Jack Wood to IDA Board and Commercial Incentive Board

Subsequent to the resignation of John Corneby from the Industrial Development Agency (IDA) and the Commercial Incentive Board, the IDA recommends that Jack W. Wood of Allentown fill the remainder of Mr. Corneby's four-year term commencing immediately and expiring December 31, 2013. The Committee approved Mr. Wood's appointment to the two Boards on a motion by Legislator LaForge, seconded by Legislator Jessup, and carried.

Prepare Resolution

Employment & Training

Monthly Report

Employment & Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch began her report by saying that she had attached information on programs for veterans, but was willing to postpone talking about it in depth because she and Commissioner of Social Services Vicki Grant would be presenting information on their joint programming initiative, Employment Assessment Class (EAC) which follows. Additionally, Ms. Lynch noted that "front door" traffic was heavy during the month of October, in part due to the cessation of summer (seasonal) jobs. In fact, 863 individuals sought help/information from E&T, an increase of 246 from September. Unfortunately, however, not many people found employment. The majority of those who did find jobs found part-time jobs only. Ms. Lynch, when queried, told the Committee that no Job Fairs

are scheduled until the spring. However, the E&T "Breakfast Club" hosts businesses monthly to talk to E&T clients about any openings they might have. Next month, she said, Civil Service is scheduled. When asked, Ms. Lynch noted that American Heroes at Work is a variety of programs, that help, specifically, vets who come back with traumatic brain injury or post-traumatic stress disorder. There are a lot of programs out there for veterans, she said. This is just a small sampling. The bad news, Ms. Lynch said, is that the Southern Tier Library System lost its trainer for the JobLink Program and hasn't been able to replace the position. As a result, STLS is returning the remaining \$6,000 to the United Way. Ms. Lynch said she and others are working on getting someone locally to provide that training throughout the County because the training wasn't just occurring at the E&T Center, but at five libraries throughout the County as well.

Legislator-elect David Decker told the group that he'd recently learned that State government is planning to close several mental health facilities throughout the State. Some brief discussion followed whereby it was noted that this could have an impact on a variety of services in Allegany County. Clerk of the Board Brenda Riehle told the group that InterCounty had taken action on this issue on Friday, asking that these closures not take place. That resolution will be forwarded to NYSAC (New York State Association of Counties).

Report on Employment Assessment Class (EAC) (see attached report for full details)

Ms. Grant reminded the Committee that about a year ago, they had talked about "having the State OTDA look at our employment process. And although we are still waiting for a report from them, we thought we'd present our data about some of the processes we changed based on some of their preliminary suggestions."

The Job Readiness Training Classes have been restructured into Employment Assessment Classes. When an individual who is employable without dependent children applies for public assistance, s/he must register with Employment & Training at the same time. In order for their applications to be processed, they must participate in a two-week training session. Because the County tries to help each enrollee succeed, if one class is missed, they can make it up; however, if the applicant simply fails to show up at class, his/her application is not processed and s/he must re-apply for benefits. In 2013, 279 applications were received; however, only 169 of those actually enrolled in EAC. Seventy-three of those actually completed the classes. Six people found jobs prior to enrolling in EAC; 22 found jobs either while enrolled or after completing the class. E&T remains engaged with those people who have not yet found employment. Those 110 who "opted out" did not receive assistance. The cost avoidance to Allegany County since the start of the reworked program is close to \$500,000 less the cost of mileage. (Mileage is paid up front to be sure the applicants get to the classes.)

County Historian

County Historian Craig Braack was unable to attend the meeting.

Cornell Cooperative Extension **Monthly Report**

Cornell Cooperative Extension Representative Lynn Bliven began her report by introducing the new Executive Director, Laura Hunsberger. Ms. Hunsberger went on to give a brief overview of her background. She comes to Allegany County after serving for a year-and-a-half as the Executive Director of Cooperative Extension in Nassau County. Prior to that, she worked for nine years with Extension at the University of Maryland. Additionally, she is an agricultural educator.

Ms. Bliven then offered the following Cooperative Extension program highlights:

- will be hosting an OSHA dairy farm safety inspection training for large dairies (that is, those with 11 or more employees and/or Hispanic housing) to provide information to prepare farms for the audits expected to be coming up for that community and help them to avoid fines;

- is working with a local dairy in in the County that is looking to do on-farm processing, so working on project management and business planning with that dairy in addition to connecting it to Ag & Markets in order to move forward;

- is working with a couple of vegetable farms that are seeking additional season extension and a larger roadside stand market;

- recently submitted a Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) grant application—as part of that grant, Cooperative Extension will collaborate with four beef farms to address winter sacrifice areas in order to try to bring that into production. Part of that function is economic return; if something is growing in that field, it allows for an increase in forage availability on the farm, thereby reducing the need to purchase feeds. However, there is also an environmental impact: a lot of those areas are often left barren, so they often have resulting erosion issues as well as water quality issues;

- will be hosting a Southern Tier Crop Congress, a new program for field crops that will help with risk management and pesticide issues related to field and forage crops. Aaron Santagelo, the new educator, is putting together this program and working with educators from Cornell University as well as from Crop Insurance Education Program (NYS Crop Insurance); some pesticide credits will be part of that program.

Additionally, she said, she is watching what's happening with the Farm Bill and the Food Safety Modernization Act and the impacts that could have on producers. There is nothing definitive to share on that at this time.

Soil & Water Conservation

Monthly Report

Soil & Water Conservation Executive Director Scott Torrey gave an overview of the activities which have been completed or are in progress in his area:

- two fencing projects have been completed: Town of Birdsall-14,000 feet; Town of Angelica-7,900 feet;

- a silage waste treatment system has been completed in the Town of Scio;

- all 2009-10 FL-LOWPA Grant projects have been completed, and they are finishing the close-outs on that. They will be receiving more FL-LOWPA grant money once that's done.

As regards hazard mitigation, Mr. Torrey has submitted a grant application for \$500,000 for Belfast Bank Stabilization Project. They requested \$375,000 from FEMA; we had approximately \$109,000 left over from New York State Dorm Authority on the last two river projects we did. They have verbally committed that to this project. Soil & Water will do an in-kind of approximately \$15,000 for design and technical services.

Seneca Trails RC&D (Resource Conservation and Development) has hired a part-time Executive Director. The County RC&D Committee will be meeting with the Director next week to review the needs of Allegany County.

Ag District Review

Ag District Number Two is up for review. The enrollment period has been closed. The total enrollment has increased to 32,582 acres up from 30,960 acres for the last review. The Report will need to be completed and reviewed by the Farmland Protection Board by December 16, 2013. A Public Hearing date needs to be set for the Ag District Review. It can occur between the middle of December 2013 (12/12/) and the middle of February 2014 (2/10). Mr. Torrey felt that January or February would be best. It was decided to set up a public hearing for the review

of Ag District Number 2 on the occasion of the last Board meeting of January 2014 on a motion by Legislator Hopkins, seconded by Legislator Pullen, and carried. **Prepare Resolution**

County Planner

County Planner Kier Dirlam was unable to attend the meeting.

Greater Allegany Chamber of Commerce

Greater Allegany Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Gretchen Hanchett was unable to attend the meeting.

Economic Development/IDA

Monthly Report

Prior to beginning his report, Economic Development/IDA Director John Foels explained that County Planner Kier Dirlam was unavailable to attend the meeting because he is working with a surveying team at the CrossRoads to lay out the “Park-and-Ride.” This has been about three-and-a-half years in the making, he said. One of the reasons is that the funding needed to be acquired. The plan now is to have another outlet from the CrossRoads. Currently, there is one driveway; the plan is to have two. The plan also includes LED lighting among other things. This change is necessary, he said, because the volume on the transit system has increased measurably. It’s not unusual, he added, for him to see 25-30 people in the parking lot when he pulls into work. The engineering will be done over the next couple of weeks. The plan will be in place, and the work will be set to go in the spring.

The copying and assembling of the Comprehensive Plan continues in his office, he said. Once this is completed (projected to be within the next 10 days), the copies will be distributed as needed (Towns, Villages, and County Agencies and Offices). Mr. Foels said he had just picked up the signed SEQR (environmental impact statement that Chairman Crandall has signed), and that will be sent to Albany, final Comprehensive Plan will be filed with Albany, and that should complete the process. Mr. Foels went on to say that Klein Cutlery (Bolivar) which recently installed some environmental equipment over the last 18-24 months will receive a \$35,000 grant through ESD which will file through the Development Office as part of a contractual agreement with ESD. Mr. Foels also told the Committee that Chairman Crandall and he had had a conversation with Senator Young via conference call regarding development in Allegany County. The issues: what’s new, what’s the same, and where are you going.

Mr. Foels informed the Committee that the sale and title transfer of a co-gen plant in Hume had been completed within the last three weeks. He explained that RG+E had to divest itself of any power plants it owned and had three or four (Hume, Carthage, Rochester area). The plant in Hume was bought by Alliance Energy of Rochester, a large, national firm. The existing tax pilot schedule will continue to run through 2018, he said. The project had been in the works for a while, but it couldn’t be discussed until the deal closed. He went on to say they will regroup in December to facilitate the sale; there will be reinvestment in the plant to bring it up to a level where it will be competitive, noting there are no plans to mothball it, and that it will be a viable power plant. He noted that Alliance often does this type of thing when it acquires different plants. On the agenda in December will be what else the Development Office can do to help and encourage them; that could include involvement in a local greenhouse. They simply want to, at least initially, deal with just a few things at a time. When asked, Mr. Foels confirmed there was no mortgage involved; it was a cash sale.

He went on to say that over the course of the next three weeks or so, Allegany County will have a lot of attention from Empire State Development—either on-site or via conference calls. He will have dealings with Sam Hoyt, Christine Orsi, and Diego Sirriani, targeting certain companies that have expressed a desire to discuss potential projects. He reminded the

Committee that the Empire Zone Program has been discontinued by New York State, but that maybe 70 companies in Allegany County continue to be in the Program because it hasn't run out on them yet. Every year, he said, the Development Office brings Wendell Brown back into the fold for a couple of months, and he shepherds the business activity reports through the companies and makes sure that they get filed and that the companies know what their benefits are going to be. He went on to thank Wendell for helping out. Many counties just refer companies to an 800 number and let it go at that. So Mr. Foels wanted to acknowledge and thank Wendell. He added that Mr. Brown is paid through the Development budget.

Mr. Foels invited the Committee and the entire Board to the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Group annual breakfast at L'Italia on December 12, at 9 a.m.

Legislator Pullen reminded the Committee that there would be a training program sponsored by the Planning Board that evening, and following that, there would be a business session for the County Planning Board. Again, he reminded the Committee that it had expressed support several months ago for the solar array project that Houghton College is working on. The plan is to install about nine acres of solar panel array just off Route 19. However, some issues need to be addressed and, thus, have been referred to the County Planning Board. The array, he said, will be one of the largest solar array operations in Western New York, if not the entire State and/or the Northeast. We hope for approval this evening, he said, so the project can move forward, because until they have that permit, Houghton can't order the solar panels. He added that the College is getting some pressure from NYSERDA, who provided the grant. Once Houghton gets the "go-ahead," the array should be installed by late spring or early summer 2014.

Mr. Foels went on to say that the training program, "Site Plan Review for Municipalities with or without Zoning," arranged by County Planner Kier Dirlam, will be conducted by a professional planner from URS Corporation

Mr. Foels also noted that he would be attending a meeting with some planning folks from Houghton which would be headed by Ralph Kerr, who, he said, has an aggressive program for the athletic campus there. There are also plans for modernizing Main Street, creating/upgrading a town park, etc. He predicted the prospect of a nice coordinated effort there.

Legislator Healy then asked Mr. Foels about the CrossRoads project. Mr. Foels responded that there had been quite a bit of movement over the course of the past 40 days. However, he said, the configuration of owners, investment, construction, and financial aspects was changing. He said in the past, we had talked of "a" developer. Now, he says, there will be two or three different funding sources, there will be developers as well as people in construction involved in the project. "It is just taking a while to gel," he said. He added that the same is true for the Cuba Hospital Assisted Living Campus. Many of the same people will be involved, but figuring out the financial aspects has always been the issue. Originally, it was thought that financing would come from one source, and that's not the case any longer.

Mr. Healy went on to say that in November 2010, the County had made a contract with O'Connell Associates for \$30,000 to write five grants. Mr. Healy wanted to know what the outcome of that contract had been. Mr. Foels responded that he would ask Mr. Dirlam to compose a report, but that he could say that O'Connell did write a grant application to ARC for \$150,000 that had been realized. However, two other grants had not been funded. He said, however, that he still saw it as a good return on investment, as for \$30,000 the County had received \$150,000 in grant dollars. Now, he says, his office works with TVGA and a few others because the pricing is better and that they work on a project-by-project basis, with no long-term contracts involved. Mr. Foels added that the funding comes from his Marketing budget.

Chairman Crandall noted that several years ago the Board had spent money to identify areas we might be able to target to apply for grant funding. At that time, it dealt with Stewart Brown and Associates (which has been acquired by LaBella). "There have been different mixes over the years," he said, "but maybe it's time for a conversation and take another look at the pockets which ought to be specifically targeted and to look at the costs associated with those. It's probably been a couple of years since we've had that kind of an exercise."

Transfer of Funds to Purchase Shredders

Mr. Foels requested a resolution to transfer \$1,102 from A6430.474 (Office of Development-Marketing) to A6430.201 (Office of Development-Equipment) to purchase two new shredders from ACME Business Machines. Approval to transfer the funds was granted on a motion by Legislator Healy, seconded by Legislator Graves, and carried. **Prepare Resolution**

Good of the Order

Legislator Sinclair wanted to bring the Committee up to date regarding a new focus for the "WoW" (Walk on Water) facility in Rushford. Originally utilized as a retreat facility for five or six years, it is in the process of becoming a facility to provide shelter for transitioning veterans. It is run by Rev. Raymond Reed as a 501c3 organization. It currently has nine living units and may expand if it's successful. Legislator Sinclair could see myriad possibilities for this endeavor and encouraged any of the assemblage to be as accommodating as possible if they are contacted by this worthy organization.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m. following a motion by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Curran, and carried

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Santora, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board
Allegany County Board of Legislators

**PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 18, 2013**

**** NOT APPROVED ****

Committee Members Present: F. Sinclair, C. Jessup, P. Curran, K. Graves, D. Healy, T. Hopkins, K. LaForge, D. Pullen, C. Crandall

Others Present: M. Alger, C. Braack, D. Decker, K. Dirlam, D. Fanton, J. Foels, G. Hanchett, L. Hunsberger, T. Miner, B. Riehle, T. Ross, C. Santora, R. Sobeck-Lynch, S. Torrey

Media Present: D. Donohue, *Olean Times Herald*

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at approximately 10:03 a.m. by Planning & Economic Development Committee Chairman Frederick Sinclair.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Jessup, and carried to approve the Planning & Economic Development Committee minutes of November 20, 2013.

Re-appointments to the Industrial Development Agency (IDA) Board

The four year terms of the following Industrial Development Agency members expires December 31, 2013. The Committee desires to re-appoint the following to a four-year term of office commencing January 1, 2014, and expiring December 31, 2017:

Michael Johnsen, Dalton
Theodore L. Hopkins, Fillmore
Richard Ewell, Wellsville
John "Jack" Ormond, Cuba
Jack Wood, Allentown

Re-appointment of the aforementioned people to the Industrial Development Agency members was approved on a motion by Legislator Jessup, seconded by Legislator Pullen, and carried. **Prepare Resolution**

Re-appointments to the Industrial & Commercial Incentive Board

The four year terms of the following Industrial & Commercial Incentive Board members expires December 31, 2013. The Committee desires to re-appoint the following to a four-year term of office commencing January 1, 2014, and expiring December 31, 2017:

Michael Johnsen, Dalton
Theodore L. Hopkins, Fillmore
Richard Ewell, Wellsville
John "Jack" Ormond, Cuba
Jack Wood, Allentown

Re-appointment of the aforementioned people to the Industrial & Commercial Incentive Board members was approved on a motion by Legislator Pullen, seconded by Legislator LaForge, and carried. **Prepare Resolution**

Appointments to Planning Board

The Chairman of the Board plans to re-appoint Valerie Perkins of Caneadea, Larry Kaminski of Wellsville, and Aaron Dale Foster of Andover as members of the Allegany County Planning Board for a three-year term commencing January 1, 2014, and expiring December 31,

2016, subject to confirmation by the Board of Legislators. The Chairman also plans to make the annual ex officio appointments to the Planning Board as follows:

Guy R. James, Public Works Superintendent, Scio

Terri L. Ross, County Treasurer, Angelica

Theodore L. Hopkins, Ways & Means Committee Chairman, Fillmore.

Approval of the re-appointments to the Planning Board as well as the re-appointment of the ex officio members was granted on a motion by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Jessup, and carried. **Prepare Resolution**

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Employment & Training

Monthly Report

Employment & Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch told the Committee that November had been a quiet month with numbers down from the previous month. Although she felt some of that could be attributable to the holiday last month, she added that Cattaraugus County also posted lower front door traffic. Along with her monthly report, Ms. Lynch distributed a fact sheet delineating how unemployment rates and other labor force data is determined. Also included was a map of NYS unemployment rates by county for October 2013. Ms. Lynch indicated that the information on the map for Allegany County is erroneous as the County's unemployment rate had dropped to 6.8 percent and it should have been a lighter color on the map. Legislator Healy asked if Ms. Lynch had a sense of whether unemployed people in the County might not be actively seeking employment. Although those receiving unemployment benefits are required to log into a work search site to receive benefits, she added that it is hard to police. She also said that the extended unemployment benefits would cease December 29, 2013, but that there had not been an influx of people seeking services due to this fact. Additionally, she said, layoffs at local industries are down, and many are actually hiring. Ms. Lynch also noted that the Breakfast Club will meet the following day and that Bobby and Nancy from the County's HR Office will present information regarding Civil Service exams and how to apply for jobs. Legislator Sinclair commented that E&T should continue to pursue a portion of the Broadband program in order to increase distance learning, job training, etc. Ms. Lynch said E&T would like to have an interactive video conferencing center because a lot of what the Department of Labor does is through video conferencing, but at this time, there is no definitive plan, but she has been in contact with Deb Button and Literacy West regarding this issue.

County Historian

Monthly Report

County Historian Craig Braack updated the Committee on his recent activities, saying he is making progress on the artifacts and the museum. He has been in contact with ReHouse Architectural Salvage, a Rochester firm, which buys architecturally significant pieces from structures being razed, regarding the stained glass windows at the old church. Mr. Braack cautioned the group that the County must be sensitive to the locals who may have worshipped at that church in the past and not offend them during this process of relocating artifacts and, eventually, razing the building. Mr. Braack is investigating the best method of removing the stained glass windows (whether using a professional glass company or the Department of Public Works if it is willing/able [which would save money]). Mr. Braack has also been in contact with a local (Hornell) glazier who will be bidding on the removal and crating of the windows. He went on to say that he continues to place items and artifacts in his new area, but that there are more items than space to put them. However, he stressed that any artifact or paper item dealing

with Allegany County will be kept in the County. Only generic historical items will be sold. He believes there are items that could go to auction, but that there are not enough for a dedicated "County" event. Mr. Braack suggests contracting with an auctioneer in order to realize the most return on the items. Mr. Braack hopes to have things completed by late spring 2014. Legislator Healy stressed that the local community should be kept apprised of the activity with the windows in case locals would like to obtain some. It was also noted that perhaps a monument or marker of some sort be erected at the site following the building's removal.

Soil & Water Conservation

Monthly Report

Soil & Water Conservation District Director Scott Torrey addressed the Committee, saying that all construction projects have been wrapped up for the year, and that his area is beginning the design work for next year's projects. Additionally, he said, the Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed 2009-10 Grant Program has been closed out, and the 2012-13 Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed Grant Program funds have been received. The Agricultural Environmental Management Program is working with the Natural Resources Conservation Service with its federal grant applications. The District is working with the Towns of Friendship and Hume to remove some gravel from problem areas in streams. The Ag District #2 Report has been completed and the Farmland Protection Board will meet Friday (December 20) to approve this report and forward to the County Legislators. The District is also working on getting the access to the Weir Lot finalized, and they are marking boundaries at the C. Horner Lot in Angelica for a cutting and soft wood sale.

Legislator Sinclair took a moment to recap some of the strides the Soil & Water Conservation District has made, including the addition of a technician who is a trained forester able to handle the needs of the 2,000 acres owned by the County, as well as the addition of Leonard Preston, a licensed professional civil engineer. And Mr. Torrey, he said, is a certified planner and agronomist.

County Planner

Monthly Report

County Planner Kier Dirlam reported that the Comprehensive Plan printing and binding is coming to an end. The Plan has been sent to towns and villages in the County; 100 have been distributed thus far, and the plan is to print and bind 140 overall, so his office is close to achieving that goal. He anticipates getting all copies distributed by the end of the year. He noted that two versions contain 26 appendices (one has been sent to Albany for the official record, and one resides in the County Clerk's Office). Chairman Crandall interjected that Cattaraugus County recently hired a company, for \$72,000, to create its Comprehensive Plan. An article from the *Olean Times Herald* indicates that without a current plan, Cattaraugus County feels it has been shut out of some grants that require a comprehensive plan no more than three to five years old. Chairman Crandall went on to say that not only does Allegany County have a good plan in place that he believes has been instrumental in the County's receiving recent grant funding, but that it was created in-house on a shoestring budget. But thanks to the hard work of Mr. Dirlam and the volunteer committee, Allegany County is once again ahead of the curve. Mr. Dirlam went on to say that he started work on a mapping server to bring GIS data to the Internet. The first task is tourism data, he said, to see how that goes. There is a draft on line which will be tweaked as necessary. He will continue that project with planning data, so people can find information about towns, streams, etc. He said he will have something to show the Committee in January. Mr. Dirlam said he continues to work on the 417 E waterline grant application, commenting that the USED A (Economic Development Administration) has been difficult to work with as it continues to lose the applications the County continues to submit. But,

because the funding he is seeking for this project of about \$400,000 will cover nearly one-half of the cost of the project, it is worth pursuing. It was submitted again at the beginning of December. He added that the TVGA grant writers have been great throughout this process. It was mentioned that TVGA is now part of KHEOPS, a firm in Atlanta, GA. Mr. Dirlam recapped the Planning Board training session that occurred in November, saying that over 40 people attended the session on site plan review for municipalities with or without zoning laws. URS Corp., Buffalo, sent a planner and an engineer to conduct the session and field questions. Mr. Dirlam said he had all positive reviews regarding the session. He would like to conduct training sessions in the fall and in the spring from now on. Mr. Dirlam informed the Committee that he had received notice of a successful grant application to create a "Comprehensive Planning School." This would require a commitment from the towns and the villages to go through the process of creating a comprehensive plan. Each of about 15 scheduled sessions would focus on a portion of a comprehensive plan, and each team (ideally, each municipality would send a group of people to these sessions) would take that information, return to its respective municipality, and plug in the appropriate and necessary information. At the end of the process, a professional planner/writer will edit the draft plans. Mr. Dirlam anticipates having four comprehensive plans created or updated at the end of the process. When queried, he said that four villages/towns will be targeted, although a fifth could be added, that would be about the limit. Mr. Dirlam stressed that the towns and villages would need to make a true commitment to the process in order to end up with a complete document. The grant provides \$67,000 in funding for this project in order to pay a consultant to create the curriculum and conduct the course. He added that the Planning Board meeting that had been scheduled for that evening (December 18) has been cancelled, and that the annual dinner meeting is scheduled for January 15, 2014, at *L'Italia* in Wellsville. Mr. Dirlam will be the featured speaker. Legislator Sinclair reminded Mr. Dirlam that his office, in conjunction with Fire & Emergency Services should be looking into applying for FEMA dollars to update the Hazard Mitigation Plan for 2015. Mr. Dirlam indicated that he and Mr. Luckey have already discussed this issue. Mr. Dirlam ended his report by thanking outgoing Legislator Sinclair for his service, not only to the Board of Legislators, but for the initiative, energy, support, and mentoring he provided to the County Planner.

Cornell Cooperative Extension **Monthly Report**

Cornell Cooperative Extension Executive Director Laura Hunsberger presented this month, updating the Committee on recent and future Cooperative Extension activities. The first up is the Southern Tier Crop Congress to be held Friday, January 10, 2014, in the Belfast Fire Hall, with sign-in beginning at 9 a.m. She distributed a handout with a registration form to members of the Committee. On February 6, there will be a Growing Produce for Auction workshop targeted toward the Amish; on February 8, in Cuba, there will be a direct marketing meeting for vegetable growers; on February 12, there will be a farm disaster training session; and on March 1, there will be the annual rural landowners' workshop. Ms. Hunsberger also noted that she and Ms. Bliven had been applying for grants to the Northeast Risk Management Education Center located in Dover, DE, in order to hold risk management workshops which could cover such topics as crop insurance, marketing, enterprise budgeting, etc. Additionally, Cooperative Extension is targeting Andover for the 2014 Complete Streets Project. 4-H, she said, is always busy. In January, there will be a "Choose Health" program in Warsaw, targeted at teens to facilitate healthy food choices. After the first of the year, Cooperative Extension will begin educational clinics for the 4-H livestock kids so they can start picking their topics in marketing and breeding to set their goals for the Fair. On January 23, 2014, the Teen Council Community Programs for 2014 hope to involve high school youth who need to do community

projects for school credit. Additionally, the horse youth meet monthly throughout the year to work on skills for the horse bowl and hippology competition, a sort of Jeopardy for horse lovers. The public presentations will take place on February 8 at Scio Central School. Ms. Hunsberger invited Committee members to attend to support these new “public speakers.” *[Hippology (from Greek: hippos, "horse"; and logos, "study") is the study of the horse. Today, Hippology is the title of an Equine Knowledge Contest that is used in 4-H, FFA, and many horse breed contests. Hippology consists of four phases: Horse Judging, Written Examination and Slide Identification, ID Stations, and Team Problem Solving. Taken from Wikipedia]* Legislator Sinclair expressed his hope that Allegany County continues to keep its agricultural economic development efforts strong and to keep Lynn Bliven available for this task. Ms. Hunsberger indicated she is committed to keeping that effort alive and to having Lynn continue in this vein. She added that she would like to get another agricultural educator in Cattaraugus County so the Allegany County folks can continue with the economic development effort.

Legislator LaForge questioned Ms. Hunsberger regarding articles he had seen in the local press on her membership on new committees. She indicated that she had met with Crystal Abers of Cattaraugus County regarding the Farmland Protection Board and its Farmer/Neighbor Dinner and that they are also developing a program to increase hops production in the two counties. She added that they are also working toward an entrepreneurial adventure for kids called CYFAR (Children, Youth, and Families at Risk) to train kids to have skills for the job market so more youth will stay in the area and perhaps stem the flow of out migration. “Even if we can’t increase the number of tech jobs in the area,” she said, “at least we can educate these kids to a higher skill level and take these jobs that are here up a notch.”

Greater Allegany Chamber of Commerce

Monthly Report

Greater Allegany Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Gretchen Hanchett addressed the Committee, saying that the “I Love NY” tourism grant has been submitted, and although she expects it to be a few thousand less than last year, overall things look good for that, she said. She also said that she had met with the regional tourism group to develop regional projects. She also met with the Governor’s Regional Economic Development group regarding some regional projects which are in the process of being developed. Ms. Hanchett went on to say that the WNY Regional Economic Development Council had asked for photos to post at the Empire State Plaza in Albany, and she had sent images of Swain, ATV, and local trails and countryside. New brochures are being printed for spring and summer; her office has redone the County historic brochures which will play in nicely as we develop County-wide scenic drives and bus tours. She noted that she is working with Allegany Transit to develop bus tours in the local area. Ms. Hanchett went on to say that the Manufacturing Council had met earlier that week and that Congressman Tom Reed had been there talking about the Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act which is still being developed. She has hopes that Allegany County will become one of the 15 proposed hubs. Finally, Ms. Hanchett thanked outgoing Legislator Sinclair for his work on the Board and presented him with a Bounty of the County gift box.

Economic Development/IDA

Monthly Report

Economic Development/IDA Director John Foels began his report by thanking Legislator Sinclair for his help and guidance over the years. He went on to talk about the Comprehensive Plan School which, he said, is a one-of-a-kind, never-been-done-before activity. He added that getting grants has become more difficult since the state developed regional councils (eight of them) to determine if an application makes it to the next round. This increased level of

competition makes it more difficult to succeed in getting the available grants. He went on to say that the County had a contract with O'Connell and Associates for a little more than a year during which time four or five applications were submitted. One was very successful (\$150,000 for the Crossroads), one was a near miss, and the others fell apart because the entire complexion of New York changed with the advent of the regional councils. Since that time, what we've done in our grant work is go on a project-to-project basis. One of the first is through TVGA which so far has gotten the County \$1.4 million in grants including the Broadband grant. The return on investment is about 30 or 40 to one, he said.

Mr. Foels went on to discuss Start-Up New York which offers tax benefits for companies and employees for 10 years. Allegany County is in a unique situation, he added, because it has four campuses. He added that he is in continual contact with Empire State Development and the three colleges to figure out "where we will put this stuff." The program is a game-changer and we want to do it right and get the right real estate involved, he added. He went on to say that we need to be aggressive in order to compete successfully because thousands of companies have already applied to be in the tax-free zone. Alfred is now a "hot spot," he said, and we're going to learn what that is. Dr. Alan Rae, who spoke to this Committee a few months ago, talked about going after that and he was successful. Now we'll learn what that means. The tax advantage will put businesses in New York on a level playing field which is a positive thing.

Legislator Sinclair said his understanding of a hot spot is that it is like a doorway allowing access to funding, technical assistance, and expertise, so being a hot spot is a portal to economic development and a focal point through which resources will be disseminated. He added that now is the time for our institutions of higher education to start formulating ideas and sending them to the state. They should ramp it up in order to not miss out on the opportunity. Mr. Foels said that some of that has been done, but that it is an ongoing process.

Mr. Foels added that Mr. Dirlam has been helpful to those institutions in providing mapping and insight into where things should be placed and is meeting with the colleges and university on a regular basis.

Legislator Sinclair added that the geographic information system (GIS) is a valuable tool to see boundaries, soil types, land use, etc. for proposal development and project funding.

In response to a question, Mr. Foels noted that any company wishing to become part of Start-Up New York would need to "fit" with the curriculum of the school, citing such examples as medicine at UB, ceramics at Alfred University, and technology at Alfred State.

Chairman Crandall commented that as these programs become available, the County should be poised to take advantage of them as that's the key to moving forward. Additionally, he said, the County needs to be ready to help the institutions to apply for the programs and help out in any other way it can.

Good of the Order **Houghton College**

Legislator Pullen updated the group on the progress of Houghton College's PV solar array, saying that it has moved forward. The County Planning Board gave approval for a special use permit that had to come through the Town Planning Board and had been referred to the County Planning Board. Houghton now has all the necessary permits and is ordering the equipment which will probably be installed in spring and summer.

Assessment of Jail for Possible Alternate Energy

Legislator Fanton said he has talked to Jeff Stevens at Alfred State who will do a study on the Jail in April to determine the feasibility of PV or geothermal installations at the Jail.

Question on the Crossroads

Legislator Healy returned to the topic of economic development, asking Mr. Foels if there was anything new to report about the Crossroads Project. Mr. Foels responded that new IDA member Jack Wood has taken a personal interest in the project, making it his number one priority. Mr. Foels said that Mr. Wood is the point man on the project now. Legislator Healy indicated he would be contacting Mr. Wood.

Expression of Appreciation

Legislator Sinclair took the opportunity to express his appreciation for the opportunity and privilege to serve on this Committee, saying he is pleased with the progress that it has made in economic development. He added that he will be “out there” and not “gone!” He indicated that he would still like to receive the minutes.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:28 a.m. following a motion by Legislator Graves, seconded by Legislator Jessup, and carried

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Santora, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board
Allegany County Board of Legislators