

## **PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**November 17, 2021**

**Members Present:** D. Root, G. Barnes, J. Burdick, P. Curran, W. Dibble, D. Healy, J. Hopkins, J. Ricci, C. Crandall

**Others Present:** T. Boyde, C. Clark, A. Cyr, D. Decker, K. Demick, M. Denhoff, D. Fanton, Gordon, K. Graves, B. Harris, S. Havey, K. Hooker, C. Knapp, T. Linn, R. Lynch, T. Miner, Reynolds, B. Riehle, T. Ross, P. Stockin, J. Swales

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Planning & Economic Development Committee Chair Debra Root.

### **Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Legislator Curran, seconded by Legislator Dibble, and carried to approve the October 20, 2021, Planning & Economic Development Committee minutes.

### **EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING**

Employment and Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch attended the meeting and submitted her monthly report to the committee for review. Ms. Lynch stated that Unemployment was down again, and that they received a list from the Department of Labor with responses to frequently asked questions. Ms. Lynch stated that Saputo settled their contract and employees are back to work, and that they had spent a lot of time with those employees during that time. Ms. Lynch stated that it had been a quiet month with nothing new to report.

### **PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

Planning and Development Specialist Michelle Denhoff attended the meeting and submitted her monthly report to the committee for review. Committee Chair Root stated that Planning Director Kier Dirlam was unable to attend due to the passing of his Mother, and sends thoughts to him and his family during this time. Ms. Denhoff stated they are continuing to work with the Amity Belmont Comprehensive Plan Committee to complete their joint comprehensive plan which is expected to be completed in early Spring 2022. Ms. Denhoff stated that the Alfred State College students recently presented their Visualization Study findings to the public which had been well attended by the community. Legislator Hopkins stated that she attended the Alfred State College student's presentations in Hume, and also in Caneadea in 2020, and commended the students for their knowledge and ideas brought to these communities. Legislator Hopkins stated that there were many good questions, the illustrations were fantastic, and it really stimulates new thinking. Legislator Hopkins stated that she encourages other communities to apply for the Visualization Study because it is eye opening. Ms. Denhoff stated that the Allegany County Planning Board meeting for November 17, 2021, had been canceled, with the next meeting scheduled for December 15, 2021, pending any referrals. Ms. Denhoff stated that they were able to have a quorum at the November 4, 2021, Shared Services meeting where panel members decided not to submit a 2021 plan, and that there were a few items left to finish up before submitting the material to the State.

### **Request to Create and Fill Planner**

Planning Director Kier Dirlam forwarded a request to create one full-time Planner (Grade 7, Step: Base), for the Planning Department. This position will work with Towns and Villages, and the County on creating plans for downtown development, hazard mitigation, GIS work, and

comprehensive plans. The annual salary of this position is \$47,897, with benefits estimated at \$18,713.36. This position is funded 100 percent with County funds, and is in the 2022 Budget. Legislator Graves asked if this is a newly created position. Ms. Denhoff stated that this position is currently vacant in the Development Office, and this is more of a housekeeping issue to eliminate the position in the Development Office, and create the position in the Planning Office. The request was approved on a motion by Legislator Healy, seconded by Legislator Ricci, and carried. **Refer to Personnel**

### **Wild Souls, Wild Places**

Ms. Denhoff referred to the Wild Souls, Wild Places Campaign Update handout she provided to the Legislators prior to the meeting. Ms. Denhoff highlighted the paid advertising campaign analytics for social media activity between September 7 and October 31 as follows:

- 186,719 total people reached since release
- 2,678 total link clicks
- 15 newsletter subscribers
- 60,000 people reached since last campaign update
- Over 100 link clicks since last campaign update
- Average viewer interacted 3-4 times as opposed to 2-3 times in September

Legislator Burdick asked if Allegany County was intentionally left off of the Western New York Wilds handout. Ms. Denhoff stated that this is part of creating the Western New York Wilds brand, and when people click the link it will lead them to the tourism site which eventually leads them to Allegany County. Ms. Burdick asked why they would not list Allegany County so that people are associating Western New York Wilds with our County. Ms. Denhoff stated that it is intentional to create brand awareness. Ms. Denhoff stated that when creating a brand, it is important to familiarize people with Western New York Wilds, and what it means to the communities within Allegany County. Ms. Denhoff stated that when they click on the Western New York Wilds link, that is when they will get information where Allegany County is located, and what is offered. Legislator Burdick stated that her preference would be to list Allegany County because that is what we are promoting, and we want it to have a positive impact. Legislator Graves asked if there is a link to Western New York Wilds from the Allegany County website. Ms. Denhoff said, yes. Committee Chair Root stated that if you navigate through the Western New York Wilds website, you will be able to read stories of businesses here in Allegany County, and she agrees there should be some tag link for Allegany County, but Allegany County is referenced throughout these stories. Legislator Hopkins stated that she recalled during development of this program, just how many different “Allegany(s)” existed, and that people may get confused with exactly where it is, so it was intentionally left out to encourage them to seek out where it is located. Legislator Havey stated that brand development takes time, but until Western New York Wilds has built up the brand, Allegany County should be listed on the material that is put out. Committee Chair Root stated that these are all good comments that we can take back to Development. Ms. Denhoff played the new video titled “Meet Ed” with an interview with Ed Kent from Kent Farms. Legislator Hopkins stated that this video was a great Allegany County story that says a lot about the County and the Kent Family, and that she is very proud of it. Ms. Denhoff stated that the third video was released on November 8, titled “Meet Steve” with Steve Walker, focusing on the different recreational opportunities at Swain Resort. Committee Chair Root stated that there are approximately six of these videos. Ms. Denhoff stated that yes, a new video will be released each month currently targeting the Buffalo Suburbs, next month extending into the Rochester area, and expanding to the Syracuse area in 2022.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

Allegany County Development and Industrial Development Agency Executive Director Craig Clark attended the meeting and submitted his monthly report to the committee for review. Dr. Clark briefly highlighted his monthly report noting the following:

### **Crossroads Development**

Dr. Clark stated that he has been talking with four developers, with one planning a decision in January 2022, another is still ongoing, and the last two seem likely to move forward. Dr. Clark stated that things are finally starting to break free, stating that COVID really impacted hotels, with one developer being concerned about not being able to obtain development funding from banks.

### **ANGEL Fund**

Dr. Clark stated that the ANGEL fund is still active, but one investment is taking longer than he had hoped.

### **ARVOS Ljungstrom**

Dr. Clark stated that they are starting to work with ARVOS Ljungstrom with some of their training needs in the Wellsville area as they begin hiring approximately 100 employees for their different levels, including welders, painters, some engineers, and general staff.

### **Wellsville Business Park and Clean Air Projects**

Dr. Clark stated he continues to work with people regularly on a few project ideas that will be announced in 2022. Legislator Barnes asked if they thought Saputo would be interested in the Cuba plant, and if there are any plans to talk with Saputo. Dr. Clark stated that they would talk to Saputo first, but that it is likely too far into the future at this point. Dr. Clark stated that clean energy projects are ongoing, and the large wind project is programmed to begin in 2022. Dr. Clark stated that all of the small solar projects have either been started or completed, except for Independence which is slow to start. Dr. Clark stated that there are two large solar projects in Alfred and Hume which are still in the developmental stage, and he had a meeting on Friday, November 12, 2021, for a potential wind project in Independence and Andover.

### **Microenterprise Grant**

Dr. Clark stated that five of the six microenterprise projects are doing very well and almost closed out. Dr. Clark stated that there is one that has been struggling, so they are going to ask for an extension to make sure it is completed.

### **CBDG Grant**

Dr. Clark stated that the CBDG Grant is going very well, and everyone is very pleased with the outcome.

Legislator Barnes asked if there is any movement at all with the old Dresser-Rand plant in Wellsville, NY. Dr. Clark stated that they have had two or three really good bites, with one we were sure was going to land, but has not come to fruition yet. Dr. Clark stated that he believes they are waiting for the infrastructure project because it is steel related. Dr. Clark stated that the current owner also has a few ideas to utilize the property in the future.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:22 p.m. following a motion by Legislator Dibble, seconded by Legislator Ricci, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Tiffany Linn, Confidential Secretary  
Allegany County Board of Legislators