

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

December 12, 2019

Public Safety Complex, 2nd Floor Conference Room, 49 ½ Court Street, Canton, NY

I. Call to Order

- a. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum.** K. Bellor called the meeting to order. A quorum was present.

Members Present: E. Alan, K. Bellor, K. Bisonette, J. Cameron, D. Duff, D. Fay, M. Gazin, A. Gilbert, M. McCluskey, B. Murray and K. O’Neil. **Members Absent:** D. Chambers, W. Davis, R. Hotte and D. Mullaney. **Staff Present:** M. Larson and J. Pfothenhauer. **Others Present:** K. Zimmerman, guest presenter; Bob Washo, Town of Canton Board member; Mike Dalton, Village of Canton Mayor; Brad Mintener, Canton resident; John Casserly, Town of Canton Planning Board member; and an unknown news reporter.

Bellor welcomed newly appointed member Andy Gilbert, and welcomed members of the public to tonight’s meeting.

- b. Adoption of the Agenda.** Bellor suggested rearranging the order of the agenda to present full review projects first, followed by projects that are returned for local action. The modified agenda was unanimously adopted (Alan/Gazin).
- c. Approval of the Meeting Minutes.** The November 14, 2019 minutes were unanimously approved (Duff/O’Neil).

II. Public Forum

None.

III. Land Use Training Session

Zimmerman began his presentation by explaining he served as the County’s interim Emergency Management Director this summer while the County searched to permanently fill the position. In that capacity, he worked with shoreline communities in response to St. Lawrence River flooding. As flooding progressed, Zimmerman said New York State determined state funds would not be used to rebuild damaged infrastructure as it was originally built, but would be reconstructed to make the shoreline more resilient to flooding. At the same time, Zimmerman explained the County was awarded funds to prepare a desktop study to identify areas between Hammond and Lisbon that were susceptible to flooding, and the report recommended local governments institute a new construction requirement of Base Flood

Elevation (BFE) + 2' for uninhabited structures, and BFE + 3' for inhabited structures. Zimmerman said one week after a public hearing was held in May to receive comment on the study, the State formed the Resiliency and Economic Development Initiative (REDI) in response to 2019 flooding. St. Lawrence County was paired with Jefferson County in identifying shoreline resiliency projects. In addition to making funds available to shoreline property owners, Zimmerman said \$60 million consisting of part-loan/part-grant monies was awarded to projects in both counties, including a wastewater treatment plant in Waddington; the seawall in Ogdensburg; bridge and abutment removal in the Village of Morristown; and park development at Fort de La Presentation. Zimmerman said the local matching component would be satisfied with funds provided by the County Industrial Development Agency.

Zimmerman said projects will be underway with the next construction season, and engineering reports will be due in early February. Duff said homeowners are having difficulty finding contractors who can provide cost estimates so that they can be eligible to receive funds. Duff also asked if maps are available to depict locations where BFE + 2' and BFE + 3' would apply, Zimmerman said no, but the timeline to update FEMA flood maps in Northern New York may be accelerated with recent and continued future Great Lakes flood events. Murray asked Zimmerman if he knew what the Canadian Government's response has been to 2019 flooding. Zimmerman said he did not. Gilbert asked if alternative septic system arrangements are being designed for property owners, such as pumping waste uphill. Zimmerman said guidelines identifying where and how to build should be drafted. *Zimmerman's presentation satisfied one-hour of the Planning Board's annual four-hour land use training requirement.*

IV. Project Reviews

a. Full Reviews.

- i. Canton (V): Site Plan Review for McDonald's Restaurant in the General Commercial (C2) District at 111 East Main Street. Pfothenauer said this project was originally reviewed by the County Planning Board five years ago. Pfothenauer said the project uses a land lease arrangement, and described its location. Pfothenauer described the site plan; the intent of the C2 zoning district; and said the project represents good infill development of an underutilized parking lot. Pfothenauer reviewed staff recommendations to install a median along the length of the parking area; moving the building north to lengthen car queueing for drive-thru orders; and rearranging the short-term parking spaces that are available to drive-thru customers. Duff said parking spaces in front of the McDonald's restaurant in Gouverneur were eliminated to help address traffic circulation and queueing. Pfothenauer said the developer should consult with the DOT about whether they have concerns about vehicle queueing in the turning lane on US Highway 11.

Washo asked whether Pfothenauer spoke with the developer about moving the building north. Pfothenauer said he spoke with the project engineer. Mintener said there is a lot of westbound traffic on Route 11. O'Neil said vehicles will likely cross through the Price Chopper parking lot to access the restaurant and avoid the traffic signal at USH 11 and SH 310. Bellor asked whether the developer did a study to measure traffic flow.

Pfotenhauer said he did not know. Additional discussion ensued about relocating the pedestrian crosswalk in front of the drive-thru service and installing a sidewalk to redirect pedestrians away from the property's driveway entrance. Pfotenhauer said the applicant's sign proposal is greater than what is allowed by the Village, and reviewed the dark sky lighting and snow removal recommendations. Fay said there are a lot of athletic teams who stay at the Best Western and will cross the highway to access the restaurant. Bisonette recommended the installation of a bike rack for those who may bicycle to the restaurant. Pfotenhauer reviewed the recommended conditions of approval suggested by staff and the Planning Board. The Board unanimously approved the site plan with conditions (O'Neil/Alan).

- ii. Fowler (T): Adoption of Development District Map. Larson explained that while the Town's proposed map was referred to the County Planning Board for review, the land use regulations were previously adopted and filed with the Department of State in August, 2019. Larson described the proposed districts, the intent of each district, and uses that are allowed by right, and uses that are subject to local review. Larson noted the current regulations omit mineral extraction and mining. Alan said the shoreline district along the Oswegatchie River does not permit agricultural operations. The Board unanimously agreed to return the Development District Map for local action with comments (Gilbert/O'Neil).

b. Projects Returned for Local Action.

- i. Potsdam (V): Use Variance to allow for the operation of a restaurant and bar in the Light Business (B-2) zoning district at 95 Market Street. Pfotenhauer described the property's location and noted the applicant did not satisfy any of the four legal tests to approve a use variance. Gilbert said he felt the project wouldn't be supported locally. *The Board concurred with staff recommendation to return the project for local action with standard language for use variances.*

IV. Reports

- a. **Executive Committee.** Bellor said the Executive Committee did not meet, but tonight's meeting agenda was set.
- b. **Board of Legislators.** Fay said the County is continuing its discussions with the City of Ogdensburg about a future formula for sales tax distribution. Fay also mentioned County discussions regarding mineral leases.
- c. **Highway Department.** None.
- d. **County Roundtable.** None.

- e. **Staff Report.** Pfothenhauer said John Tenbusch finalized a Community Development Block Grant application for additional home repair funds for low-income households, and said the Office is closing out an \$850,000 CDBG. Larson said the County approved the submission of an emergency application to provide Star Lake residents with transit service to nearby Harrisville in Lewis County. Pfothenhauer said the Office has also provided the Town of Potsdam with some technical assistance as it finalizes its comprehensive plan, and that he will also be serving on the Village's Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) Committee.

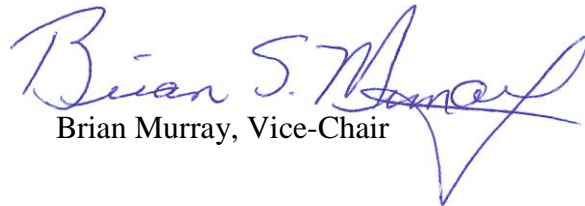
V. Other Items

- a. **Correspondence.** Bellor said Mullaney informed the Office that she will not be seeking reappointment to the Board after her term expires on December 31st. Bellor read for the record a letter of appreciation commemorating her 20 years of service with the County Planning Board.
- b. **2020 Work Program.** There were no new additions to the 2020 Work Program. Pfothenhauer said it will be presented to the Board for adoption at the January meeting.
- c. **Announcements.** Pfothenhauer said the Office is looking to permanently fill a Planner II position, and is seeking an Office Manager to service on a temporary, six-month basis.
- d. **Next Meeting Dates.** The Executive Committee is scheduled to meet on Tuesday, December 26th at 4:15 pm. The Planning Board will meet on January 9th at 7:00 pm in the 2nd floor conference room of the County Public Safety Complex, located at 49 ½ Court Street in Canton.

VI. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned by consensus at 9:32 pm (Fay/O'Neil).

Respectfully Submitted,


Brian Murray, Vice-Chair

Minutes prepared by M. Larson

P:\PLANNING\CPB\MINUTES\2019\CPB Mins 12.12.19.docx