

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

May 10, 2018

Hawkins Point Visitors Center, 21 Hawkins Point Road, Massena, NY

I. Call to Order

K. Bellor called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., welcomed all those in attendance, and asked all those present to please introduce themselves.

- a. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum. Members Present:** K. Bellor, K. Bisonette, J. Cameron, D. Chambers, W. Davis, D. Duff, M. Gazin, and J. Timmerman. **Absent:** D. Fay, R. Hotte, M. McCluskey, D. Mullaney, B. Murray, W. Palmer, and M. Pennington **Staff Present:** M. Larson and J. Pfothenauer. **Others:** David Grant, Town of Massena Planning Board; Vance Fleury, Village of Massena Planning Board; Joe Leary, Brian Terry, Dan O'Neil, Mark Malone, Frank D'Eufemia, and Mark Slade, all from the New York Power Authority.

A quorum was established when Timmerman arrived before the Board recessed for a short break at 7:35 pm. The order of the agenda was changed so that all items requiring Planning Board action were deferred until later in the meeting.

II. Land Use Presentation

Karen White began the overview of NYPA's Smart Path Initiative by explaining the project will upgrade the Authority's 60 year old transmission lines that span 86 miles from the Moses Power Dam in Massena to a substation in Crogan. White explained the project will increase the transmission capacity from 230 kv to 345 kv to accommodate additional energy production, and will occur in two phases. The first phase will begin in January 2020; be implemented over a 3½ year period, and conclude in June 2023. The second phase may be implemented depending on the need for 345 kv power. White said the new utility poles will be 140' above grade (they currently reach 70' to 80' above grade). Because the poles will be taller, White said it will require fewer structures, and the spans between the poles will increase from 550' apart to 1,100'. White said the upgrade will occur in NYPA's existing right of way. White was asked whether the project would begin in Massena or Crogan. White said she did not know. White was asked about the dam's current energy capacity. White said the dam generates 800 Mw, and the power line upgrades would allow the dam to increase the capacity to 912 Mw, and added the new height of the utility poles would be appropriate to increase transmission capacity to 345 kv.

Duff asked if the upgrades will take the transmission line out of service. White replied NYPA will coordinate outages with construction sequences, and the line will be relocated

away from SUNY Canton's expanded campus. White was asked about any additional public hearings on the project. White said the Public Service Commission will conduct a public hearing when they conduct a review. Chambers asked about the use of County highways and local roads as a part of the proposed upgrade. White said NYPA intends to prepare a traffic plan as a part of the project. Chambers asked how impacts to local roads would be mitigated and accounted for by NYPA, and explained local roads may not be able to take the project's traffic loads, and said a new permitting process is underway to accommodate up to 150,000 pounds.

A discussion ensued about the ability to transmit power downstate from the dam, and an existing bottleneck in Marcy that is owned by National Grid, and for National Grid to upgrade its own transmission lines. A comment was made that Alcoa utilizes 230 Mw for production purposes, and a new cryptocurrency operation in Alcoa's former east plan will use 250 Mw when fully built out. White was asked if power generated at the dam will be sold to Ontario or Quebec. White said she is unsure. Duff asked what NYPA does with excess power that is generated. White said it is sold on the open market. A question was asked about whether a second line could be installed in the existing right of way. White said the upgrade will fully occupy the ROW. White said critical elements of the project will be addressed and finalized by 2020, and said project development is at 30% and will be submitted to the Public Service Commission.

Davis asked if NYPA will include a provision that the new steel poles will follow a Buy NY or Buy US provision, and encouraged NYPA to take a preference in working with union labor. White was asked if NYPA intends to import and transmit Canadian power. White said there were no plans. White was asked how the IJC's Plan 2014 regarding water levels affects power production by NYPA. White said power production is dictated by the IJC and by Border Control. Bellow thanked White and NYPA staff for their presentation. NYPA's land use presentation about its Smart Path Initiative satisfied ½ hour of the Planning Board's annual four-hour land use training requirement. Larson said the County Planning Office will notify municipal clerks about satisfaction of the training requirement.

Bellow announced the Planning Board would take a brief recess at 7:35 pm.

I. Call to Order (continued)

b. Adoption of the Agenda. Pfothenauer said an updated agenda was distributed to all those present at tonight's meeting. The modified agenda was unanimously adopted (Davis/Duff).

c. Approval of the Meeting Minutes. The April 12th meeting minutes were unanimously adopted (Timmerman/Cameron).

III. Public Forum None.

IV. Project Reviews

- a. Projects Returned for Local Action.** Pfothenhauer said the MOU addendum was distributed at tonight's meeting. Larson answered questions for Duff about the status of the Special Use Permit and Site Plan for a women's halfway house in the former parsonage at Grace Episcopal Church in the Village of Canton. Larson also provided details for a special use permit for a small engine repair business in the Town of Stockholm. Bellor explained for members of the audience the Memorandum of Understanding between the County Planning Board and municipal planning and zoning boards of appeals about projects that are returned for local action, and projects that are held for full review at the Planning Board's monthly meetings.
 - i. Potsdam (V): Special Use Permit and Site Plan Review for renovations to Clarkson University's Cheel Arena. Pfothenhauer described the project proposal, said it was reviewed by the Executive Committee, and returned for local action.

- b. Full Reviews.**
 - i. Massena (V): Site Plan Review for Aldi's retail store in the Commercial-Auto Related (CAR) zone at 3 Malby Avenue. Pfothenhauer said Aldi's 19,000 square foot store would be constructed on an existing parking pad, and the applicant would restripe the associated parking lot. Pfothenhauer said the project requires an area variance and subdivision, and said the project checks all the boxes for ideal infill development. Pfothenhauer said staff recommendations include dark sky compliant lighting, dumpster screening, and designating a seasonal snow storage location on the site plan. Pfothenhauer described the subdivision and parking plan for Duff. Chambers said the building will need to be sprinkled, and recommended the local planning board consult with the municipal DPW to discuss whether the existing water lines have sufficient capacity to accommodate the new use, and can flow water to the site from the main. Davis wondered if the business' former location will be razed or become an attractive nuisance. The Board unanimously approved the site plan with conditions (Timmerman/Chambers).

V. Reports

A discussion occurred about a potential 1,600 acre solar array that will be constructed in Brasher and Massena, and a 900 acre solar array is proposed in Franklin County.

- a. Executive Committee.** Bellor said the Executive Committee met to set the agenda and review Clarkson's proposed renovations to Cheel Arena.

- b. Board of Legislators.** Timmerman said the County won't have to borrow cash for payroll purposes, which will save the County \$100,000 in interest charges.

- c. Highway Department.** Chambers said next week the County Route 24 bridge in Russell will be closed, and is anticipated to be reopened in December, depending on the

availability of steel materials. Chambers also mentioned paving activities in Massena. Gazin recommended the Highway Department suggest the NYS DOT post signs to avoid accidents on the Pyrites road as it is being used as an unofficial detour by motorists while Canton's Main Street bridge is under repair.

- d. **State of the County.** None.
- e. **Staff Report.** Pfothenauer said the County Board of Legislators reviewed this year's request to add land to Ag Districts 1 and 2, and Larson reported that she and Pfothenauer to deliver a presentation about the benefits of subdivision regulations traveled to the Town of Lawrence.

VI. Other Items

- a. **Correspondence.** Pfothenauer said this month's correspondence consisted of notices of approval from municipal planning and zoning boards of appeals. Pfothenauer said the Office received a notice that the Baptist Church in Ogdensburg was added to the National Register of Historic Places.
- b. **Next Meeting Dates.** Pfothenauer said the Spring Land Use Training session is scheduled for May 30th and will be held in the 2nd floor conference room of the County Public Safety Complex in Canton. The training agenda will include a guest speaker about incorporating design standards in site plan review, and recent court decisions involving zoning boards of appeals decisions.

The Executive Committee is scheduled to meet at 4:15 pm on Thursday, May 31st in the Planning Office. The next Planning Board meeting will be June 14th at 7:00 p.m.

VII. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned by consensus at 8:20 p.m. Davis asked Planning Office staff to send a note of thanks to NYPA for hosting tonight's meeting and land use presentation.

Respectfully Submitted,



for Renee Hotte, Secretary