

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

August 1, 2005

Present: Legislators Byrne, Kraeger, Doney, Farney and Walsemann; Joe Baruth, Dianna Pell, Renee Beyer, Jessica Jenack

Dianna distributed and reviewed her 2006 budget request. The committee indicated their approval.

Dianna stated that the County Attorney would be responding to any inquiries or concerns relative to the turbines for the Flat Rock windmill project.

The Otis Technology contracts have been signed. Dianna will be completing required paperwork for reimbursement to the company for equipment purchases through the Governor's Office of Small Cities.

The Empire Zone boundaries will be amended as required by the State Program to have all empire zone designations within six (6) zones of 2 sq. miles each. The Empire Zone Board is working to revise the zone development plan. In October, all the Towns and Village Boards with zone designations, will be asked to adopt concurring resolutions for zone boundaries. In November, the proposed Local Law to revise the zone boundaries will be submitted to the Legislature, setting a public hearing for December. The zone revisions must be submitted to the State by the end of December.

The areas of Port Leyden and Harrisville, with depressed economics, would be prudent areas for zone designations.

Mr. Baruth noted that the Community Bank located in the Port Leyden does nothing to assist the community with economic development. He noted specific instances of proposed business ventures being denied loans. A suggestion to start a federal credit union could be accomplished by an estimated 25 to 50 investors of \$50,000 each.

The empire zone program was started in 1994 with three (3) zone areas located in Harrisville, Lowville and Martinsburg. The intent was to assist with establishing new businesses and/or help existing business, primarily by State sales tax exemption for business improvement materials. In 2000, the State amended the regulations that allowed various businesses in differing locations to be zone-certified, as long as the overall zone-certified area did not exceed the County's allotted 1,280 acres.

Owner-owned businesses took advantage of these benefits, but are no longer eligible unless they hire additional employees. Farmers are eligible, but must expend \$15 for every \$1 of budget for salaries and employee benefits, and this would be

Existing zone-certified businesses that have not met their projections to increase their employee numbers by at least one from the date of certification, may be decertified.

Current regulations require addition of jobs. Employee numbers are certified by the State Dept. of Labor.

Renee Beyer reviewed the attached list of projects being administered by the Planning Department:

Beaverite: The grant is completed.

Beaver Falls Sewer Project: There were only 37 responses out of the 58 surveys for prospective users of this system. The grant requires an increased response, so those who had not responded are being asked to appear at the local fire hall for assistance to complete the survey.

CEDS: The committee had met in June. Following receipt of the reports from the sub-committees, Jessica and Dianna will develop the 5-year plan, for completion in early 2006.

Sanitary Code for Lewis County: County Attorney has determined that an engineered plan is not necessary for septic systems. He will devise a written response and speak with Mr. Droz.

Funding for Communications Systems: Joe Baruth has forwarded written request to State and Federal representatives for assistance to finance outdated fire/emergency radio system.

Snowmobile Trail Approvals: Joe Baruth has asked if the County could request monies from the State Snowmobile Maintenance Fund to finance repairs of roadways deteriorated by snowmobiles where trails enter the roads.

In response to Legislator Kraeger, Jessica stated that a small administrative fee would be requested to compensate for Planning personnel time, when applying for future CDBG grant funds. Snow Belt Housing's CDBG application for current year funding included a small administrative fee for the Planning Department, she said.

County Court House funding: Grant application will be prepared.

County Planning Board: The inter-municipal agreements with Towns and Villages, with minor amendments to address types of proposals to be presented and addressed by the Planning Board.

Jessica distributed and reviewed a copy of her 2006 budget request. The committee indicated approval.

The next Planning Committee meeting was set for Tuesday, September 6, 2005 at 10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Kenealy