

Romulus Planning Board Meeting January 7, 2013

Present:

Al Nivison
Sue Ellen Balluff
Cindy Meckley
Bill Karlsen
Tom Bouchard
Kate Sinicropi

Guests: Bob Aronson, Seneca Co. IDA

Cindy Lorenzetti, Supervisor Town of Fayette
Steve Churchill, Supervisor Town of S. F.
Marion Krzanak, NorthEast Freight Transfer
Bruce Habberfield, FL Railway
Justin Coppolo, Toro Run

Meeting called to order at 7:02 pm

The minutes of December 3rd, 2012 and November 2012 meetings, and the Special Meeting of December 10th, 2012 were distributed. Motion to approve Dec. 3, 2012 minutes by Sue Ellen Balluff, 2nd by Cindy Meckley. Motion carried. December 10th minutes were moved by Sue Ellen Balluff, 2nd Kate Sinicropi. Motion carried.

Public Hearing –Toro Run Phase II

Special Use Permit – The Toro Run Phase II project was open for discussion and comment. The use is temporary, seasonal for the building as a tasting room for the winery. Comments solicited. There being no comments from the public, Tom Bouchard closed the Public Hearing.

Discussion : The application, SEQR(short) ,Site Plan and maps were received. Sue Ellen asked if Tom had e-mailed the application to us? No, it was in Tom's mailbox. The Highway Supervisor for Romulus has looked at the access and road. He has not indicated any concerns with either.

Motion: Motion to approve the Special Use Permit for Toro Run by Kate, 2nd by Al. Motion carried unanimously.

Tom will call Harriet Haynes to make sure that we do not have to send to the County Planning board. Dave Kaiser stated at the last meeting that we do not have to send to County Planning Board due to limited number of occupants for the winery,(less than 50). Justin Coppolo from Toro Run thanked the Board.

Depot Zoning

Bruce Habberfield of Finger Lakes Rail, at the last meeting stated we would need the zoning to be the same for Romulus and Varick in order to use the rail. Marion Krzanak of NorthEast Freight Transfer was in attendance as well. He agreed that the zoning would need to be compatible in both towns. Bob Aronson from the Seneca IDA also spoke.

Steve Churchill, Seneca Falls Town Supervisor and Cindy Lorenzetti, Fayette Town Supervisor were present as well.

The issue is that the Conservation and Green energy is the present zoning for the area the railroad wants to use. Dave Hayes, Zoning Enforcement Officer, Town of Romulus, at the last meeting stated the only thing we can do there presently, would be solar and wind. Any grain coming in on rail would have to be taken out, and not stored on the Depot.

Marion reported that Keystone Mills handles Citrus pellets for their feed mill and are looking for storage. They have bunkers and could put it in silos, in order to load the trucks directly. If fracking comes to New York, NE Freight is thinking of using depot for clean sand and take out to sites 35-70 miles from southern tier. All non hazardous materials and pipes; all clean materials. would be transported in.

North East Freight Transfer has applied through NYSEG for 3 phase electric for Romulus loading dock and conveyors.

Bob Aronson clarified that the Seneca Depot LLC leases the warehouses east, which are all industrial. There is rail inside the area and a lot of switches that go by the docks. After BRAC '95 all maintenance stopped by the Army. Therefore many warehouses are really tear downs.

The west side of the Depot is zoned energy development. The Air field is zoned Institutional. You need a zoning map in order to know the lines where it is zoned for agriculture. Varick wraps around the Q area and is zoned conservation. The concern is that Varick may continue as conservation.

Bob clarified that the IDA is the title holder to parts of the Depot, for example, Five Points Prison is deeded to the state; one part is deeded to the Coast Guard where the Loran Tower was.

Restoration and remediation of certain areas are titled over to IDA. 9500 acres of the original 10,600 acres is titled to the IDA.

Some rail comes into depot below the airport. The rail goes all around the perimeter of the Bunker(igloo) area and a series of tracks are inside the industrial warehouse area. There is 47 miles of track in total in the Depot.

Bob asked what was the area zoned prior to the proposed Ethanol Plant, as it was a different zone. In 2001, 2002 zoning was adopted by Town of Romulus. . An offer was made from Bob Aronson to tour the Depot as things have changed there. The IDA designated the large pond as conservation as it is a fly way for migratory birds and DEC would probably keep that designation. (Varick)

Bob responded to the question as to why zoning was not addressed at the time of leasing. The rail was not really a focus at the time of closure nor was zoning. In the mid 2000's, a Multi Model Grant from DOT was put into rail going to Geneva from the Depot. Renovation was done jointly with FL Railway and IDA. Bruce pointed out that NYSDOT determines volume of traffic for rail crossing. Lights and gates are at River Road and Yale Station Road. All other crossings are cross butts. The rail is good and very heavy rail. It can handle the traffic. Steve Churchill, representing County board and environmental concerns, asked to speak. Two years ago Seneca Meadows was interested in bringing in waste which they never got money for. Prior to this we have heard rumors that there

was a plan to bring trash into the Depot and also fracking materials. Any discussion prior to now was concealed.

Sue Ellen summarized that it comes down to whether the Planning Board is willing to state they want this area industrialized. Is it in the interest of Romulus to have industrial development and is it good for the Town.?

Bob responded that originally we understood that it would be green energy that would be there in the Depot. A meteorological group looked at a wind tower because the Depot was a welcoming site for wind towers. Unfortunately they did a critical issues analysis and found a bald eagle's nest in that area. The wind company did not want to deal with it. At the present wind energy development is stalled due to cheap electricity.

Bill reported that the Finger Lakes Times was reporting on Sandy debris at the IDA meeting. Bob pointed out that the press does not always get it right. What occurred at the meeting was that both towns are reviewing their zoning at the Depot and the IDA is interested in determining what the IDA should do at the Depot, or even if they should have it.

Bob went on to explain the industries located in the eastern part now.

Bill asked what is the long term plan for the Depot from the IDA perspective? Bob provided a brief history. Tom asked how have you been marketing it? Bob responded since 2008 we established branding for the site and developed a web site for development. We participate in trade shows in conjunction with a marketing firm nationally; also E-marketing.

The question is how does the Depot fit in to the larger plan and the Town Plan?

Bob reiterated that we need to know what you want at the Depot. We need flexibility, as you do not know who or what is going to be interested in it. We need specific guidance from the Planning Board and the Town.

Cindy Lorenzetti questioned why the IDA did not check into zoning before having Northeast Freight Transfer come in.

There are businesses looking at possibilities at the Depot, in light of rail availability.

Al stated that we need to know this information and to be in communication with the IDA.

Steve said we need to keep in mind what we currently have here winery & tourism and make sure we do not jeopardize it.

Tom agreed, reiterating that it is important we share information so we can make the best decisions and not make mistakes with lack of communication as in the past. We did not know what was going on behind the curtain. We would like to attract these kinds of businesses and specify what would benefit the Town.

Bob reiterated that the IDA is fine with what we decide for our community. If we want conservation the IDA should not be involved. If you want business and commerce then the IDA should be involved. If not, we (IDA) need to know why we have the Depot.

Steve asked, did you know that North East Freight would be able to operate there.? Bob responded, no. However, the IDA has been open to attracting business and in that process some things, like zoning, have not been addressed.

The members of the Planning Board reiterated that we need to know what someone is looking at . There is clearly better communication needed. Bob pointed out the most valuable asset over past several years is the rail. Most probable market is the oil and gas that is coming in. It is difficult for the IDA to target industries. Food processing, alternative energy; oil & gas; agricultural businesses; are all possible at the Depot. Tourism yields very low paying jobs even though an important economy. Tourism is very important industry for this region. The quality of life it generates can not be equaled. Tom responded that we need to stay informed throughtout the year so we can coordinate more efficiently. Al felt that a tour would be very helpful in understanding exactly what we are talking about. Varick has already set up tours. Pat Jones, IDA, could accommodate us as well as Bob. Tours established for weekend and a weekday.

Varick is looking at a special Use permit as an interim possibility. Their zoning is different than ours. We need to clarify our zoning. We need to meet with Varick Planning board. Bill and Tom will set this up.

Goals & Objectives: zoning issues; goals in farmland Protection Plan; Alternate Member & permanent member are still needed; Monitor natural gas moratorium etc.

Old Business

Follow up on Steve Getman: to send an email regarding Docks & Moorings.

Gas Moratorium: Steve Getman said we have to wait and see.

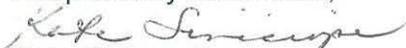
Tom reported that he spoke with Deputy Director Susan Squires today. She found some documentation that there was discussion on the lease for Lakeshore Visioning. A 5 year lease with renewable option is what is being considered.

Right to Farm Community Signage – Dave Kaiser got back to us because the wording was too long. We told them to make it like Ovid, Lodi wording. Tom will call tomorrow to find out the status.

Tom provided the new listing of members and contact numbers. Please forward and changes before it is sent out. He also provided the listing of meeting dates for 2013.

Sue Ellen made motion to adjourn and Cindy seconded. Motion approved. Meeting adjourned at 9:40pm

Respectfully submitted,


Kate Sinicropi