

**Tompkins County IDA Meeting Minutes**  
**January 5, 2007**  
**3:30 – 5:30 PM**  
**Scott Heyman (Old Jail) Conference Room**  
**Ithaca, NY**

**Present:** Tim Joseph, Jeff Furman, Michael Hattery, Martha Robertson, Dan Cogan, Kathy Luz Herrera, Ed Marx, David Squires

**Staff Present:** Michael Stamm, Ina Arthur (recording), Mariette Geldenhuys (Attorney)

**Guests Present:** Carolyn Peterson (City of Ithaca), Russ Gaenzle (Harris Beach), Steve Flash, Steve Wampleo (WHCU), Brian Noteboom (Carpenters Local 281)

**CALL TO ORDER** Tim Joseph called the meeting to order at 3:35 PM.

**ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA** There were no additions to the agenda.

**PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**

Brian Noteboom of the Carpenters Local 281 thanked the IDA Board for their work on the updated IDA Application. Of note was their recognition of construction jobs.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Martha Robertson moved to approve the December 1, 2006 draft meeting minutes. Jeff Furman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Action Items

- Martha Robertson asked that a copy of the new IDA Application and a process timeline be sent to the Board.
- Kathy Luz Herrera asked that future motions include the names of Board members and how they voted.
- Future resolutions will include a summary paragraph.

**BUSINESS**

**A. Cayuga Green I/Community Development Properties, Ithaca (Parking Garage)**

Mariette Geldenhuys explained that the series of leases involving Community Development Properties, the Ithaca Urban Renewal Agency (IURA), and Cayuga Green II necessitated a resolution that clarifies who will lease what property to whom. The resolution will also outline utility installation and air rights. Since the IDA is involved, the approval of the IDA Board is needed.

**Dan Cogan moved to approve The Resolution of the TCIDA authorizing the execution and delivery of certain documents with respect to the Community Development Properties, Ithaca,**

**Inc. project in order to modify the property described there under. Martha Robertson seconded the motion.**

Mariette Geldenhuys commented that CDP Ithaca operates the Parking Garage and leases it from the IURA.

**The motion passed unanimously.**

### **B. RPM Ecosystems Ithaca LLC**

Mariette Geldenhuys commented that due to a name change the original Inducement Resolution for RPM Holdings, LLC needs to be redone to reflect the new name of RPM Ecosystems Ithaca, LLC. This is the exact same resolution that was approved before with just the name of the company changed.

Tim Joseph asked if there would still be two entities, a property holder and an operating company. Yes.

Kathy Luz Herrera commented that she had voted against the original resolution due to the fact that housing was included under the tax abatement. Therefore she will vote against this resolution.

**A vote was taken. 5 Yea votes (Joseph, Cogan, Furman, Hattery, Robertson), 1 Nea (Luz Herrera). The motion passed.**

### **C. Project Updates**

Michael Stamm stated that there are eight IDA projects that are moving towards closing. It is hoped that they can make the March 1sts deadline to take advantage of the tax abatements this tax year.

The IDA NYS Audit questionnaires have been sent out. The State has created an earlier deadline so the trend data gathered from the questionnaires should be presented to the IDA earlier than usual.

There have been two companies certified by the Empire Zone in 2006: Vanguard Press, LLC and Incodema, Inc.

ATC-NY is still waiting for the Neg Dec from the town of Lansing.

### **D. PAAA**

Ina Arthur stated that the enclosures included the annual financial disclosure forms. These need to be completed and returned to meet the May 15<sup>th</sup> deadline for filing with the County. Members of the County Legislature who file with the County already do not have to file a second form.

A brief summary of the two Board committees mandated by PAAA was outlined. Tim Joseph suggested waiting until after the Board training in late January before forming the Audit and the Governance Committees. It was suggested that this be addressed at the February Board meeting.

## **E. Density Policy**

Mayor Carolyn Peterson joined the Board meeting for the City Density Policy discussion.

Tim Joseph commented that discussion is to outline the role of the IDA with the City Density Policy. The IDA can make it its role to outline the qualifications for projects under the policy. But it would be good to follow the City's lead.

Michael Hattery commented that those issues are important. There is a policy and there is a process. Fairness to municipalities and fairness to projects should be kept in mind. He feels that the City does have a planning and review process so he does not think that the IDA should create a second process for projects to go through. He sees that IDA as having more of a financial decision role.

Kathy Luz Herrera commented that the IDA has the overall interests of the tax payers to think about. She sees the IDA as having the role of Public Review.

Martha Robertson stated that while she understands the reasoning behind not duplicating the review process, the IDA is not part of the City's review and the IDA does have a different set of interests to consider.

Carolyn Peterson stated that the City is considering all comments including those from the IDA and public. There is a sub committee that is addressing community benefits that should be considered under the policy. This community benefits piece does take into consideration the IDA comments. They are also trying to get the public involved earlier in the process. The community benefits program is set up as a point system that addresses a number of categories of concern. Some categories can be weighted.

Dan Cogan commented that the process is to help developers come to the public and City Common Council early in the planning stage. Then the City could give a yea or nay to the IDA. Then the City would ask the IDA to evaluate the project for financial need only.

Jeff Furman stated that the IDA should be part of the process earlier in the process. The IDA is more than the City of Ithaca; it encompasses the County and the County Schools.

Ed Marx asked if this review process and then subsequent approval by the City Common Council would proceed the review of the City Planning Board? This would usurp the planning board and would put pressure to comply with the Common Council's wishes.

Kathy Luz Herrera agreed with Ed Marx's comments. She also suggested thinking about the timing and involving the public earlier in the process.

Martha Robertson stated that the list of concerns is good, but would they scare off potential developers?

Jeff Furman stated that he is concerned about projects with housing that would impact the school districts.

Dan Cogan stated that they are trying to "front load" the process to aid in getting the Common Council's blessing before a large amount of money is spent by the developers.

Tim Joseph stated that the Community Benefits document mentions that 18 points are needed to qualify. Does this mean that you only need 18 points? There would be incentive not to go beyond 18 points. He suggested different levels of abatements for different levels of points.

Ed Marx commented that this is not a substitute for land use and zoning plans. Land use needs to conform to zoning usage. The City needs to review its current Zoning.

Tim Joseph commented that the IDA seems like a “second chance” for projects. He would like to avoid this by changing the process. Could there be a parallel time line for both the City and IDA review?

Michael Hattery commented that the point system is a way of getting relevant issues on the table.

Dan Cogan stated that the intention of the community benefit piece is not to remove judgment from the process. Getting the IDA involved earlier would be good, but the developer would not have financial information at that point.

Carolyn Peterson commented that the Common Council still has room to decide in spite of the rating system.

Martha Robertson expressed concern that the policy will change with the members of the IDA.

Michael Hattery stated that if we feel that the revision of the Density Policy will take a long time, we should lift the moratorium on Density projects and use the current policy. He also asked if the IDA will be using some criteria to see if the Density Policy will continue. Will we hit a threshold and then end it?

Dan Cogan stated that milestones of approval are being built in to the process. This is a work in progress – there is a need to put it out there and see how things go.

Ed Marx stated that we need to keep in mind that the IDA cannot take action until the SEQR review has happened.

Tim Joseph stated it seems like the City is not asking the IDA to lift the moratorium on Density Projects until the process is done. He also suggested adding a sunset to the policy that would happen when the downtown is self sustaining, perhaps in six years.

Dan Cogan commented that there may always be a need for the Density Policy in Downtown due to the high cost of building there.

**The meeting adjourned at 5:30 PM**

