

**Village of Lansing
Planning Board Meeting
March 8, 2010**

1 The meeting of the Village of Lansing Planning Board was called to order at 7:30 P.M.
2 by Chairman Ned Hickey. Present at the meeting were Planning Board Members Phil
3 Dankert, Mario Tomei, and Maria Stycos; Alternate Board Member Lisa
4 Schleelein; Code Enforcement Officer Ben Curtis; Code Enforcement Officer in training
5 Marty Moseley; Trustee Liaison Lynn Leopold; Associate Professor of City and Regional Planning Rolf
6 Pendall and his students, David West, Anne Turcotte, Sara Lipori and Anna Brawley; Eric Goetzmann and
7 Jim Bold from Triax Management Group; Village resident and pedestrian advocate Carolyn Spicer; a
8 reporter from WHCU and an unidentified observer.

9 Hickey appointed Lisa Schleelein as a full acting Planning Board Member for Richard Durst who could not
10 attend the meeting.

11 **Public Comment**

12 Hickey opened the public comment period. Caroline Spicer of 2250 North Triphammer Rd. commented on
13 the pedestrian access from the Sevanna Park and Lansing West area through the islands at the Triphammer
14 Mall entrance. She brought in pictures to demonstrate the problem that walkers are faced with in trying to
15 navigate to the Triphammer Mall. She noted that about 293 people live in Lansing West and Sevanna Park
16 that could have the same problem. She stated that the Triphammer Mall entrance is confusing to motorists
17 and to the walkers. Spicer expressed concern about pedestrian safety in the entrance of the Triphammer
18 Mall. Spicer stated that when the use of the Kinney Drugs drive thru increases it may create more problems.
19 She noted that the Triphammer Mall staff has not adequately cleared the sidewalks of snow. Spicer also
20 stated that the TCAT bus is now driving through the Mall, instead of dropping riders off at the sidewalk on
21 Triphammer Rd. in front of the Tompkins Trust Company. Spicer stated that the west end of the mall is
22 getting more traffic, since the Ithaca Bakery has moved to the old Hopes Way store. Spicer expressed
23 concern for handicapped people and people with strollers trying to navigate through the parking lot of the
24 Mall. Spicer stated that although the islands were created for pedestrians, the walk ways on the islands were
25 not well configured for people to cross safely. Hickey asked if these problems happen other times of the
26 year or just the winter months. Spicer stated that this is a problem all year long, and that mostly the
27 motorists fail to yield to the pedestrian right of way. Hickey asked if the Planning Board could keep the
28 pictures and forward them on to the Board of Trustees. Spicer said that would be OK. Leopold stated that
29 the Village had a traffic study done for the reconfiguration of the entrance way for Kinney Drugs, but
30 focused on the car movements, and was not sure to what extent pedestrian issues were considered. Hickey
31 stated that the islands were supposed to help the pedestrians. Spicer suggested that the islands seemed to
32 direct foot traffic to either Kinney Drugs or Tompkins Trust Company. This forces a person to walk to
33 Kinney Drugs in order to reach other destinations in the mall. With no one else to speak, Tomei moved to
34 close the public comment period. Seconded by Stycos. Ayes by Hickey, Stycos, Dankert, Tomei, and
35 Schleelein.

36 **A Look Ahead at the Village's Commercial Centers**

37 Hickey stated that the Planning Board would like to take a look ahead to see what the future might hold for
38 the Village's residential and commercial districts. Hickey introduced Associate Professor of Cornell City

1 and Regional Planning Rolf Pendall who has challenged his class on ways to improve the five-corner
2 intersection in The Village of Cayuga Heights and how to improve the Triphammer Mall, Cayuga Mall, and
3 The Shops at Ithaca Mall and their contiguous properties. Pendall explained that he undertook this exercise
4 mostly because he was approached about the five-corner intersection in The Village of Cayuga Heights, and
5 how to improve it. He noted that economically Tompkins County is one of the healthiest in NY State.
6 Pendall stated that the older malls throughout the country have been dying out. In some places these
7 abandoned malls have been adapted into a mixed-use occupancy. Anna Brawley, Sara Lepori, Ian McLaren,
8 Daniele Petrone, Anne Turcotte, David West, and Josh Yost are Rolf Pendall's students that worked on this
9 assignment. Pendall introduced West, Turcotte, Brawley, and Lepori. He asked them to explain the project.

10
11 Brawley stated that they gathered information on the past and present history of the Village of Lansing.
12 They reviewed the 2000 census data and talked to Village of Lansing Mayor Don Hartill. Brawley also
13 explained that they didn't look at the whole Village, and that they just looked at the Triphammer Mall, the
14 Cayuga Mall, and The Shops at Ithaca Mall in the Village. Hickey asked if they had done a survey for what
15 the Village needs. West stated that he had spoken with Curtis, who gave him some plans to compile a list of
16 vacant properties. The students discussed how these properties could benefit the Village and its residents.
17 Turcotte stated that one option they considered was changing the zoning regulations for the three malls to
18 encourage more mixed use. They considered having residential units and commercial office buildings
19 combined in these areas. Turcotte explained that the Cayuga Mall and Triphammer Mall had the most
20 potential for this approach. At The Shops at Ithaca Mall local shops could mix with big box stores. Hickey
21 stated that was a timely discussion with the P&C stores now being bought by Tops. Pendall explained that
22 while the class only considered residential, commercial, and mixed use, the Village's other zoning
23 classifications such as commercial high traffic and commercial low traffic are still useful. He also stated that
24 people generally do not want to walk across roads to do their shopping.

25
26 Pendall explained that the mass transit access for this area is very good, and that it only takes minutes to get
27 to Ithaca and Cornell. Hickey asked if anyone focused on open space. Pendall replied that the major focus
28 was on urban design. Hickey stated that a major problem is that Rt. 13 divides the Village in half. This
29 creates a problem with people moving between commercial centers. Lepori suggested that a shuttle to take
30 people from one mall to another might address this problem. Brawley explained that if the Shops at Ithaca
31 Mall were to grow it could expand towards Triphammer Rd. Bringing the shops closer to Triphammer Rd.
32 would psychologically create a more inviting shopping district and slow the cars down. Pendall adds that
33 there is a physiological mind set with bringing the shops closer to Triphammer Rd., and that it would slow
34 the cars down. Pendall also explained that the Village can always ask more of the developer, and the Village
35 can work with the developer to benefit the Village, the developer, and the residents. The Village and the
36 shop owners could benefit from each other. Tomei asked about what might develop on the land north of the
37 Shops at Ithaca Mall and behind the YMCA. Turcotte suggested that a senior housing facility or affordable
38 housing area be a good fit on this parcel

39 **PDA Approval Process-Review**

40 Hickey stated that the Village received a petition for a PDA from the Triax Management Group, which
41 included both a commercial component and a senior housing component. The PDA parcels include Army
42 Corps of Engineers delineated wetlands that the developer will have to deal with. Hickey stated that the
43 Village now has a PDA (Planned Development Area) law in place. The purpose of the PDA that Triax
44 Management Group is proposing is to rezone the area behind the YMCA. Goetzmann explained that the

1 PDA that they are proposing would change the zoning of the parcels in question, which would permit a big
2 box store, senior housing, and a public space.

3
4 Hickey explained the steps involved in the PDA process. A PDA request must be
5 submitted to the Board of Trustees and a copy to the Planning Board. This would be in
6 the form of a preliminary proposal. Upon receipt of a preliminary proposal for a
7 proposed PDA, the Board of Trustees shall review such proposal (jointly and/or in
8 consultation with the Planning Board if the Board of Trustees deem it appropriate and/or
9 necessary) to determine if it wishes to proceed further with the consideration of the
10 proposed PDA. If the Board of Trustees determines that further consideration is
11 appropriate, the proposed PDA shall be referred by the Board of Trustees to the Planning
12 Board for more in depth review and consideration and for the purpose of the Planning Board
13 providing the Board of Trustees with its input and possible recommendations. Such in depth
14 review and consideration shall include the Planning Board's authority to require submission
15 of supplemental information and materials by the developer to complete the preliminary
16 proposal. Hickey stated that once the proposal is complete and the fee of 250 dollars has
17 been collected, the Planning Board shall hold a developer's conference with the developer
18 to review the proposed PDA. The Village shall send written notice by mail to all owners of
19 Village property contiguous to the boundaries of the property under consideration. Such
20 notice shall state the nature of the proposed PDA and developer's conference, the time and
21 place of the conference and such additional information as shall be deemed appropriate by
22 the Planning Board. In addition thereto, the Village Planning Board shall publish a legal
23 notice, which notice shall likewise state the time and place of the conference and the same
24 additional information as provided in the notice to the contiguous property owners. Hickey
25 stated that the developer's conference would also serve as a public information meeting.
26 The Planning Board will determine if the proposal is in accordance with the general
27 planning objectives for the area, and the Planning Board might make additional
28 conditions. Hickey explained that the developer and the Village both have to agree on the
29 additional conditions. If the developer wishes to continue with the PDA, then the
30 developer needs to submit a written statement of intent to comply with the additional
31 conditions. Hickey stated that the proposed PDA would then be subject to a State
32 Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) review and the submission of an
33 Environmental Assessment form. Hickey noted that a public hearing will be held by the
34 Board of Trustees after the SEQR and the Environmental Assessment have been
35 completed and after the Trustees have received the recommendation by the Tompkins
36 County Department pursuant to 239-l, 239-m, 239-n, and 239-nn of article 12-B of the
37 General Municipal Law. After the public hearing the Board of Trustees could authorize
38 the developer to prepare a conditional final development plan. Hickey stated that the
39 developer would then submit the final development plan to the Planning Board. The
40 Planning Board would review the submitted plan and make a recommendation to the
41 Board of Trustees. Bold asked if, at any time, the Board of Trustees could potentially stop
42 the proposed PDA from being approved. Hickey responded that they could. Bold asked at
43 what point the engineering was to be required. Hickey stated that some of the engineering
44 would happen at the developer's conference, and several of these steps in the approval
45 process could be happening at once. Curtis stated that the PDA is a new zoning district,

1 and that the developer could propose the district regulations. The regulations might
2 include uses by right and uses permitted with a Special Permit. Pendall asked if the
3 engineered plans have to be complete before the public information meeting. Curtis
4 responded that the Planning Board generally requires schematics. Goetzmann explained
5 that in the interest of expediting the project, the construction drawings will have
6 advanced beyond the schematics point so they can make sure that the site issues can be
7 resolved. Curtis explained that section 8 pertains to the final development plan that must
8 be approved by the Trustees. After it is approved, the developer then has one year to start
9 the project.

10 **Update on Green Building at the Local Level**

11 Curtis stated that he had talked to potential speakers on “Green Building” and that Ian Shapiro, of Taitem
12 Engineering PC, is a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified engineer that has
13 been working with a group to try to help municipalities incorporate “Green Building” techniques into their
14 local law. Curtis also explained that NYSERDA (New York State Energy Research and Development
15 Authority) is offering a grant, which Taitem Engineering PC has applied for, to help municipalities
16 incorporate “Green Building” practices at the local level. Curtis stated that Shapiro would be able to come
17 and talk to the Planning Board at the end of March or in April, and that Curtis had talked to several “Green
18 Building” oriented builders and they too have expressed interest in speaking on the topic. One of the
19 projects Taitem Engineering PC has worked on is the Vineyard Church of Ithaca in the Small Mall. Curtis
20 stated that when there are 400 people a lot of conditioned air has to be replaced with fresh air. They had a
21 CO₂ (carbon dioxide) detector installed to monitor the level of CO₂ emitted from the people attending. The
22 detector regulates the amount of fresh air brought into the building depending on how much CO₂ is
23 detected, and when the levels decrease they can recycle more of the conditioned air. This will save on
24 heating costs.

25 Hickey stated that the 12th or 27th of April meeting dates might work.

26 **Reports**

27 *March 1st Trustees Meeting* - Stycos reported that the proposed PDA was passed by the
28 Trustees. Hickey added that no one showed up at the public hearing for the PDA.

29 There was a presentation by Jay Franklin from the Tompkins County Assessment Office.
30 He explained how assessments are done, and that Tompkins County is one of the few
31 counties in New York State where the assessment is performed by the county and not the
32 local municipalities. Stycos stated that there was a presentation by Dr. Jay Boulanger and
33 Dr. Bernd Blossey on deer hunting and deer population in the Village. Both are avid bow
34 hunters, and Dr. Jay Boulanger is in charge of managing the deer population on certain
35 Cornell properties. In the Village the estimated deer population is between 200-300.

36 Hickey, Schleelein, and Dankert all agreed that sounded like an accurate number. Stycos
37 stated that 33 deer had been harvested this year in the Village and about 40 deer had died
38 due to car accidents. Stycos reported that the topic of an extended season, or a larger
39 hunting area came up. Dankert stated that would involve a nuisance permit. Stycos stated
40 that nuisance permits are mainly for farmers because of devastation the deer cause to
41 their crops. Tomei asked why the permit was limited to farmers. Stycos was unsure
42 because residents could lose thousands of dollars in plants on their properties. Stycos
43 reported that the sewer extension into the Town of Lansing was discussed. The Town of

1 Lansing, the Village of Cayuga Heights and the Village of Lansing all have to agree on
2 the rates that will be charged, but there was a discrepancy in how the payments were
3 calculated and collected. Stycos stated that this project was in response to the failure of
4 the UPS septic system, and that an application had been filed two years ago to request an
5 extension of the sewer up Warren Rd. Stycos stated that there will be a 2% increase in
6 taxes this year.

7 **Further Discussion**

8 Stycos asked about the parking on the Proposed PDA. Curtis explained that screening would be an issue
9 that needs to be discussed eventually. Leopold stated that it would be nice to have the developer flip where
10 the building and parking are proposed. Curtis explained that it was Hickey, Tomei and himself who pushed
11 the developer to place the building behind the firehouse to make it less visible from Oakcrest Rd. Curtis also
12 explained that it is his understanding that the Army Corps of Engineers was leaning toward proposing the
13 wetland area be developed into a possible bird habitat, which might entail planting specific types of trees.
14 This would help with the screening. This stems from conversations with Jim Bold and Eric Goetzmann.

15

16 **Adjournment**

17 Dankert moved to adjourn at 9:10 P.M. Seconded by Stycos. Ayes by Dankert, Stycos, Tomei, Hickey and
18 Schleelein. Motion carried.