

SOUTHERN TIER WEST REGIONAL PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT BOARD

MINUTES – FEBRUARY 21, 2008

The regular meeting of the Southern Tier West Regional Planning & Development Board was held on February 21, 2008 at the Center for Regional Excellence, Salamanca, New York. The following persons were in attendance:

Board Members

Jerry Scott
Brent Reynolds
Ted Hopkins
Joseph Eade
Charles Couture
Crystal Abers
Jim Cooper, Vice Chairman
Greg Edwards

Representing

Allegany County
Allegany County
Allegany County
Cattaraugus County
Cattaraugus County
Cattaraugus County
Chautauqua County
Chautauqua County

Others Attending

Tom Livak
Sharon Turano
Donald Rychnowski
Tom Barnes
John Buzzard
Eileen Weishan
Richard Zink
Brian Paschen
Daniel Reynolds
Sarah Phearsdorf
Ginger Malak

Representing

Cattaraugus Co Economic Development
Post Journal
Staff
Staff
Staff
Staff
Staff
Staff
Staff
Staff
Staff

In the absence of Chairman Keis, Vice Chairman Cooper called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Introductions were made and a sign-in sheet was circulated.

Minutes

Mr. Couture made a motion to accept the December 20th minutes as distributed. Mr. Eade seconded the motion and it carried.

Correspondence

In the absence of Secretary Margeson, Vice Chairman Cooper read the following correspondence:

1. Letter from Assemblyman Joseph Giglio to Astrid Glynn, Commissioner of NYS DOT, supporting continued construction of the Route 219 corridor by NYSDOT.
2. Letter from Assemblyman Parment to Donald Rychnowski, acknowledging receipt of Mr. Rychnowski's request for continued support of the proposed Route 219 Freeway alternative project. Assemblyman Parment agrees that upgrading Route 219 to freeway status would open opportunities for the businesses and residents of our communities.

3. Letter from Crystal Abers, Chairwoman of Cattaraugus County Legislature to Donald Rychnowski, announcing that Mr. Rychnowski has been officially appointed to the Cattaraugus County Route 219 Corridor Planning Committee.
4. Letter from Assemblyman Daniel Burling to Donald Rychnowski, in receipt of the resolution adopted on December 20, 2007 by the Southern Tier West Board of Directors that supports continued funding for completion of the Route 219 Freeway Project.
5. Letter from Governor Elliott Spitzer to Donald Rychnowski, appointing Mr. Rychnowski as a member of the Appalachian Regional Commission Intermodal.

Project Review Report

Mr. Eade moved to acknowledge receipt of the Project Review Report. Mr. Couture seconded the motion and it carried.

Executive Director's Report

Donald Rychnowski reported the following:

News & Notes

1. ARC Funding

Mr. Rychnowski reported that ARC funding was approved as part of the overall congressional budget process. ARC received an appropriation increase from 2007 of approximately \$6 million. Part of the increase will be devoted to additional administrative funds for the 72 LDD's in Appalachia and the other portion will be used to increase the Area Development Program. New York State will not receive a significant amount of additional funding due to the distribution formula for ARC.

2. Computer Upgrade

Southern Tier West's last computer upgrade (hardware and software) was in 1999. Richard Zink will begin the process of analyzing Southern Tier West's needs to make necessary replacements to keep the computer system upgraded.

3. ARC Area Development Program

Southern Tier West staff is gearing up for the 2008 ARC Application process. Board members were asked to think of projects that could be encouraged for ARC funding.

Actions

1. GIS Needs Assessment

Authorization was needed for Southern Tier West to enter into an agreement with EMA, Inc. in the amount of \$16,000 to provide a GIS Needs Assessment and GIS technical assistance on an "as needed" basis. The assessment would involve an analysis of all internal GIS data, software, hardware, and staffing needs as they relate to current and future projects. Mr. Reynolds so moved, Mr. Edwards seconded the motion and it carried.

2. **DiscoverSouthWestNY.com Website**

Authorization was needed to enter into an agreement with Seneca Trail RC&D in the amount of \$7,000 to add agricultural businesses to the DiscoverSouthWestNY.com website and give a virtual tour. Mr. Reynolds so moved, Mr. Couture seconded the motion and it carried.

New Business

1. **STW Transportation Program**

Brian Paschen reported that under the Southern Tier West Transportation Program, staff is meeting with the counties to obtain their transportation improvement priorities. Cities will be included in this process. At the March Board Meeting Mr. Paschen will provide the Board with a breakdown of these priorities.

Under this contract, Southern Tier West is looking into hiring a consultant to assist with this Program. A survey is located on the Southern Tier West website in reference to the Transportation Study - - Board members are encouraged to look this over. Southern Tier West will outline the contract to determine the role of Board members. NYS DOT requested adding public transportation into the contract; therefore groups have been appointed thus far in Allegany and Chautauqua Counties to work on this task. NYS DOT also requested an overlay of bridge conditions, which will be included in the contract.

2. **Broadband Development Initiative**

Richard Zink reported that in January 2008 Southern Tier West sent out a proposal in regards to the request for a proposal from the NYS Office of Technologies for broadband grants. Southern Tier West partnered with Southern Tier Wireless, Accord Corporation, and Time Warner Cable to put together an application for \$600,000 to the State - - we are hopeful a decision will be made in March 2008.

This application proposed construction of six towers throughout Allegany County to be used for deployment of Broadband. This project will bring high-speed Internet to businesses and residences and be a good start to bringing needed bandwidth into the region. Special training classes will be held at the Belmont Commerce Center to teach business owners and residents how to use the Internet. Another application with Alfred University and the Rural Health Network for \$175,000 was submitted to enhance the broadband institute.

With respect to the wireless grant submitted to NYS for northern Allegany County, Southern Tier West has talked with ARC and EDA regarding other options for grants if this does not come to fruition.

Southern Tier West is working with Time Warner Cable to develop a "Memorandum of Understanding" that would allow for significantly lower-cost bandwidth available to large bandwidth users in the region by using Southern Tier West as an intermediary. Southern Tier West is able to negotiate with all parties and provide benefits to both area businesses and Time Warner Cable. If Southern Tier West can assist in creating a loop that has often been talked

about from Jamestown to Whitesville; it would solve redundancy issues currently experienced within the southern tier.

Southern Tier West is also working on a Fiber Mapping Project with Allegany, Cattaraugus, and Chautauqua Counties to identify the exact fiber-run locations within the three counties to ensure proper planning in the future. Letters of support and in-kind contributions have been obtained for the project to be submitted to EDA and ARC next week.

3. Entrepreneurial Website

Richard Zink reported that Southern Tier West contracted with the Performance Development Consulting Corporation and Alfred State to construct a database-driven website that provides access to all the providers across our three-county region. This website is a simple way for individuals who want loans or assistance to get a list of providers who fit their needs and criteria. Richard gave a PowerPoint Presentation of the website.

Old Business

There was no old business.

Committee Reports

1. Board Special Committee

Vice Chairman Cooper reported that the Board Special Committee met on February 6th and discussed web casting of the Southern Tier West Board meetings. The Committee agreed to experiment at the March Board meeting to see how this will work and possibly lead the region in this practice.

2. Economic Development Committee

Tom Barnes reported that under the Comprehensive Planning Process, Southern Tier West keeps the Regional Development Strategy, Comprehensive Project List, and the Statistical Abstract up-to-date. A fourth document in this process is the CEDS, in which the format is prescribed by EDA. All of these planning documents are located on the Southern Tier West website. Mr. Barnes is currently starting the update process for 2008.

For the March Board Meeting, Mr. Barnes requested the counties prioritize their top two economic development projects for EDA investment to be included into the 2008 CEDS document.

Audit Abstract

Mr. Eade moved to approve the December 2007, January 2008 Audit Abstract. Mr. Couture seconded the motion and it carried.

Next Board Meeting

The next meeting of the Southern Tier West Regional Planning & Development Board will be held on March 20, 2008 at 1:00 p.m. at the Center for Regional Excellence, Salamanca, New York.

Adjournment

Mr. Eade moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:25 p.m. Mr. Reynolds seconded the motion and it carried.