

Tompkins County Industrial Development Agency
Board of Directors Meeting Final Minutes
June 12, 2019
2:30 PM
Tompkins County Legislative Offices
121 E. Court Street, Ithaca, NY

Present: Rich John, Jennifer Tavares, John Guttridge, Martha Robertson, Leslyn McBean-Clairborne

Staff Present: Heather McDaniel, Ina Arthur, Russ Gaenzle (Harris Beach, PLLC)

Guests: Dan Cogan, Peter Mesmer (City of Ithaca), Katie Borgella (TC Planning), Ian Gaffney, William Kelly (Emmy's Organics), Svante Myrick (City of Ithaca)

CALL TO ORDER

Rich John called the meeting of the **Tompkins County Industrial Development Agency** to order at 2:30 pm.

City Parking Presentation

Dan Cogan and Peter Mesmer from the City of Ithaca gave a presentation on the City's efforts regarding parking. The TCIDA Board is interested as a number of downtown projects incentivized by the IDA are increasing the demand for parking in the City's core.

In the past, the parking supply in the City filled the needs. However, currently there are a number of projects coming online that will increase the future demand. There is also the fact that current parking garages need upkeep and maintenance and the supply of parking is tightening up. Mr. Cogan commented that as the City moves forward they know they cannot just build their way out of the issue. Other means need to be found to address parking partly because parking garages are expensive and there is no place to build in the City core. Also the nature of transportation is changing. The next 50 years will not look like the past 50 years. The City is moving forward with bringing a consultant on board that will help with this process in a comprehensive way – working with existing parking and manage it in a way that helps the most people.

Peter Mesmer went through a power point presentation. The existing parking situation, future needs and how to address moving forward were covered in the presentation.

Current garages have new equipment and functioning. For street parking the park mobile app is out there. Remote parking options are also available. Upcoming improvements include the Green Street Garage Replacement and a Comprehensive Signage Replacement.

Meeting the needs of City residents, the workforce, tourists, the taxpayers, downtown apartment residents and business patrons are the focus.

They are striving to balance the costs and revenue, supply and demand as well as minimizing the need for a parking subsidy.

On the revenue side of things they are interested in looking at the value of parking which varies by interests and demand of parkers. This would mean moving beyond setting flat rates and perhaps varying rates based on demand.

Costs include operations, major rehabilitations, routine maintenance and construction/reconstruction.

Existing conditions in the downtown garages are near or at peak capacity. Peak is usually set at 85% occupancy. Seneca Street Garage is at 78% occupancy. Green Street is at 87% and Cayuga St is at 70%. At this point there is only 125 spaces that are excess capacity.

Street parking was reviewed. In the core, there is paid parking which leads to a “ring” of parking just outside the paid parking zone. Based on studies there may be opportunities for some longer term parking.

Garage Repair/Reconstruction:

- Green Street – currently planning with design happening in 2019-2020. Reconstruction to begin in 2021.
- Seneca Garage – remaining life is 5-12 years. A 3-year inspection and report is in progress.

New Anticipated Parking Demand

- Harold’s Square – 150 spaces
- City Centre – 90 spaces
- 202 the Commons – 50 – 100 spaces
- Green Street Redevelopment – 80 spaces
- Canopy Hotel – 60 average spaces

Total projected demand: 450 – 500

Less Capacity in Downtown Garages: 126 spaces

Projected Parking Short Fall: 325 – 375 spaces.

Current and future efforts to meet parking needs were discussed including a TCAT Downtown Circulator, consideration of zones with longer hourly limits near the Downtown core, park and ride lots, private parking garages, private-municipal flat lots, and driveway and private space rentals. Demand based pricing and progressive pricing was mentioned.

The City is working with a consultant on a comprehensive parking study to evaluate the situation.

John Guttridge thanked Dan and Peter for the presentation. He asked if they would be looking at the indirect effect of the parking subsidy cost to tax payers. Yes, the consultant is working on this.

Heather McDaniel commented that there is a need to balance the cost and benefits. She asked if there are other urban areas that have eliminated the need for a subsidy? Is it even an option? Is it doable?

Martha Robertson stated that parking is tied to a cost. They should think about those with mobility issues who need to be near the core of the City. Should they be forced to pay more for this? This is an equity issue.

Svante Myrick, Ithaca City Mayor, commented on the equity issue. Currently only City residents via their taxes pay the subsidy. However, City residents make less than residents of other municipalities.

Heather McDaniel commented that she is glad that the consultant is on board and working on this. There is a timeline we need to be aware of due to the fact there are immediate needs of projects coming on line now.

John Guttridge commented that part of this is the customer experience – it is key to having people stay and return. Parking is the first and last experience visitors will have in the City.

Martha Robertson spoke to the efforts by all to create a vibrant Downtown and the sacrifices all taxpayers have made. All should be involved in paying and benefiting.

Jennifer Tavares agreed with this. She would like to have the parking stakeholder survey include information from those who do not come downtown due to parking issues. We need fewer barriers.

Svante Myrick stated that he and the City are in favor of the upcoming Emmy's Organics application that includes a move from the City of Ithaca to the Town of Dryden.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

None.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Emmy's Organics Application

Heather McDaniel introduced the project. She introduced Ian Gaffney, co-founder of Emmy's, and Bill Kelly, CEO, to the table. A previously planned new building on Cherry Street in the City of Ithaca did not move forward due to site/soil constraints. This project will enable Emmy's to remain in Tompkins County and bring back in house production that has been shifted to a co-packer out of state. The project includes purchasing 20,000 sf existing building, interior renovations including adding a processing room, additional office space and bathrooms along with the purchase of equipment. The interior renovations will not significantly increase the value of the building and as a result the recommendation is to have a PILOT schedule that will provide an established tax payment for 7 years that is based on the taxes associated with the current value of the building followed by a three year phase in of the full tax payment. This is a deviation of the IDA's standard UTEP. The project would also receive a sales tax exemption and a partial mortgage recording tax exemption. She mentioned updates to page 7 and 12 of the application regarding the move from the City of Ithaca to the Town of Dryden as well as the percentage of project costs financed from the public sector.

Bill Kelly gave an overview of the progress to date. This project will enable Emmy's to bring back in house all the production that had been sent out of state. He also mentioned Emmy's commitment to having all their staff receive a living wage. They will be announcing an increase in hourly rates to all staff to bring them up to a living wage (page 9 of the application was updated to indicate that they are willing to pay a living wage). They also are offering health insurance to salaried staff.

The company is also meeting with the County's BEA program on energy efficiency efforts.

Jennifer Tavares moved to accept the application and move the project to a public hearing. Martha Robertson seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0.

Taitem Engineering – IDA Energy Incentive Policy Revision

Heather McDaniel gave an overview of the proposed scope of work and fee from Taitem Engineering. This would be for the IDA Energy Policy Revision. The original energy policy recommendation that was developed by Taitem for the IDA was never officially adopted. Now that the City of Ithaca is in the process of adopting a green building policy, a review is warranted to ensure the policy is not incentivizing what is already required by local code and local policy. The fee is \$19,720.00 and meets the sole source requirement as outlined by the IDA's Procurement Policy for contracts between \$5,000 and \$20,000 – Taitem provided the background and feasibility for the first study and policy recommendation. They will be reviewing the existing work and providing some updates.

John Guttridge move to approve the proposed scope of work and fee from Taitem Engineering for the IDA Energy Policy Revision. Leslyn McBean Clairborne seconded the motion. The motion was approve 5-0.

The IDA Energy Committee will be involved with this process.

CHAIRS REPORT

None.

STAFF REPORT

Heather McDaniel reported that the NYS Authority Budget Office has issued new website guidelines for the TCIDA and TCDC. The requirements will be reviewed and websites updated if needed.

The City Centre project will begin apartment move ins this month.

The IDA's Governance, Housing and Energy committees will all be meeting within the next month. Also the NYS OSC report on IDA's for 2017 has been issued.

Martha Robertson commented on Air BNB issues in NYC and rental apartments as discussed at a recent Chamber event and she hopes this does not carry over to Ithaca. There is currently no protection regarding short-term rentals in IDA apartment projects. This makes her uncomfortable. Could it be a future IDA requirement to prohibit units from being used for short-term rentals? Air BNB does have a contract with the County to collect room tax dollars. Martha is more concerned with pulling housing units out of the rental market for long-term leases.

Russ Gaenzle stated that if this prohibition became part of IDA policy, legal documents could be drawn up to prohibit this for future projects that have yet to close on legal documents.

Heather McDaniel stated that this topic could be sent to the IDA Housing Committee to discuss.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Martha Robertson moved to approve the draft meeting minutes from the May 8, 2019 Board meeting. Leslyn McBean Clairborne seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

John Guttridge moved to take the meeting into Executive Session to discuss financing of a project and potential litigation. Jennifer Tavares seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0.

Martha Robertson moved to bring the meeting out of executive session. Leslyn McBean Clairborne seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM

Minutes were approved at the July 10, 2019 Board meeting