

**VALLEY VIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
(REMOTELY)**

**TUESDAY, MAY 18, 2021
2:30 P.M.**

PRESENT: James D. O'Donnell, Chairman
Michael Amo, Michael D. Paduch, Dan Bloomer, Laurence LaDue, Eric Ruscher

ALSO

PRESENT: L. Stephen Brescia, Chairman
Leigh J. Benton, Legislator
Thomas J. Faggione, Legislator
Kevin W. Hines, Legislator
Laurie R. Tautel, Legislator
Peter V. Tuohy, Legislator
John S. Vero, Legislator
Betsy N. Abraham, Legislative Counsel
Christopher Ericson, Deputy Commissioner of Health
Liz Delaney, Budget Analyst

Mr. O'Donnell opened the committee meeting at 2:30 p.m. and asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. All committee members were present with the exception of Ms. Kukys who was absent.

On the agenda was a discussion on possible uses for the Parry Building at Valley View.

Due to technical difficulties Mr. LaDue was disconnected from the meeting.

Mr. O'Donnell explained that he requested that Laurence LaDue, Commissioner, Valley View Center, and Dr. Irena Gelman, Commissioner of Health, designate a member of their staff to look at possible uses for the Parry building. Mr. Ericson was assigned from the Department of Health and Mr. LaDue would be addressing it for Valley View.

Mr. Ericson explained that he along with Mr. LaDue and Ms. Strecker from Valley View conducted a walk through of the Parry building. It was a challenge to look past some of the current design features and envision it as something else and they are currently unsure if the building is up to code and what would need to be done. He was perplexed on how the building could be used and all he could come up with was a Medical Arts building similar to what they have in Oneonta, New York. They took an abandoned mall and turned each storefront into a different type of medical facility such as eye doctor, podiatrist, general medicine, x-rays and lab all in one central location similar to Cornerstone Family Healthcare and/or Crystal Run Healthcare. Another option could be residences for a family member of a resident at Valley View; however, only a small percentage would take advantage of that concept. In addition, the layout of the building is unique and quite large with a great deal of distance to travel from one place to another.

Mr. O'Donnell reiterated that the goal is to make Valley View sustainable with assets that are not currently being used at Valley View.

Mr. LaDue rejoined the meeting at 2:35 p.m.

Mr. O'Donnell asked Mr. LaDue for a brief update on Valley View. Mr. LaDue replied that today's occupancy was at 75% and they have one COVID-19 positive resident and three staff members that have either tested positive for COVID-19. Currently, 92% of their residents have been vaccinated and 58% of staff. The Valley View Certified Home Health Agency (CHHA) currently has 16 patients, and it will take a long time to rebuild their nursing homes census to pre-COVID-19 conditions and they are currently finding it difficult to hire full-time CNA's and RN's.

Mr. O'Donnell asked for Mr. LaDue's input on how to best utilize the Parry building. Mr. LaDue replied that Anthony Sole, Director of Plant Operations at Valley View prepared a brief synopsis including background information on the Parry building. The Parry building consists of over 58,000 square feet and was built in the 1970's as a residential healthcare model and eventually used as a skilled nursing facility. It is an institutional setting, not fully sprinklered and a unique layout if not actually a shell. The elevators, one functioning boiler and the sprinklers are maintained; however, there is a list of items that the building needs done. The following items either need repair or to be replaced; water tower for cooling, generator, HVAC system only partially working, new roof, domestic hot water and one boiler needing repair as it is an aged building that needs a lot of TLC. If they could find someone who was interested in building an assisted living and/or senior housing or that ilk.

On the agenda was an update on Valley View Real Property.

Mr. Ruscher reviewed the packet that was emailed to committee members on the Valley View property (see original minutes). He offered a brief overview of the property including the Pad Site 1 consisting of 2.9 acres; Pad Site 2 consisting of 6 acres and Pad Site 3 consisting of 71.5 acres, Department of Social Services and Valley View. The proposed plan for Valley View option 2 consisted of assisted living area – A Lease area 5A; assisted living area – B Lease area 1A and medical facility lease 2.9A. The issue they have with the 71.5 acre parcel is the road frontage off of Quarry Road and an interior road between Valley View and Department of Social Services. They would then be talking about building roads. He has pulled some opinions of counsel from Real Property Tax Law that even if they maintain ownership of the property and go into a ground lease and the property is used for something like a health facility, assisted living, veterans or something of community benefit, but not office space, they could still maintain the exemptions on the buildings at a big savings. In February 2020, he had mentioned solar panels as a supplement to the large parcel of 71.5 acres. While solar panels aren't the nicest things to look at, they are huge right now and in that site they could probably get over 5 megawatts of panels to possibly provide power to the Valley View complex or benefit from a lease to the solar companies because he does not see solar companies going away now that Indian Point is offline. In his opinion, that would be the best use of the space because they would have to get a consultant/engineer who could be costly. He would be contacting Brendan R. Casey, Commissioner, Department of Emergency Services on the pros and cons of solar panels as they have been dealing with them for several years.

Mr. O'Donnell asked that Mr. Ruscher continue to work on solar panels.

Mr. O'Donnell asked for clarification that they could possibly do a land lease at the Parry building and they would be exempt from taxes. Mr. Ruscher replied that currently the whole building is exempt but if they had a tenant that was using it for public use, they would maintain their full exempt status.

Mr. O'Donnell requested that the opinions of counsel from Real Property Tax Law be forwarded to all legislators.

Mr. Amo commented that when this process began, they talked a great deal about a long-term care campus and would that be something that could supplement Valley View and if so, what are those components.

Mr. LaDue replied yes, they would want assisted living and/or senior housing and somewhere for the CHHA to provide services and the nursing home in close proximity if short term rehabilitation is needed. Pre-COVID-19 they were going for an outpatient rehabilitation license; however, that is on the backburner if and/or when things are back to normal so there is that opportunity. This could give them a skilled nursing home, CHHA and outpatient rehabilitation in one building. He pointed out that Mr. Amo is on the right track with possibly adding assisted living, affordable senior housing and/or anything of that nature would be great.

Mr. Amo added that they would then become a complete caregiving center. But what would Mr. LaDue like to see there as he knows the reimbursement models.

Mr. LaDue replied that to supplement Valley View it would be someone that would need the CHHA, short-term rehabilitation and in the future outpatient rehabilitation.

Mr. O'Donnell commented that they have discussed assisted living, senior housing and the need to get something done with the Parry building. In 2020, he discussed the possibility of talking to Mount St. Mary College and having a few masters candidates do their thesis on the entire Valley View property and he will talk to the president at Mount Saint Mary College. He would like to end the committee in December with a clear vision of what they have, where they think they can best benefit going forward. He has spoken to County Historian Johanna Porr who will write the history of Valley View and come before the committee in July, Office for the Aging Director Annemarie Maglione will write up something on the aging population including up to date data, Commissioner LaDue for the current operating status of Valley View and the information comprised by their Director of Plant Operations at Valley View be formalized and placed into a document for the final report with respect to the status of the building and what needs to be done to the building and Mr. Ruscher with the property information with all recommendations moving forward finalized by December. While they still have a lot of work to be done, they have also done a lot of work.

Mr. Paduch agreed with Mr. Amo that a complete care facility is the way to go; however, infrastructure needs must be addressed in regard to water, extending the sewer treatment plant, possible wells and roads or nothing works.

Mr. Paduch pointed out that a study on the infrastructure needs to be completed to address all the issues and to go along with their recommendations.

Mr. O'Donnell asked that Mr. LaDue create a packet on Valley View, Mr. Sole create one on the Parry building, and Mr. Ruscher on the Valley View property for the July meeting.

Mr. Ruscher asked if Mr. Sole has any information on the sewer plant that it be updated, expanded as the village of Florida supplies water to Valley View and they would need to ensure they have capacity for any endeavor.

Mr. Bloomer suggested they narrow it down to a couple of options such as housing for seniors and solar panels which would have a positive effect on Valley View and its residents. This would be a very expensive process and he agrees that it would be a good idea to have Mount Saint Mary College be involved.

Chairman Brescia commented that there are some good ideas, but he would support the one-stop concept.

Ms. Tautel commented that if they are going to look into a complete caregiving center, they need to ensure there is indoor and outdoor space for amenities such as a convenience store and bookstore and those geared toward the elderly and retirement.

Mr. Amo agreed with Mr. Bloomer and regardless of what they do they need to remember the purpose of the property and to be consistent and to not put anything there that does not support the mission of Valley View and their goal.

Mr. Bloomer asked once a decision has been made on what they will do, how will it be funded. This is a county building in his opinion, they cannot put the cost of what they decide to do on the taxpayers of Orange County so it could possibly be bonding.

The meeting adjourned at 3:02 p.m.