

## GREEN COMMITTEE

(REMOTELY)

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2020

2:15 P.M.

PRESENT: Joseph Minuta, Chairman  
Barry J. Cheney, Kevindaryán Luján, Alan J. Sorensen

ALSO

PRESENT: James M. Kulisek, Legislator  
Peter Tuohy, Legislator  
Antoinette Reed, Legislative Counsel  
Harold J. Porr, III., Deputy County Executive  
Dan Bloomer, Director, Operations and Cost Control  
James S. Brooks, Commissioner of Parks, Recreation & Conservation  
Julie Richmond, Deputy Commissioner of Planning  
Kate Schmidt, Planner, Planning Department

Chairman Minuta opened the committee meeting at 2:18 p.m. by asking everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. All committee members were present with the exception of Legislator Benton who was absent.

Mr. Sorensen addressed the first agenda item which was an update/discussion on LEED for Cities and Communities Certification as a Pilot Program. He stated that at the July meeting he briefed the committee on this new program which was being offered by the U.S. Building Council as certification and is a new way forward for Resilient Green, Inclusive, and Smart Communities. Over the past several months the Planning Department has been working to be certified under this new program which helps measure sustainably and resilience performance against national and global standards. He added that they are resubmitting the application at the end of next week to be reviewed and they he will know what level of certification the county is will receive.

The second agenda item was a brief discussion regarding County Planning as a Lead Agency for green initiatives.

In thinking about not having the county subjected for every project to LEED standards, Mr. Sorensen stated there are many different things that can be done to make sure the buildings are energy efficient and environmentally sensitive. If the county were to start off with the capital plan, the Planning Department could play a role that as capital projects come online they could work with the sister agencies (Department of Public Works, Parks, Health Department etc.), so when a new building comes online they could look for funding opportunities through grants to incorporate energy efficient infrastructure. The goal would be to reduce the cost of the project for the county as well as reduce the maintenance operation costs of running the facilities. In the same sense they may look for opportunities to enhance the resiliency of new county projects.

Mr. Minuta asked if there is a timeline for moving this forward.

Mr. Sorensen replied he would defer to the committee, but suggested they begin looking at existing capital projects in January.

Mr. Cheney stated that every capital project that is in the plan needs to come to the legislature for authorization before the Planning Department can proceed; therefore, it may be appropriate for the legislature through the Green Committee to advise all the departments that have capital projects that when they come before the committee it is expected that there is an indication as to what steps they are taking to meet with green initiatives.

Mr. Minuta agreed with Mr. Cheney and asked Mr. Sorensen what his thoughts are.

Mr. Sorensen stated it is an excellent idea and the Planning Department can coordinate with the departments and lend any necessary resources.

Mr. Cheney agreed with Mr. Sorensen's approach.

Mr. Minuta asked how the departments will be notified regarding their capital budgets and green initiatives.

Mr. Cheney replied that it should come from the Green Committee as the advocate for the county being responsible in this manner. It could be a "blanket" memo sent to all departments.

Mr. Minuta agreed with Mr. Cheney in that a "blanket" memo is a good idea and he will work on it.

The next agenda item was an update/discussion on EV: Charging Stations and identifying locations for initial installation.

Mr. Sorensen stated the application was submitted but put on hold due to COVID-19. The three county buildings included were the Government Center, a location at Thomas Bull Park and the Seward Avenue Complex. He added that the application is solid and as we begin to come out of the COVID-19 crisis, the state funding will become available.

Mr. Minuta asked if the monies may be released so they can start to plan for an RFP.

Mr. Sorensen replied it would be an RFB and if he were to guess, they would receive notification by January/February. He stated it is a straightforward project.

Mr. Cheney asked if the units are single or dual.

Mr. Sorensen replied that he will report back to the committee with that information.

Ms. Schmidt addressed the committee with an update/discussion regarding the Pilot for Farmers Market Composting. The compost market began in September and recently finished this past Friday. It was a positive experience with a lot of education. She stated that compared to last year there is no data, but everything was well received.

Mr. Cheney asked if the DEC gets involved with the permits.

Ms. Schmidt replied the composting facilities have a hierarchal order, so if it is just starting the DEC does not care because it is a dirt pile. As it grows commercially and industrially, one must have several permits.

The last agenda item was a brief discussion regarding the Kowawase Unique Area.

Mr. Minuta explained this area is in the Town of New Windsor along the Hudson River, is one of the most majestic locations in the town and has a clubhouse that can be rented out for events. He had a meeting with Mr. Sorensen to discuss what can be done with the property as well as a meeting with Mr. Brooks to find out who owned the property. From his understanding, the County of Orange has a maintenance agreement with the State and the State owns the property however, the agreement was never executed. Two things he would like to see done is restoring the docks and possibly getting a permit from the DEC to have small beach fires.

Mr. Sorensen stated it was a good site visit and his understanding is that there is an MOU between the county and the DEC (1988), so in order to move forward cooperation from both the DEC as well as the Army Core of Engineers. He added that it is a beautiful location and can see where it would be a benefit to the community to have these improvements.

Mr. Brooks added that any approval would require Army Core of Engineers and the DEC's involvement, but he is not sure if what was in the location can be reestablished. He is onboard for any ideas such as kayak launches.

Mr. Minuta stated that in discussions with the local fire department, it was said that they do not have any issues with small campfires, and it is a DEC regulated item.

Mr. Brooks noted that he will reach out to the DEC and see what type of response is received.

The meeting adjourned at 3:07 p.m.