

WESTCHESTER COUNTY BOARD OF LEGISLATORS

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY

MINUTES: March 22, 2010

MEMBERS: Chair: Rogowsky; Legislators: Abinanti, Kaplowitz, Maisano, Testa.

IN ATTENDANCE: STAFF: C. Crane, M. McGovern; G. Oros, D. Balistreri (CEO); J.P. Iannace (Law); M. Thielking (Bedford); M. Wallach (CCE); H. Oringel (by telephone) [list of other attendees is on file]

Committee on Energy called to order at 3:20 pm.

Item(s) Discussed: **Energy Conservation Programs**

Chair Rogowsky opened the meeting on a discussion of qualified energy conservation bonds (QECBs) and an overview of the energy program being developed by the Town of Bedford and the consortium of northern Westchester communities. energy incentives and assistance available to the County. He noted Westchester County received a \$7.88 million QECB allocation, which the County may opt to use.

Mark Thielking, Bedford Energy Advisory Panel director, described Bedford and other towns' initiative to improve energy efficiency in buildings and homes. The existing barriers to homeowner building improvements are i) upfront cost, ii) transfer cost to changing owners, and iii) engaging low and moderate income homeowners. Mr. Thielking described the PACE program (property assessed clean energy) which Bedford and other towns are establishing to obtain funds from capital markets, create a loan pool, and initiate retrofits utilizing contractors conducting the NYSERDA Home Performance with Energy Star program. The initial goal is to complete retrofits in 5-10% of the homes in Bedford within six years, leading to the creation of 250 jobs.

Mr. Thielking and Mr. Oringel described the relationship among the towns in the consortium (Northern Westcheser Energy Action Consortium, NWEAC), which will be accomplished through intermunicipal agreements and the creation of a new local development corporation. Mr. Oros stated the county's One-Stop center will be conducting a residential energy assessment program, and Mr. Rogowsky noted that \$200,000 ARRA energy block grant funds were designated for this.

Noting the April 1 pending application deadline, Mr. Rogowsky commented that applying the county's QECB allocation to assist in the PACE program funding in the towns appears worthwhile. Mr. Oros indicated interest in reviewing the program with Mr. Rogowsky and county staff, and he noted the application itself is straightforward. Mr. Harckham stated that USDOE prefers leverage in reviewing applications, and use of the QECBs in this fashion would demonstrate such leveraging. Mr. Oringel stated that his earlier conversations with US Department of Energy indicated collaborative and creative approaches among local governments were highly supported by USDOE.

Mr. Rogowsky expressed interest in collaborating with the Administration in creating an energy management plan for the county. In addition to environmental benefits, such plan could lead to cost savings.

Upon the motion of Leg. Harckham, seconded by Leg. Testa, the Committee voted to adjourn (all in favor). The meeting ended at approximately 4:03 p.m.

[audio recording of the meeting is on file]