

**WESTCHESTER COUNTY BOARD OF LEGISLATORS
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING & PLANNING
Tuesday, March 23, 2010, 9:30 am
MEETING MINUTES**

In Attendance:

Housing & Planning Committee Members: Leg. William Burton, Chair; Legislators Peter Harckham, Judy Myers, John Nonna [by telephone], Martin Rogowsky, Bernice Spreckman and Board Chairman Ken Jenkins. Advisory Members: Albert Annunziata and Blanca Lopez. Committee Coordinator: Barbara Dodds.

Others: BOL: Leg. Vito Pinto; Planning Dept.: Anthony Zaino, Norma Drummond; Law Dept.: Rick Cashman; CEO: Katy Delgado, George Oros; Westhab: Ken Belfer; Housing Oppty. Comm.: Shelly Weintraub, Jean Pollak, Betsy Stein-Weiner, George Raymond and Richard Hyman.

▪ Act determining surplus land-Parcel Q-in the Town of Greenburgh & Village of Ardsley

With a quorum present, Leg. Burton opened the meeting and began the discussion on the Parcel Q item. Representing the item in question was Rick Cashman, Associate County Attorney and Anthony Zaino, Director of Design from Planning.

Three parcels are being declared as surplus, ready for disposal by the county. Parcel "A" to the Village of Ardsley, Parcel "B" to the Town of Greenburgh, and Part "C" to be sold to the adjacent property owner. At this time the approval sought is only to declare these parcels surplus. Later, the Board will have to approve disposition of these parcels.

Leg. Harckham asked about the current status of dealings with the adjacent owner who had been in arrears on his rent of Parcel "C." Mr. Cashman related that although the owner had not signed the rental agreement for last year, he had recently sent a check for six months of rent. The Dept. of Public Works sent the check back requesting that the lease be signed and returned along with the entire rent for the last year. The rental agreement must be completed before the sale can go forward.

Leg. Burton acknowledged receipt of letters of right of first refusal from both Greenburgh and Ardsley. Leg. Rogowsky asked about the history of the property and whether it had been considered for affordable housing. Mr. Zaino said in the late '90s it was analyzed by Planning and declared unsuitable for housing development because the land was too steep and wet.

Mr. Cashman noted that approval of this act would only approve declaring the parcel surplus, the parcel would be coming back to the legislature for approval of the sale.

Leg. Burton made a motion to approve the act, moved by Leg. Rogowsky and seconded by Leg. Harckham. All voted in favor.

▪ Presentation and discussion with the Housing Opportunity Commission

Leg. Burton noted that for the past six months the committee has been considering the renewal of the commission. Last week, members of the Community Housing Resource Center (CHRC) were here and stated that the HOC has been the leading player in helping the County set policy and bring insight into the matter of affordable housing in the County. They also acknowledged that they knew of no other entity that could fill that role as well. Leg. Harckham agreed and added that from his own experience, the work of the HOC is vital to the housing work the County is trying to do. There is no question we need to continue the commission. Leg. Spreckman said the input of HOC is important and is needed by the legislators.

Mr. Raymond spoke about the mission of the HOC and that the County decided on the need for an allocation plan. Everything that HOC has been trying to do is in line with the new need because of the settlement. Every unit of housing that is created in fulfillment of the settlement would qualify under the allocation plan. The commission was given no mandate to enforce but rather to only advocate by testifying and writing letters in support of projects. The County could decide how best the HOC could be of help under the settlement. Changes recommended by the Commission and the previous administration include:

- a reduction of members from 15 to 11 because of the difficulty in finding active participation.
- Number of meetings would be reduced.
- Permanent rather than temporary commission.

Mr. Raymond responded to an inquiry from Leg. Nonna about what the HOC had been doing over the past four years. Mr. Hyman referred him to the annual reports and updates to the allocation plan. Leg. Nonna asked what factors determined the number of units each municipality was appropriated. Mr. Raymond said the gross number of acres was one of the most important of the six factors and discussed the development of the allocation plan in great detail. Some of the annual reports, additional things that should be done. Ms. Weiner identified a greater role in educating education

Legs. Rogowsky, Harckham and Jenkins suggested that in crafting new legislation, some thought should be given to adding appointing some of the members instead of all coming from the County Executive, add education as part of the mission and add dates for reports. Ms. Stein-Weiner and Ms. Weintraub suggested that in its education role the HOC should strengthen contacts with other stakeholders and be used more as an advisory tool to the lawmakers and the Planning Department.

Leg. Burton made a motion to adjourn, moved by Leg. Myers, seconded by Leg. Spreckman.