

**Tompkins County IDA Meeting Minutes  
October 1, 2010  
Scott Heyman (Old Jail) Conference Room  
Ithaca, NY**

**Present:** Martha Robertson, Dan Cogan, Larry Baum, Nathan Shinagawa, Ed Marx, David Squires

**Excused:** Jeff Furman, Will Burbank, Jim Dennis

**Staff Present:** Ina Arthur (recording), Mariette Geldenhuys, Heather Filiberto

**Guests Present:** Andy Sciarabba (Lansing Market), Frank Proto (TC Legislature), Eric Goetzman, Andrew Sussman, Jim Bold (Arrowhead Ventures), Gina Speno (Shops at Ithaca Mall), Krisy Gashler (Ithaca Journal), Douglas Tesoriero (Cortland Produce), Phylli DeSarno (City of Ithaca)

**CALL TO ORDER** Ms. Robertson called the meeting to order at 3:50 PM.

**ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA** None

**PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR** None

**BUSINESS**

Lansing Market Application

Mr. Sciarabba described the Lansing Market Project – a grocery store for the Town of Lansing center. The project will be on 4 acres of land on the northeast corner of North Triphammer Road and Town Barn Road in Lansing, NY. It will be a 14,000 s.f. building with 2,000 s.f. of that space for loading docks. There will be 73 parking spaces. The building will house a full service grocery store with seven full time/managerial positions and 20 part time positions. They are hoping to start construction in December 2010.

Ms. Filiberto commented that similar to the First and Adams project, this is an independent grocery store that will provide a needed service to a neighborhood. The Town of Lansing will be providing a resolution of support for this project.

Mr. Sciarabba added that this is the beginning of the Town of Lansing town center development. It is hoped in the future that there will be more green areas and side walks.

Ms. Robertson asked about the green building practices. Mr. Sciarabba stated that the building is basically a shell. They will be looking at the lighting system in terms of saving energy. They also have to work within their budget restraints. There is not much available from NYSERDA for this type of project.

Mr. Baum asked about the time frame for opening the store. It is hoped to open by May 31, 2011.

Ms. Filiberto commented on a correction to the application. The total sales tax abatement should be \$104,000.

Ms. Robertson asked about the contribution to health insurance for employees. Mr. Sciarabba stated that the company will pay for insurance for full time employees and is hoping to have a 401k program. They will also not sell any tobacco products at the grocery store. The stored hours of operation will be 8AM – 9PM. Mr. Sciarabba also stated that he would be meeting with the Workforce Investment Board regarding diversity in hiring practices. As for construction labor the project will probably work with a general contractor who is local and who will bring in sub contractors for part of the project.

Ms. Robertson commented that there is no “density policy” for the Town of Lansing as there is for the City of Ithaca. This project seems to be leading the way. Mr. Sciarabba stated that this project should help with the nodal growth for the town center and also provide a needed service to the community.

Mr. Marx was asked for his thoughts on the project. He commented that this is the first time he has seen the plans and is not really involved. Ideally things would be clustered a bit more and would be walkable.

Mr. Sciarabba replied that the market is in the town center area and moving it closer to the town hall would be difficult as the land around that area currently has restrictions on it imposed by NYS. He will be reserving land for future sidewalks.

Ms. Filiberto commented that the Town of Lansing planning board would be reviewing the SEQR on October 25, 2010.

**Dan Cogan moved to have the Lansing Market project go to public hearing. Larry Baum seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### Cortland Produce Update

Mr. Tesoriero gave an update to the board on a few things they had requested. He has met with Julia Mattick of the Workforce Investment Board. It was a very informative meeting. The company will be advertising for jobs through Tompkins County Workforce NY and the company has joined the Tompkins County Workforce Diversity Consortium.

Ms. Filiberto presented other information that the board had requested relating to the number of hires from Ithaca Produce, the health insurance option that was offered to employees, the amount of property taxes paid in Cortland County and a letter of support from the Cortland County Business Development Corp.

Ms. Geldenhuys gave a brief update on Ithaca Produce and the outstanding debts that company has. The company has loans from Tompkins County and the Broome County IDA for equipment. The building was financed by Elmira Savings bank. Tompkins County and BCIDA both filed a purchase money UCC on the equipment. Elmira Savings bank filed a general UCC. The bank disputes the other party’s filing. The dispute really is between Elmira Savings bank and Tompkins County and BCIDA. The bank

is taking the position that they are first in line. Ideally there would be agreement among the creditors and the proceeds of any sale would be split up.

Another issue is the Ithaca Produce is behind in its PILOT payments. This will need to be resolved.

Ms. Geldenhuys was asked to put this information into writing for the benefit of other board members who are not present.

Mr. Marx stated that the County has \$102,000 invested into the company. He is hoping to get a portion of that back.

### Arrowhead Ventures Update

Mr. Goetzman gave an update on the project. They have met with the Village of Lansing to obtain the PDA (Plan Development Area) change in zoning for their project. The Village requires them to build 12 units of senior housing and a bird sanctuary in the surrounding wetlands. They have also met with the finance committee of the Ithaca City School District. They are hoping to move forward with the project.

Mr. Sussman reported that they have met with a number of consultants. He outlined the positive impact for the community in terms of an increase of sales tax revenue to the County, the senior housing, cleaning up of the wetland area, and the required buffer between the residential and commercial areas in the village of Lansing. A chart was used to show how with each additional commercial business the sales tax revenues increased.

Their current proposal for the PILOT Incremental Finance (PIF) they are requesting would be for 20 years with 50% of the increase in current taxes going back to the municipalities. He suggested that currently there is \$30,000 in property taxes on the land that was proposed to go back to the municipalities. That number would increase to \$70,000 and would be used to support the community and the additional taxes on the big box would go to help support the housing project debt.

Approval from all the involved municipalities is needed (County, Village of Lansing and Ithaca City School District).

Mr. Cogan stated that it is hard for him to support a subsidy for only 12 units of housing. This is close to \$150,000 per unit and is much greater than any other residential component the IDA has supported through the City of Ithaca's Density Policy. He would like to see more "dial back" from the project. He does not like the precedent this will set.

Mr. Baum stated that this project will bring in \$1.4 million in sales tax revenue. To not look at it would be wrong. We need to look at this project very seriously.

Mr. Shinagawa asked if need is usually established for supporting a project?

Mr. Marx stated that if this goes through, all the commercial retailers could start asking for abatements. There are also a lot of commercial vacancies.

Ms. Robertson commented that she feels this would be a bad precedent to set. Mr. Baum stated that cannot believe the IDA would turn its back on this deal. He thinks there would be a lot of community support.

Mr. Sussman stated that it is not just a commercial retailer. There is senior housing and a wetland in the project.

Ms. Robertson stated that if the project is to come back at the November meeting, they should bring the revised plan in writing. She appointed a sub committee of the board to review the new elements of the project finance. The members are: Dan Cogan, Larry Baum, and Nathan Shinagawa.

#### JB Holding Resolution

The resolution from JB Holding/Ongweoweh is before the TCIDA due to its lease hold interest in the property. The resolution is regarding a refinance and also will allow the company to access the partial mortgage recording tax abatement.

**Dan Cogan moved to approve the refinance resolution from JB Holding. Larry Baum seconded the motion. The motion passed (Yays: Robertson, Shinagawa, Cogan, Baum) (Absent: Furman, Dennis, Burbank).**

#### Transonic Systems Resolution

Transonic Systems is beginning the construction of its project and would like to access the sales tax exemption from the TCIDA. The resolution before the board is this sales tax exemption.

**Larry Baum moved to approve the inducement resolution for the Transonic Systems project. Nathan Shinagawa seconded the motion. The motion passed (Yays: Robertson, Shinagawa, Cogan, Baum) (Absent: Furman, Dennis, Burbank).**

#### Cayuga Green Apartments

Ms. Geldenhuys reported that she has talked with the Cayuga Green attorney who is compiling the requested information.

#### TCIDA 2011 Preliminary Budget

**Nathan Shinagawa moved to approved the 2011 Preliminary TCIDA budget. Dan Cogan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

No report this meeting.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes will be considered at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 5:45 PM