

**Tompkins County IDA Approved Meeting Minutes
October 18, 2012
Tompkins County Assessment Department
Conference Room
128 E. Buffalo Street, Ithaca, NY**

Present: Martha Robertson, Will Burbank, Svante Myrick, Larry Baum, Jim Dennis

Excused: Nathan Shinagawa, Jeff Furman

Staff Present: Michael Stamm, Heather Filiberto, Mariette Geldenhuys, Russ Gaenzle (Harris Beach), Ina Arthur (recording),

Guests Present: Nels Bohn (IURA), Philly DeSarno (City of Ithaca)

CALL TO ORDER The meeting was called to order at 3:50 PM

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA - None

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR - None

BUSINESS

2013 Draft TCIDA Budget

Mr. Stamm stated that the 2013 Draft TCIDA Budget is being presented now to comply with the State's PAAA legislation that requires the budget to be posted by November 1, 2012. A final budget and TCAD work plan review will be presented at either the November or December meetings.

Jim Dennis moved to approve the Draft 2013 TCIDA Budget. Svante Myrick seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CIIP Policy Revisions

Ms. Filiberto presented the City of Ithaca's Revised CIIP Policy. This has been approved by the City's planning department and will be considered by the City's Common Council on November 7th. The policy has incorporated the suggestions from the IDA Board regarding the need for more transparency and the need for more public comment on projects. The property tax abatement period has been changed to seven years as standard. If projects can demonstrate financial need, then the abatement period will be extended to ten years. A five-year review of the policy was recommended.

Ms. Filiberto stated that the IDA Board could approve the policy pending the Common Council approval or it could wait until its November 15th meeting to approve the policy.

Mr. Burbank asked about the other tools the City has that can incentivize community benefits. Ms. Filiberto listed: Incentive zoning, design incentives, using the Excelsior program for jobs, ground floor commercial zoning, SEQR, CU/City housing fund, and site review.

Ms. Robertson asked if the IDA could impose its own criteria to the policy.

Ms. Geldenhuys commented that the IDA can but it should think about reporting requirements and ambiguity with definitions.

Ms. Robertson commented that she would like to see all density projects that contain housing components be affordable housing.

Mr. Baum stated that it might depend on the project. Not all projects with housing will have affordable housing components.

Ms. Filiberto commented that the new policy objectives are not directly related to affordable housing.

Mr. Myrick commented that incentive zone could be a way to obtain affordable housing objectives.

Ms. Robertson asked about going to a ten year property tax abatement for projects that include affordable housing.

Mr. Myrick stated that he would like to see more, smaller market rate housing projects as well.

Mr. Stamm stated that staff could provide an overview of the entire area that includes low-income housing projects being built by a number of organizations.

Mr. Burbank stated that he is concerned with projects coming to the IDA that do not need incentives.

Mr. Myrick stated that the IDA board could do what it wants. The City wants to move projects forward.

Mr. Dennis stated that he feels affordable housing makes a project much more difficult. He feels we are fortunate to have projects that want to come to this area. There is a need to get tax paying properties.

Mr. Myrick commented that he agrees with Mr. Burbank, but would rather err on the side of giving abatements and see development go forward.

Ms. Robertson stated that she would like to think more on the policy and wait for Common Council to vote on November 7th before having the IDA Board make a final decision. She would like to have some option to encourage more affordable housing.

Mr. Baum suggested talking with developers who are doing low-income housing projects like INHS, Conifer, Pathstone, and Better Housing of Ithaca.

STAFF REPORT

Mr. Stamm reported the current deal flow is very different than what was common in the past. There are a lot of high-tech companies growing or starting up with different needs than traditional manufacturing companies. They are not the types of deals that come to the IDA. There is a potential large high tech project that may come to the IDA in the near future.

Mr. Stamm gave a brief update on the Emerson site. The developer still does not have a signed contract with the parent company but that should happen soon. The developer is gearing up to do the engineering and environmental studies that will be needed at the site. DEC will be involved.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Will Burbank moved to approve the draft minutes from the August 16, 2012 board meeting. Larry Baum seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 PM

Minutes approved at the November 15, 2012 Board meeting.