

1 CITY COUNCIL/PLANNING BOARD MEETING COUNTY OF SARATOGA  
CITY OF MECHANICVILLE

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PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING THE RESTORE NEW YORK GRANT  
APPLICATION AND PROPERTY ASSESSEMENT LIST

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THE TAPED AND TRANSCRIBED MINUTES of the above entitled  
proceeding BY NANCY STRANG-VANDEBOGART commencing on  
April 6, 2009 at 7:23 p.m. at the Senior Citizens Center  
178 North Main Street, Mechanicville, New York

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CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS:

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Mayor Anthony J. Sylvester

C. Mark Seber

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Jack Messoro

JoAnn Reilly

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Salvatore Izzo

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PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS:

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Mary Grace Izzo, Chairperson

Sue Peluso

14

Richard Delaney

Larry Case

15

Joel Depeaux

Michael Namm

16

Val Serbalik, Esq., Corporation Counsel

17

Sandra Governor, Barton and Loguidice

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Mary Elizabeth Slevin, Esq., Stockli Greene & Slevin, LLP

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**Nancy Strang-VanDeBogart**  
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1                   MAYOR SYLVESTER: I'd like to go into a public  
2                   hearing on Restore New York Grant application and  
3                   property assessment list. The presentation will be by a  
4                   city planner and then public comment after that.

5                   MS. REILLY: So moved.

6                   MR. IZZO: Second.

7                   MAYOR SYLVESTER: Roll call.

8                   *(The roll was called.)*

9                   MAYOR SYLVESTER: It's now 7:23.

10                  MS. GOVERNOR: The City of Mechanicville is  
11                  proposing to submit a grant under the Restore New York  
12                  program. I'll give a very brief presentation of the  
13                  background for the grant and then give it back to Mayor  
14                  Sylvester for public comment period.

15                  The Restore New York grant will be for the  
16                  Esplanade project to be built on the 10 acre under  
17                  utilized site as a mixed-use complex with seven major  
18                  buildings including 175 one, two and three bedroom  
19                  residential units as well as commercial office,  
20                  restaurant and retail space.

21                  The purpose of this public hearing is to satisfy  
22                  the requirement for a public hearing for the Restore  
23                  New York grant and to open up the project for public  
24                  comment. It's important to also make sure that the  
25                  public understands that the property is the property

1           that is the former Westvaco Papermill at 240 North Main  
2           Street.

3                   To begin with, I'll give a brief overview of the  
4           application and the requirements and at the end of my  
5           very brief presentation we will have a public comment  
6           period.

7                   New York State created the Restore New York  
8           community initiative in 2006 and gave the Empire State  
9           Development Corporation, ESDC, the responsibility of  
10          implementing the program of \$300,000,000.

11                  Round one and two are over and now in round three  
12          \$150,000,000 is available. The maximum grant request  
13          for cities of the size of Mechanicville is 2.5 million  
14          dollars.

15                  The sole purpose of the Restore New York fund is  
16          to revitalize urban areas and stabilize neighborhoods.  
17          It is expected that projects will attract individuals,  
18          families and commercial enterprises to the community  
19          and help build an increased tax base and improve  
20          municipal finances. Cities, towns and villages may  
21          apply.

22                  Projects require a 10% matching contribution from  
23          the municipality which can be obtained from owner,  
24          public or private sources. The deadline for proposals  
25          is Monday May 4<sup>th</sup> which is four weeks from today.

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1           The proposal requirements are complex and  
2           thorough; 14 forms with multiple pages and many issues  
3           to be addressed. At the end of the grant application  
4           process, we will have a very thick binder filled with  
5           all of the requirements addressed as completely as  
6           possible.

7           I failed to mention that I work with the firm of  
8           Barton and Loguidice and we have been retained to  
9           prepare the grant. We will be working with both the  
10          city officials and also the Empire Warehouse  
11          Association to prepare the grant and assemble all of  
12          the required materials.

13          The proposal will be rated according to four main  
14          criteria. We have to make sure that the grant proposal  
15          is as competitive as possible.

16          The criteria are: The economic distress of the  
17          community. This is based on eight specified criteria  
18          given by Restore New York.

19          The second one is leveraging other sources or  
20          programs such as project location and the Empire Zone  
21          or Brownfield opportunity area.

22          Then there are criteria such as project goals  
23          such as whether the project will induce commercial  
24          investment and revitalize the urban center and project  
25          readiness.

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1               Restore New York also has 15 discretionary points  
2               that it may give.

3               Projects funded through Restore New York funds  
4               are expected to be completed in an 18 to 20 month time  
5               period. That is, as you can see, a very short time.

6               We are going to be phasing the Esplanade project  
7               and propose only that which can be accomplished in the  
8               first 24 months.

9               The project scope has been identified as first,  
10              the demolition of the warehouse, second the preparation  
11              of the site and the construction of infrastructure and  
12              the construction of the first two buildings.

13              That is the end of the formal presentation and  
14              let me give it back to Mayor Sylvester for comments and  
15              questions.

16              MAYOR SLYVESTER: Thank you.

17              Questions on the application for the Restore New  
18              York grant - does anybody have anything on this?

19              We are the lead agency on this, which means the  
20              grant will be written through the City of Mechanicville  
21              and paid for by the developer and the matching part of  
22              it will be paid for by the developer. There is a  
23              matching 10% of whatever monies they receive for this  
24              project.

25              Anybody with any questions on this

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1 MR. DEMARCO: Dave DeMarco.

2 My question is: you say tow buildings. Are they  
3 big buildings or are we just talking little buildings?  
4 Could you be just a little bit more specific on what  
5 tow buildings for that amount of money?

6 MS. GOVERNOR: We're talking about the sum of the  
7 project that we mentioned in the grant. The 2.5 million  
8 will go towards what is accomplished in that time  
9 period, but not necessarily time in any way to the  
10 total amount spent. So in other words, the grant is  
11 going to request 2.5 million but the project scope  
12 can't be done in the first two years. The first two  
13 buildings are by Route 4 to the south.

14 FROM THE FLOOR: Who controls the funds, if you  
15 do receive it? Does the city control the funds and how  
16 much money you get as you accomplish what you need to  
17 accomplish, or what you are supposed to accomplish?

18 MS. GOVERNOR: The city will be the recipient. In  
19 terms of what kind of contracts will be required, I  
20 have not gotten that far. We are just at the beginning  
21 of this process of writing the grant. We're at the  
22 stage where we are identifying everything that has to  
23 be gathered to go into the grant application.

24 When and if the grant is awarded, at that time,  
25 all of the requirements for managing the grant will

1 definitely be known to the city because they will have  
2 to go through an agreement and a contract period. At  
3 that time, everything will be written down so that  
4 everybody understands how it's going to happen. Right  
5 now I don't have an answer for you because we haven't  
6 gotten that far. We may have to wait until we submit  
7 the grant and then get some sort of feedback from  
8 Restore New York.

9 FROM THE FLOOR: So suppose you got 30% of the  
10 grant, is that going to impact on how much you're going  
11 to do, or are you going to move forward with the  
12 project?

13 MS. GOVERNOR: When you say you -

14 FROM THE FLOOR: The agency.

15 MS. GOVERNOR: In terms of the way everything is  
16 going to progress, the grant will be submitted. From  
17 what I understand the project will go forward and the  
18 funding for the whole project will have to be  
19 negotiated and managed by the proposer and working with  
20 the city.

21 As far as my role in this, my role is to put  
22 together the most competitive project that I know and  
23 if I need to know this by the time the end of the grant  
24 is submitted, then I'll be working with the developer  
25 to see how it all goes.

1                   As I say, we aren't the beginning of this process  
2                   and I don't have a good answer for you.

3                   FROM THE FLOOR: That's honest but we want to  
4                   know that based on the infrastructure that's there,  
5                   that it's taxable. But after we start to tear it half  
6                   down or we only have one-third of the money, do we have  
7                   to take down one-third of the building or do we have a  
8                   plan?

9                   MS. GOVERNOR: And perhaps I'm not the right  
10                  person to be answering these questions. As I say, I'm  
11                  the grant preparer.

12                  MS. SLEVIN: Mary Beth Slevin. I just wanted to  
13                  give a little clarification.

14                  The monies under the Restore New York grant are  
15                  not available for reimbursement. It's a reimbursement  
16                  program. The project has to be completed first. All the  
17                  work under the defined project must be completed before  
18                  any of the funds are disbursed. So to really address  
19                  your question, all of that work must be completed prior  
20                  to the time that any of the reimbursement applies.

21                  FROM THE FLOOR: My concern with my restaurant is  
22                  that we are established there. When this building  
23                  starts, what is the impact that it will have on my  
24                  business, the traffic flow and the people behind me?  
25                  How is it going to affect them? They are customers of



1 mine. Is there going to be a cut off point where nobody  
2 is going to be able to get up there?

3 One time before Empire took over, that building  
4 looked like Beirut.

5 So, if we get this building half done and it's  
6 left there, is there a clause that some agency steps in  
7 and takes over should this project fail? Nothing is  
8 100% full-proof.

9 Being the highest sewer operator for \$1,600 for  
10 the city and \$1,600 for the county, what kind of sewer  
11 rate is this project going to produce? More or less?

12 MS. GOVERNOR: Again, I don't feel that I'm the  
13 right person to be answering these questions. They're  
14 more developer questions and they address issues that  
15 should be looked at in an environmental review and  
16 other types of reviews that I will not, as the grant  
17 writer, be getting into. So, my knowledge of those  
18 issues are rather limited. I'm not quite sure who I  
19 should turn this question over to.

20 MAYOR SYLVESTER: This will be answered in the  
21 next public hearing. The developer will do that then.

22 Anybody else on this grant application?

23 ***(There was no response.)***

24 MAYOR SYLVESTER: I'd like to make a motion to  
25 close this part of the Restore New York public hearing.

1 MR. SEBER: I'll second it.

2 MAYOR SYLVESTER: Roll call.

3 *(The roll was called.)*

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7 *(Whereas the proceeding concerning the above entitled*

8 *matter was adjourned at 7:33 p.m.)*

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## CERTIFICATION

I, NANCY STRANG-VANDEBOGART, Notary Public in  
and for the State of New York, hereby CERTIFY that the  
record taped and transcribed by me at the time and  
place noted in the heading hereof is a true and  
accurate transcript of same, to the best of my ability  
and belief.

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NANCY STRANG-VANDEBOGART

Dated April 8, 2009

***Nancy Strang-VanDeBogart***  
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