

**McHenry County Regional Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
December 13, 2007**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Eldredge called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Charlie Eldredge, Chairman; RB Thompson, Ron Bauman, James McNutt, C. Swenson, Frank Harrison, Jeremy Shaw, Nancy Schietzelt, John Jung, Dennis Dreher and Craig Hubert

Commissioners Absent: Jerry Davenport, Jim Coughlin and Tim Culbertson

Staff: SuzAnne Ehardt, Maryanne Wanaski, Matthew Hansel and Audrey Martin

MINUTE APPROVAL

Motion by Ms. Schietzelt seconded by Mr. Swenson to approve the minutes of November 8, 2007. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

DIRECTORS REMARKS

No comments

PRESENTATION

Ms. Wanaski introduced Ms. Denise Collins, Chairman of the McHenry County Historic Preservation Commission. Ms. Collins showed the Commission a PowerPoint presentation titled Integrating Historic Features in a Rapidly Developing County. The presentation focused on integrating well-planned growth along side existing historic and natural features. After the presentation, Ms. Collins asked for any questions or comments.

- Mr. Dreher said the presentation touches on all the critical areas of the focus of the Commission's plan. The question is how we get there. Ms. Collins answered the Commission should look at the inventory and see what they have to work with and see what is left.

Mr. Eldredge asked the time frame was for finishing the rural intensive survey. Ms. Collins said there is no funding at this time to complete the survey. The townships that have been completed are the southeastern portion of the County working to the northwest quadrant. When the money becomes available, the Preservation Commission will be able to continue the survey.

- Ms. Schietzelt noted the presentation provides confirmation of what they have heard from most of the township representatives.
- Mr. Thompson said he would like to see the presentation preserved for future Commissions. Ms. Collins said the presentation may be transferred on to a DVD that would be made available in the future.

It was asked if the presentation can be presented to the County Board. Mr. Eldredge said it would be a good idea to incorporate it in the Commission's presentation to the County Board. Ms. Collins stated the Historic Preservation Commission is available to the Planning Commission for any questions or comments.

Mr. Dreher mentioned the Planning Commission is exploring how to develop verbiage to explain the character of a community. Ms. Collins cited the Starbucks in the Historic Woodstock Square, pointing out how the store fits into the character of the Square.

Mr. Eldredge asked if the Historic Commission has guidelines they recommend to municipalities in terms of the best way to preserve. Ms. Wanaski answered the Secretary of Interior has guidelines but there is nothing at the state or local level.

There was a brief discussion on keeping the preservation of historic structures during remodeling. Codes change and the remodeling can get expensive. Mr. McNutt mentioned in his meetings with the different municipalities, there is a lot of support in the keeping the integrity of the towns.

OLD BUSINESS

LISTSERVE SOFTWARE – Ms. Ehardt reported that Mr. Hansel did some research and found the County would have to engage in a contract for maintenance which would cost \$200 a month; in addition the software would not be supported by the IT department. The purchase of the software plus the \$200 a month would not be feasible from a budgetary standpoint.

Ms. Ehardt noted the Commission has not been working to keep the web page up to date. Information is needed from the subcommittees to keep information current. She added people want to see the map and the Commission's recommendations. Ms. Ehardt recommended the Commission produce more information to keep the webpage interesting and informative. It was noted this "communication issue" will be addressed later in the agenda under new business.

Mr. Eldrege addressed the Commission concerning Commission member Tim Culberston. Mr. Eldrege stated he has not received any communication from Mr.

Culbertson and wants to have the position recognized as vacant and have the Planning and Development Commission fill the position. Ms. Ehardt mentioned she had spoken with Mr. Culbertson and he had said things had changed at his job and therefore, he cannot put in enough time with the Commission. She suggested he send a letter of resignation. Mr. Eldrege noted he has not received the letter. Staff will attempt to contact Mr. Culbertson regarding his formal notification to resign his appointment.

COUNTY BOARD PRESENTATION - Ms. Ehardt said staff is looking forward to getting the subcommittee's outlines and summaries of their presentations. Ms. Wanaski said staff is looking for direction on how the Commission sees the presentation unfolding. Mr. Eldredge said they will have Mr. Jung introduce the Committee chairman who will make the presentation. Mr. Eldredge said an abridged version of Ms. Collin's presentation would make a good introduction. The Committee chairs could then do their presentations and, after a brief summary, they could finish with a question and answer session. Mr. Eldredge said he would like to ask for feedback and commentary from the County Board in order to get a sense if the Commission is going in the right direction or if any changes need to be made.

Ms. Schietzelt pointed out she was not in attendance at the last presentation to the Board and asked about the procedure. Ms. Wanaski said staff will take the text form the Commission, pull out the key points and bind everything together in packet form. The summaries should be completed and sent to staff by the end of December. The goal is to get the packet to the County Board at least 2 weeks before the first Tuesday meeting in February.

Mr. Harrison mentioned there are several aspects where there are contradictions between one subcommittee and another. He stated he doesn't want the County Board to think this is the way the plan is actually going to be. Mr. Jung stated the presentation is just a concept and will inform the Board of the direction the Commission is going. Ms. Ehardt stated the presentation is for informing the County Board where the Commission is in the process. The Commission does not want to imply all these decisions have been made. It is a presentation on what the Commission has been doing since the last time they met with the County Board. Ms. Ehardt said they will include a memo that will make that clear. Ms. Wanaski added that the Board is looking for a description of what the Commission has learned. When staff reviews the information, they can note those discrepancies and give that information back to the Commission.

Ms. Wheeler mentioned she liked Ms. Collins' presentation but the Commission may want to rethink introducing her presentation at the beginning of the County Board presentation. Her concern is about message of local businesses versus the big box stores. She said we need development in the unincorporated areas and

the presentation doesn't explore balancing economic development with natural resources. Mr. Eldredge said he would like to use an abbreviated version of the presentation, the theme being we have these resources, but how do we integrate them with development while facing growth.

NEW BUSINESS

Election of 2008 Regional Planning Commission Chairman -

Motion by Mr. Harrison, seconded by Mr. Shaw to nominate Mr. Eldredge 2008 Regional Commission Chairman. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Harrison, seconded by Mr. McNutt to nominate Mr. Dreher 2008 Vice Chairman. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Harrison, seconded by Mr. Swenson to nominate Mr. McNutt 2008 Treasurer. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Communications Subcommittee: Communication issues-

Mr. Dreher distributed a summary of discussion topics which is attached to these minutes. He mentioned the material on the website is dated and needs fresh content from the subcommittees and the Communication subcommittee. Things he would like to see posted are items of interest more than meeting dates and guest speakers. Mr. Hansel mentioned Northern Public Radio may be willing to broadcast information about the Commission. It would be good to have Mr. Eldredge write a letter for the website focusing on what the Commission has accomplished and what they are going to be dealing with in the upcoming months.

Mr. Dreher suggested a newsletter be distributed. The newsletter is a way to regularly share information with the municipalities and townships. It can also include special topics such as the intergovernmental meetings. The newsletter can be distributed via listserv and regular mail. Local libraries can also serve as repositories. Mr. Dreher noted the challenge will be in getting regular content.

Ms. Wanaski suggested having a February target date for the newsletter because of the County Board presentation. It was noted the newsletter will be on the agenda at the next communication meeting.

Mr. Harrison suggested after the County Board presentation, creating a "growing" map with layers that depict issues/areas of concern or special interest. As decisions are made, the map can accommodate additional layers

Mr. Dreher discussed communication with the County Board. He suggested the idea of presenting individual chapters to the Planning and Development Committee for review and initial feedback. Mr. Dreher said if the subcommittee has a draft chapter, they can take it to the next available full commission meeting so everyone can be acquainted with it before it is forwarded to the Planning and Development Committee. Ms. Wheeler asked if the chapters can incorporate the entire County map for illustration purposes, not just text.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Agriculture

Mr. Bauman reported they had the final meeting with the Ag Conservation Easement Conservation Commission. The Ag Subcommittee has an outline which they will expand on and have ready for the County Board presentation.

Communications

Mr. Dreher reminded everyone to volunteer.

Community Character

Mr. Swenson reported no change since the last meeting.

Economic Development

No report.

Water Resources

Mr. Dreher reported he sent out a copy of the draft report and they are circulating information out to presenters for feedback. One remaining challenge is to get graphics and maps.

Infrastructure

Mr. Swenson reported the head of PACE spoke at the last meeting along with Donna Schaefer of McHenry Township. Ms. Schaefer spoke about what they are doing for the transportation of elderly people.

Intergovernmental Coordination

Mr. McNutt said they are nearly finished with their initial round of meetings with municipalities. They may have to reschedule their next meeting if not enough municipalities show up. He feels the municipalities are glad to be participating and most of them don't seem to think they have a problem with water resources. Mr. McNutt also mentioned he has not been hearing any concern with affordable housing. The City of McHenry is focusing on the new River Walk and the Village of Fox River Grove is working on transportation orientated development.

Open Space & Environmental/Natural Resources

Ms. Schietzelt said she is working on the writing of the draft. The chapter for open space and environmental natural resources falls into 3 sections, natural

resources, open space and green infrastructure. She will have the final first draft ready for the Committee at the next meeting and she will also have the white paper ready. She informed the Commission they do not have any more guests scheduled.

MCCG

Ms. Moeller reported the next meeting will be January 23. She said they are grateful for having the opportunity to speak and are looking forward to the presentations.

Ms. Schietzelt left the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

MEMBERS COMMENTS

Mr. Harrison said he liked Ms. Collin's presentation but was troubled. He stated just because a building is old does not mean it has historic value. He said good things can come from tear downs. He stated that the Commission is planning uses of real estate and the real estate market will take care of the problem. Mr. Harrison said he attended a seminar and the speaker spoke about real estate use and said every use is an "interim use" in the content of history. Whatever the use is now, in 100 years, it will be different. Mr. Harrison said the real estate market is stagnate and this is an opportunity for the Commission to do planning without being undercut by a new development.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Action Items:

- Staff will procure a letter of resignation from Tim Culbertson
- Staff will address the Planning and Development Committee regarding filling the vacancy
- White paper summaries are due to staff by December 31st or before, if possible
- Subcommittee chairs will e-mail reports to the entire Regional Planning Commission
- Staff to draft County Board packet for discussion at the January meeting
- Chairman to do a write-up about meetings with surrounding counties and township officials
- Staff to follow up on a "build-a-map" possibility

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by RB seconded by Mr. Swenson. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.