

**McHenry County Regional Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
November 8, 2007**

Call to Order

Chairman Eldredge called the meeting to order at 6:23 p.m.

Roll Call

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

Commissioners Absent: Jeremy Shaw, Jim Coughlin and Tim Culbertson

Staff: SuzAnne Ehardt, Maryanne Wanaski, Matthew Hansel and Cindy Sassaman

Ken Koehler, Peter Austin, Barb Wheeler, Mary Donner and Mary McCann

Chairman Eldredge introduced himself and thanked everyone for attending. He asked Mr. Koehler if he would like to begin the meeting with opening comments. Ken Koehler welcomed everyone and encouraged them to become involved in the 2030 planning process. He also asked for continued involvement after the adoption of the plan. He stressed the importance for all to work together.

Mr. Eldridge reiterated Mr. Koehler's sentiments noting that the Commission is interested in hearing from everyone. The agenda was modified and township presentations began.

Randy Stowe gave a PowerPoint presentation about the Alden Township Planning Commission and the history of the Alden Township Plan. He explained that their commission was formed in 1995. Meetings were held in 1996 for public input. They currently use the 2010 County Land Use Map. The Alden Township Plan endorses ag districts, recognizes environmental corridors and identifies unique features. The township boasts 17,000 acres of prime farmland. It also has the second highest elevation in the state. The township contains the headwaters of several creeks; the Kishwaukee River also runs through the township. MCCD has been purchasing more acres and working to protect land in the township. He invited everyone to visit the website: www.aldenplan.org. He explained that they used the land first approach. He felt the County's zoning designation of "A-2" is a challenge and impediment to natural resources. The township would like to adopt the Nippersink Creek Watershed Plan, a green infrastructure plan (or a countywide infrastructure plan), encourage conservation

design projects and would like to see McHenry County update their Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance to work seamlessly with the updated land use plan.

Algonquin Township did not have a representative present.

Richmond/Burton Township – Ms. Garza-Valentine appreciated the opportunity to speak tonight and informed the Commission that her township has adopted the County's land use plan.

Chemung Township – Bob Dixon reported that 80% of the township is agricultural. The City of Harvard has some industrial uses at the Arrowhead Industrial Park. Big Foot has some light manufacturing along with an area in Chemung. The township planning commission has not been very active since the City of Harvard annexed property out to Oak Grove Road. He noted there is an 800 acre mining operation one-half mile north of Lawrence which is not scheduled to open until 2008. It will operate for 60-65 years. Most development is along Route 14 and Route 173. He reported the biggest problem is marketing the empty Motorola Plant. Mr. Harrison asked if they were looking to have commercial areas added to the plan map. Mr. Dixon did not report any additional commercial area and said that the industrial park was doing quite well.

Coral Township- Roger Naylor explained that the land use map was created immediately after the township was inundated by developers, and, has been changed twice since 1987. The majority of parcels that are developed are smaller tracts of land (100-200 acres). Mr. Naylor reported they have at least one request per month before the township board. Most of the developments are high-end homes on 1+ acres. As the villages annex property the smaller subdivisions located throughout the township will help influence how other development proceeds. The township board works with developers to get the best product. He reported that his township only has two industrial parcels which were created years ago. He also noted that some of the major intersections are designated as nodes on the plan and show areas for commercial uses. These are currently being revisited to make those areas smaller. He mentioned the Board asked the citizens of the township for input and an advisory board was formed. They have created a pamphlet that is provided to any petitioner wanting to develop land in the township. The pamphlet provides information as to what the citizens of the township would like to see regarding new developments (i.e. architectural standards). Mr. Dreher asked that since the plan shows green space, are there policies to protect "open space". Mr. Naylor explained that Coral Township adopted the Union-Marengo Watershed Plan and has implemented the plan's best management practices recommendations.

Mr. Davenport asked what the effect of so much development will have on the township 10 years down the line. Mr. Naylor explained that tax revenue has increased to almost double and is keeping pace with the township demands. However, there are not enough funds to complete any major projects. He mentioned that older roads are a problem for maintenance. Newer roads have a life span of 25+ years. Mr. Harrison asked how much pressure there is for an interchange at Route 20 and I-90 or if Route 23 was a better location. Mr. Naylor mentioned that Huntley is at their border. They just approved a 44-acre site planned for 20 homes in the \$800,000 range. He also noted that employment areas are crossing over from Hampshire near Getty Road and Route 20.

Dorr Township – Robert Pierce reported that the township does not have a planning commission. Most property in Dorr Township is already incorporated within municipalities.

Dunham Township – Pat Kennedy filled in for Supervisor John Pihl, who apologized for his absence. The strategy for the township's plan is to encourage compact development. The land in Dunham Township is rich, productive land which is very close to the Chicago markets. There are several ag protection districts in the township. Dunham Township is interested in preserving ag land, historic buildings etc. Mr. Davenport asked about development. Ms. Kennedy responded that most of the unincorporated areas of the township consists of rural residences; there is not much commercial. She noted their map is the same as the County's 2010 plan except ag rural has been changed to ag. Their commission would like commercial development to occur within municipal boundaries where municipal services are available.

Grafton Township – No one was present from Grafton.

Greenwood Township – Don Kaiser stated that Greenwood Township has had a land use plan since 1997. He reported the City of Woodstock's limits are moving northward. The Villages of Greenwood, Wonder Lake and Bull Valley are in Greenwood Township and have been actively annexing land. The township objected to the subdivision at the corner of Allendale and Greenwood Road; however the property was annexed by the Village of Greenwood and is currently being developed. He would like to see more clustered developments to protect wetlands and natural wildlife and would like the county to be able to take a more protective stance. Mr. Kaiser reported that he has 49 miles of roads in the township and he replaces a mile or two per year. He explained that township roads last longer with the way they are currently maintained; most roads have been improved/upgraded to asphalt. Mr. Dreher asked if there are policies for protecting natural resources. Mr. Kaiser reported that they are currently updating their plan to address that issue.

Hartland Township - Evert Evertsen explained that his township's situation is similar to Alden Township. He felt that the responsibility is for the state and county to enforce planning issues. Mr. Dreher asked how the situation is similar. Mr. Evertsen mentioned they use the same policies. Mr. Harrison asked Mr. Evertsen to explain how he sees Route 14 in 20 years. Mr. Evertsen thought it would depend upon if the fairgrounds were developed in that area and if Plum Tree Golf Course expanded the subdivision.

Hebron Township – Mr. Kuhs informed the Commission that Hebron Township established their Planning Commission in 1997. Their primary land use is agriculture. The Commission recommends all residential and major development be focused in municipal areas. Hebron is the major town in the township. The township is against high density housing developments. The Planning Commission likes to see 2-3 acre home sites. On existing roads they would like to see 5-10 acre parcels. The Commission encourages slow, managed growth, preservation of open space and wetlands. They will object to large developments to make their voice known. Mr. Harrison asked if the township objects to gravel mining. Mr. Kuhs reported that he worked with Mr. Pease and Bass Material. Both are considered good neighbors and have helped replace some of the roads. Since a rail line runs through the gravel pit, the use of township roads is reduced because the materials are exported via train.

Marengo Township – Bob Levin, Trustee of Marengo Township, said that their Planning Commission has been in existence since 1997. At this time they are close to approving their 2020 Plan. They recently participated in the Union Marengo Watershed Study. The new plan was developed to sustain economic systems; it continues to recognize the Kishwaukee River as an important natural resource; it encourages infill and new development under conservation design; promotes compact, contiguous development, and preserves green space using conservation design. Mr. Harrison asked if the township would object to heavy industrial or industrial near the railroad in the next 20 years. Mr. Levin had some concerns due to possible contamination of the Kishwaukee River (i.e. drainage could be an issue). The new planning map for the township will be available in approximately 3 weeks.

McHenry Township – Donna Schaefer provided a written statement indicating that McHenry Township is not involved in any land use decisions. The township has 8 municipalities. Hence with a 1.5 mile planning jurisdiction, she believes most of the township will be developed according to municipal standards.

Nunda Township – John Heisler reported there are 45,000 residents in the township of which half of the land area is unincorporated. There are 94 miles of township roads. The township's land use plan was adopted in 2003 and an open

space plan was recently adopted in 2007. Mr. Heisler introduced Mr. Ders Anderson who has worked with the township regarding land use issues. Mr. Anderson explained to the Commission that Nunda Township has great diversity; many wetlands, MCCD holdings and 28 natural resource sites that have been identified by the conservation District. The Fox River sustains many of the beautiful wetlands and the township has the largest concentration of conservation areas (500 acres). Ag preservation is very important to the township. The first farm in Nunda Township has been preserved. He noted that even with all that he mentioned, many municipalities are still annexing a great deal of land. Mr. Anderson expressed the township's concerns regarding a road system that is not adequate; state highways need to be expanded. He expressed the need for Routes 176 and 31 to be expanded. Mr. Heisler explained that the City of Crystal Lake does not extend their storm sewers into adjacent roadways, which causes runoff into unincorporated Nunda Township roads. The township would like to limit strip zoning with commercial property along state highways. He explained that the township would prefer to limit residential growth by requiring the builder to prove that water capacity was adequate. The township is concerned with water levels dropping rapidly. Mr. Anderson said they would like to make a strong recommendation that new development not occur unless water availability is proven. There is a need for intergovernmental efforts to determine water availability and how much is required to sustain development that is currently there and the high quality wetlands that exist. Mr. Harrison noted that Nunda is proactive in acquiring open space, and asked if the railroad from Johnsbury will affect the township. Mr. Anderson reported that the railroad is viewed as an asset.

Riley Township – Donna Bernardi, Riley Township Supervisor stated that the township participated in the Marengo-Union Watershed Plan. The township is dense with wetlands, fens and protected areas. They prefer the use of best management practices and conservation design. They are in the process of re-designing their current plan. Coon Creek is important to their township. Ms. Bernardi said that Hampshire is discharging water into the Coon Creek, which in turn floods the township and is now creating new creeks and small streams. Ms. Bernardi's vision is that Hampshire will spill over I-90. She would prefer "office campus" type development in that area. Currently there is gravel mining in the township and many residents are unhappy with this industry. The township would be opposed to any heavy industrial along the tollway.

Seneca Township - Ms. Schuster described Seneca Township as a very quiet, predominantly agricultural area that contains the north and south headwaters of the Kishwaukee River. The township has a very strong agricultural philosophy and rejects the idea that areas be designated as commercial or industrial on a land use map because that creates "artificial zoning" area corridors. Ms. Schuster would like each proposal to be approved/denied on its own merits. The

township has 72 miles of township roads, which are deteriorating due to heavy traffic. She has noted most every township has had concerns with preserving agricultural land and protecting water resources. Mr. Harrison asked what "artificial zoning" means to Ms. Schuster. She explained that once a use is designated on the land use map, zoning is almost guaranteed. Mr. Harrison asked where industrial uses should occur. Ms. Schuster has no objection to that use in the municipal areas where they can be serviced by the sewer and water.

Ms. Schietzelt requested that each township share their number one priority for the 2030 plan.

- Mr. Kaiser asked for waterway, wetland protection with buffers for wetlands around subdivisions.
- Mr. Anderson asked that the plan show the watershed and sub-watersheds and include hydric soils.
- Mr. Kuhs asked for controls for out-of-control growth. Mr. Kuhs felt that municipalities should be required to have their plans in place and present them to the township before annexing property.
- Ms. Valentine-Garza's main priorities were transportation, water and saving secondary roads.
- Mr. Rhea asked that recharge areas be identified. (ALAW provided a copy of the prior Planning Commission's 2020 Land Use Plan to Commission members.)
- Ms. Bernardi noted that because of municipal annexations, some farmers may have to move past the mile and a half municipal boundary.

Mr. Dreher thanked everyone for attending and encouraged everyone to participate in any and all of the subcommittee meetings.

Chairman Eldredge thanked everyone for attending the meeting and for all of their valuable information. He reminded everyone to pay attention to the website for upcoming meetings and information.

The Commission took a short break at 9:10 p.m.

Old Business

Listserv Software – Mr. Hansel reported that he spoke to the Information Technology Department and software is available to fix the listserv problem. The IT Department recommends purchasing the “super deluxe” version so that there is maximum support. The estimated cost of the software is \$1,700 plus monthly fees.

Status on Tim Culbertson – Ms. Ehardt spoke with Mr. Culbertson who is not able to complete his commitment to the Commission due to his new job. Mr. Eldredge will contact him and request a formal letter of resignation. Mr. Jung stated that the County Board would like to fill the vacancy on the Commission. Once the letter of resignation is received Chairman Eldredge will pass it along to the Planning & Development Committee.

New Business

Write-ups outlining Subcommittees' work to date - A suggested outline was provided to Commissioners. Mr. Dreher briefly described the outline and mentioned that everyone should be consistent and provide recommendations and courses of action. Mr. Eldredge noted that the Commission was not yet at a “recommendation stage/findings, etc.” and did not want to include that in the Commission’s 12-month report to the County Board. A second hand-out was provided by Mr. Dreher, which was an initial draft of the Water Resource Subcommittee write up. It was noted that subjects for further research are added as bullet points. Mr. Dreher suggested that working maps be included and resources for reference (list of outside experts that the subcommittee has heard from). Each subcommittee is required to have completed drafts by the December meeting. Mr. Harrison explained that he has lots of contradicting information and in many cases his submission does not have expert opinions. Mr. Eldredge stated that is perfectly acceptable and probably most noteworthy for the County Board to hear. He suggested Mr. Harrison summarize his findings and note where conflict exists.

Mr. Dreher suggested the Commission present bite-sized pieces to the Planning & Development Committee submitting 1-2 chapters per month. Ms. Ehardt was not in agreement with presenting bite-sized information to the Planning & Development Committee. She felt that the County Board was certainly capable of reading initial sections from all of the subcommittees, then reading sections on what LEAM modeling showed and finally recommendations and courses of actions. She noted that anything less would be disjointed and require the Commission to spend valuable time explaining bits and pieces instead of working to establish a unified document.

Subcommittee Reports

Agricultural – Mr. Bauman reported that the subcommittee's last meeting was in October. The subject of discussion was that any recommendation made by the Ag subcommittee can be used in court cases so the subcommittee wants to proceed very carefully with text and recommendations. Mr. Shaw was going to research legislation. The next meeting will be on December 12th with the Ag Conservation Easement and Farmland Protection Commission. This should be the last meeting with presenters.

Communications – Mr. Dreher noted that Kenosha County had a very appealing newsletter. He thought this would be a good idea for the Commission and asked the Commission to begin writing. He again, stated bite-sized pieces would be a nice format much like P&D Committee submittals. He asked subcommittee chairmen to concentrate on writing up their "work-to-date" summaries. Chairman Eldredge stated he did not think it was appropriate to have drafts on the website, especially only sections of the plan. Chairman Eldredge will contact the Chairman of the Planning & Development Committee for direction on how the Committee would like to receive information from subcommittee meetings.

Ms. Wanaski stated that, for the 12-month report to the County Board, staff is looking for:

- summaries of what the Commission has learned; information gathered from all of the subcommittee meetings; and if
- subcommittee chairmen can, include how information gathered at one subcommittee meeting will mesh with the goals established on other subcommittee meetings they attend. She strongly suggested that Commissioners need not spend an extraordinary amount of time on grammar and sentence structure because staff will edit and make the write-ups sound like one voice. The most important thing was getting the write-ups to staff in December.

Jerry Davenport left the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

Community Character – Mr. Swenson reported the Subcommittee met jointly with Infrastructure. Sandy Lewis from the McHenry County Mental Health Board presented information at their last meeting. The next meeting will be with PACE and McHenry Township Supervisor, Donna Schaefer. Ms. Wanaski noted that the McHenry County Historic Preservation Commission has created a slideshow they would like to present to the subcommittee. Mr. Swenson asked that they be put on the next agenda.

Economic Development – Mr. Harrison reported the subcommittee met with Dr. Packard from MCC. He gave insight on current programs and where they would like to be. They also spoke with Chris Manhein, Chairman of McHenry County EDC. This will be their last presenters meeting.

Water Resources - Mr. Dreher reported that subcommittee members have seen parts of draft chapters. The initial draft will be complete in November.

Intergovernmental – Mr. McNutt reported they would be meeting with Crystal Lake, Trout Valley, Cary and Fox River Grove. The meeting will be focused on water and traffic issues. He reminded everyone on the value of other Commissioners attending and hearing from the communities.

Open Space - Ms. Schietzelt reported that they met jointly with Water Resources last month. There was a presentation by the County's GIS Department (Nicole and Garret). The subcommittees found the information very valuable. GIS data will be available via the county website by January 2008. They also met with Cary, Crystal Lake and Huntley park districts (Marengo was not able to attend). Amy Peters from MCCD was also present. She explained green infrastructure and current and proposed trails. The next meeting will be for creating the draft.

MCCG

Ms. Moller announced that there is a meeting next week the same night as the Intergovernmental Subcommittee meeting. This meeting is to discuss how to attract retail development to communities. She noted that MCEDC is regularly represented at the MCCG meetings. There was a roundtable meeting regarding transportation issues, focusing on different areas of transportation, IDOT, Regional Transportation priority and how to set and lobby for funds.

MEMBERS COMMENTS

Ms. Schietzelt reminded everyone that the Water Resources and Open Space meeting will be on the 5th Thursday in November due to the holiday.

Mr. Dreher mentioned what a great opportunity it was to meet with municipalities. He suggested finding time to attend the Intergovernmental Subcommittee meetings.

Mr. Thompson thanked staff for the seamless presentations.

Chairman's Comments

Action Items:

- Mr. Eldredge reminded everyone that at the next meeting written statements are due.
- If there are any changes in meeting dates please inform staff.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Bauman, seconded by Mr. McNutt. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 10:03 p.m.