

MCHENRY COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 14, 2008

Commissioners Present: Chairman Charlie Eldredge, Dennis Dreher, Frank Harrison, Jim McNutt, RB Thompson, Nancy Schietzelt, John Jung, Bill Swenson, Jerry Davenport, Ron Bauman and Mike Rein

Absent: Craig Hubert

Also present; Peter Austin; County Administrator, Pat Kennedy, Kim Willis, Ersel Schuster, Jane Collins, Tom Harding, Conor Brown, Lisa Haderlein, Julie Richardson, Tammy Valentine Garza, Chris Manheim, Pete Klosek, Rowena Wermes, Jim Thorpe, Micheal Grenning, Sherry Ludwig, Robert Ludwig, Robin Pendergrest, Emily Berendt, Steve Fubiel, and Randi Wille

Staff Present: Matthew Hansel, Maryanne Wanaski and Cindy Sassaman

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Eldredge at 6: 08 p.m.

Motion by Ms. Schietzelt, seconded by Mr. Thompson to approve the minutes of July 10, 2008 with the amendment of adding Julie Richardson to the "Also present" list. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Harrison, seconded by Mr. Thompson to approve the minutes of July 31, 2008 minutes. All members present voting aye (Mr. McNutt abstained due to his absence at that meeting). Motion carried.

Public Participation

Jane Collins questioned when subcommittees were abolished. Ms. Schietzelt asked when the last meeting of economic development subcommittee was held. Mr. Harrison explained that the subcommittee met last in February. They met with Darrell to provide him with hand drawn maps and find out if he could put the maps together.

Ms. Wanaski reviewed the open meetings act. Ms. Collins did not agree with Ms. Wanaski's remarks.

Director's Remarks

Ms. Wanaski reported on the review of the draft chapters by the Planning & Development Committee. In the future the Committee would like working drafts without changes. They do not wish to have presentations, and only one draft which has been approved by the Commission should be forwarded for their review. Their concern is that the Commission keep moving and stay on track with the timeline. From the Committee it goes straight to the writers. There is to be no going back and forth with drafts.

Mr. Austin provided contract information on Houseal Lavigne (consultant) to the Commission. Ms. Schietzelt asked about the writer's attendance at meetings. Mr. Austin said they will attend meetings as necessary, but they will not be at all meetings. There was a brief question and answer period.

Ms. Wanaski asked that the Commission consider making a motion to review the economic development chapter and not waste a meeting. She noted that the Board Chairman is concerned the Commission will not meet the deadline set for the 2030 plan.

Ms. Schietzelt spoke of a verbal beating by the planning director and Commissioners back in February when she missed a deadline. She stated that she will bend to the whim of the Commission but had to bring up the past situation.

Mr. Dreher was willing to have the economic development chapter presented, but not make changes to the chapter. He does not want to slow the process down but would be willing to take comments at the next meeting.

Mr. Harrison made a to motion, seconded by Mr. Davenport that the Commission not discuss the economic development chapter at tonight's meeting. All members present voting nay. Motion failed.

Mr. Harrison made a follow up motion, seconded by Mr. Davenport to abandon the 10-day noticing requirement for items to be reviewed by the Commission and review the economic development chapter.

Discussion:

The Chairman felt this was an easy chapter for him because he has some experience in this area, but is more on the side of Ms. Schietzelt and Mr. Dreher. The Chairman felt a few more days for review would be good, even 4 or 5 days would be better. Ms. Schietzelt highly suggested that the 10-day requirement not be dropped. She stated that from the beginning of the Commission, staff urged the Commission to conform to the requirement because the previous process was not open enough and did not include all the groups and the public. Elimination of the 10-day requirement cuts down on opportunity for this to be an open process. She feels there is no reason to do away with the 10-day requirement and there should not be any chapters at this stage that are not completed. Chairman Eldredge asked if the chapter was posted on the website. Ms. Wanaski stated that the chapter was posted on the website. She also noted that this is just the beginning and that comments will be taken after the writers produce a draft and at the end when the document is in a draft form. Mr. Dreher stated that exceptions should not be made. Mr. Davenport said that 48 hours was unfortunate, but 10-days also seems like a long time.

Vote on the motion: Aye: Eldredge, Harrison, McNutt, Thompson, Swenson, Davenport. Nay: Dreher Schietzelt and Bauman.

Mr. Davenport mentioned that the Ag draft was waiting for a few things to be resolved during the review of the economic development chapter.

Mr. Davenport made a motion to wait until the economic development chapter review is completed to forward the Ag draft to the Planning & Development Committee. Mr. Harrison suggested after the ag portion of economic development chapter is reviewed. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

The Commission will wait until both the economic development chapter and the ag chapter have been reviewed by the Commission and then forward to the Planning & Development Committee.

LEAM

The LEAM website was presented to the Commission. Mr. Hansel demonstrated the map usage and where to add comments on the website. LEAM would like the Commission to sign off on the existing land use and base map (reference model) on the website.

New Business – Economic Development Draft Chapter

The Commission reviewed the Economic Development Draft Chapter. Commissioners highlighted areas of concern for discussion at the next meeting. Ms. Schietzelt suggested that the Commission complete their review through page 5 and then start back at the beginning and make comments on the highlighted areas. She made this requested because she only had time to read through page 5.

It was suggested that Mr. Harrison continue with review of the rest of the maps after a short break.

There was a short break from 8:20 to 8:35 p.m.

Mr. Harrison continued explaining the maps.

Public comment

Sherry Ludwig spoke regarding the words “must” and “shall” in the overall document. As a voter and resident of McHenry County she would be sorry if the language is watered down. She stated that there are many statistics in the economic development draft without citations. She requested that citations be provided. She commended Mr. Harrison for explaining the maps tonight.

Jane Collins did not hear where would an airport could be sited. It was noted it would be near Route 23 in the Dunham Township area. She heard a distribution center would be one of the things that would have been attractive in the past. Mr. Davenport stated that it’s a good source of value and revenue but does not create jobs, but the few jobs it does create pay well. Ms. Collins asked if the high price of gas was factored into this scenario. Mr. Davenport stated that it was not. Ms. Collins said she didn’t hear any mention of municipal FPA’s and asked if they have a map of the FPA’s and proposed additions and if the FPA’s were used in part of their philosophy. Mr. Davenport did not think it was important if the

industrial park is incorporated or unincorporated, just as long as it is there. Ms. Collins stated that many people are concerned with groundwater. Were they going to factor into their calculations if there is available groundwater. Ms. Wanaski stated that all issues will be looked at as a whole and the subcommittees are looking at their issues specifically. Ms. Collins asked who gave Mr. Harrison his “marching orders”. Mr. Harrison stated the County Board.

Pat Kennedy commended the subcommittee for numbering the pages. The 10 day item is galling especially since one member of the Commission requested printed drafts only in the packet. Airports are tremendous she agrees and there is one in nearby Rockford. When agriculture moves to the west be aware that Belvidere is rapidly moving east and that agriculture cannot just move west.

Robert Ludwig thanked the Commission for the overlay map. A concern is the elimination of municipalities which could lead to assumptions that will manifest themselves differently than the planning document is projecting. He understands that the County does not have any influence over municipalities, but they should not be neglected.

Conor Brown, Association of Realtors, his comments were to be considered in reading the draft. He spoke about shovel-ready sites and site de-selectors and how they eliminate sites. He would like to know as far as industrial sites, what is in the pipeline and how that incorporates with the vision for the next 25 years. He would also like to examine the type of work force we would like to have in the county. Breaking it down into subcategories would be helpful as to which areas could be targeted for development and what sort of industry would we like in the county. There are other groups that would like to have input and what type of industry do we want to bring in. He would like a goal that the people that live here would work here as well. Technology is another matter and he asked what are we doing in advancement of technology such as fiber optics and getting out in front as a county.

Tom Harding – comments related to the industrial map. Over the past 20 years the county has reputation for high quality residential, industrial and commercial development. We are competing with the counties to the north, south and west so it is import to have sites with zoning or with potential to be zoned. This type of mapping gives support to be competitive and also to be able to pick and choose the type of industry we would like in McHenry County. We also want to recognize plans of all neighbors and that we are competing with other parts of the metro area, but we also want to look out for ourselves and there are currently very few large sites that give the EDC the opportunity to become competitive.

MCCG

No comments.

Member's comments

Mr. Swenson mentioned that some of the businesses have very little effect on groundwater. He stated that looking in Coral Township they were considerate of groundwater. They eliminated industries that would pollute groundwater.

Mr. Bauman provided statistics of importance for agriculture for the Commission to review.

Chairman Eldredge asked the Commission to look at the LEAM website and make comments and also to review the Economic Development draft for the next meeting where they will talk about and growth and development.

There was a short discussion on subdivisions and current lots that are vacant.

Motion by Harrison seconded by Mr.Thompson to adjourn the meeting. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.