

McHenry County Regional Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
October 23, 2008

Commissioners Present: Chairman Charlie Eldredge, Ron Bauman, Jim McNutt, Bill Swenson, Jeremy Shaw, Nancy Schietzelt, Jerry Davenport, Craig Hubert, Mike Rein, RB Thompson and Dennis Dreher

Commissioners Absent: Frank Harrison

Staff Present: Matthew Hansel and Cindy Sassaman

Also Present: Tina Hill, Barbara Wheeler, John Jung, Randy Donley, Ken Koehler, Pete Austin; County Board Members, Patti Nomm, McHenry County Health Department, Cassandra McKinney, Tammy Valentine-Garza, Kim Willis, Pat Kennedy, Jane Collins, Emily Berendt, Carl Martens, Tom Jones, Julie Biel Claussen, Mary Lu Seidel, Tom Riley, Sandy Lewis, Josh Blakemore, Ed Ellinghausen, Dave Bockleman, Jose Rodriguez, Nancy Wagner, Audie Beeson, Robert Ludwig, Sherrie Ludwig and Randi Wille

Public Comments

Tamara Valentine-Garza spoke about statements that were made during a Planning Commission meeting on October 16th. Ms. Valentine-Garza reported that the Township operates within its budget. She asked Dave Bockleman, Richmond Township Highway Commissioner, to explain that they do more than mowing and plowing. They contract through the County for road resurfacing, they maintain roads in addition to road patching in Richmond Township. He noted that they have a budget of \$430,000. Ms. Valentine reiterated that it is important to clear up misunderstandings and that Townships are not a special interest group. She asked that the Commission consider reevaluating their comments and have them corrected on record.

Jane Collins observed that everyone rushed from work and everyone is hungry. She felt that it is disrespectful for the Commission to have their backs to the public as they are trying to make comments that they feel strongly about. It gives the public the impression that they do not count. Townships are the fundamental unit of democracy. They are close to their electors.

Chairman Eldredge stated that he received a communication from Ms. Valentine-Garza requesting to postpone the presentation of the township letter until the November 13th meeting.

Chairman Eldredge reported that he, along with County Board Chairman Ken Koehler and Jerry Davenport, met with Randy Blankenhorn, Executive Director of CMAP and Kermit Weiss the Assistant Executive Director for research and planning to discuss Mr. Davenport's work on population forecasting for the County. He felt the meeting was interesting and productive. This work will be presented at the next meeting. They were informed that CMAP has taken a new approach in coming up with population figures. The Commission will have the opportunity to interact with Mr. Weiss at the next meeting.

Mr. Dreher asked if this information has been shared with the municipalities. Chairman Eldredge said that this work will be put on the website and that they are eager to share the information.

Peter Austin said that he, along with Barb Wheeler, Matthew Hansel and Maryanne Wanaski have been in contact with Ann Moeller to determine how they can get MCCG to reengage. They discussed how they could get their ideas to LEAM and what exactly LEAM will encompass. He anticipated having meetings next week to get MCCG involved.

Presentations

Mary Lou Siedel, Executive Director of CAHMCO and Julie Biel Claussen, Tom Jones, Tom Reilly and Sandy Lewis from the planning group were in attendance for the affordable housing presentation. Ms. Siedel met with the community character subcommittee a few months ago. She presented a PowerPoint that is available on all of their websites. She explained that the definition of affordable housing is when a person spends no more than 30% of their income on housing/rent. It was shared with the Commission that in McHenry County 1 in 17 people live in poverty. She stated that while the population has doubled, the poverty level has tripled. One in three households earns less than \$50,000. 11% of manufacturing jobs have been lost in the County. The housing prices in McHenry County are among the highest in the State. She began talking about the study, trends driving the needs for affordable housing, effects of not being stably housed, the gap in housing for rental units, and the private market affordable housing gaps and number of families. She also explained who is vulnerable without affordable housing such as low wage earners, senior citizens, disabled and mentally disabled citizens. She said that any type of housing could be affordable housing and should be scattered throughout the community and look like everyone else's home. Recommendations from the study were to implement a task force or housing commission and would be the single greatest thing that could result from the survey. Developing a trust fund and explore other funding mechanisms for affordable housing is a priority, as well as, building support for affordable housing and implementation of a comprehensive plan that promotes affordable housing. At this point they are sharing the results of the study and soliciting input. Mr. McNutt asked what was the biggest funding mechanism used. She mentioned that the largest funding mechanism is a trust fund. Chairman Eldredge mentioned that mostly affordable housing would be in or very near the municipalities.

Mr. Shaw left the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Cassandra McKinney, Water Resource Manager of McHenry County introduced herself and Dave Brandt from the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service. Ms. McKinney said they would present the sensitive aquifer recharge area map, explain the process they used to create it and then speak about what the map means. Mr. Brandt gave a brief lesson on soils, groundwater, runoff and recharge areas. He then spoke about infiltration and contamination of groundwater. Because 70% of McHenry County is within 100 feet of an aquifer, this information is very important. Ms. McKinney explained that she along with the McHenry County Groundwater Protection Program Task Force and Technical Committee put the map together. The map defines two areas. Dark green areas show high potential for groundwater contamination and the lighter green area shows which

areas have a moderate potential for groundwater contamination. The map gives the opportunity to show areas that need to be located and protected. Ms. McKinney stated that they would like the maps to be used as a planning tool.

Mr. Brandt also spoke about new ordinances in Wisconsin that call for retro-fitting which allows for stormwater runoff to be put back in to groundwater recharge areas. This type of practice would use best management practices.

Mr. Dreher stated that he would like to have this map replace the existing map in the water resources section. The motion to substitute this map will occur later in New Business.

Tina Hill, County Board member asked everyone to help her celebrate fellow board member, John Jung's birthday. Cake was served.

Carl Martens, from the McHenry County Workforce gave a presentation of the state of the McHenry County workforce. His presentation began with a brief history of information on the previous reports from 2003. He explained that the Commission finished an update to that report and he was here today to present the information to the Commission. The report analyzes the County's workforce demand, workforce supply, and emerging workforce. This collection of data also further compares these demographics of McHenry County to the surrounding areas of the Chicago Metropolitan Region. He explained that the McHenry County labor force participation includes those employed or unemployed, but still looking for work. Information that was presented contained figures going forward to the year 2017. Education rates for the County were very good with only 3% having less than a 9th grade education. He mentioned that the Hispanic rate of education from 9th throughout 12th grade was very high. He felt that a much of the information relates back to the housing presentation the Ms. Siedel spoke about earlier in the meeting. Mr. Martens reported that today's figure for unemployment is approximately 6.3% for the County. He also spoke about two-thirds of the County that leaves McHenry County to go to work on a daily basis (information from the United States Census Bureau). Where are the jobs? Manufacturing is the largest industry in McHenry County which accounts for 1 out of 7 jobs. He also addressed the aging workforce and used the age of 50+ to determine that 30% of the healthcare workforce will be leaving within 15 years. Similar numbers are in the manufacturing industry. These jobs will need to be filled. Projected industry growth in the county are listed respectively: 1) administrative and waste services, 2) healthcare and social assistance, and 3) retail trade, construction, technical and professional services. Projected growth does not mean just new jobs, but also those jobs that will need to be refilled as people retire. Many employers he has spoken to report that many workers applying for jobs cannot perform eighth grade math, convert fractions or read rulers. He also reported the 80% of the jobs available require more than a high school education such as technical school, associate's degree or apprentice program, not necessarily a bachelor's degree. In McHenry County 56% of the population earns less than \$30,000 annually. Mr. Martens stated that the County needs to use the education factor of the population and generate higher level jobs to keep people living in the County working in the County. He ended in saying McHenry County has many assets and that this report could be used in making important decisions by community leaders.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Eldredge announced that the municipal population constraints will be moved to the meeting on November 13, 2008.

The Municipal Townships letter will also be presented at the next meeting on November 13, 2008.

Motion by Ms. Schietzelt, seconded by Mr. Bauman, to substitute the recharge map with the map that was presented tonight the Highly Sensitive Aquifer and Recharge area map in the 2030 water resource section. All present voting aye. Motion carried.

The vision statement from Houseal Lavigne and Associates was provided to the Commissioners for review. Mr. Austin said that this was emailed to him today at 4:00 p.m. and it is still considered a draft. He asked that they read the document as if they are in the year 2030 looking back at what has happened since adoption of the 2030 plan. He did not expect dialogue on the document tonight. The Commission stated that they would like the document emailed to everyone and also placed on the website. Houseal Lavigne and Associates staff will be at the next meeting to accept suggestions from the Commission on the vision statement.

Mr. Dreher asked if MCCG's municipal land use maps would be included with the Commission's for LEAM. He also asked if this item could be added to the next agenda. Mr. Dreher assumed that we collected the municipal land use plans to use with LEAM. Mr. Austin stated that this was what we spoke about at the beginning of the meeting and it would be fair to address at the next meeting.

Community Character subcommittee met last week and came up with bullet points. Mr. Davenport suggested dividing up some work to meet next Thursday at 6:00 p.m. They will assign out the writing of different portions. Mr. Rein was named as chair of the subcommittee.

Ms. Schietzelt asked about the infrastructure subcommittee. This item was dealt with at the last meeting. An extra meeting will be held on November 20, 2008. There will also be an extra December meeting, date to be decided at a later.

Public comments

Kim Willis of McHenry was please to see County Board members and candidates here tonight. In looking at the talent pool and people leaving the county for higher paying jobs, she can see how all things are interconnected. We have a great talent pool that does not stay long enough because they cannot afford the housing here. She enjoyed the map presentation and is happy it was adopted. She cautioned against using best management practices which are not equal to existing natural systems.

Jack Berry is a retired college teacher and has checked many essays. He said that he would give the last two paragraphs of the vision statement an A-. He is on a Northern Illinois Groundwater Water Protect Committee. There was a proposal for a chemical plant near the Kishwaukee River west of Marengo, is there a possibility that a pollutant would reach the deep aquifer? Mr. Dreher explained that they did look at that and the deep aquifer is recharged in the northern and western parts of the county and

further west in Boone County and Wisconsin. However, contamination is contamination whether in the deep aquifer or not. The map reflects the ability of the likelihood of contamination of the aquifer.

Jane Collins said that it was her understanding that the Imagine McHenry County Survey was to be the inspiration for what the Commission's priorities would be for this plan. She asked if there had been a survey for the workforce of McHenry County of the people leaving the county that have said they want their job to be here? Chairman Eldredge stated it is in the raw data of the Imagine McHenry County Study, but he was not sure if it was in the results.

It was asked if Communications Subcommittee had a report. Mr. Dreher mentioned that he has spoken to Houseal Lavigne and Associates and is trying to connect with them regarding communications.

Mr. Davenport hoped everyone had a copy of the population constraints for the next meeting.

Adjournment

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

