

**Joint Meeting
Between the Planning and Development Committee and
The Regional Planning Commission
May 21, 2009**

Planning and Development Committee Members Present: Tina Hill, Chairwoman; Marc Munaretto, Mary Donner, Sue Draffkorn and Ersel Schuster

Planning and Development Committee Members Absent: Randy Donley and Lyn Orphal

Regional Planning Commission Members Present: Charlie Eldredge, Chairman; Dennis Dreher, Jerry Davenport, Frank Harrison, Nancy Schietzelt, RB Thompson, Mike Rein, Ron Bauman, Bill Swenson and Craig Hubert

Regional Planning Commission Members Absent: Jeremy Shaw and Jim McNutt

Staff Present: Dennis Sandquist, Maryanne Wanaski, Faith Taylor, Sean Foley, Ben Wellington and Cindy Sassaman

Also Present: Julie Richards, Pat Kennedy, Kathy Bergan Schmidt, Virginia Peschke, Jim Kennedy; County Board Members; Tom Harding, Colin Brown, Tom Dilsaver, Nick Mathey, Emily Berendt, Kim Willis, Jim Heisler

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by Chairman Hill and Chairman Eldredge.

Chairman Eldredge asked Ms. Hill to assist in running the meeting. Ms. Hill explained that there would be 20 minutes devoted to each chapter's discussion. Introductions were made.

Review and discussion of 2030 Comprehensive Plan - Review began on page 15, Community Character and Housing policies. Mr. Davenport stated that Houseal Lavigne and Associates (HLA) was directed to add policies and he felt that some of the original policies were missing such as redevelopment in the area within the mile and a half of train stations, which would create substantial development along the rail system. He also mentioned the policy of creating a task force on how to make housing more affordable and how to reduce the cost of education without reducing the quality of education. Other members felt this information was in the chapter, but Mr. Davenport did not agree and felt that if it is in the plan it is too vague. Mr. Davenport said that he does not know what modern affordable housing is and that he liked the definition that was originally provided by the Commission. Mr. Davenport asked staff if the subcommittee comments were added back into the draft. Mr. Sandquist explained that the comments were forwarded with the draft to the Planning and Development Committee. The Committee did not forward the comments back to HLA. Ms. Hill stated that the Committee did not review the draft housing policies and instructed staff to include them in the document. Mr. Davenport asked that the policies be included in the document to find out how much support there is for this type of policy. Ms. Hill recollected that they were not going through the plan with this specificity. Mr. Dreher agrees with Mr. Davenport on specificity, if the policy is too vague they are not actionable. The County

should be the leader and needs to bring together municipalities. The watered down version of a policy does not mean anything. The draft was edited substantially as reviewed by the Committee. Ms. Donner stated that in conservation design, the County cannot statutorily require a municipality to do something and she questioned why it would be put in the plan. It can be promoted, but the Committee did not feel this was something to act on. Mr. Munaretto reminded that the letter from MCCG supported this, but it needs to be done carefully. Chairman Eldredge explained that the way to accommodate growth is to increase density even though described in places that the County does not have any control. Mr. Harrison explained within the mile and half radius of municipalities there can be conflicts and there would need to be cooperation to keep consistency. Mr. Dreher commented that throughout this plan we are pushing the County to be proactive, to be leaders and are modeling recommendations on other adopted plans. We are asking the County to be aggressive, within statutory powers, but with a leadership role; to be the model to set an example.

Mike Rein arrived 6:25 p.m.

Mr. Harrison reported that there are subdivisions that exist on paper and not yet built. Perhaps the County would allow developers to comeback in and reconfigure the development to use less land and possibly encourage municipalities to do the same. Mr. Munaretto feels the plan should provide guiding principles. After adoption of the plan, ordinances will need to implement the goals of the plan. Mr. Munaretto was not sure that using power to make the municipalities follow the County's plan was the best way to proceed. Ms. Hill explained that it seemed like an action plan wanted to know how to implement each step. Ms. Schuster said that MCCG suggested an overlay for areas around municipal areas that would show what they have planned. Mr. Davenport suggested one more time that specificity is a good thing to determine if there is broad support. He feels we can learn from this. Ms. Hill said that at this level she does not have a problem. However, she would like to let the public comment. Mr. Bauman would like to know how municipalities feel and receive feedback before changing. Ms. Donner agreed to give back item #24 in the new draft at this level. The Committee requested the plan be more general.

Ag protection goals and objectives - The last objective in the Agriculture Protection Plan and Policies was discussed. Mr. Munaretto and Ms. Donner noted that there was a fair amount of duplication and felt that the last objective in ag protection did not fit in this section. Mr. Bauman reported that the objective removed is probably written into other sections. Mr. Thompson mentioned that either the work "Agriculture" or "Agricultural" should be chosen. Ms. Hill said that the Commission is to decide which word is to be used. Mr. Bauman noted that the maps on page 28 and page 29 and said that one of the maps be deleted and one changed. The RPC also added the prime soils map and would like to the two maps to be adjoining. Ms. Wanaski suggested adding the maps in the chapter where LEAM information is located. Ms. Donner likes overlay maps and it is her opinion that they are easier to read.

Policy statements on page 33 were discussed Mr. Dreher said that the Commission spent a fair amount of time reviewing. He noted that policies #3, #6, #7 and #10 are the guts of this chapter. They are part of the basis to come up with a 2030 land use map. Ms. Schietzelt thought #10 is the new #4 in the public comment draft. Mr. Bauman asked why #13 and #15 were deleted. Ms. Hill asked the Committee why item #3 was deleted. Mr. Munaretto explained that it was a direction not a policy. The County does not have jurisdiction to amend regulatory barriers for #13. Item #15 was changed

because the County cannot vary some of the regulations related to building code issued when dealing with agritourism. It is also in the new plan under #11. Ms. Draffkorn mentioned that #7 was deleted because the County does not have the funding. Ms. Donner felt that at this level she would like item #7 to remain in the plan because if there is a time in the next 20 and if statutes changed then the policy would be appropriate. Mr. Munaretto asked why put something in the plan that the County is not empowered to do.

Ms. Donner made a motion to leave item #7 in for the public meeting. Ms. Wanaski asked everyone to look at new plan under items #6 and #7 which stated the same policy. Motion withdrawn.

Mr. Harrison stated that there are many farms that have LE 80 soils and are not suitable for agricultural protection or farming at all. This is not addressed anywhere in the plan. Perhaps it is an oversight to use LE 80. Mr. Bauman noted that Mr. Shaw previously noted concerns about this issue and possibly it could be a site specific issue. Ms. Hill directed the Commission is to resolve this.

At the request of Mr. Bauman, the RPC will be allowed to reword policy #13.

Greenways Open space - Beginning on page 53, it was decided to keep policy #9 and change the wording from "require" to "encourage". Mr. Munaretto does not see this as a land use principle, it should be in the subdivision ordinance or should be a law. Ms. Hill stated that they did not want the Planning and Development Department to lose this idea, but it did not belong in the land use plan. Mr. Dreher encouraged looking at the current subdivision ordinance and asked how anyone would know to allow this to happen without it being in a plan. The Committee agrees it just does not belong in plan. Mr. Dreher feels it will fall through the cracks if not added to the plan. Mr. Dreher mentioned that other counties are doing this and thought it was actionable. Ms. Schietzelt reported they took things from other counties' plans. Mr. Munaretto explained that the plan is not actionable it is a guiding document. The next step after the plan is approved is an intensive review of the zoning ordinance and subdivision ordinance. That is where the specificity should be located. Mr. Davenport said that as one of the few city planners it is ok to make statements that are meant to be in a zoning ordinance to offer suggestions that are broad. Next, the County will look at the ordinance to make it consistent with the overall policies of the plan. If County Board disagrees at that point and not include it in the ordinance it will be in the plan and give guidance. He does not feel that Ms. Schietzelt's and Mr. Dreher's request is unreasonable. Ms. Hill said that there have been many discussions that if it is put in the plan it should be followed or the County Board members are hypocrites. At this level Ms. Hill is OK with "encourage" per committee for now.

Policy #10 on page 52 - Mr. Dreher feels that actionable is different from required. He mentioned that actionable makes the choice up to you to perform the action which is not required. Chairman Eldredge feels that as amended it is stronger, by making it less specific, it is more encompassing. Ms. Hill mentioned that she will make sure this plan is a plan she can follow.

Policy #13 - Mr. Munaretto explained that the highway improvement plan is a technical plan and the County would like to see this happen, but planning does not work this way. This could be in conflict with regulations. Mr. Dreher disagreed on this topic. He stated that the CMAP forum regarding this topic discussed upfront planning process to recognize environmental constraints and projected impacts

of transportation projects on spin off development and is completely in line with what is happening nationally, regionally and locally. Chairman Eldredge mentioned that most all transportation projects are built with federal funds which would require federal approval.

Policy's #15 & #17 Ms. Hill explained that the Committee was not comfortable having other plans within the plan. For instance, if there are items that the Commission liked about the Chicago Wilderness Green Infrastructure those policies should be written into the plan. Ms. Schietzelt suggested that other county boards have adopted these plans. Mr. Munaretto explained that what other county's do should not affect McHenry County. If there are specific policies from those plans, a list should be created and the Committee reviews them.

Policy #18 - Ms. Hill explained the Committee did not want to create a countywide open space plan. Mr. Munaretto said the County is not empowered to have cash for land. Mr. Hubert reported that other counties are following a plan and he could provide information regarding their plans. Mr. Dreher explained that the County would act as the central government within McHenry County and would provide the framework to get municipalities, townships, park districts to the same table to develop strategies to develop a unified open space. Currently, there is no connectivity at a countywide level. Counties like Boone and Winnebago recently adopted a unified open space and greenway plan. The plans do not target specific parcels; it is the county acting as a leader. The Planning and Development Committee reported that they spent a great deal of time talking about this issue and the conclusion was that they felt that it was not the Commission's place. Mr. Munaretto said that MCCD is empowered to do this. Mr. Dreher explained that open space is a combination of donations, greenways and acquisitions and working with the other entities to develop a plan and to work together. He felt that if no one else was doing this, the County should take on the leadership role. Ms. Hill said that this was too far ahead, the Committee did not want this in the plan, and the Committee needs more education on this item. Ms. Hill offered to put this item on Planning and Development agenda and discuss at another level. Chairman Eldredge thought it applied to policies #26 and #27. Mr. Munaretto stated that policy #26 has far reaching implications, and is his view, not likely to occur any time soon. Ms. Donner said it probably warrants review from other entities that would be working with the County, but only at this level. Mr. Munaretto said that for #26 the County does not have the power to make this happen. He felt that if it is desirable in the State of Illinois, someone should address the legislature and ask them to amend the Counties Code. Ms. Donner made motion to put items #18, 27, 28 and 34 for discussion level for taking on the road to receive feedback. No second on the motion. Motion failed.

Policies #22 and #25 – Ms Hill stated the County will not be in the business of land acquisitions or to create incentives.

Policy #33 – Change word from “Cooperate” to “Encourage”.

Water Resources - It was explained that on Page 57, third objective, it was noted that the information came from the Kane County Plan and was to make the objective more measureable.

Policies, page 72, Mr. Dreher explained that the Committee requested an edited, re-organized version of the water resource policies. This item is to be discussed later in the meeting after copies are provided to everyone.

Economic Development - Pages 95 and 96, Policy #5 - Mr. Davenport said that the traffic on the northwest rail in will increase 4-fold.

Policy #8 - HLA took out of context which makes the statement sound strange. Mr. Harrison explained that the intent was to limit commercial uses in industrial areas to those that support the workforce. Mr. Munaretto said that this becomes an issue of execution and that the land use principle is more related to zoning parks. If they are going to trade agriculture land it should be traded for industrial development and for jobs which is a worthwhile trade in his opinion. A trade for retail is not a good trade. Mr. Munaretto asked if it should say limit industrial park development to service related retail uses. After a brief discussion it was decided the RPC will work on the language of policy #8.

Policy #10 - Mr. Harrison explained that there were two motivations for a reliever airport; economic impact and it an attractive mechanism to entice certain employers into this area. He said it would take at least ten years to plan permit. It could be 30 years from now before a reliever airport could become a reality. Chairman Eldredge felt this is an enormous economic driver. It is not a regional airport but a reliever airport. The wording was changed at HLA. He also noted that the FAA has identified this area as a location for a reliever airport even with Rockford nearby.

Mr. Kennedy, County Board Member, wanted to remind everyone that the County already has the LITH's airport and they have been working on safety improvements for the past five years and have another five year program. Their economic impact is in the millions of dollars and that is a good example. Chairman Eldredge said that the LITH's airport cannot meet the needs because it cannot increase its runways for modern jet aircraft. There are three airports in the Chicago market; Chicago Executive Airport, DuPage and Waukegan. Mr. Munaretto felt the plan should say be open to the possibility. Ms. Hill asked Ms. Peschke and Ms. Schuster why it's not a good idea to have an airport in McHenry County. Ms. Schuster said that it is not a bad idea having an airport, but having gone through the original siting of an airport it was suggested that Rockford, Milwaukee and Chicago were the best areas for this type of airport. She noted that there are many smaller aircraft airports in McHenry County. She suggested utilizing the airports that have been begging for years. She also noted that the public did not want jets. Mr. Kennedy noted that being involved with the LITH Airport, regarding the size of aircraft LITH has modern, corporate jets that hold 16 – 20 passengers and it is really the depth of the runway and weight classification and not necessarily that the runway needs to be longer. The Committee felt this plan should be open to siting or working with existing airports.

Policies #28 & 33 Mr. Harrison explained that the Commission talked about a specialty campus associated with a university or high tech training facility to create an educational opportunity for companies that would come in to McHenry County without having to import labor and workers. Ms. Donner asked how we encourage this type of situation. Mr. Davenport explained that we need to develop a plan as to how to do this. Chairman Eldredge reported that MCC is aggressively expanding in this area and what the Commission is trying to accomplish probably will be done by MCC. He also noted that the area lacks an engineering school to move manufacturing forward. It was thought that possibly an ag partnership would fit better with the character of the County, perhaps a partnership with the University of Illinois or Northern Illinois University. Planning and Development Committee thought

these were similar to Policy #30, Mr. Munaretto stated that the County is not in a position to fulfill the expectation in the policy statement.

Policy #33 will be included, "but not limited to".

Water Resources (cont'd)

Copies of the revised policy statement were provided for everyone to review.

Policy #4 and #10 - It was decided there was no problem with either policy.

Policy #23 was removed by the Committee. Ms. Hill asked Julie Richardson to share her thoughts. Ms. Richardson said that there is nothing wrong with having productive conversations, but municipalities instinctively know that it is better to encourage connectivity with growth. Mr. Hubert noted that the letter from MCGG addressed this point. Ms. Richardson stated that everyone in the mayor's caucus understands.

Policy #30 this is in recognition of reactivating the Stormwater Commission. Ms. Wanaski noted that the Chief Stormwater Engineer already reviews and recertifies municipalities per the Ordinance requirements.

Policy #44 will be moved to Community Character section.

Policy #55- #57 encourages the County to take a leadership role and bring others together. Ms. Wheeler advocated this to remain in the plan on the County Board floor. Ms. Donner asked if it could say why it incorporates this and why there is a reason why the county wants to be a leader. She asked that it be reworded by taking out the word "create" and state who is going to do it and how will it be paid for it. Mr. Dreher noted that there are numerous grants available and there other counties are doing this.

Infrastructure

Policy #2 – Ms. Hill noted the County will not pay for this policy. Mr. Swenson said that concept was that possibly County could assist with the conversion of septic systems. Mr. Munaretto suggested continuing the idea of subarea plans along entire length of the Fox River from Algonquin to McHenry. They could address issues such as infrastructure and other things that are in conflict with other ordinances. It would be similar to the subarea plan that the County created for Wonder Lake. This allowed Wonder Lake to better understand the dynamics of their land use and was able find funding. Mr. Swenson explained the last part of #2 is that the homeowner does not know his septic system is bad until he sells his property. The issue is important, but the largest concern with this issue is the cost. This should be addressed by the Health Code.

Policy #7 – Mr. Harrison mentioned that one of the issues with this policy is the communication service in the County regarding cell phones; wireless technology etc. is vastly different depending where you are located. To accommodate corporate growth something has to be done to improve communication speed and service. Ms. Hill noted that Crystal Lake has gone Wi-Fi and the County is working with NIU to do a broadband countywide. RPC to modify language and change the word to "encourage".

#4 Mr. Thompson noted that the words "bike" and "bikers" should be "bicycle".

Mr. Dreher asked to look at policy #2 where it looks at the Fox River as a unique opportunity for eco-tourism etc. He would like to suggest that they incorporate a recommendation to encourage a subarea plan for the Fox River Corridor. Mr. Munaretto suggested that this plan should support and encourage subarea planning including the Fox River area. Mr. Sandquist suggested that policy #2 should be placed in the land use chapter.

Mr. Sandquist felt that the two groups accomplished their goal this evening of reconciling discrepancies. The RPC will meet on their next regular meeting date of June 11th. Mr. Sandquist said that there will be a new version of the plan to work from at the next meeting.

Ms. Wanaski gave a brief review of the changes made this evening and asked if the changes should be an addendum or would the Committee prefer a revised draft. The Planning and Development Committee would like one clean plan.

Mr. Harrison suggested staff make revisions and present to the RPC and be allowed to proceed if approved by the Commission. The only issue left that would require input would be the policies from the Chicago Wilderness plan from Ms. Schietzelt. Mr. Sandquist asked for consensus from both the Committee and the Commission. The deadline for the revisions will be June 4th. This will allow the Commission to proceed with scheduling public meetings by the end of June.

Mr. Sandquist explained the next step when the public meetings are over are for the RPC and Planning and Development Committee should meet jointly to review public comments and present changes to HLA at one time for efficiency.

Public Comments

Kathy Bergan Schmidt commented about a few places where townships were not mentioned and should be. She asked that the Townships not be ignored. People who live in municipalities tend to forget about the Townships. She is in favor of Mr. Sandquist's comment to have a plan be proactive and she is seeing too much being watered down and taken out of the plan. There will not be anything left to vote on if it is watered down. She mentioned that comments about the plan passing the Board; she will be disagreeing with some decisions being made tonight. The County needs a plan that gives good guiding principles until 2030.

Kim Willis requested that items that were put in so the public can see that they were thought about, but will remove later, be made into a list. She asked that areas of resistance be noted so that the public is aware of which items are on the chopping block.

Ms. Hill asked about creating the list Ms. Willis requested. Mr. Sandquist suggested having a memo noting areas that were contentious.

Tom Harding, Real Estate Broker, feels that the map is the most referenced tool used at ZBA hearings. The text which has been the focus has a much lesser role in ZBA cases, but the mapping process and what influenced the map is what is most important to the ZBA at this time. The map is all green because it encourages development within municipalities. Most cities in McHenry County do not look at these

designations at all. They know they have the ultimate authority. The County does not have any real influence. His concern is that we do not have a site specific map or a plan that reflects where the County will in the future. The County is representing all the people all the time and needs an element of growth to survive. He sees very little in the plan to encourage future growth in the County which is mostly centered around municipalities. An urban growth boundary model has been a failure in most areas. He would like maps that reflect current uses.

Sonja Brook of Harvard thanked all that are volunteers and have put in years of work and it is appreciated. She hopes the Commission will not lose sight of the spirit and vision for the plan. We need leadership, sustainability and different vision of growth and preservation of prime farmland should not be up for grabs. Please listen to the public comment. Do not assume that a municipalities or townships do not want to hear your plan.

Jack Berry from Marengo is a retired college professor. He agreed with Ms. Bergan Schmidt. For a decade Mr. Dreher has been doing this work and he is local and he feels he knows what he is talking about.

Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Draffkorn seconded by Ms. Schuster to adjourn the Planning & Development Committee. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

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