

**McHenry County Regional Planning Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**July 16, 2009**

**Members Present:** Dennis Dreher, Vice-Chairman; Jerry Davenport, Ron Bauman, Frank Harrison, Bill Swenson, Jeremy Shaw, RB Thompson, and Jim McNutt

**Commissioners Absent:** Chairman Charlie Eldredge, Mike Rein, Craig Hubert and Nancy Schietzelt

**Staff Present:** Dennis Sandquist, Maryanne Wanaski, Matt Hansel, Darrell Moore, Sean Foley and Cindy Sassaman

**Also Present:** County Board Members Virginia Peschke, Jim Heisler, Ersel Schuster, Tina Hill, Mary Donner, Anna May Miller, Kathy Bergan Schmidt; County Administrator, Peter Austin; Bob Miller, Tim Dilsaver, Kim Willis, Pat Kennedy, Tom Harding, Conor Brown, John Darger, Howard Doughman, Ed Rode, Sherrie Ludwig, Steve Wenzel, Jack Speer and John Kunzie

Vice Chairman Dreher called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

**Public Comment**

Pat Kennedy quoted Roberts Rules regarding proxy voting. Vice Chairman Dreher reported that this item has been discussed with the State's Attorney's Office and proxy voting will not be allowed.

**Director's Remarks**

Mr. Sandquist noted that the 48 hour required notice for the special meeting was met. As a courtesy, a reminder email was sent out Thursday morning to those that have been actively involved in the process. Because it is a special call meeting, staff has not prepared an agenda or materials specific to the agenda; staff is here to participate and assist the Commission as appropriate. He hoped that with many County Board Members present that an agreement on the process for completion of the plan can be made. Separate from the agenda staff has sent out items related to the public comment from the four public meetings held in late June. This information is also available on the website.

**Presentations**

None

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

*Accepting Proxy Votes* – This item was discussed during public comment. Due to a State's Attorney opinion proxy voting is not allowed.

***Consideration of RPC Policies Regarding Each Chapter –***

Vice Chairman Dreher explained that it was his understanding that the intent of the meeting was to begin to identify areas where policies are inconsistent between chapters or have unresolved conflicts.

Mr. Shaw was asked to clarify the purpose of the meeting. He thanked everyone for attending and for rearranging their schedules to attend. He said that there were issues that the Commission has not had the chance to discuss or resolve before turning over the plan. He felt the Commission lacked clear direction on how to do this. He hoped that after going through the agenda items a list can be made of things that the Commission needs to make decisions on. Mr. Shaw said that he had been in contact with the members that were absent and explained that proxy voting was added to the agenda because they did not want to give anyone the idea they were being disenfranchised. The meeting was not planned around anyone's absence this evening. In fact, Ms. Schietzelt has provided the Commission a list to be included on the Commission's "punch list" of items to be resolved. Mr. Shaw asked the Commission how to accomplish the task of creating a complete plan. He suggested creating a punch list of items to be resolved and that these items be addressed prior to the joint meeting with the Planning and Development Committee.

Mr. Davenport suggested going chapter by chapter and felt that there were not that many issues.

Mr. Bauman said that the Economic Development chapter was not discussed by the Commission. Mr. Davenport disagreed. Vice Chairman Dreher said it was discussed, but there might have been items that were not resolved. It was noted that the biggest issue is the map included in the chapter. Mr. Davenport said that many people are interpreting this exhibit as a land use map.

Mr. McNutt agreed with Mr. Shaw that there is not a complete plan to present to the Committee. There are several issues that need to be resolved.

Ms. Thompson also agreed with Mr. Shaw.

Mr. Swenson agreed with Mr. Shaw and also felt that chapter policies are in conflict with other chapters; a land use map is needed.

Mr. Harrison asked when the Commission would be able to go through and address the text of the document. He likewise believes that there are certain areas of text that are in conflict. Because people use the plan for reasons such as zoning changes or development, the map is out of date within five years, but the text is very meaningful. He noted difficulty in reviewing changes in the plan on an entirely new copy plan. He suggested using highlighting or an indication of what was changed. He does not feel that a one vote sway on any issue is a big enough consensus for approval. He would hope there would be more deliberations on votes of this nature.

Vice Chairman Dreher said that he feels there is not that much to be done. The Commission had agreed to wait for resolution on issues until public comment was received. He noted that staff has done a wonderful job of compiling the comments. He would like to place a heavy reliance on the on the public comment as a framework for moving through and resolving issues.

Mr. Harrison listed all the different groups that the economic development subcommittee met with. He felt that the public input has to be balanced between the input they received at those meeting a year and a half ago.

Mr. Davenport felt that the Commission needs to create a balanced plan. He would like the votes to be 9-2 instead an undecided vote of 5-6. This will make the plan last.

Mr. Shaw agreed that public comment needs to be considered. He reminded the Commission that the bylaws state that their terms expire December 1, 2009. The Commission will be pressured to complete the plan before then.

Mr. Dreher noted that the timeline has the plan out of the Commission's hands before November and asked that the Commission focus on the big picture, inconsistencies and priorities not the nitty gritty. The question is how will this be accomplished that will expeditiously move the Commission through this process and provide the balance everyone wants. He felt that a review chapter by chapter, independently identify issues that are worth focusing on, and then identify a process for working through the issues. This should be done in coordination with the public comments.

Mr. Shaw felt that chapter by chapter is not a good process. He thought the Commission should re-group and create a list of issues. The Commission needs to create a timeline and time is running out.

Mr. Davenport would like Commissioners that are in the middle on certain policies to try to help out. He felt that policies should be handled in one meeting.

Mr. Bauman mentioned that he reviewed many of the comments and 70% of the comments coincide with those views of the Commission. He approximated that 30% of the comments have a different view and not all that much would need to be changed if anything at all.

Vice Chairman Dreher stated that he was not suggesting the Commission take a position on each public comment. He explained the suggested process that uses the documents online with check boxes. Review the comments; check the boxes with areas that need to be discussed. Then when the Commission next meets, they will have the areas identified that need to be addressed. He requested that Mr. Sandquist explain the process.

Mr. Sandquist explained that the comments were arranged by chapter and common themes and how many votes that comment received. He asked that the check boxes be used to indicate if a change in the plan is necessary. He explained that agreement with the comment is not necessary. He requested that the Commission complete the exercise and email their responses back to staff. This will allow the Commission to see which comments justify a change to the plan or at least a possible discussion regarding a possible change and should set the framework for the next meeting.

Mr. Bauman commended staff on the compilation of comments.

Mr. Harrison suggested rewriting certain issues to see if a consensus could be reached on contentious issues.

Vice Chairman Dreher asked if there was a general consensus on using public comments on the spreadsheet as the framework.

Mr. Shaw asked how the integration with the Planning and Development Committee will help solve issues.

Ms. Hill was invited to the table.

Ms. Hill said that she appreciates the Commission's input. If the Commission wishes to proceed without the Committee's input it would be allowed as long as the process moves along. She mentioned that she has a charge from her Committee to get the plan completed. She could understand how the Commission could feel that the Committee previously took a vote without understanding the RPC's position; moved on with corrections/deletions etc. and that maybe that did not sit well with the Commission. She also said that if the Commission would like to take the plan to the last deadline she would approve that. She mentioned that the reason they met with the Commission and tweaked the plan was because time was running out. If the Commission resolves their issues by end of October or early November she would abide with that time schedule.

Mr. Harrison felt he has not ever received any feedback from the Committee. Ms. Hill said that was the reason for the joint meeting. Ms. Hill explained that the bylaws state that the Commission is to take direction from the Planning and Development Committee, not suggestion or opinion. The Committee's job is to get the job done and not to insult the Commission. Ms. Hill suggested canceling the joint portion of the meeting for next week. She cannot say if they would be granted more time for completion of the plan. The state statute reads that the Commission is fact finding. The Commission has done their job. A few conflicts remain, but the Committee would decide the fate of those conflicts. Mr. Harrison preferred that Commission complete the plan was to provide a joint plan.

Mr. Bauman asked if a plan was completed by the end of October, would the Commission have the ability to make changes to the plan. Ms. Hill informed everyone that the RPC would not be able to make changes, the Committee would take over. He liked the idea of working with the Committee so that the Commission could defend issues. That was the purpose of the previous joint meeting.

Mr. Shaw said there would be changes that not everyone likes. That is the reality of a recommending body. The Planning Commission was created to provide a draft plan. It will be changed after it leaves the Planning Commission. That is the Commission's job and it is the Commission's job to walk away after delivery of a plan. No other recommending bodies get a second chance in making changes. These are the realities the Committee will have to abide by; it is not the Commission's job to reconsider. It is not the Commission's job to defend the plan. Mr. Shaw recommends proceeding with the traditional method. Mr. Bauman stated that he does not like having changes made without input. Ms. Hill

explained that the Committee would be consulting the Commission if they felt it necessary and reading the record. That is the process the Committee will follow.

There were several approaches suggested that included meetings with the Planning and Development Committee and only the Planning Commission votes or Planning Commissions meets several times and then consults with the Planning and Development Committee for insight. Ms. Donner suggested the Planning Commission do their work and then when the Committee meets the Commission could attend to answer questions. Ms. Hill stated she would have to consult with her Committee on that option but did not believe it will proceed in that manner.

Ms. Hill mentioned that decisions will be made because her Committee works in a political environment. The Committee will take all issues under advisement.

Motion by Mr. Shaw, seconded by Mr. Davenport for the Commission to approach finishing the plan in the traditional manner; resolve the Commission's issues and do their best to push the plan forward in a timely manner. The motion included forwarding a completed plan to the Planning and Development Committee.

After minimal discussion Mr. Shaw amended his motion to include a deadline of October 31, 2009. His motion was seconded by Mr. Davenport. There was clarification that this was the text and maps by October 31, 2007. This deadline would also include seven (7) hearings during October and then be forwarded to the Planning and Development Committee to make a recommendation to the County Board at the December County Board Meeting.

Mr. McNutt explained that he would be voting against the motion because he would like to work out issues with the Committee prior to handing over the plan.

Vice Chairman Dreher felt that there is no downside to getting input from the Planning and Development Committee and would be a win-win situation. This could make a better plan.

Mr. Davenport felt the only reason for not going along with this plan is that it could result in an endless cycle.

Mr. Swenson asked if this time schedule would mean having to have three meetings per month to accomplish this task and be finished by the end of October. If so, the Commission should be prepared to work whatever necessary.

Mr. Shaw echoed Mr. Harrison's comments and felt the Commission has done their best to draft this document. Political realities should not have anything to do with the plan. The Commission has considered the data, information from experts and resources, not politics. He mentioned that he did not have a problem working with the Planning and Development Committee, but it is not the Commission's job to implement political realities.

Mr. Thompson explained he is on the Woodstock City Council and sees the frustration from Commissioners when the City Council makes changes.

Mr. Sandquist asked for clarification on the public review for the land use map. It should be completed by the Planning Commission by October 31, 2009. October 31, 2009 is the drop-dead date for the text, map, and public meetings.

Vice Chairman Dreher called for a roll call vote: Harrison- aye, Swenson-aye, Thompson-aye, McNutt-no, Baumann-no, Shaw-aye, Davenport-aye, Dreher-no. Motion carried.

**Revised timeline** – Mr. Sandquist said that there would not be any additional revisions to the timeline for the Planning Commission. Additional meetings would be added in November for the Planning and Development Committee. For the Planning Commission, the second Thursday of the month is the regular meeting and the Commission will now add the third and fourth Thursday's of the month. If the Commission makes progress, additional meeting could be canceled.

Ms. Hill reiterated to Mr. Harrison that she does not have a means to give feedback as he requested earlier. Vice Chairman Dreher cordially requested Ms. Hill's attendance at the Planning Commission meetings.

Mr. Harrison asked if there was a problem could it be forwarded to the Committee. Ms. Hill requested that the Commission make a motion and send the issue to the Committee. She reminded the Commission that the Committee will not approve of any other plans within the plan, such as the Chicago Wilderness Plan, etc.

Mr. Harrison asked if the meetings always needed to be on a Thursday. He asked if they could check the week prior to a meeting and could possibly change to Wednesday. He suggested a Saturday meeting for 5 or 6 hours to complete some tasks. Mr. Shaw requested that everyone bring their calendars to the next meeting. Vice Chairman Dreher requested the Commissioners be more committed, efficient and focused in order to come to resolution. Ms. Hill suggested the Commission have timelines to keep things on track.

Mr. Bauman asked for consensus from the Commission on finishing in six meetings. Two meetings would be for policies and the last four would be for the land use map.

**Consideration of mapping policies** – Mr. Davenport said it would be helpful if the Commission had a clear idea of the land classifications system that will be used. Mr. Sandquist has a system that is currently being used, based on previous discussions. This will be mailed out to the Commissioners.

There was discussion regarding adding industrial/institution to the land classifications. Vice Chairman requested a brief preview of where staff is going on the land use maps during the next meeting.

**Public Comments** – This item was previously discussed. Tuesday will be the deadline for RPC members to return their spreadsheet to staff.

**MCCG** – Vice Chairman Dreher spoke with Anna Moeller and she asked if the Commission would review the comments sent to the Commission this spring. Mr. Sandquist reiterated that written comments are not included in the list of comments. Vice Chairman Dreher reminded Commissioners that the letter was circulated to all of the mayors and carries more weight and Ms. Moeller would like the opportunity to explain the comments. Mr. Sandquist suggested that a motion be made to move MCCG up on the agenda during the next meeting if the Commission would like to hear from Ms. Moeller. Mr. Harrison said that other written comments are not given a second chance to come in and explain their comments. Vice Chairman Dreher was not suggesting special preference be given to MCCG, but he reminded that they are our principal planning partners in the County. If there are major concerns with the plan, he for one, would like to hear them. The Commission previously endorsed having MCCG at the table.

**Members Comments** – Mr. Harrison requested that there be no more presentations. He would like to get on with the work at hand. Mr. Swenson thanked County Board members for attending the meeting.

**Chairman's Comments – Summary of Action Items**

- There was consensus regarding the approach for prioritizing policy issues.
- The RPC will complete and independently develop the plan including the future land use map.
- There will be a brief overview of the land use classification at the next meeting.
- Mr. Sandquist will create a timeline with the Commission meeting 3 times per month (being flexible as to the days of the meeting).

**Additional Public Comment**

Kathy Bergan Schmidt commented about the split vote mentioned earlier in the meeting. She would like to know if there is a split vote. She asked the Commissioners to own their vote. She told the members not to be afraid of a split vote on an issue. The vote will determine which items should be evaluated.

Pat Kennedy commented that Mr. Shaw is admirable in moving to meet the issues head on, but was unfortunate that it happened at a special meeting and that all members could not be present. One item of concern is the RPC's plan and she understands that, but it is the citizens' plan more than the RPC or the County Board's plan. There is agreement that the map in the economic development chapter if used in the plan, then it will be used by the zoning board, and at County Board meetings and will ultimately be used in the courts.

Conor Brown mentioned that he submitted a letter to this body and is glad to know that his points were not included in the spreadsheet and that Commissioners take the time to read the written comments. He spoke about public forums and felt that they are the pulse and that anyone could come and give their input. He felt the dot system was unfair. He attended and represented 900 members and did not receive 900 dots. It should not be viewed as a democratic process and he feels it is unfair.

Mary Donner mentioned that it has been 3 years for this process and there have been many changes. She appreciates what has been done and feels it will be a good plan.

Kim Willis spoke in response to the map in the Economic Development Chapter. The map, as it exists, is nothing like the hydric soils map that shows what is actually there. The map on page 97 is speculative in nature and is not appropriate. She attended two of the public meetings and has read 75% of the comments which are overwhelmingly a similar response. The chapters were written with direct engagement from relevant persons and experts for each chapter and topic. The Commission did not directly engage the public until now. She hopes that the public comments would not be dismissed because they did not say what you wanted them to say. This is the peoples' plan and it is the Commission's responsibility to represent the entire County.

Elise Livingston, from the Richmond Township Planning Commission, wanted to reiterate Mr. Brown's comments. The township had polled their members and sent a few people to the meetings. She would like the Commission to keep that in perspective that they are representing more people than attended the meeting. She noted that the public is waiting for the map which is the most important part and reminded the Commission to give themselves enough time to have revisions.

Tom Harding said that it is important to have public input. He felt that in public hearings the only people that attend were from special interest groups. He feels, generally speaking, most of these people have a predetermined notion of where the plan should go. As a realtor he feels his industry uses the map more than any other group.

### **Adjournment**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.