

McHenry County Regional Planning Commission
AGRICULTURE SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
May 23, 2007

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL: The meeting began at 5:10 p.m. Members present: Ron Bauman, Chairman, and Frank Harrison. Members absent: Jeremy Shaw. Staff present: Suzanne Ehardt and Jean Hervert Niemann.

MINUTES: Minutes from March 28, 2007, were approved by consensus.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None

DISCUSSION ITEMS: Chairman Bauman suggested that this meeting be spent gathering ideas for future meetings and listing terms that will need definition in the text of the plan.

The next meeting will be scheduled at the end of June with a tentative date of the 25th. This will be a joint meeting with the Economic Development Subcommittee with the topic of specialty crops and agritourism in the county. Chairman Bauman will coordinate a date with Mary McCann who has a berry farm and has offered to host the meeting. A list of specialty growers was made and Chairman Bauman and Mr. Harrison will make the contacts once a date is confirmed.

Chairman Bauman said that the list of questions about farming from the March 28, 2007, meeting was sent out by the Farm Bureau. After the responses are received, the committee would like to meet again with the Farm Bureau.

Other meetings topics include livestock operations and a meeting with the newly formed county commission that will be working with agricultural preservation and conservation easements.

Several words related to agriculture have common meanings that will need clarification as the 2030 Plan is developed. Many people think of farmland as "open space" or "countryside". Farmland needs to be defined in terms of productivity and separated from the idea that it is "open space". Other definitions needed include LESA, intensive farm use, and prime farmland. The Subcommittee would like to see a percentage breakout of the "LE" portion of the LESA analysis and see a current map of agricultural areas.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:27 p.m.

Approved 9-26-07