

McHenry County Regional Planning Commission
AGRICULTURE SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
September 26, 2007

Call to Order/ Roll Call: The meeting began at 5:15 p.m. Members present: Ron Baumann, Chairman, and Frank Harrison. Member absent: Jeremy Shaw. Staff present: Matt Hansel for the first portion of the meeting and Jean Hervert Niemann.

Minutes: The minutes of April 26, May 23, and June 25, 2007 were approved by consensus.

Public Participation: none

Discussion Items: Mr. Baumann handed out a summary document titled "Agriculture Overview of Conditions and Issues" for the subcommittee and staff to review.

Mr. Baumann asked that the December meeting be planned with the McHenry County Agriculture and Conservation Easement Commission, at the MCACE commission's regularly scheduled meeting time.

Staff presented a handout detailing the LE portion of the LESA system for soils with a 76 or higher score. A computer analysis calculated that approximately 20% of the acreage associated with these soils is no longer in an agricultural use. Mr. Baumann asked if staff could create a map of the 76 and greater LE scores in 5 point increments for the next meeting. The LE portion of LESA was thought to be less likely to be challenged in court than the SA part.

Mr. Baumann estimated that over 100,000 acres of the county could be identified as agriculture for the 2030 plan. He thought that DeKalb, Boone, and Kane Counties each had methods of preserving farmlands that should be considered by McHenry County. Mr. Harrison recommended that a separate zoning be considered for specialty agricultural growers.

The McHenry County Conservation District has, in the process of acquiring natural areas, bought parcels that included farmland. Mr. Baumann suggested that the county work with MCCD to help them preserve their farmland.

A set of agricultural definitions compiled by staff was handed out for informational purposes. The meeting ended at 6:55 p.m.

Approved 5-8-08