
COUNTY OF ALLEGAN

PLANNING COMMISSION



KELLE TOBOLIC, Chairperson
3255 – 122nd Avenue, Ste 103
County Services Building
Allegan, Michigan 49010-1350
email: kelle623@sbcglobal.net

MINUTES

Meeting Date: February 8, 2010
Meeting Time: 1:30 P.M.
Location: County Services Complex at Dumont Lake
Human Services Building, Karl Zimmerman Room

1. Call to Order.

The regular monthly meeting of the Allegan County Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman, Kelle Tobolic at 1:29 P.M.

2. Roll Call.

Members present: Kelle Tobolic, Ken Pardee, Marv Voss, Jackie DeZwaan, Tom Vogeler, John Bouterse, Dawn Buist, Terry Burns, Fritz Spreitzer, and Gale Dugan

Absent: Sam Dykstra

Also present were: Ronda Foreman, Recording Secretary; Valdis Kalnins, LIS Director; Bill Hinz, Environmental Health Director.

3. Approval of Agenda.

A motion was made by Buist, seconded by Pardee to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 11, 2010.

A motion was made by Voss, seconded by Bouterse to approve the January 11, 2010 minutes as presented and emailed. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Approval of Expenditures as of February 3, 2010.

Voss stated there is nothing to report at this time except for \$3.50 that appears as a per diem expenditure; the sum was carried over from 2009 due to the pay period and timing of when the voucher was entered. The Finance Department will adjust the amount back into the 2009 budget. A motion was made by Voss, seconded by Dykstra to approve the expenditures as of February 3, 2010. The motion carried unanimously.

6. Public Participation.

None.

7. Discussion and Presentation Items:

None.

8. Commission Business:

The election of Gale Dugan was approved by the Allegan County Board of Commissioners on January 14, 2010; term to expire on June 8, 2012. Dugan is a resident of Otsego and will represent Otsego Township and the City of Otsego for the Allegan County Planning Commission.

As an elected official, Burns swore Gale Dugan in before the meeting as the newest member of the Allegan County Planning Commission. Tobolic welcomed Dugan and thanked him for his service.

9. Continuing Education:

Citizen Planner: Michigan Association of Planning 2010: Planning and Zoning Essentials

- Non-member: \$115 Full Program; \$105 Planning Commission Essentials; \$105 Zoning Board of Appeal Essentials (discount available for MAP/APA members)
- Registration after February 17, 2010: Add \$20
- Lansing, MI on March 2, 2010

DeZwaan stated she would like to attend the workshop Planning Commission Essentials in Lansing on March 2, 2010. Tobolic asked if anyone else is interested in attending one of the offered courses. A motion was made by Dugan, seconded by Buist to approve DeZwaan’s registration fees and mileage to attend the Citizen Planner: Planning Commission Essentials workshop in Lansing on March 2, 2010. With DeZwaan abstaining from the vote, the motion passed by everyone present.

10. Communications:

None.

11. Final Actions Received:

None.

12. Received for Notice:

None.

13. Received for Information:

a. M-40/M-89 Corridor Committee Meeting – Voss

Although Voss was unable to attend the M-40/M-89 January meeting due to surgery, he was able to report the problem with the pavement in Otsego will be repaired; they will remove the top 1” of asphalt and replace with 2” sometime later this year. A second project to repave between 28th Street in Allegan down M-89 to Otsego is also planned for 2010.

b. Robert Toland Consulting, Planning Consultant Letter

14. Received for Review:

None.

15. City of Plainwell Draft Master Plan Update – Vogeler

The Plainwell City Council has approved the review process of the draft master plan prepared by the local planning commission. Upon receipt of the proposed draft master plan on December 15, 2009, the statutory 63-day review period has commenced and all comments or concerns should be forwarded to the township within that period.

After reviewing the City of Plainwell’s Draft Master Plan, Vogeler stated they did an excellent job putting the update together. Foreman was asked to mail a letter to the City in compliance with the statutory 63-day review period.

16. City of Allegan Draft Master Plan Update – Spreitzer

The Allegan City Council has approved the review process of the draft master plan prepared by the local planning commission. Upon receipt of the proposed draft master plan on December 28, 2009, the statutory 63-day review period has commenced and all comments or concerns should be forwarded to the township within that period.

Spreitzer stated the City of Allegan is in the process of updating their master plan and are not quite finished; we should be receiving the draft copy very soon.

17. Martin Township Ordinance Amendments – Vogeler

a. The proposed text amendment would amend Article XVIII of the zoning ordinance regarding Zoning Board of Appeals to add up to two alternate members and other amendments to comply with the Zoning Enabling Act; Article XIX to provide for notification requirements concerning four or fewer dwelling units; and Article XXI regarding amendment procedures. The ordinance amendment was approved by the Township Zoning Board on December 2, 2009.

Reasons for action taken: The amendments were necessary in order to comply with PA12 of 2008 which further amended PA110 of 2006 (Zoning Enabling Act). The amendments were fairly minor and addressed Zoning Board of Appeals membership, public notification requirements, and amendment procedures.

Ayes 6; Nays 0; Absent 1; Abstaining 0

b. The proposed text amendment would amend Section 4.33, Article IV, Wind Energy Systems. The amendment will establish regulations for the installation and operation of Wind Energy Systems (WES). Provides for definition, heights, zoning districts, permitting, setbacks, blade arc, lighting as required by FAA, plans to decommission and remove, sound limits, shadow flicker. The ordinance amendment was approved by the Township Zoning Board on December 2, 2009.

Reasons for action taken: With the introduction of alternative energy systems in Michigan, a Wind Energy Systems Ordinance was necessary. A planner who provided model language to adopt was consulted.

Ayes 6; Nays 0; Absent 1; Abstaining 0

c. The proposed text amendment would amend Section 4.34, Article IV, MET Tower Ordinance to address the placement of said towers and requirements for the site plan review. The ordinance amendment was approved by the Township Zoning Board on December 2, 2009.

Reasons for action taken: The MET tower (meteorological tower) is needed before a wind farm is established. The MET tower measures the wind speeds over time to see if establishing a wind farm is practical. With the advent of wind farms in Michigan, this ordinance was important to be ahead of the curve.

Ayes 6; Nays 0; Absent 1; Abstaining 0

Vogeler reviewed and discussed each zoning ordinance amendment from Martin Township where they have addressed: a.) the Township's compliance with PA12 of 2008 Zoning Enabling Act; b.) the establishment of a Wind Energy System Ordinance; and c.) amended the MET Tower Ordinance regarding tower placement and certain requirements to establish wind farms within the Township. A motion was made by Vogeler, seconded by Voss to approve text amendments a., b., and c. as recommended by the Martin Township Zoning Board. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Ayes 10; Nays 0; Absent 1; Abstaining 0

Standing Committee Reports:

18. L.I.S. – Valdis Kalnins, Director

Kalnins passed out the new Allegan County road maps that LIS updated and had printed. Next, Kalnins reported that the processing of the new aerial imagery into township-wide mosaics had been completed and

would be shipped by the vendor tomorrow, with LIS receiving them by the end of the week. They are still working on processing a single countywide image, which is a time consuming eight-day process. Once complete, LIS will receive a DVD containing the data, probably in the next week or two.

Lastly, a call was received from the University of Michigan Flint, who obtained a grant from the Michigan Department of Agriculture to map out PA116 land and Black River Watershed for watershed protection purposes. Working with other agencies the scope was expanded to cover all of Allegan and Van Buren Counties. LIS provided a copy of the county's parcel layer to U of M so the mapping would be more accurate since farmland agreements do not necessarily encompass an entire parcel. The project has been completed and LIS now has an accurate and current PA 116 lands layer without expending any direct funds. LIS is now investigating opportunities to maintain the layer and distribute it to local units of government. After a quick tally, Kalnins stated 80 square miles in Allegan County are currently under PA116, which is equivalent to 9.5 % of the County.

19. County Master Plan Committee – Vogeler

Vogeler stated the Committee is coming close to being done with the master plan update and a draft version of the text will be completed and distributed to the Planning Commission at the March Meeting. Commissioners will then have the opportunity to review the draft and prioritize approximately 40 potential planning-related projects. Before the April meeting, Vogeler will ask that everyone respond to Foreman with their top five priority items.

Responding to some discussion about project prioritization, Kalnins explained that the planning-related action items in the master plan are quite different from the Board priorities since the Planning Commission's intent should be to suggest projects that are of global benefit to the development of the county as a whole, while the Board's priorities were more focused on county government. In a few cases, they were one and the same, but Kalnins suggested that this discussion should be held after everyone had received the list of projects.

In terms of process, there are still a few steps to go through before the master plan is done. Once the final plan is reviewed and approved by the PC, it will go to the BOC for their review and approval. After the BOC gives their approval, they will authorize the PC to hold a public meeting and distribute the draft plan to local units of government for their review and comment. From there, it goes back to the BOC for adoption.

20. Work Program Committee – Pardee

Allegan County Planning Commission Bylaws Update

Draft copies of the bylaws are included in everyone's agenda packets for their review; Bouterse stated the changes discussed during last month's meeting have been incorporated. He asked if anyone has any comments or concerns they would like to address at this time. Spreitzer drew everyone's attention to Article II, Section I, where he feels the two items listed should be reversed. He stated the PC's main purpose at this point is operating to the extent of the law under PA33, which is the second item listed under this section. The first item listed regarding the PC's 'general purpose' is not mandated by the BOC and should come after the verbiage regarding PA33. Once the bylaws are sent to the BOC, Spreitzer will inform the Chairman, Casey Jones, the mandated goals when the Planning Commission was created are different than what we are doing; historically we are not working under why we were created.

A motion was made by Pardee, seconded by Burns to approve the bylaws as written and send to the Allegan County Board of Commissioners for their approval. The motion carried by everyone present.

21. Dept. of Public Works – Rininger

None.

22. Parks Commission / Recreation & Tourism – Tobolic, Spreitzer

Tobolic stated the Parks Commission had a joint meeting with the Tourist Council on February 2, 2010, and tentative plans were made for the grand opening ceremonies for New Richmond Bridge Park and the equestrian trails this spring. A ribbon cutting ceremony for New Richmond Bridge Park has been scheduled for 10am on Saturday, June 5, 2010 with guest speakers and a bridge turning. The equestrian trails ribbon cutting ceremony is planned for 2pm on Friday, May 21, 2010 at Silver Creek County Park; a lot of media coverage is anticipated. Also discussed during the joint meeting was the Tourist Council's budget that went from \$18,000 to \$2900. The group is looking for ways to generate revenue, including the possibility of becoming a chamber of commerce so they can qualify to collect a bed tax from the larger hotels. This year they are all set since advertisements and distribution of the guide are paid a year in advance. Next year, the TC will not have the funds to distribute the Allegan County Visitor's Guide or place advertisements to promote the County.

23. Region 8 – Burns

Burns attended the Region 8 meeting a couple of weeks ago at the Ottawa County Fillmore Complex. One of the grants that were issued was \$4.5 million to the City of Allegan for their sewer system. Region 8 is also having issues with their dues and they are going to try to do something about the disparity between areas. The next meeting will be in a couple of months.

24. Resource Recovery – Hinz

Hinz reports Trowbridge Township will be participating in the County recycling program due to the efforts of Ben Williams, the Recycling Coordinator for Allegan County.

25. Board of Commissioners – Burns, Spreitzer

Burns stated last Friday the County's meth diversion program received funding of \$70,000 through the Lakeshore Coordinating Council; the funds come from liquor taxes collected in the County and can be used for drug addiction treatment or prevention.

Secondly, the Health Department has implemented a free prescription drug discount card (up to 75% savings), thanks to Bill Hinz, Environmental Health Director, and Rashmi Travis, Health Officer. At no cost to the County, the card can be used at participating pharmacies and was developed to help uninsured and underinsured residents. There are no restrictions or income/age limitations; those with prescription coverage can use the program for non-covered prescriptions. Burns suggests everyone grab a stack of cards to pass around your townships and cities to help get the word out; a card can also be downloaded and printed right off the County website.

Spreitzer reported the BOC has selected an architect firm to design the new sheriff's office. Also, the County has selected a candidate who will be offered the position to head up the Mental Health Department. As part of the hiring process, the State must approve the applicant before he or she can be offered the position.

26. Education – Buist

Buist stated State Representative Patty Birkholz is sponsoring a bill to take funds away from schools that spend more than 28% on administrative expenditures that include busing, speech therapy, social work, librarian, athletics, transportation, and more. Schools that are under 1000 students would be excluded from the bill.

27. Discussion and Presentation Items:

Allegan Township Planning Commission Request – Countywide Wind Energy Ordinance
Spreitzer stated he has brought the issue up to several people regarding the Planning Commission developing a countywide wind energy ordinance. Those he spoke to do not want to be involved in spending funds on an attorney to come up with a model ordinance that townships may or may not want to use. He just got

information today from Monterey Township that they found a model ordinance on the net that didn't cost them or us anything. Spreitzer reports it was suggested that when we find these types of ordinances on certain topics, a file should be started where they can be categorized and referred back to when local units question what their surrounding communities are doing. He attended Michigan Township Association's wind energy informational program last Thursday at Hopkins Middle School where over 400 people were in attendance. Spreitzer stated MTA is a valuable resource for information on this issue. He learned of a recent report put out by the State of Michigan that states Allegan County is in the wind energy belt; we have been designated as being one of the best in the State.

28. Public Participation:

None.

29. Round Table:

Vogeler clarified that Pardee only temporarily took over the review of PA116 Farmland Agreement applications received by the Planning Commission until a replacement could be found. He informed the PC that Dugan is knowledgeable with PA116s; Tobolic asked Dugan if he would be willing to review all of the applications the PC receives from throughout the County, to which he agreed. Foreman stated she would forward PA116 applications to both Dugan and the area's PC representative.

Buist thanked Dugan for his participation on the Allegan County Planning Commission.

Bouterse reported he attended the Boy Scout Klondike Derby at Silver Creek County Park over the weekend; he stated it was a packed house and was enjoyed by all.

Dugan thanked the Planning Commission for having him as a member.

Tobolic thanked Dugan again for his service.

30. Adjournment:

A motion was made by Dugan, seconded by Vogeler to adjourn the meeting at 2:41 P.M. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

The next regular meeting of the Allegan County Planning Commission will be held on Monday, March 8, 2010 at 1:30 P.M., in the Human Services Building, County Services Complex, 3255 – 122nd Avenue, Allegan, Michigan.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ronda Foreman, Recording Secretary for the Allegan County Planning Commission.