
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: August 9, 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 Chairperson Kelle Tobolic at 1:31 P.M.

2. Roll Call.

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

Absent: Fritz Spreitzer

Also present were: Ronda Foreman, Recording Secretary; Valdis Kalnins, LIS Director; Bill Hinz, Environmental Health Director; Kevin Ricco, County Development Director; Rob Sarro, Allegan County Administrator; Michael Flynn, Byce Consulting Engineers; Juliana Garner; Byce Consulting Engineers; Rachel Hughes-Nilsson, OCBA Landscape Architecture; and Mark Van Allen; RQAW.

3. Approval of Agenda.

Tobolic requested to move Item 22. Parks Commission/Recreation & Tourism/County Development to be heard under Item 7. Discussion and Presentation Items: c. A motion was made by Buist, seconded by Vogeler to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried by everyone present.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes from July 12, 2010.

A motion was made by Vogeler, seconded by Dugan to approve the July 12, 2010 minutes as presented and emailed. The motion carried by everyone present.

5. Approval of Expenditures as of August 4, 2010.

Voss stated the only item appearing on this month's expenditure report was a remaining 2nd quarter per diem amount of \$43. A motion was made by Voss, seconded by Pardee to approve the expenditures as of August 4, 2010. The motion carried by everyone present.

6. Public Participation.

None.

7. Discussion and Presentation Items:

a. County Administrator's Update – Sarro

Sarro reported he has been working with Tobolic and they have been reviewing the Planning Commission bylaws. Other than some format issues, the main area of focus is getting an actual plan or process in place of how infrastructure reviews would be handled. Currently, the bylaws take the language right from the act which can be somewhat confusing. They have been discussing how those plans are supposed to be reviewed

against the actual master plan and what information needs to be put into the master plan to make that successful. They have started to narrow that down and will be working together over the next month to get that defined. From Sarro's perspective, once this area is defined, the bylaws can be presented to the Board for their review. A follow-up meeting to the last joint session with the Board is scheduled for Thursday, October 7, 2010 and he hopes to have everything figured out by that time.

b. Allegan County Jail Presentation – Byce/RQAW

Sarro introduced the representatives from both the architectural and engineering firms who are in attendance to update the Commission on the jail project; Juliana Garner from Byce & Associates and Mark Van Allen from RQAW. Also with them are Michael Flynn from Byce & Associates and Rachel Hughes-Nilsson with OCBA Landscape Architecture. Van Allen began the presentation by reviewing the design schematics of both the proposed jail and courthouse, and the different options that were considered.

In terms of where the project is in the process, initially the design charette was held in March and was subsequently approved by the Board to proceed on April 8th. Next came a review of the project at the schematic design level and the firms will be returning next week on August 19th for a preliminary meeting with the Board to present a more detailed design. Sarro stated we are in the preconstruction planning phase; continued discussions will include ways to further cut the cost of construction and funding options are still being explored. Last week, the millage asking for the full debt amount did not pass which would have saved the County interest money. Now, the County may have another millage request asking for the exact operating cost for the jail. Sarro stated it is important to clear up a misperception that it will cost more to operate the new jail than it does the old facility when in fact, it will be considerably less. He encouraged everyone to attend the August 19, 2010 meeting.

c. Parks Commission / Recreation & Tourism / County Development – Ricco

Ricco stated he plans to be a regular at the Planning Commission meetings to give updates on his areas. Parks are beginning to wind down their season and moving into fall. Earlier this year there were two ribbon-cutting ceremonies. The first was for the grand opening of 60 miles of equestrian trails located in the State Game Area and surround the three County campgrounds of Silver Creek, Ely Lake, and Pine Point. The second ceremony was to celebrate the opening of the County's newest park, New Richmond Bridge Park, which has been in the making for several years.

In regards to the Tourist Council, most of their 2010 budget was eliminated with last year's cuts. At that time they agreed to continue to meet without paid per diems and have been working to come up with creative ways to market the County's tourism and recreational activities without any backing. One successful marketing tool has been the annual visitor's guide which is subsidized by paid advertisements. Currently the group is putting together their fifth guide and is still trying to get funding for its distribution in 2011.

Lastly, Ricco reported that back in March the Board of Commissioners approved our strategic economic development plan that we have been working on for the last couple of years with McKenna Associates. Some modifications were made to the plan to make it easier to implement and they are now into the next phase.

One of the items associated with the plan is a recommendation to create an Economic Development Commission. Even though the structure of the group is outlined in the McKenna plan, the state statute allows for three to thirty members. Now they are trying to come up with a way to structure that committee, not only from the number of members but also what areas are represented. Ricco stated that after going over the information with Sarro and Tobolic, there may be an opportunity to make an advisory committee from this body and over the next six to eight months, come up with a recommendation that can be taken to the BOC of how the Economic Development Commission would be structured. Over the next couple of months, Ricco would need a couple of PC members to champion the advisory committee. A motion was made by Dugan,

seconded by Buist to add the item for discussion on the September 13, 2010 agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Commission Business:

None.

9. Continuing Education:

None.

10. Communications:

None.

11. Final Actions Received:

Laketown Township enacted the request to change zoning from AG to I-1 for the south half of Parcel Number 03-11-031-001-00. Final action approved by the Township Board on July 14, 2010.

Ayes 5; Nays 0; Absent 0; Abstaining 0

12. Received for Notice:

None.

13. Received for Information:

State of Michigan – Department of Agriculture

Landowners who have completed contracts with the State of Michigan under the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act of 1974.

14. Received for Review:

None.

15. Martin Township Ordinance Amendment – Vogeler

The proposed text amendment would make changes to Section 4.27 of the zoning ordinance that regulates the removal and processing of top soil, sand, gravel, or other such minerals or earth minerals. These amendments will allow AG districts to excavate on their own property without having to obtain a Special Exception Use Permit. The proposed language clarifies the zoning districts that do not need permits (AG, R-1 and I-1). The qualifying conditions of constructing a building or pond was removed. AG districts can move earth minerals from one parcel to another. The request was approved by the Local Planning Commission on July 20, 2010.

Reasons for action taken:

- The Township Board had requested this change after conflict arose between gravel pit operators and AG district owners. These changes address some long standing issues which have caused dispute and recognizes the farmer's interest in using his land for AG purposes.

Ayes 6; Nays 0; Absent 1; Abstaining 0

Vogeler stated the township wants to make changes to the ordinance that regulates the removal and processing of top soil and all other earth minerals, and what will be allowed within certain zoning districts. A motion was made by Vogeler, seconded by Pardee to approve the text amendment as recommended by the Local Planning Commission. The motion passed by everyone present.

Ayes 10; Nays 0; Absent 1; Abstaining 0

16. Laketown Township Rezoning Request – Burns

Change zoning from R-1 Rural Estate to R-2 Low Density Residential for Parcel Number 03-11-034-043-00. The request was approved by the Local Planning Commission on July 7, 2010.

Reasons for action taken:

- The proposed zoning complies with the Local Unit Master Plan.
- The proposed zoning is consistent with land use in the area.
- The change would make entire parcel in the same zoning district.

Ayes 5; Nays 0; Absent 0; Abstaining 0

Burns stated the proposed rezoning request is to combine properties. A motion was made by Burns, seconded by Vogeler to approve the rezoning request as recommended by the Local Planning Commission. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

Ayes 10; Nays 0; Absent 1; Abstaining 0

17. Heath Township Rezoning Request – Ramey

Change zoning from R-2 Residential to C-1 Commercial for Parcel Number 03-09-006-119-10. The request was approved by the Local Planning Commission on May 25, 2010.

Reasons for action taken:

- The proposed zoning complies with the Local Unit Master Plan.
- The PC received a document showing approval by the Commission for C-1 Zoning in 1986. This document shows a legal description assumed to include the parcel in question.
- After researching Township minutes from 1986 when the property was to have been rezoned, nothing was found to indicate the change had been made.
- The PC recommends the zoning be changed as there has been a business there since 1986 and complies with the zoning map.

Ayes 5; Nays 0; Absent 0; Abstaining 0

Ramey stated the proposed request was thought to have already been rezoned years ago, although nothing could be found in the township's records to indicate the change had ever been made. A motion was made by Ramey, seconded by Buist to approve the rezoning request as recommended by the Local Planning Commission. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

Ayes 10; Nays 0; Absent 1; Abstaining 0

Standing Committee Reports:

18. L.I.S. – Valdis Kalnins, Director

Kalnins reported although Allegan County has not been affected, the DNRE used information from the LIS Department for the water levels in Lake Allegan.

19. County Master Plan Committee – Vogeler

Vogeler spoke to Casey Jones, Board of Commissioners Chairman, regarding the Allegan County draft master plan; the BOC have not been able to discuss the draft as of yet but may be able to sometime in September.

Kalnins received only two comments from the BOC regarding a request for input on the draft master plan; County Administrator Rob Sarro also provided some suggestions. Using the overhead projector Kalnins displayed a summary of the responses for the PC to review; Commissioner DeYoung proposed waiting until the new census information is available for insertion before approving the MP. Kalnins stated the plan moving forward was to update certain chapters annually and the one containing the census information would be amended next year. He recommends the MP be approved in regards to that issue. After some discussion, other minor amendments were made to the plan.

20. Work Program Committee – Pardee

Pardee stated if the committee members are able, he would like to meet today following the meeting.

21. Dept. of Public Works – Rininger

Burns stated there is a hearing on August 23rd for the Clearbrook Golf drain in Saugatuck.

22. Parks Commission / Recreation & Tourism / County Development – Ricco

This discussion was moved up on the agenda to be heard under Item 7c.

23. Region 8 – Burns

None.

24. Resource Recovery – Hinz

Hinz stated the DNRE and Allegan County Emergency Management requested Consumers Energy lower the water level in Lake Allegan in support of the cleanup efforts of the oil spill that occurred upstream on the Kalamazoo River. Fortunately, the oil has not reached Allegan County or Lake Allegan at this time.

25. Board of Commissioners – Burns, Spreitzer

None.

26. Education – Buist

Buist stated the Michigan Association of School Boards is trying to educate the public of why the schools are having funding problems.

27. Discussion and Presentation Items:

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

Voss stated it was a quiet meeting; one item of discussion was the citizen committee that is trying to stop semi-trucks from traveling through the City of Allegan.

28. Public Participation:

None.

29. Round Table:

Vogeler stated the meat packing plant in Gun Plain Township is planning to expand.

Voss wanted to comment about the cloud over head in regards to the Planning Commission's demise; we should proceed as usual and cross the bridge when we come to it.

Bouterse wanted to acknowledge the Boy Scout efforts; two local scouts spent almost three weeks attending the Boy Scout Jamboree in Virginia where over 45,000 'Scouters' were in attendance.

Tobolic asked if everyone views parks, recreation and tourism as part of economic development and if so, shouldn't we advocate for them. The department has lost a lot of their funding and she finds it hard to believe

the County wants to cut more from their budget. Tourism is the second biggest industry in the County and Tobolic feels its significance is underrated.

30. Adjournment:

A motion was made by Buist, seconded by Dugan to adjourn the meeting at 3:58 P.M. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

The next regular meeting of the Allegan County Planning Commission will be held on Monday, September 13, 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.