
COUNTY OF ALLEGAN

PLANNING COMMISSION



KELLE TOBOLIC, Chairperson
3255 – 122nd Avenue, Ste 102
Human Services Building
Allegan, Michigan 49010-1350
email: kelle623@sbcglobal.net

MINUTES

Meeting Date: December 13, 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, Marv Voss, John Bouterse, Jackie DeZwaan, Gale Dugan, Terry Burns, Dawn Buist, and Fritz Spreitzer

Absent: Jim Ramey and Tom Vogeler

Also present were: Ronda Foreman, Recording Secretary; Valdis Kalnins, LIS Director; Kevin Ricco, Parks/Recreation/Tourism & County Development Director; Rob Sarro, Allegan County Administrator; William Hinz, Environmental Health Director; Kurt Schindler, MSU Extension Educator; Denise Stan, Allegan County Executive Administrative Assistant; and David McCorry of Gun Plain Township.

3. Approval of Agenda.

A motion was made by Buist, seconded by Dugan to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried by everyone present.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes from November 8, 2010.

A motion was made by Buist, seconded by Bouterse to approve the November 8, 2010 minutes as presented and emailed. The motion carried by everyone present.

5. Approval of Expenditures as of December 8, 2010.

A motion was made by Voss, seconded by DeZwaan to approve the expenditures as of December 8, 2010. The motion carried by everyone present.

6. Public Participation.

No comment at this time.

7. Discussion and Presentation Items:

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

Ricco stated the 2010 season is winding down. The Allegan County visitor's guide is going to the printer tomorrow morning and looks great. With their limited budget, discussions are still in progress for ways the Tourist Council can market the County; they may rework the structure and are considering becoming a Convention & Visitor's Bureau.

b. Economic Development Commission Advisory Committee Discussion – Ricco

Ricco stated the Advisory Committee of around twelve people met for two hours a couple weeks ago. They discussed draft bylaws and membership recommendations for the Economic Development Commission; between three and thirty-five members are allowed and the committee decided on a final membership of eleven. From the workshop in 2009 it was initially recommended by McKenna Associates to focus primarily on having representation from all the geographic areas in the County with a secondary focus on nine focal areas of economic development. This group decided to switch the priorities around with the primary focus on having representation for the nine focal areas and secondarily focusing on the geographic areas. Ricco stated it was a productive meeting where the discussion was very free flowing; they are now working on the bylaws incorporating the recommendations into them.

c. County Planning Commission Update – Sarro, Schindler

An outline was handed out as Tobolic introduced Rob Sarro, Allegan County Administrator, and Kurt Schindler, an MSU Extension Educator, who are in attendance to discuss the responsibilities and expectations of a county planning commission. Sarro summarized what he and Tobolic have been working on over the past several months and their discussions with Schindler; they have reviewed and researched how things are currently done, focused on better communication, and identified areas for improvement.

Regarding the county master plan, it should evolve to include more input from stakeholders and have more emphasis on results. Although the entire master plan should be reviewed at least every five years, instead of waiting to update it all at one time Schindler recommends selecting a topic every year to review and update over a one year period. Also, instead of having the public participate by merely reading the plan after it has been written, encouraging their involvement early in the process can be advantageous. Inviting the public to share and participate in writing the plan can dramatically increase their involvement and is more likely for them to buy into and comply with the plan once it is adopted.

Next Sarro talked about the bylaws and how they should be designed for how the planning commission conducts its business. Schindler agreed stating the bylaws are your operating procedures. This Commission's recently amended bylaws are too redundant to what is stated in Act 33 of 2008. Schindler stated the state statute is very general and broad with many interpretations, and was done so on purpose so local units can decide what works best in their community. He can give recommendations or offer sample policies, but that does not mean he endorses them for every entity. Each county must determine the needs in their own communities and interpret their bylaws in detail.

Sarro stated we now have a pretty good grasp at many of the previous questions raised regarding the County Planning Commission. The Board of Commissioners has until July 1, 2011 to adopt a new Planning Commission Ordinance; much of the work that has been done so far will help shape the final ordinance. The timeline to complete the bylaws is as follows: revised draft ready for review at the January 10, 2011 PC meeting; draft copy to Kurt Schindler for his review before the end of January; work through any additional changes at the February 14, 2011 PC meeting; bylaws ready to be passed by the PC at their March 14, 2011 meeting. Sarro thanked Schindler, Tobolic, and everyone for their work in moving forward.

8. Commission Business:

Vacant seat (Pardee): Trowbridge Township and Watson Township representative, term ending June 8, 2011.

9. Continuing Education:

None.

10. Communications:

None.

11. Final Actions Received:

None.

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. Hopkins Township Rezoning Request – Buist

Change zoning from Ag to R-1 for Parcel Number 03-10-007-008-00; address 3298 – 22nd. The request was approved by the Local Planning Commission on August 31, 2010.

Reasons for approval:

- The proposed zoning complies with the Local Unit Master Plan.
- Rezoning from Ag to R-1 as buffer zone between lake areas and medium density residential conforms to master plan.
- No adverse affect on surrounding area.
- Adjacent to R-1 zone area.

Ayes 6; Nays 0; Absent 1; Abstaining 0

Buist summarized the request stating it complies with the township’s master plan. A motion was made by Buist, seconded by Spreitzer to approve the rezoning request as recommended by the Local Planning Commission. The motion carried.

Ayes 8; Nays 0; Absent 2; Abstaining 0

16. Hopkins Township Ordinance Amendment – Buist

The proposed text amendment would amend split allowances in Agricultural areas; new parcels to be only 1.25-2 acres in size per 40 acres (previous splits either 20 acres or 1.25-2 acre). The ordinance amendment was approved by the Local Planning Commission on June 1, 2010.

Reasons for action taken:

- Split change allows better farmland preservation which is a main objective of the master plan.
- 1.25-2 acre allowance still allows same amount of splits as in previous ordinance.
- Best available plan for mitigating farmland preservation and protecting landowners’ right to split property.
- Best use of land for areas in AG designation.

Ayes 5; Nays 0; Absent 2; Abstaining 0

Buist stated this is a text amendment that changes how new parcels can be split in Agricultural zoned areas. A motion was made by Buist, seconded by Spreitzer to approve the ordinance amendment as recommended by the Local Planning Commission. The motion carried.

Ayes 8; Nays 0; Absent 2; Abstaining 0

17. a. Gun Plain Township Ordinance Amendment – Vogeler

The proposed text amendment addresses sign requirements for cottage industry regulations. The ordinance amendment was approved by the Local Planning Commission on November 17, 2010.

Reasons for action taken:

- To make cottage industry sign regulations compatible with the AG sign regulations as cottage industry is only permitted in the AG district.

Ayes 7; Nays 0; Absent 0; Abstaining 0

In Vogeler’s absence, Tobolic stated this amendment addresses sign requirements for cottage industries in the township. A motion was made by Tobolic, seconded by Bouterse to approve the ordinance amendment as recommended by the Local Planning Commission. The motion carried by everyone present.

Ayes 8; Nays 0; Absent 2; Abstaining 0

b. Gun Plain Township Ordinance Amendment – Vogeler

The proposed text amendment is to specify and allow lawn care, snow plowing, and contractor type businesses as a special use permit in the C-2 district. The ordinance amendment was approved by the Local Planning Commission on November 17, 2010.

Reasons for action taken:

- To clarify where this type of use is allowed.

Ayes 7; Nays 0; Absent 0; Abstaining 0

Tobolic stated this text amendment addresses contractor type businesses in the C-2 district. A motion was made by Tobolic, seconded by Dugan to approve the ordinance amendment as recommended by the Local Planning Commission. The motion carried.

Ayes 8; Nays 0; Absent 2; Abstaining 0

18. Fillmore Township Ordinance Amendment – Ramey

The proposed text amendment would expand zones, redefine, and add general provisions regarding bed and breakfast inns. The ordinance amendment was approved by the Local Planning Commission on November 22, 2010.

Reasons for action taken:

- Expand zones allowing bed and breakfast inns by special use permit (currently only A-1) expand to A-2, R-1, and rezones.
- Include better definition of bed and breakfast inns.
- Add general provisions for bed and breakfast inns as special uses, Chapter 16.36.
- No opposition to proposed amendments at public hearing.

Ayes 5; Nays 0; Absent 0; Abstaining 0

Tobolic received an email from Ramey stating there does not appear to be anything in this proposed ordinance amendment that would be a cause for concern and he supports the recommendation made by the Local Planning Commission. A motion was made by Tobolic, seconded by Bouterse to approve the ordinance amendment as recommended by the Local Planning Commission. The motion carried.

Ayes 8; Nays 0; Absent 2; Abstaining 0

Standing Committee Reports:

19. L.I.S. – Valdis Kalnins, Director

Kalnins reports LIS has been working in the background on the emergency management plan for the Wayland Casino which is scheduled to open on February 14, 2011.

20. County Master Plan Committee – Vogeler

Kalnins stated the updated master plan was sent out last week to the contiguous entities and they now have 63 days to review and comment. The Board of Commissioner's comments will be included with January's agenda for the Commission to review. Any additional comments that are received will be attached to February's agenda, along with a draft of the letter for the proposed public meeting. At the March meeting we should be able to approve the master plan to send to the BOC.

21. Work Program Committee – Tobolic

Invitation for Workshop 101, January 31, 2011

Tobolic asked everyone to promote the workshop to their respective townships. Unless there are revisions to be made, the invitation that is included in everyone's agenda packets will be mailed to all of the local units of government tomorrow. Foreman will add to January's agenda a request to approve payment for PC member's attending the workshop.

22. Dept. of Public Works – Rininger

None.

23. Region 8 – Burns

Burns stated transportation in the area was discussed at the meeting; it was also reported Pure Michigan funding will be coming for the tourism industry.

24. Resource Recovery – Hinz

None.

25. Board of Commissioners – Burns, Spreitzer

Burns reported that during last week's BOC meeting, the design and funding for the jail was discussed.

26. Education – Buist

Buist stated Hopkins schools will be offering online classes for their students. She also urged everyone to help the needy this holiday season by donating to the local food pantries.

27. Discussion and Presentation Items:

None.

28. Public Participation:

None.

29. Round Table:

Burns stated the West Michigan Airport Authority is planning to put in a new terminal at Tulip City Airport.

30. Adjournment:

A motion was made by Spreitzer, seconded by Bouterse to adjourn the meeting at 3:26 P.M. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

The next regular meeting of the Allegan County Planning Commission will be held on Monday, January 10, 2011 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.