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# COUNTY OF ALLEGAN

## PLANNING COMMISSION

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

## MINUTES

**Meeting Date:** May 9, 2011  
**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 1:29 P.M.

**2. Roll Call.**

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

Absent: None.

Also present were: Ronda Foreman, Recording Secretary; Valdis Kalnins, LIS Director; Rob Sarro, Allegan County Administrator; Patricia Petersen of Monterey Township.

**3. Approval of Agenda.**

Tobolic added under Item 9. Continuing Education: *MAP: Spring Institute 2011 Workshop*; information is included in everyone's handout. A motion was made by Buist, seconded by DeZwaan to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried.

**4. Public Participation.**

No comment at this time.

**5. Approval of Meeting Minutes from April 11, 2011.**

A motion was made by Dugan, seconded by Vogeler to approve the April 11, 2011 minutes as emailed and presented. The motion carried.

**6. Approval of Expenditures as of May 4, 2011.**

Voss stated the first quarter per diem and mileage vouchers totaling \$1477 were deducted; also \$163 for the notice of the public hearing that was posted in local newspapers for the master plan. A motion was made by Voss, seconded by DeZwaan to approve the May 4, 2011 expenditure report as presented. The motion carried.

**7. Discussion and Presentation Items:**

**a. County Administration Update – Sarro**

County Administrator Rob Sarro updated the Planning Commission on the jail project. The design phase is still moving forward; the contractor will be back in June for design development detail. At that time the Board will decide if they will go to construction documents. They also directed them to finish the details for the courthouse project since it was included as part of the fixed cost for the design. As far as what would be moved ahead if it all went out for bid still remains to be decided by the Board. For the last couple of years there have been issues with the retaining wall in the parking lot at the courthouse so that project will have to be done this summer. The designs have changed since the last time they were brought to the PC; anyone interested in seeing them can get in touch with Sarro.

In regards to next year's budget, property taxes are still down although not as much as last year. The good news is Sarro believes we are getting close to rock bottom and will hopefully see the upswing soon. At the end of the day the county is looking at a 2.4 million dollar deficit which is down from the 2.8 mil last year. The county is offering another voluntary separation plan to employees that are close to retirement and are still looking at other ways to cut costs.

Lastly Sarro reported on the federal withdrawal of funding that was previously used for methamphetamine site cleanups. The county is a part of WEMET (West Michigan Enforcement Team) and there are processes that have to be followed once a site has been identified. Now the question is who will be responsible to pay for the cleanup; the county is trying to get with WEMET and local units of government to figure out how to pay for it. Sarro wanted to make sure the Planning Commission is aware of this development and will try to keep them in the loop.

**b. County Development / Parks Commission / Recreation & Tourism Update – Ricco**

Tobolic stated the automated fee entrance gate is being installed at the Gun Lake County Park boat launch and should be up and running soon. At the last Parks Commission meeting a representative from the Allegan County Community Foundation was in attendance to answer questions from the group; they are in the early stages of discussing whether it would be practical to start a fund for park donations to be used towards capital improvement projects. Regarding the timber harvest previously mentioned, all of the trees have been marked and the harvest will start later this summer at Littlejohn Lake County Park.

**c. Economic Development Commission Update – Ricco**

Sarro stated Ricco has been working on a couple of reports for the EPA grants that are going through Brownfield. Tomorrow we will be meeting with Jill Bland from Southwest Michigan First to talk about the economic development structures. Although nothing has been cast in stone, there is a structure proposal that would break the MEDC (Michigan Economic Development Corporation) down into nine districts or regions within the state. If the structure proposal goes through it would put Allegan County on the line between the right place and Southwest Michigan First in terms of districts, and it may be something the County would like to chime in on.

**8. Commission Business:**

None.

**9. Continuing Education:**

**MAP: Spring Institute 2011 Workshop**

Moving Toward Resilience: How Community Planners Can Lead the Way to a More Sustainable Future

- When: 8:30AM – 4:00PM on Friday, May 13, 2011
- Where: Lansing Radisson Hotel, Lansing, MI
- Cost: Member Rate: \$105 (\$125 after May 3); Non-Member Rate: \$135 (\$155 after May 3)

No one is interested in attending this workshop.

**10. Communications:**

None.

**11. Final Actions Received:**

None.

**12. Received for Notice:**

None.

**13. Received for Information:**

None.

**14. Received for Review:**

None.

**15. a. Gun Plain Township Ordinance Amendment – Vogeler**

The proposed text amendment would make changes to Ordinance No. 149, Chapter XVI, “Sign Regulations” of the Gun Plain Township Zoning Ordinance, amending requirements for wall signs in commercial and industrial zoning districts. The ordinance amendment was approved by the Local Planning Commission on April 20, 2011.

Reasons for action taken:

- To make wall signs more conducive to the relationship of the size of the wall they are to be located on in the commercial and industrial districts.

Ayes 7; Nays 0; Absent 0; Abstaining 0

Vogeler stated this text amendment came about due to commercial signs in the township were being made larger; this would allow them to regulate the maximum size allowable. A motion was made by Vogeler, seconded by Dugan to approve the Gun Plain Township Ordinance Amendment that would change Ordinance No. 149, Chapter XVI, “Sign Regulations” as recommended by the Local Planning Commission. The motion carried.

Aye – Dugan	Aye – Tobolic
Aye – Burns	Aye – Voss
Aye – DeZwaan	Aye – Spreitzer
Aye – Buist	Aye – Bouterse
Aye – Ramey	Aye – Sage
Abstaining – Vogeler	

Ayes 10; Nays 0; Absent 0; Abstaining 1

**b. Gun Plain Township Ordinance Amendment – Vogeler**

The proposed text amendment would make changes to Ordinance No. 150, Chapter XIX, “General Provisions” of the Gun Plain Township Zoning Ordinance, by adding a definition of Anemometer Tower to Section 19.23 (a). The ordinance amendment was approved by the Local Planning Commission on April 20, 2011.

Reasons for action taken:

- To regulate towers used for wind assessment studies.

Ayes 7; Nays 0; Absent 0; Abstaining 0

Vogeler stated this text amendment would add a definition of wind towers to the Township’s wind energy ordinance. A motion was made by Vogeler, seconded by Bouterse to approve the Gun Plain Township ordinance amendment that would make changes to Ordinance No. 150, Chapter XIX, “General Provisions” by adding a definition of Anemometer Tower to Section 19.23 (a). to the Township’s wind energy ordinance as recommended by the Local Planning Commission. The motion carried.

Aye – Dugan	Aye – Tobolic
Aye – Burns	Aye – Voss
Aye – DeZwaan	Aye – Spreitzer
Aye – Buist	Aye – Bouterse
Aye – Ramey	Aye – Sage
Abstaining – Vogeler	

Ayes 10; Nays 0; Absent 0; Abstaining 1

**16. a. Hopkins Township Rezoning Request – Buist**

Change zoning from RR to R-1 (Conditional) for Parcel Numbers 03-10-006-003-00, 03-10-006-004-00, and 03-10-006-001-10. The request was approved by the Local Planning Commission on April 26, 2011.

Reasons for action taken:

- The conditions offered to the township include no further building on interested parcels.
- There is no adverse affect on surrounding area; no increase of traffic/infrastructure.
- All future occupants currently live within one household on site.
- Neighbors support petitioner.
- Combined parcels are large enough to support split within R-1 zoning.
- The petitioner waives future split rights.

Ayes 7; Nays 0; Absent 0; Abstaining 0

Buist stated this rezoning request would change the zoning of the parcel with conditions to the township there would be no further building. A motion was made by Buist, seconded by Spreitzer to approve the Hopkins Township rezoning request that would change zoning from RR to R-1 (Conditional) for Parcel Numbers 03-10-006-003-00, 03-10-006-004-00, and 03-10-006-001-10 as recommended by the Local Planning Commission. The motion carried.

Ayes 11; Nays 0; Absent 0; Abstaining 0

**b. Hopkins Township Rezoning Request – Buist**

Change zoning from I to C-2 for Parcel Number 03-10-012-002-10. The request was approved by the Local Planning Commission on April 26, 2011.

Reasons for action taken:

- The rezoning request fits the Master Plan for mixed use areas.
- There is no adverse affect on surrounding area; no increase of traffic/infrastructure.
- The revised zoning allows for state licensing to continue previously permitted activity of open-air vehicle sales and brings property use into compliance.
- Variance in 2005 was for a “use variance” no longer permitted by zoning enabling act. Use variance expired with business change; this has occurred and brings property in compliance.

Ayes 7; Nays 0; Absent 0; Abstaining 0

Buist stated this rezoning request would change the parcels zoning to bring it into compliance with the zoning enabling act and fits the local master plan. A motion was made by Buist, seconded by Dugan to approve the Hopkins Township rezoning request that would change the zoning from I to C-2 for Parcel Number 03-10-012-002-10 as recommended by the Local Planning Commission. The motion carried.

Ayes 11; Nays 0; Absent 0; Abstaining 0

**Standing Committee Reports:**

**17. L.I.S. – Kalnins**

None.

**18. County Master Plan Committee**

Kalnins stated he does not have much to report; the master plan has been submitted to the Board of Commissioners and he is just waiting for everything to fall into place.

**19. Work Program Committee**

None.

**20. Dept. of Public Works – Rininger**

None.

**21. Region 8 – Burns**

Burns stated he invited Dave Bee, the Director from West Michigan Region 8 Planning Commission, to come and give a presentation to the PC at next month's meeting. He is waiting for Bee to give confirmation and guesses the presentation will last about half an hour.

**22. Resource Recovery – Hinz**

None.

**23. Board of Commissioners – Burns, Sage**

Sage reports the Board of Commissioners voted to increase the fees for the Sheriff's Department. Also, Sarro mentioned earlier that the land bank discussion was tabled for lack of structure; they are waiting to see a five year plan before further consideration. The GRM Recording module for the Clerks Office was also approved by the Board for approximately \$31,000 which will have a yearly maintenance fee of \$5500 plus has additional transaction fees. The Board also voted to support the HB4207 to prevent the prohibition of open burning so folks can still burn their leaves. Sage stated if anyone wants more information on land banks go to the [www.kalamazoolandbank.org](http://www.kalamazoolandbank.org) website.

Burns stated on Friday the Lakeshore Coordinating Council, which encompasses four counties, voted to approve \$98,000 for the next sixteen months to Allegan County for sobriety court; they also fund the meth diversion program which comes from a separate area of money. The sobriety court should be up and running by next month which is composed of PA2 funds that come from liquor taxes that stay within the county, and also PA2 funds that we get from the Cobo Hall fund.

**24. Education – Buist**

Buist stated the State House of Representatives is working on the budget and it is not looking good for anyone (in the school system); everyone hopes to know what to expect by the beginning of June or July. Next, Hopkins is the last school in the county to approve all day kindergarten but they probably will, only because it is more economical to hire three and a half teachers than to only get funded for a half day of school per pupil.

**25. Discussion and Presentation Items:**

**a. County Services Meeting, April 28, 2011, Update – Tobolic**

Tobolic reports she went before the County Services Committee on April 28, 2011 and gave a PowerPoint presentation that conveyed the Planning Commission's value and importance to the County; Spreitzer, Dugan, and Sage were also present. Also discussed were the Township's responses to the questionnaire that was distributed to all of the townships by the County Board of Commissioners. Most of the responses were unfavorable to the PC; anyone interested in checking them out can view them online once the minutes are posted. Tobolic stated the people she has talked to are ready to engage with the PC. Overall, the PC is disconcerted with how the survey was administered and the way the questions were worded. Sage suggested the PC come up with their own questionnaire.

Tobolic stated the meeting ended with Sarro and Campbell both wanting to see more structure and detail for the Planning Commission's future plan. She stated the PC has a lot of homework to do but she is feeling optimistic; meetings have already been arranged with Sarro, Dugan, and Ramey to come up with the structure and how the PC will work collaboratively with the County and local units. Burns stated he heard compliments on Tobolic's presentation; the PC thanked her for her efforts.

**b. M-40/M-89 Corridor Committee Meeting – Voss**

Voss stated the meeting was pretty quiet; the only thing new to report is M-89 between Otsego and Allegan will get repaved.

**26. Public Participation:**

Patricia Petersen of Monterey Township asked what the Planning Commission's budget is; Spreitzer stated it is \$12,080. Patricia is in attendance because she is considering running for one of the positions on the PC and

has submitted her application to Administration. She stated she did not know all that the PC does until sitting in on today's meeting; she always thought the basic function of the County Planning Commission was to serve as a watchdog over what is happening in the rest of the county which she feels is important.

**27. Round Table:**

**Bouterse** stated Leighton Township canceled their last meeting.

**28. Adjournment:**

A motion was made by Dugan, seconded by Burns to adjourn the meeting at 2:58 P.M. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

The next regular meeting of the Allegan County Planning Commission will be held on Monday, June 13, 2011 at 1:30 P.M., in the Human Services Building, County Services Complex, 3255 – 122<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Allegan, Michigan.

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