

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE MONROE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE and TIME: October 8, 2014, at 7:30 p.m.

PLACE: Monroe County Courthouse Annex
Board of Commissioners' Committee Room
125 East Second Street
Monroe, MI 48161

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mary Webb (Chairman), Scott Assenmacher, Mark Brant, Dan Brooks, Rebecca Curley, Floreine Mentel, Herb Smith, Jason Sheppard, Mike Sperling

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Dan Brooks, Patrick Miller

MCPC STAFF PRESENT: Lee Markham, Planner; Ryan Simmons, Planner

OTHERS PRESENT: Rachel Imes, Newport; Huan LaVoy, MCCC student; Rebecca LaVoy, Monroe; Andrew Robinson, MCCC student; Larry See Jr., citizen

1. A quorum being present, Chairman Webb called the meeting to order and the Commission proceeded to transact business.
2. Chairman Webb led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Adopt/Revise Agenda

Motion by Mr. Sheppard, supported by Mr. Smith, to adopt the agenda.

MOTION CARRIED

4. Approval of the Minutes of the September 10, 2014 meeting minutes

Motion by Mr. Sperling, supported by Mrs. Mentel, to accept the minutes of the September 10, 2014 meeting as submitted and place on file.

MOTION CARRIED

5. Call to the Public – Huan LaVoy, MCCC student, asked the Planning Commission about the importance of the items on tonight's agenda. Chairman Webb went through the agenda items and explained their importance and the importance of the Monroe County Comprehensive Plan. She introduced the members of the Planning Commission and the staff of the Planning Department. Ms. LaVoy asked about the process of putting an item on the agenda. Mr. Peven replied that citizens can express their concerns during the Call to the Public, or can have an item put on the agenda if they call the Planning Department in advance. He stated also that anyone in the public can address any items on the agenda and that citizens often show up to address rezoning cases.
6. Correspondence & Information
 - A. Correspondence
 1. Letter from Planning Director to all Monroe County Municipalities reminding them of the need to adopt the new flood insurance rate maps – Mr. Peven presented a letter that he sent out to the municipalities in the County reminding them of the need to adopt the new FEMA floodplain maps. He stated that the maps took effect last week.

B. Information

1. SEMCOG – Public Notice on Non-Motorized Plan for Southeast Michigan
2. River Raisin Watershed Council – Notice of 2014 Fall Meeting on October 6, 2014
3. The Southern Post – October 2014 – Village of South Rockwood Newsletter
4. *The Open Road*, Monroe County Road Commission Newsletter, September-October 2014

Mr. Smith asked if Mr. Peven attended the watershed meeting on October 6th. Mr. Peven stated that he was not there but that the County already has a couple of representatives who regularly attend.

Motion by Mr. Sheppard, supported by Mr. Sperling, to accept the Correspondence and Information and to place them on file.

MOTION CARRIED

7. Old Business:
 - A. Partners in Planning Update
 1. Erie Township Mapping Project – Mr. Peven stated that this project is almost done and that the Township is currently reviewing the maps.
 2. Milan Township Land Use Plan – Mr. Peven stated that he will be meeting this month with the Township to start on this Plan.
 3. Luna Pier Recreation Plan – Mr. Peven stated that he will be meeting with the City to start on this plan on October 9th.
 - B. Monroe County Remonumentation Program – Mr. Peven stated that there will be a final meeting this year on October 22nd and that they will apply for the 2015 grant as soon as the application is received from the State.
 - C. Monroe County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy – Mr. Markham stated that the project list has been forwarded to the regional CEDS organizations in Detroit and Northwest Ohio.
 - D. Northwest Ohio / Southeast Michigan Regional CEDS – Mr. Peven stated that County projects were included in this CEDS and that it was approved by the County Board of Commissioners.
8. New Business:
 - A. Consent Agenda

TOWNSHIP ZONING REVIEW

200.1-10-14-18 Frenchtown Charter Township (text)

Frenchtown Charter Township is proposing to amend Article 21 of its Zoning Ordinance, which would add a footnote to the Schedule of Regulations pertaining to unenclosed ramps and chairlifts built within the required yard setback.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Monroe County Planning Commission advise the Frenchtown Charter Township Board that it recommends approval of the proposed zoning text amendment.

FARMLAND REVIEWS

200.4-10-14-15 Dundee Township (Owner: Prielipp Farms)

The property consists of two contiguous parcels that total approximately 77 acres in size. They are located on the north side of Brewer Road east of Dennison Road.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Monroe County Planning Commission approve this application for inclusion in the Farmland and Open Space Program because it is consistent with the intentions of Public Act 116 of 1974 and for the reasons stated in the review.

200.4-10-14-16 Dundee Township (Owner: Prielipp Farms)

The property consists of two parcels that total approximately 33 acres in size. They are located on the west side of Petersburg Road just north of M-50.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Monroe County Planning Commission approve this application for inclusion in the Farmland and Open Space Program because it is consistent with the intentions of Public Act 116 of 1974 and for the reasons stated in the review.

200.4-10-14-17 Dundee Township (Owner: Prielipp Farms)

The property consists of a parcel totaling approximately 40 acres in size. It is located on the west side of Petersburg Road north of Cake Road.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Monroe County Planning Commission approve this application for inclusion in the Farmland and Open Space Program because it is consistent with the intentions of Public Act 116 of 1974 and for the reasons stated in the review.

200.4-10-14-18 Dundee Township (Owner: Prielipp Farms)

The property consists of a parcel totaling approximately 104 acres in size. It is located on the south side of M-50 east of N. County Line Highway.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Monroe County Planning Commission approve this application for inclusion in the Farmland and Open Space Program because it is consistent with the intentions of Public Act 116 of 1974 and for the reasons stated in the review.

200.4-10-14-19 Dundee Township (Owner: Prielipp Farms)

The property consists of a parcel totaling approximately 89 acres in size. It is located on the south side of Brewer Road east of Petersburg Road.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Monroe County Planning Commission approve this application for inclusion in the Farmland and Open Space Program because it is consistent with the intentions of Public Act 116 of 1974 and for the reasons stated in the review.

200.4-10-14-20 Dundee Township (Owner: Prielipp Farms)

The property consists of a parcel totaling approximately 100 acres in size. It is located on the south side of Brewer Road east of Petersburg Road.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Monroe County Planning Commission approve this application for inclusion in the Farmland and Open Space Program because it is consistent with the intentions of Public Act 116 of 1974 and for the reasons stated in the review.

200.4-10-14-21 Dundee Township (Owner: Prielipp Farms)

The property consists of a parcel totaling approximately 78.45 acres in size. It is located on the east side of Petersburg Road north of Cake Road.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Monroe County Planning Commission approve this application for inclusion in the Farmland and Open Space Program because it is consistent with the intentions of Public Act 116 of 1974 and for the reasons stated in the review.

SUMMARY OF AMENDMENTS

TOWNSHIP ZONING REVIEWS

200.1-10-14-19 Bedford Township (map)

This is an official request to change the zoning two parcels totaling approximately 1.2 acres from PBO, Professional Business Office District to C-1, Local Business District. The applicant's stated proposed use of the property is for retail sales. The site is located on the south side of Sterns Road west of Secor Road.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Monroe County Planning Commission advise the Bedford Township Board that it recommends approval of the proposed zoning change request, as it is in agreement with the Monroe County Comprehensive Plan, and for the reasons stated above.

200.1-10-14-20 Dundee Township (map)

This is an official request to change the zoning on a portion of a parcel that totals approximately 2.71 acres from AG-1, Agricultural District to I, Industrial District, with conditions. The applicant's stated proposed use of the property is for a bulk propane station. The site is located on the north side of M-50 between Wilcox Road and Monk Road.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Monroe County Planning Commission advise the Dundee Township Board that it recommends approval of the proposed zoning change request, but with reservations regarding the use of conditional zoning for this property and regarding the proposed conditions for this property, as stated above in the analysis.

Mr. Peven pointed out some typographical errors in the Farmland Reviews to the Commissioners.

Motion by Mr. Brant, supported by Mrs. Mentel, to approve the consent agenda and summary of amendments and to accept Staff's recommendations, with the corrections stated by Mr. Peven. Mr. Sheppard abstained from voting on the consent agenda and summary of amendments, stating a conflict of interest regarding Case 200.1-10-14-19.

MOTION CARRIED

- B. Policy 202 Implementation Plan regarding preparation and distribution of agendas for County Boards and Commissions – Mr. Peven addressed the Policy passed by the County Board of Commissioners that states that all meeting materials must be posted 24 hours in advance of County meetings on the County's website. Mr. Peven brought up Staff's traditional policy about not informing the public of Staff's recommendations before meetings, stating that the public was instead told that recommendations would be available at meetings. He stated that this was due to some controversial rezoning cases in the past. Mr. Peven stated that he did not have a problem with changing this policy but that he thought he should bring it up to the Planning Commission first.

Mr. Assenmacher asked about the procedure for additional items added to the agenda before the meeting. Mr. Peven stated that these would continue to be passed out before the meeting because sometimes cases are not

received in time for the County's agenda deadline, yet the Planning Commission has only 30 days to comment on any Township rezoning cases. Mr. Assenmacher stated that because of the public's expectations, a disclaimer should be put on the agenda. Mr. Peven agreed that a disclaimer could be put on the agenda stating that items may be added to the agenda before the meeting if necessary.

Mrs. Mentel asked about whether the public may be confused about whether Staff's recommendations are the final recommendation of the Planning Commission even though they are not and that the public has the right to speak against Staff's recommendations. Chairman Webb stated that she did not think the public would be confused. Mr. Markham stated that he could add that Staff's recommendations are only recommendations and could be changed by the Planning Commission's vote to the disclaimer on the agenda. Mr. Sheppard agreed that a disclaimer would be adequate. Mr. Peven stated that he would add a trial disclaimer for the next meeting and that the Planning Commission could give their input whether they believe that it is adequate.

Mr. Peven again brought up Staff's policy of previously not releasing recommendations to the public before the meeting. He repeated his belief that there was no harm to releasing Staff recommendations before the meeting but that a policy should remain in place that recommendations are only discussed at meetings and not on the phone before the meeting. There was no disagreement to this among the Commissioners. Mr. Smith stated that it was important to emphasize to the public throughout this process that the County Planning Commission is only a recommending body and that the Townships ultimately make the final zoning decisions.

9. Budget & Finance

A. Third Quarter Financial Statement – Mr. Peven presented the Third Quarter Statement. He stated that approximately 75% of the Department's funding has been spent. He stated that there are a few significant expenses remaining for the rest of the year. He stated that the budget that is being approved by the County Board is the same as the one recommended by the Planning Commission.

10. Committee Member's / Director's Report

A. Lake Erie Transit (LET) Commissioner Report – Dr. Miller was not present to give a report.

B. Monroe County Parks and Recreation Commission Report – Mrs. Mentel stated that the Parks and Recreation Commission had 156 pavilion reservations, which was more than any other year. Staff has been spending much of its time on maintenance. The budget will be raised 1% next year. Brush was cleared and the parking lot was maintained at Waterloo Park. Some citizens removed some downed tree branches at Vienna Park. Nike Park also needed some clean up of tree limbs. The 50th anniversary ceremony was held at the Heck Park veterans' memorial. The lease was approved by the County Board for the river site in Raisinville Township. Some minor site improvements will be performed once the lease is fully approved. A hand railing was added at Navarre-Anderson.

Mr. Peven stated that he will present the water trail plan to the Parks and Recreation Commission and that he has been working on park signs for the Commission. He stated that he applied for a permit from the Corps of Engineers to do construction in the floodplain but that a permit was not needed because the site is above elevation.

C. Monroe County Road Commission Report – Mr. Assenmacher brought up the State running out of obligational authority once again and how that resulted in the loss of a County road project. He stated that the MCRC is currently trying to decide when to reschedule this project but that it will likely be in 2017 but if another funding mechanism appears then the project can be scheduled for sooner. He brought up the truck hauling ordinance and stated that they have gotten support from law enforcement agencies.

Mr. Brant asked if Tuttle Hill Road is finished. Mr. Assenmacher stated that it will be done next year. He stated that Samaria Road will be fully completed this year, however.

12. Other Items from Members – Mr. Peven discussed a soybean processing grant. He had a meeting with Ned Birkey earlier that day and they are trying to get an application out that is due next week.

Chairman Webb gave the college students that were present the opportunity to ask more questions. Rachel Imes, MCCC student asked Mr. Assenmacher about the loss of obligation mentioned by him in the MCRC report. Mr. Assenmacher explained the basics about how federal funding of transportation works, the obligational authority and why the State ran out of money this year. Chairman Webb thanked the students for attending the meeting.

Mr. Smith mentioned that he was at the Farm Bureau meeting last month and that someone stood up and congratulated the Road Commission on doing a great job this year and that this was the first time that he has heard this at the annual meeting. Chairman Webb stated that unfortunately this comment did not make it into the Monroe Evening News.

Mr. Smith told a story about how he and his wife were both absent from the County during the last millage election for the Community College in the 1980's and how if they had been present the millage would not have passed as it only was approved by a margin of one vote. He stated that he now realizes the importance of a college education and that he supports this year's millage request, and he urged others to vote yes for it.

Chairman Webb passed around some articles regarding the Lake Erie algae bloom. She stated that the article discusses how the problem is not just from farmers and that they have done a lot of work to improve agricultural runoff.

13. Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 12, 2014 at 7:30 p.m.

14. Adjournment: Motion by Mr. Brant, supported by Mr. Sperling, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting concluded at 8:38 pm.

MOTION CARRIED

MEETING ADJOURNED

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