

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE MONROE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

- DATE and TIME:** February 10, 2016, 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; Larry See, Jr.; Mike Sperling
- MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Patrick Miller, Herb Smith, Gary Wilmoth
- MCPC STAFF PRESENT:** Rob Peven, Planning Director; Lee Markham, Planner; Ryan Simmons, Planner
- OTHERS PRESENT:** Kevin Johnson, SEMCOG; Natalie Youakim, SEMCOG

1. Chairman Webb called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and the Commission proceeded to transact business.
2. Chairman Webb led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Adopt/Revise Agenda – Mr. Peven requested that item 8A – Consent Agenda, be moved up so that the guests from SEMCOG could complete their presentation regarding the regional economic plan and return home in a timely manner.

Motion by Mr. Brant, supported by Mr. Sperling, to adopt the proposed agenda.

MOTION CARRIED

4. Approval of the Minutes of the January 13, 2016 meeting minutes

Motion by Mr. Brant, supported by Mrs. Curley, to accept the minutes of the January 13, 2016 meeting as submitted, to waive the reading thereof, and to place them on file.

MOTION CARRIED

5. Call to the Public – There were no members of the general public present.
6. New Business
 - A. Consent Agenda

TOWNSHIP ZONING REVIEW

200.3-2-16-1 Partnering for Prosperity: Economic Development Strategy for Southeast Michigan

The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) has submitted a draft of its publication entitled *Partnering for Prosperity: Economic Development Strategy for Southeast Michigan* for staff review.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Monroe County Planning Commission submit the comments from its review to the SEMCOG.

Chairman Webb asked the members from SEMCOG to make their presentation at this point.

Mr. Peven introduced the speakers from SEMCOG. The speakers completed their presentation, which highlighted the elements of the regional economic plan titled, *Partnering for Prosperity: Economic Development Strategy for Southeast Michigan*.

Mr. Peven went over the Monroe County projects that were considered regionally significant and thus included in the Plan and showed how they were related to the goals of the Plan.

Mr. Brant asked how the impending construction of the new bridge to Canada affected the Economic Plan. Ms. Youakim stated that she was not sure that it made a difference in the overall goals of the Plan, but that SEMCOG made sure emphasize international trade and to mention the bridge as an important component of this element of the Plan. Chairman Webb thanked the speakers for coming to speak about the Plan.

Mr. Peven submitted and read the text of an approval letter regarding the Regional Economic Plan that he asked for the Planning Commission to approve that would be signed by Chairman Webb and then put before the County Board for approval and eventual signature by Chairman Lievens. He also asked the Planning Commission to approve Staff's review of the document.

Motion by Mrs. Mentel, supported by Mr. See, to approve the letter to be sent to SEMCOG recommending approval of *Partnering for Prosperity: Economic Development Strategy for Southeast Michigan*, as well as to approve Staff's review of the Plan.

MOTION CARRIED

7. Correspondence & Information

A. Correspondence

1. Letter from Chris Beland, Director, Michigan Office of Land Survey and Remonumentation approving the 2016 Monroe County Remonumentation grant application

B. Information

1. Michigan Association of Planning – Upcoming Training Programs
2. The Southern Post – Village of South Rockwood newsletter
3. PAS Memo – Jan/Feb 2016 - “Local Approaches to Managing Oil and Gas Development” – Mr. Peven stated he has sent this timely article to the County Attorney as well as to several other people, as the County has been working on an ordinance regarding this matter.
4. Healthy Herald – Feb 2016

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

MOTION CARRIED

8. Old Business:

A. Partners in Planning Update

1. Erie Township Mapping Project – Mr. Peven stated that Staff is still waiting for the Township to finish their review of the maps.
2. Frenchtown Township – proposed recreation plan contract – Mr. Peven stated that the Township is still looking over the proposed contract.

B. Monroe County Remonumentation Program – Mr. Peven stated the grant application for 2016 was approved and that he is still working on closing out the 2015 program.

- C. Planning Commission Reappointments – Mr. Peven stated that it was likely not possible for Mark Brant to be reappointed as a citizen due to a restriction in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act regarding appointments from the County Board and that he would probably need to be appointed as an ex-officio member by the County Board for a one-year term. This point was brought up by the County legal advisor. The one-year term is a restriction not based upon the State Act but based upon county policy. Mr. Peven also stated that he was not certain but that there also may be a County policy that if a member of the County Board may not serve on another county committee for an entire year after leaving office, so this could also present some difficulties in the future.

Mr. Peven stated that Mr. Wilmoth was appointed as an ex-officio member for another year, and all other Commissioners whose terms expired were reappointed to the normal term length.

- D. Follow-up on January 2016 Milan Township zoning case (case #200.1-1-16-2) – Mr. Peven stated that this case was recommended for approval at the January meeting. However, he stated that Milan Township erred in its public notification duties and that their Township Planning Commission would have to rehear the case in order to give the public a chance to comment. He stated that the Township wanted to know if it would need to be reheard by the County Planning Commission or if it could go straight to the Milan Township Board after being reheard by their Planning Commission.

Mr. Peven stated that if no members of the public showed up that he did not think that the County Planning Commission needed to rehear the case again, but if some of the public made comment then he felt it would be necessary for the County Planning Commission to also rehear the case again in order to give the public a chance to comment at our meeting, as well. Mr. Peven asked the Planning Commissioners how they felt about this.

Mr. Brant stated that he has heard that the applicant is the railroad company and that they are not committing that the rezoning will necessarily be for storing oil and gas pipes. He stated that he thought that the Planning Commission should rehear the case regardless in case anybody ever wants to contest the rezoning and sees that there was a defect in the rezoning process. He stated that he personally knows some of the adjacent property owners and knows that they would like to comment regarding this rezoning and if they do not have a chance to do so at the County Planning Commission level then the process is not being followed correctly.

Mr. Peven asked the Commissioners if they would be willing to hold a special meeting if the applicant is willing to pay for the meeting. Mr. Brant asked if there was a fee schedule for special planning commission meetings. Mr. Peven stated that he did not think there was but that they could just ask the applicant to pay for the per diem and mileage of the Planning Commissioners. Mr. Brant stated that he thought that this would be appropriate. He wondered if the meeting could be held concurrently with the Milan Township Board meeting. Chairman Webb thought it would be easier just to have it in the central location of the County Courthouse. Mr. Peven stated he would let them know if the Township decided to request a special County Planning Commission meeting.

Chairman Webb asked for a motion stating that the Township should be willing to follow the normal process and send the case to the County Planning Commission to be reheard after their February 18th meeting.

Motion by Mr. Brant, supported by Mr. Sperling, to inform Milan Township that the Monroe County Planning Commission asks that Case #200.1-1-16-2 be reheard at a public meeting by the Monroe County Planning Commission, and that the Planning Commission would be willing to organize a special meeting if needed at the applicant's expense.

MOTION CARRIED

9. New Business (Continued):

- B. Monroe County Community Health Improvement Plan – Mr. Peven stated that he included the executive summary of this Plan in the agenda packet and that Mrs. Mentel sits on this committee. He went over the

four main goals listed in the Plan and stated that the goals of obesity and safe driving are related to planning. Mr. Peven stated that this plan is a requirement under the Affordable Care Act.

- C. The Stewardship Network – upcoming meetings and events – Mr. Peven stated that he wanted to let the Planning Commission know about the harmful algae blooms meeting that was being held on March 10th at Monroe City Hall.

10. Budget & Finance – There were no items on the agenda for Budget & Finance.

11. Committee Member's / Director's Report

- A. Lake Erie Transit (LET) Commissioner Report – Dr. Miller was not present to give a report. Mrs. Mentel brought up the important millage vote in Bedford Township in March.
- B. Monroe County Parks and Recreation Commission Report – Mrs. Mentel stated that there was not a meeting but that they are still doing winter maintenance in the parks and trying to solve the water drainage problems in Nike Park including taking out trees and fixing ditches. A bench will go in, as well.

Mr. Peven stated that he has been asked by Mike Bosanac and Annamarie Osment to do some planning work at West County Park to improve the trails and river access and also to use a trail planning grant to implement some of the recommendations of the water trail plan for kayak and canoe access at the Raisinville site or at the site behind the country store.

Mr. Peven stated that he has talked to Dale DeSloover at the ISD about getting more trails and sidewalks built in the County. He stated that there is a lot of money in the Transportation Alternatives Program to do this. There is an upcoming information meeting about this program and afterwards a meeting could be held to come up with some ideas about where to do build these in the County. Seventh Avenue and Raisinville Road are possibilities. Mr. Assenmacher stated that the Road Commission has discussed options about a pedestrian path on Seventh Street due to the heavy walking traffic.

- C. Monroe County Road Commission Report – Mr. Assenmacher stated that the Road Commission is in winter mode at the moment. He said there should be a small amount of cost savings because of the light winter due to not having to pay overtime. Construction projects are currently being planned and the first federal aid letting bid has already proceeded and it was positive. There are many other projects being planned for 2016 as well as some 2015 projects that still need to be completed. The next edition of the Open Road newsletter should be available soon. Mr. Assenmacher stated that he would like the Commissioners to read it as it will detail the Road Commission's accomplishments since 2012. He stated that due to the funding coming in that transportation infrastructure will only get better in the future, and that there will be a map published in a future edition of the newsletter showing the upcoming projects.

12. Other Items from Members –

- A. Director's Evaluation – Chairman Webb read through the summary of Commissioners' evaluation comments of Mr. Peven. She stated that many of the comments also pertained to Mr. Peven's staff and the work that they do. The comments were positive overall and stated that Mr. Peven and his staff were doing an excellent job despite being understaffed, and that having the funds for a receptionist or secretary would help make the office more welcoming when either the public visits or when planning commissioners visit the office. Chairman Webb also said that the comments were positive about bringing in funds and revenue but that more could still be done.

Chairman Webb also brought up that several Commissioners stated that they did not have enough knowledge of to answer the questions accurately. One of these was regarding the County Planning Ordinance and another was whether there was certification processes for the department. Chairman Webb also brought up whether there would be a central bank of information that Commissioners and staff could use in the future. There was a

question about whether all planning efforts in the County were coordinated. Finally, some Commissioners were unsure about how precisely work was delegated among staff and how to answer questions regarding this. Chairman Webb suggested that perhaps the evaluation form should be updated.

Mr. Assenmacher stated that he was not sure Commissioners needed to answer questions about things such as work delegation and that this was primarily Mr. Peven's responsibility. Mr. Brooks agreed with this.

- B. Mrs. Mentel stated that the Salvation Army would be having their Soup Day on February 18th. It is being moved from the Salvation Army building to K of C due to a need for more parking.
- C. Mrs. Mentel stated that the technology millage is coming up and that it is important to vote for in order to properly educate the County's students about today's technology, and that it is not expensive to fund.
- D. Mr. Markham reminded the Commissioners that he would like some interesting information about them for an article that he is writing for the County Planning newsletter.

13. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 9, 2016 at 7:30 p.m.

14. Adjournment: Motion by Mr. Brant, supported by Mr. Assenmacher, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting concluded at 8:43 pm.

MOTION CARRIED

MEETING ADJOURNED

:rds