

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE MONROE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE and TIME: February 11, 2015, 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, Patrick Miller, Floreine Mentel, Mike Sperling

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Herb Smith

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

OTHERS PRESENT: April Ellison, 7528 Grant Ct., Newport; Amy Lorann, 6739 Summerfield Rd., Temperance; Larry See Jr., Lisa Wehrs, 11355 Finzel Rd., Carleton

1. A quorum being present, 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

Motion by Mr. Sperling, supported by Dr. Miller, to adopt the agenda.

MOTION CARRIED

4. Approval of the Minutes of the January 14, 2015 meeting minutes

Motion by Mr. Brant, supported by Dr. Miller, to accept the minutes of the January 14, 2015 meeting as submitted and place on file.

MOTION CARRIED

6. Call to the Public – Chairman Webb asked the students present at the meeting to introduce themselves.
7. Correspondence & Information
 - A. Correspondence
 1. Email from Megan Vahey-Casiere, Lucas County Planning Dept, regarding approval of NW Ohio-SE Michigan CEDS report by the US EDA.
 2. Letter from Planning Director Peven to Cheryl Baltrip supporting a grant application for water service extensions in Exeter Township.
 - B. Information
 1. Transportation Advocacy Group of Northwest Ohio (TAGNO) 2015 Winter Luncheon – Feb 26, 2015
 2. Healthy Monroe – *Healthy Herald*, Feb 2015
 3. Healthy Monroe – Strides Walk/Run event, April 11, 2015\
 4. SEMCOG – *SEMSCOPE* Winter 2015
 5. TMACOG Transportation Summit – Friday, March 20, 2015
 6. Ohio EPA Citizen Advisory – Mr. Peven stated that this advisory is regarding the open water disposal of dredge spoils from the Toledo harbor into Lake Erie.

7. Algae Seminar at BGSU – *Toledo Blade* article

Mr. Peven also stated that the U.S. EPA will be holding a public hearing on the brine injection well in the County but that he did not have a notice of the meeting yet. He stated that he arranged for a person from the DEQ speak at the last County Board meeting regarding this issue.

Motion by Mr. Sperling, supported by Mrs. Mentel, 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 the Township is still reviewing the draft property maps.
2. Milan Township Land Use Plan – Mr. Peven stated that he went to their January meeting but that there was not a quorum so nothing official was done but that he spoke with the commission members who were present.
3. Luna Pier Recreation Plan – Mr. Peven stated that the City did not meet on Tuesday despite the date for the meeting being rescheduled for Tuesday and that they met on February 11th instead, so he did not get to meet with the City. He stated that the Parks and Recreation Commission for the City will not have a quorum but will go over the Draft Plan anyways and that it will be approved by the City Council at the end of this month.

B. Monroe County Remonumentation Program – Mr. Peven stated that the Department is wrapping up the 2014 program paperwork and that he will have a map of the completed corners for 2014 at the next Planning Commission meeting.

C. Monroe County Comprehensive Plan Update – Mr. Peven stated that the County is required by law to review the County's Comprehensive Plan to update it. He stated that he will pass out the Future Land Use Map and the Goals and Objectives for the 2010 Plan at the next meeting so that the Commission can look over them and make any suggestions if necessary. If the Plan needs to be updated then there is a requirement that adjacent municipalities need to be notified.

D. 2015 Strategic Growth Initiative Grant Application – Mr. Peven stated that this application was submitted on time to conduct a feasibility study. He stated that they will make a presentation to the State in the future.

E. Planning Commission Vacancies – Mr. Peven stated that he wrote a letter regarding filling the two vacancies on the Planning Commission with Mr. See and another County Board member to replace Jason Sheppard. He stated that with the approval of the Planning Commission he will put the letter on the County Board's agenda for their February 17th meeting. Chairman Webb stated that she will address the County Board, as well. Mr. Brant stated that the Board will be performing a comprehensive look at all of the boards under the County's jurisdiction to see which ones need to be eliminated or streamlined. Mrs. Mentel and Chairman Webb both stressed the importance of the Planning Commission and the local knowledge possessed by the Commission that consultants do not possess.

Motion by Mr. Sperling, supported by Mrs. Mentel, to approve the drafted letter asking for two additional appointments to the Planning Commission, and to submit it to the Monroe County Board of Commissioners

F. I-75 corridor reconstruction update – Mr. Simmons stated that he attended an MDOT meeting on February 10th at Frenchtown Charter Township Hall in which they discussed their final plans for the I-75 reconstruction that will start in April and run until September 2016. He stated that they will have two lanes running in each direction throughout construction and that no exits will be closed. He stated that only the Sandy Creek Road bridge will be closed and that traffic will be detoured onto Hurd Road. He stated that this project is in several phases and that the Erie Township portion will begin in 2019.

G. Monroe County Solid Waste Plan – Mr. Peven presented the calendar for recycling and household hazard waste collection for 2015.

9. New Business:
A. Consent Agenda

SUMMARY OF AMENDMENTS

OTHER REVIEWS

200.3-2-15-1 Exeter Township
 Exeter Township Master Plan Update

Exeter Township has forwarded a copy of their 2014 Master Plan Update to the Monroe County Planning Commission for review and comment. In compliance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, the Township is required to submit the Plan to the County Planning Commission for review and the County has 63 days to review the Plan and offer any comments.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Monroe County Planning Commission submit comments to Exeter Township as described in the Staff Review

Motion by Mr. Brant, supported by Mr. Sperling, to approve the Consent Agenda and Summary of Amendments and to accept Staff’s recommendations

MOTION CARRIED

- B. Lake Erie Algae Sources and Solutions – Chairman Webb stated that she and Mr. Simmons attended the Lake Erie Algae Conference in Toledo and that she also attended a conference up in Warren.

Mr. Simmons presented a summary of the information gathered from the speakers at the Toledo conference. He stated that both Detroit and Ohio have discharge problems with regards to phosphorus but that the problem is compounded in Ohio due to a greater concentration of dissolved phosphorus. He stated that the River Raisin is on the low end of phosphorus inputs into Lake Erie when compared to Ohio but that it has still increased slightly in recent years. Finally, he presented a list of programs on the national level that will address the algae problem, as well as some proposed legislation in the State of Ohio.

Chairman Webb reviewed the Lake Erie conference in Warren that she attended in November of 2014. She stated that at the Conference they discussed phosphorus monitoring, dredging and its impact on algae and the extent of the dead zone in Lake Erie and the invasive species in the lake. She discussed the problem with the City of Detroit’s stormwater system. There was also discussion of green infrastructure as well as the sewer overflow problems in Detroit. Both Chairman Webb and Mr. Simmons expressed their desire to have an algae conference take place in Monroe County and to bring speakers in to address local citizens and government officials.

- C. Summary of Building Activities for January 1 – December 31, 2014 – Mr. Simmons went through the building activities spreadsheet for 2014. He stated that residential building trends increased slightly when compared to 2013, while commercial and industrial trends were roughly the same.

9. Budget & Finance – Mr. Peven stated that there was nothing to report on the budget.

10. Committee Member’s / Director’s Report

- A. Lake Erie Transit (LET) Commissioner Report – Dr. Miller stated that they are still waiting to see if LET is cut loose from SMART, as they will then have to hire a few more people to take over duties previously done by SMART. He stated that business is doing well and that they have bought five new hybrid buses using grant money. He stated that they would still like nightly service to the college but that they will need more money in

order to do this. He stated that it has been difficult to find mechanics to work on the buses as they are much more sophisticated now. Mr. Brooks asked about the millage request that will be on the ballot. He stated that, despite business doing well, there are expenses that cannot be covered just from passenger fares and that there are new technologies on the buses that need funding. He stated that the proposed increase is very small but that if it is not approved then services may need to be reduced.

B. Monroe County Parks and Recreation Commission Report – Mrs. Mentel stated that they are getting in caretaker agreements for several of the parks. Bids have gone out for the baseball diamond at Vienna Park. A willow tree needed to be removed at Waterloo Park. The fishing pier also needs to be repaired and preserved. Heck Park is being regularly maintained. The accessible entrance at Navarre-Anderson has been completed and a few more maintenance activities should be completed by spring.

C. Monroe County Road Commission Report – Mr. Assenmacher stated that the Federal Aid Committee meeting will be February 18th. There will be some TIP updates at the meeting as well as approval of some National Functional Classification changes. He stated that MDOT will not help with the detours that will result from the Sandy Creek bridge closures because it is just a local traffic issue. He stated that it will be a two-month closure in 2015 as well as in 2016. He stated that he and Rob met with U.S. Fish and Wildlife and the County will not be pursuing a FLAP grant this year but may look into it in the future. Finally, he stated that they are submitting the Samaria Road project for national awards.

11. Other Items from Members – Chairman Webb asked if the students in the audience had any questions about the meeting. April Ellison asked if Monroe County is doing anything at the moment about the Lake Erie algae issue. Chairman Webb stated that at the moment the measures are mostly preventative but that the River Raisin did not seem to have as much of a phosphorus issue when compared to Lake Erie inputs from Detroit and Ohio. Mr. Peven stated that there is a study being done at the moment at the LaPointe Drain to find the sources of phosphorus input into that drain.

Ms. Ellison asked if wetlands helped the situation. Mr. Brant stated that Michigan Farm Bureau has instituted and supported programs that help to prevent runoff such as filter strips and that farmers in the area have come a long way when it comes to precision fertilizer application. He also pointed out that many of the inputs into the River Raisin come from outside of the County.

Mr. Sperling said that this weekend is a free fishing weekend. Mrs. Mentel stated that there is a muskrat dinner on February 17th and the Salvation Army Soup Day is on February 19th.

12. Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 11, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.

13. Adjournment: Motion by Mr. Brant, supported by Dr. Miller, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting concluded at 8:29 pm.

MOTION CARRIED

MEETING ADJOURNED

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