

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE MONROE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE and TIME:	October 12, 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; Patrick Miller; Larry See, Jr.; Herb Smith; Mike Sperling; Gary Wilmoth
MEMBERS ABSENT:	None
MCPC STAFF PRESENT:	Rob Peven, Planning Director; Lee Markham, Planner; Ryan Simmons, Planner
OTHERS PRESENT:	Dan Curley, Petersburg; Nathan Wassner, Cash Wagener & Assoc.

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 – Motion by Mrs. Mentel, supported by Dr. Miller, to adopt the proposed agenda. **MOTION CARRIED**
4. Approval of the Minutes of the September 14, 2016 meeting minutes

Motion by Mr. Smith, supported by Mr. Sperling, to accept the minutes of the September 14, 2016 meeting as submitted and to place them on file. **MOTION CARRIED**
5. Call to the Public – No member of the public wished to speak at this time.
6. Correspondence & Information
 - A. Correspondence
 1. Email from Scott J. Bentley, Superintendent, River Raisin National Battlefield regarding the placement of signs related to the Macon Reservation in the West County Park. – Mr. Peven stated that he would discuss this correspondence under New Business, Item 8C.
 - B. Information
 1. SEMCOG, Regional Update, Oct. 3, 2016
 2. Upcoming events at the Monroe County Museum
Motion by Mr. See, supported by Mrs. Mentel, to accept the Correspondence and Information and to place them on file. **MOTION CARRIED**
7. Old Business:
 - A. Partners in Planning Update
 1. Frenchtown Charter Township Recreation Plan – Mr. Peven stated that there was no quorum for the meeting last week, so the meeting was not held, but that he had the survey results for the Recreation Plan. He stated that the survey was not mailed out but was available online and at the Township Hall and the Township's libraries. He stated that there were more completed surveys for the online survey than for the physical copies,

as the online survey was well-advertised in the Monroe News. However, the number of total completed surveys was still down compared to previous years because the survey was not mailed out this year. He stated that because the survey was nearly identical to the previous years' surveys that they were able to compare the results. He stated that he would not go over the results, but that bicycle and walking trails were residents' most desired amenities.

Chairman Webb commented on the condition of paved shoulders in the County, stating that many were too narrow and that they did not have the reflective markings that she has seen in other places. She also remarked on the condition of the paint for the marked lanes and that it comes off too quickly and makes things unsafe for bicycles and pedestrians.

Mrs. Mentel asked about the respondents' complaints regarding there being no park in Newport, stating that there was Nike Park on Newport Road as well as Heck Park nearby. Mr. Peven stated that he created a map for the Township of all of the parks in the Township as well as a couple of nearby parks and commented that there is also a recreation center in the Township. He stated that the Township is well served by parks but that it does need more trails. Mrs. Mentel mentioned that the trail that starts at the Battlefield and goes to the State Park is one of the best ones in the County.

- B. Monroe County Remonumentation Program – Mr. Peven stated that there was a meeting in the past month and that there are one or two more meetings left for the year. He stated that he has not received the new grant application for 2017 yet.
- C. I-75 Corridor Study – Mr. Peven stated that Mr. Brant and Mr. Wilmoth were both at this meeting and that the consultant presented an almost completed rough draft of the corridor study. They have identified several sites in the corridor and have selected uses that might be appropriate for these sites. Mr. Wilmoth stated that Phase 2 would be the marketing component. Mr. Brant stated that the consultants are under their internal budget right now and that they will do some more in depth research and marketing at no extra cost to the County. He stated that the next meeting will be November 17th.
- D. James Monroe statue – Chairman Webb stated that she attended the Physical Resources Committee meeting and at the meeting informed the Committee that the Planning Commission had voted to submit a letter of support for the statue. Mr. Peven stated that the Committee recommended approval for the statue as long as there is no issue with underground utilities. Mr. Brant specified that the concerns are with a fiber optic connection between the Courthouse and the Kemmerle Building. He stated that the Committee was also concerned that the statue should be located somewhere where it is not aesthetically out of sync with other background features and also where there is accommodation for any future statues that may be placed on the site. Mr. Peven stated that the full Board of Commissioners granted approval to the statue that same afternoon based upon the recommendation from the Physical Resources Committee.
- E. Planning Commission appointments – Chairman Webb stated that a letter was sent out to the Board of Commissioners Chairman asking for reappointments of the four members of the Planning Commission whose terms are coming up: Mr. Assenmacher, Mrs. Mentel, Mr. See and Mr. Sperling. Mr. Brant stated that he would try to get the reappointments on the agenda for the next Board meeting. Mr. Peven mentioned that Mr. Brant's and Mr. Wilmoth's terms also expire, but that appointments of Board members to the Planning Commission are made in January after the election, and that he will remind the Board that the appointments need to be made.

- 8. New Business
 - A. Consent Agenda

FARMLAND REVIEWS

200.4-10-16-5 Ida Township (Owner: Kamprath, R. & M.)

The property consists of a parcel approximately 36.5 acres in size. It is a landlocked parcel with Lulu Road to the north and Geiger Road to the east.

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.

200.4-10-16-6 Ida Township (Owner: Kamprath, R. & M.)

The property consists of a parcel approximately 78.68 acres in size. It is located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Lulu Road and Geiger 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.

200.4-10-16-7 Ida Township (Owner: Kamprath, R. & M.)

The property consists of a parcel approximately 30 acres in size. It is located on the north side of Lulu Road east of Geiger 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.

200.4-10-16-8 Ida Township (Owner: Kamprath, R. & M.)

The property consists of a parcel approximately 35.438 acres in size. It is located on the south side of Lulu Road east of Geiger 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.

200.4-10-16-9 Ida Township (Owner: Kamprath, R. & M.)

The property consists of a parcel approximately 49 acres in size. It is located on the south side of Lulu Road east of Geiger 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.

200.4-10-16-10 Ida Township (Owner: Kamprath, R. & M.)

The property consists of a parcel approximately 67.415 acres in size. It is located on the south side of Lulu Road east of Geiger 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 REVIEW

200.1-10-16-30 Bedford Township (map)

This is an official request to change the zoning on a parcel portion totaling approximately 17.15 acres from R-2A, One-Family Residential District, C-2, Shopping Center Business District, C-3, General Business District and PBO, Professional Business and Office District to RM-2, Multiple-Family Residential District and C-1, Local Business District. The purpose of the rezoning is for developing apartment buildings and a local commercial business.

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 the rezoning is in agreement with the Monroe County Comprehensive Plan and the Bedford Township Master Plan and provides for appropriate transitional zoning from the Lewis Avenue/Sterns Road intersection, and for the other reasons stated above.

Mr. Peven summarized this case for the Commissioners as the developer was present in regards to this rezoning. He mentioned that the site is part of the former Whitman Ford property in Bedford Township and that the site has gone through rezonings, a citizen referendum and a court case in the past. He stated that this particular case is not as contentious, however, because it is a downzoning, as the applicant is asking for less intensive uses. Mr. Peven stated that the aerial photo from 2015 is out of date already as there is currently multi-family residential construction that is going on adjacent to the site.

Mr. Brant asked Mr. Wassner if he would like to speak regarding the case as the motion is going to be to agree with Staff's recommendation for approval. Mr. Wassner stated that he did not need to speak as he agreed with Staff's write-up of the rezoning, but that he could answer any of the Commissioners' questions.

Motion by Mr. Sperling, supported by Mr. Brant, to accept the Consent Agenda as well as the Summary of Amendments to the agenda.

MOTION CARRIED

Mr. Brant asked Mr. Wassner how many units they plan on having. Mr. Wassner replied that it would be up to 144 units.

B. Water Resource Plan for Southeast Michigan – Chairman Webb stated that this is being done by SEMCOG. Mr. Simmons stated that he and Mr. Assenmacher were present at the meeting put on by SEMCOG. He stated that SEMCOG separated attendees into three smaller groups, and each group commented on the three primary components of the Plan: Infrastructure, Natural Resources and the Blue Economy. He stated that there were concerns from participants about drinking water infrastructure in the Monroe County area primarily due to the Lake Erie algae problems, concerns about aging infrastructure needing to be rehabilitated, and concerns pertaining to road-stream crossings in the County. He stated that, in regards to natural resources, that participants had a positive opinion of the local effort being put in to preserve natural resources in the County. Finally, regarding the blue economy, Mr. Simmons stated that he brought up the Monroe County Water Trail Master Plan, but that there was input from participants that more work needed to be done by local communities and the County to cooperate in order to construct more trails that connect our water resources.

Mr. Peven clarified the meaning of "Blue Economy," stating that it is the idea that water-related recreation in a community can bring in money. Mrs. Mentel brought up the 300 kayaks a week that are sold at Cabela's in Dundee and stated that a good share of these are probably being used within the County.

Mrs. Mentel asked if it was brought up about what Dundee is doing to solve their sewage problem. Mr. Simmons stated that he was not certain, but that Dave Uhl was there representing the Village of Dundee and that he probably brought it up in his breakout group.

- C. West County Park / Macon Reserve signs – Mr. Peven explained about the history of the Macon Reserve as an Indian reservation located where the Macon Creek empties into the River Raisin. He stated that the National Park Service is trying to promote the site of the former reservation as having a connection to the National Battlefield in order to encourage visitation, as well as promoting the site of the Dundee Mill. Mrs. Mentel stated that they are using the Mill to tell the story of the reservation and to get more visitors out to the former reservation site. Mr. Peven stated that West County Park is entirely within the former reservation site. He stated that there already some signs at the Park as well as the existing ceremonial site with the stone, but that NPS is requesting more signs to be placed in the Park. He stated that he told the Park Superintendent that he should get in touch with the Park Commission, but that he would also run it by the County Planning Commissioners.

Mrs. Mentel passed around color copies of the proposed signs. Mr. Peven brought up the National Park passport stamps that park visitors can get at the Mill. Mr. Peven also mentioned the work done by the intern who was working for NPS in our Department over the summer in mapping out the former reservation. He stated that the intern informed him that the reservation was established before the surveyors came through Michigan and that they used a slightly different angle than the Township lines to establish the reservation boundary.

Dr. Miller asked about what happened to the natives who were on the reservation when it closed. Mrs. Mentel brought up how she helped to stop the sale of the land in the past when she was a County Commissioner so that it could be preserved as a park. Mr. Peven stated that he did not think that there was ever a large population on the reservation and that he thought the natives eventually sold the land either to the Catholic Church or the University of Michigan, and that the natives were eventually moved to Kansas and Oklahoma.

Mr. Peven stated that he will tell the NPS that no objections were raised, but that he will tell the Superintendent that it is ultimately the jurisdiction of the Park Commission. Mrs. Mentel stated that there was no objection and that she would get in touch with the Superintendent.

9. Budget & Finance

- A. 2017 Proposed Planning Department Budget – Mr. Peven stated that there is a budget hearing by the Board next week and after that the Board will be able to adopt the proposed budget. He stated that he already presented the budget to the Planning Commission for approval, but that he has included the final version of it in the agenda packet again.
- B. Third quarter financial statement – Mr. Peven stated that the Commission has spent 72% of its budget after the third quarter, so we are right on track with expenditures. Chairman Webb brought up the issue of hiring a new Planning Director.

10. Committee Member's / Director's Report

- A. Lake Erie Transit (LET) Commissioner Report – Dr. Miller stated that business is doing well and that the main issue is with the possible establishment of the RTA in the Detroit area and how Monroe County will not be included in the RTA, so one or two people will need to be hired to help write grants for LET as they are currently being done by SMART. He stated that they will probably have a year or two to get prepared if the RTA millage is approved, however, and that LET is already making plans.

Mrs. Mentel stated that Commission on Aging has given LET its money to cover the additional senior ridership costs.

- B. Monroe County Parks and Recreation Commission Report – Mrs. Mentel stated that there have been 176 reservations for the pavilions this year, which is a 30% increase over last year. Tree trimming is being done and portable toilets have been moved from Vienna Park before the end of the season. Garbage at Waterloo Park is being picked up and the parking lot is being repaired at Waterloo and Vienna. Nike Park is being weeded and maintained. Heck Park also had parking lot repairs done. Loranger Square had extra weeding and cleaning due to

the Bed Race. Navarre-Anderson is okay. The Raisinville river access site had a fence replacement due to damage from fallen trees. West County Park was weeded around the parking areas and structures. Mrs. Mentel mentioned the high number of kayaks sold at Cabela's and how Waterloo Park will probably soon be able to launch kayaks along with the present Raisinville river access site. She stated that only one person is employed presently at the Parks Department as everyone else has returned to school.

- C. Monroe County Road Commission Report – Mr. Assenmacher stated that the Road Commission is now into its new fiscal year, but that they are still working on some 2016 projects including Ida West Road. He stated that Norfolk Southern will be working on several road crossings in the County in the next few weeks

Mr. Assenmacher brought up the idea that there needs to be a county wide body or champion to help construct trail connections in the County. He stated that the paved shoulders that the Road Commission has been constructing are not truly bike trails and that true trails are needed. He brought up the I-75 bridge over Luna Pier Road and how MDOT is not reconstructing it wide enough for bicycles and pedestrians due to the lack of a countywide plan for walking and bicycling and that a countywide body could make a plan like this happen.

Mr. Assenmacher addressed Chairman Webb's questions about reflective markings, saying that raised or imbedded markers are difficult to do in a cold weather climate as they are usually just scraped off when winter plowing is done.

Mr. Assenmacher brought up the issue of mud tracking on the road by some farmers. He brought up a recent project that had to be postponed with extra cost to the Road Commission due to having to bring in a power washing company to clean mud off the roads. Chairman Webb stated that this issue was brought up some years ago and that problems with mud usually happen mostly at harvest time and she wondered if resurfacing projects could be scheduled to not coincide with that time. Mr. Assenmacher stated that the Road Commission is limited in when they can do their projects since Michigan is a cold weather state.

Mr. Smith stated that it was necessary to scrape the road after every load or there would be problems with overloading. Mr. Assenmacher stated that he would like to have a proactive discussion with the agricultural community regarding this matter and Chairman Webb stated that she would see what she can do. Mr. Assenmacher stated that the township truck ordinances are going well and that soon about half of the County's townships should be signed on. Mr. Wilmoth stated that he tries to clean his tires as much as possible out in the field but that every once in a while it is difficult not to put mud on the roads. Mr. Brant stated that vegetable farmers are more of a problem concerning mud than beans and corn farmers as vegetable farmers are continually harvesting. Mr. Assenmacher concluded by stating that he thought there is some degree of carelessness, and that awareness of this issue needs to be increased in order to save taxpayer dollars due to needing to clean the roads.

11. Other Items from Members –

- A. Mr. Peven stated that the 15-year contract with the Farm Service Agency for West County Park has expired. The County had been receiving an annual payment for the park for being in the CREP program by preserving highly erodible floodplain land from farming and instead putting it in permanent vegetative cover. Chairman Webb stated that it is disappointing that these payments have stopped as the CREP program was a good program.
- B. Mr. Peven mentioned the surveying tower out in Dundee on the grounds of the treatment plant. He stated that he was informed that the tower needs to be moved because of the construction going on at the plant. He stated that they are searching for a place to relocate the tower that is in the general Dundee area that also has electricity and internet. He mentioned the pump station right outside Dundee on M-50 as a possible location but he did not know if the site has internet. Mr. Brant stated that this station is actually in Raisinville Township. Mr. Peven thought there might have to be internet at this site, though, due to the fact that the pump needs to be operated remotely. Mr. Assenmacher mentioned the Road Commission property on Ida West Road as a possible site, as well, saying that they have power and internet there.

- C. Mr. Sperling congratulated Chairman Webb and her husband for receiving Volunteer of the Year awards with the Farm Bureau.
- D. Mr. Smith mentioned that in 1980 he and his wife did not vote for the Community College millage because they were out of town, but that they were going to vote against it because he was against the college back then. He said that the millage ended up passing by just one vote. He mentioned that eventually he set up a scholarship with the college, and that he has changed his mind about the value of the college as his children and grandchildren have received educations from there. Chairman Webb stated that she listened to the college president speak at the recent Oaks of Righteousness spaghetti dinner and that he stressed the importance of education in changing one's life situation. She also mentioned the college's hope of setting up a satellite facility in the east end of Monroe.

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

13. Adjournment: Motion by Mr. Brant, supported by Mr. Sperling, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting concluded at 8:33 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED

MEETING ADJOURNED

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