

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE MONROE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE and TIME:	November 9, 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.; Herb Smith; Mike Sperling; Gary Wilmoth
MEMBERS EXCUSED:	Patrick Miller
MCPC STAFF PRESENT:	Rob Peven, Planning Director; Lee Markham, Planner; Ryan Simmons, Planner
OTHERS PRESENT:	Carol Beldean, Mike Beldean, Gary Depa, Betty J. Hess, James Hess, Lisa Okasinski, John P. Sledge Jr.

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 Mr. Smith, supported by Mrs. Mentel, to adopt the proposed agenda.
MOTION CARRIED
4. Approval of the Minutes of the October 2016 Meeting

Motion by Mr. See, supported by Mrs. Curley, to accept the minutes of the October 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. Notice from Exeter Township regarding the adoption of their Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
 2. Letter to Chairman Webb from Lisa M. Okasinski regarding Ash Township rezoning case #200.1-11-16-31.
 3. Letter to Monroe County Planning Commission from Michael Beldean regarding Ash Township rezoning case #200.1-11-16-31.
 - B. Information
 1. Michigan Association of Conservation Districts announces “Farmers taking Action to Protect Water Quality in Western Lake Erie Basin” grant project – Press Release – Mr. Peven stated that this grant is mostly for projects in the headwaters of the River Raisin in Lenawee County. Chairman Webb stated that this grant will be good for Monroe County as well.
 2. Healthy Herald – Monroe County Health Department – November 2016
 3. SEMCOG Regional Update – October 2016
 4. Semscope – Fall 2016
 5. The Open Road – Monroe County Road Commission – Sep Oct 2016

Motion by Mrs. Mentel, 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. Frenchtown Charter Township Recreation Plan – Mr. Peven stated that there was a meeting in the Township a couple of weeks ago where they went over the results of the survey. He stated that they updated their goals and objectives based upon the results of the survey and based upon what the Township felt were other deficiencies in their park system. He stated that he will put together a draft plan for the Township in time for their December meeting.

B. Monroe County Remonumentation Program – Mr. Peven presented a table showing what each county in the State is getting this year for their grant. He stated that the County is getting about \$62,000, which is up about \$4,000 from the 2016 grant. He stated that each section corner costs about \$1,000 so they should be able to do four more for next year.

C. Approval of Reappointments to the Monroe County Planning Commission – Mr. Peven stated that the Board of Commissioners has reappointed Commissioners Assenmacher, Mentel, See and Sperling.

8. New Business

A. Consent Agenda

TOWNSHIP ZONING REVIEWS

200.1-11 -16-31 Ash Township (map)

This is an official request to change the zoning on a parcel totaling approximately 4.4 acres from C-2, General Service District to C-3, Heavy Commercial District. The purpose of the rezoning is to expand the existing general contractor business adjacent to the south for the purpose of storing aggregate, topsoil and building materials on the site. The parcel is located north of Sigler Road at the southwest corner of Indian Trail Road and Telegraph Road.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Monroe County Planning Commission advise the Ash Township Board that it recommends denial of the proposed zoning change request, as the expansion of the current C-3, Heavy Commercial use could have the potential to create a nuisance for neighboring residential properties to the north and west of the subject property. Staff feels that this rezoning could potentially be justified if the applicant proposes conditional zoning terms that would ensure that an expansion of the C-3, Heavy Commercial use at this site does not create a nuisance to neighboring residential properties.

Mr. Simmons read through Staff's review of the case and explained their rationale for recommending denial of the rezoning. Mr. Assenmacher asked what the zoning for the existing construction business to the south of the site is. Mr. Simmons apologized that it was not indicated on the attached zoning map and replied that the property to the south is zoned C-3.

Mr. Assenmacher asked Staff if they knew the reason why the Township's Planning Commission recommended approval for the rezoning. Mr. Simmons replied that it's not indicated in the draft meeting minutes received from the Township, but that there was a split vote among the Township's planning commissioners. Mr. Simmons stated that there was also a recommendation from the Township's planning consultant for approval of the rezoning, as the site is designated Commercial in the Township Master Plan, and that this designation is not in agreement with our County Comprehensive Plan's designation.

Mr. Markham read a letter from Mike Beldean, a neighbor living adjacent to the site, which was against the rezoning and specifically mentioned the noise and dust currently coming from the site.

John Sledge, a neighbor living adjacent to the site, also spoke against the rezoning. He stated that somebody else besides the applicant owns the subject property. He mentioned the noise coming from the site and decreasing property values. He stated that the applicant does not live near the property and does not know how the property is affecting neighboring properties. He stated that he was concerned that a C-3 classification could allow the applicant to put in something like a heavy-duty shop and he is concerned because Indian Trail Dr. has many residences.

Betty Hess, a neighbor living near the site, spoke against the rezoning, stating that she lives one house away from the property and that her husband has heart issues. She stated that there is continual noise coming from the site. She stated that she is not as concerned about what is happening now with the property but what might happen in the future, stating that the applicant has expressed his interest in purchasing even more adjacent property and that she would then be adjacent to it. She stated that the property does not have good eye appeal, and expressed her concerns regarding Township blight enforcement.

James Hess spoke against the rezoning and stated that the applicant has alternate areas where he could set up his business, and stated that the site creates too much dirt in the air. He stated that he has no problem with the applicant making a profit, but that residents should not have to accept this.

Lisa Okasinski, an attorney representing some of the homeowners living near the site, spoke against the rezoning. She answered Mr. Assenmacher's question about the Township Planning Commission's rationale for recommending approval of the rezoning, stating that the Commissioners who voted for the rezoning were not voting for the use of the property but rather for the commercial zoning classification. She mentioned the letter that she submitted to the Planning Commission, and stated that she thought that the applicant's proposed use of the property was important, as he does not plan on using the property for the same use as his current C-3 property to the south. She stated that he is currently screening dirt on the property and that this is not even an allowed use in the C-3 District, and that this activity is what is creating most of the noise and dust. She stated that the applicant has done nothing to demonstrate that, if the property is rezoned, that it will not create a nuisance to neighboring properties. She stated that there is a picture on the final page of her letter that shows the piles of dirt on the property adjacent to the street. Finally, she stated that the rezoning should be considered only when the applicant has proposed uses that would be consistent with a C-3 zoning classification.

Motion by Mr. Brant, supported by Mr. Assenmacher, to recommend denial of the rezoning application for this case.

MOTION CARRIED

Mr. Peven stated to the public in attendance that the County Planning Commission's decision and Staff's review of the rezoning would be mailed to the Township tomorrow. Chairman Webb thanked the public for attending the meeting.

200.1-11 -16-32

Ash Township (map)

This is an official request to change the zoning on a parcel totaling approximately 7.24 acres from AG, Agricultural District to C-3, Heavy Commercial District. The purpose of the rezoning is to locate an office, shop and truck and trailer parking lot on the site. The parcel is located on the east side of Telegraph Road south of Carleton-Rockwood Road.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Monroe County Planning Commission advise the Ash Township Board that it recommends approval of the proposed zoning change request, as the rezoning would be in character with adjacent commercial land uses to the north and west of the property and would further develop commercially the Telegraph Road/Carleton-Rockwood Road intersection, and for the other reasons stated above.

200.1-11 -16-33 Frenchtown Township (text)

Frenchtown Charter Township is proposing to amend Articles 7, 8, 19 and 23 of its Zoning Ordinance. These articles pertain to the following: Wording in the Zoning Ordinance referring to pool fences in the A, Agricultural District, and the Single Family Residential Districts and the GM, General Manufacturing District would be repealed, as these fences are now regulated by the Township's new ordinance regarding fences that was passed in August 2016.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Monroe County Planning Commission advise the Frenchtown Charter Township Board that it recommends approval of the proposed amendments for the reasons stated above.

SUMMARY OF AMENDMENTS

TOWNSHIP ZONING REVIEW

200.1- 11-16-34 Ida Township (text)

Ida Township is proposing to amend Articles 4 and 6 of its Zoning Ordinance. These amendments pertain to self-storage facilities within the Township.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Monroe County Planning Commission advise the Ida Township Board that it recommends approval of the proposed amendments for the reasons stated above.

Motion by Mr. Brant, supported by Mr. Brooks, to accept the Consent Agenda and the additional case from the Summary of Amendments to the Agenda, but to pull Case #200.1-11-16-31 from the Consent Agenda for further discussion.

Mr. Assenmacher brought up a typographical error in the recommendation for Case #200.1-11-16-33 on the agenda, but noted that the typo was not in Staff's write-up of the case. Chairman Webb asked Staff to take note of and to correct the error.

MOTION CARRIED

B. Notice of Raisinville Township's Intent to prepare a master plan – Mr. Peven stated that this notice is on Page 43 of the Agenda packet.

Mr. Brooks asked what the penalty is for being in violation of a township ordinance. Mr. Wilmoth stated that most townships do not have the staff or resources to pursue violations of a township ordinance. Mr. Peven stated that townships can fine people and take them to court for being in violation of an ordinance and that fines add up each day that the ordinance is being violated, but that there is a limit to these fines. He stated that each zoning ordinance has a section regarding violations and penalties and what the procedure is, but that there needs to be an enforcement officer.

9. Budget & Finance

- A. 2017 Approved Planning Commission Budget – Mr. Peven stated that the budget was approved by the County Board and he presented a table of the budget to the Planning Commissioners again. Chairman Webb mentioned the write-up of the Planning Department/Commission’s functions on the opposite page. Mr. Peven stated that a write-up of each department’s functions is part of the budget submission process for all of the county departments.

10. Committee Member’s / Director’s Report

- A. Lake Erie Transit (LET) Commissioner Report – Dr. Miller was not present. Mrs. Mentel stated that she was not at the meeting earlier but stated that the main issue was the regional transit millage failing in metro Detroit. If it had passed then LET would have had to add personnel, but that they will know more about where they stand by the December meeting. Mr. Peven mentioned that this may be good for LET as SMART currently does some accounting and grant administration tasks for LET.
- B. Monroe County Parks and Recreation Commission Report – Mrs. Mentel stated that there was not a November meeting of the Commission.
- C. Monroe County Road Commission Report – Mr. Assenmacher stated that the MCRC will be meeting with the Townships regarding 2017 projects in the next couple months. He stated that night crews will be starting up November 28th to deal with potential snow and ice issues. He stated that there is a tentative Federal Aid Committee meeting scheduled for December 14th. Mr. Assenmacher stated that he would like to hear from any of the Commissioners about any topics that they are interested in. He mentioned that Ida West Road is nice and that they got MDOT to help with some safety mitigation in the form of raised pavement markings through a three-mile section of the road. He stated that there may be more safety mitigation measures included in construction projects in the future. Chairman Webb mentioned some raised reflectors on War Road that she saw. Mr. Assenmacher stated that these are temporary and used when the MCRC performs chip seals.

Mr. Assenmacher stated that there is funding at the state level for road improvements at problematic railroad crossings. He stated that these crossings are a challenge for the County as there are so many of them. He asked the Commissioners if they would note to him any crossings that they know of that need improvements to their crossing conditions. Mr. Peven asked if this applied to paved or unpaved roads. Mr. Assenmacher stated that most likely the program would go towards paved roads as they were prioritizing money towards crossings with high average daily traffic. Mr. Sperling mentioned the crossing on Ida Center Road. Mrs. Mentel asked about the reflectors at Cole Road and Macomb Street. Mr. Assenmacher stated that these are temporary reflectors that will eventually be removed.

11. Other Items from Members

- A. Chairman Webb stated that she is concerned about the Planning Commission’s search for a new director and stated that she researched what her responsibility is in the search for a director. She stated that after talking to a County Commissioner that, eventually, she decided to make an appointment with Mike Bosanac. She stated that she had a very good talk with him and that Mr. Bosanac mentioned that they are exploring the possibility of sharing the cost of a planning director with other entities, possibly with the City of Monroe. She stated that this would help in sharing information between the City and County, as well. She stated that she stressed to Mr. Bosanac the importance of having a County Planning Commission and a director to support the Commission. She stated that both Mr. Markham and Mr. Peven are planning on leaving the Department, with Mr. Markham to resign at the end of this year, but that Mr. Peven will remain active at least until a new director is fully functional.

Mr. Peven stated that he and Mr. Markham have been part-time since they retired back in 2010. He stated that he let Mr. Bosanac know back in June when they began the budget process that he and Mr. Markham were thinking of leaving at the end of the year. He stated that he and Mr. Bosanac have been meeting with the Monroe City Manager about possible joint staffing arrangements. He stated that hiring a full-time director to replace two part-time employees is an option, but that it would have more of an impact on the budget due to the higher wages and

benefits that would need to be paid to that person. He stated that the City of Monroe is also short staffed and currently contracts out their zoning and site plan reviews to a consultant. He also mentioned that the City's GIS employee may also be retiring soon and mentioned that the County already contracts out its IT department to the City. He stated that he could not find a model of a city and county sharing a planning director and could only find examples of counties contracting out planning services to townships similar to our current Partners-in-Planning program. He stated that he is supposed to get back to Mr. Bosanac about what his recommendation is and that first he wanted to discuss it with Chairman Webb and the Commission at the meeting tonight.

Chairman Webb stressed that it is important to have the Planning Commission secure as there are a couple of Township plans that we need to review in the next few months. Mr. Wilmoth suggested that Mr. Brant bring it up at the next Board of Commissioners agenda meeting. Mr. Brant stated that he would and that he and Mr. Wilmoth should make an effort to remind Mr. Bosanac of the issue of finding a planning director, and that once a plan with the City is decided upon and once Mr. Peven's plans are finalized, then an RFP with qualifications for a new director can be put out.

Mr. Assenmacher asked how the City of Monroe currently handles its planning. Mr. Brant replied that they used to have a planning department, but that now rezonings are contracted out to Beckett & Raeder because they are short staffed and did not want to pay a full-time employee. Mr. Assenmacher asked if we are in the same situation. Mr. Brant replied that, in contrast, the County would like somebody in-house with an office at either the City or County and that this person's duties would be split between the two. Mr. Sperling asked if it would be somebody within the County. Chairman Webb stated that this would be good but that the person needs to be qualified. She noted that Jeff Green was named Community Development Director for the City of Monroe this week.

Mrs. Mentel asked what would happen with Mr. Simmons in the transition. Chairman Webb stated that she hoped that he would remain as a planner as he goes to many meetings for the Commission. Mr. Simmons noted that he would also be responsible for Mr. Markham's current duties once he leaves, as well. Once again, Chairman Webb stated that a situation where somebody comes in once a month or every other month to check in on the Department will not work. Mr. Wilmoth stated that the only problem that he could see would be upgrading the budget.

- B. Mr. Brant stated that the County Board is looking for applicants in order to make an appointment to the Road Commission. He stated that the deadline to apply is either November 10 or November 11. He and Mr. Wilmoth agreed that they would like to see the Road Commission be representative of the entire county. Mr. Peven asked if the current Commissioner is eligible to reapply. Mr. Brant stated that he is but that they have not heard from him yet. Mr. Peven asked if he was one of the elected Commissioners. Mr. Brant replied that he was elected but that now the Road Commissioner positions are appointments.
- C. Chairman Webb stated that she spoke to Dennis Meyer and Doug Darling about Mr. Assenmacher's comments at the last Planning Commission meeting about muddy roads. She stated that they are going to address this issue once all of the farming is over.
- D. Mrs. Mentel asked about whether Jeff Boudrie would be able to perform GIS duties for the City of Monroe, as well. Mr. Peven replied that Mr. Boudrie would need help as there are a lot of parcels in the City. He stated that the current GIS person is within the Engineering Department and it is not a shared GIS with other City departments. Mrs. Mentel asked if Mr. Peven would stay on into 2017 if necessary. Mr. Peven stated that he would like to and that Mr. Bosanac supports him working reduced hours in helping with a transition, and that he would need to eventually train someone else to perform his current duties. Mr. Assenmacher asked if there would be a conflict of interest if we shared a director and there was a case within the Monroe city limits. Mr. Brant replied that we do not review City zoning cases.

**Minutes of the November 9, 2016
Monroe County Planning Commission Meeting**

13. Adjournment: Motion by Mr. Brant, supported by Mr. Sperling, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting concluded at 8:50 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED

MEETING ADJOURNED

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