

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE MONROE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE and TIME:	December 14, 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; Herb Smith; Mike Sperling; Gary Wilmoth
MEMBERS EXCUSED:	Patrick Miller; Larry See, Jr.
MCPC STAFF PRESENT:	Rob Peven, Planning Director; Lee Markham, Planner; Ryan Simmons, Planner
OTHERS PRESENT:	Chase Canfield, ProMedica Monroe Regional Hospital; Mark Cochran, ProMedica Monroe Regional Hospital; Ron Giuliani, DGL; David C. Hoffman, Dundee; Brian McNulty, ProMedica; Mark Rose, ProMedica; April Smucker, ProMedica; Robin Whitney, ProMedica

1. Vice-Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and the Commission proceeded to transact business.
2. Vice-Chairman Smith led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Adopt/Revise Agenda – Motion by Mrs. Mentel, supported by Mr. Brant, to adopt the proposed agenda.
MOTION CARRIED
4. Approval of the Minutes of the November 2016 Meeting

Motion by Mr. Brant, supported by Mrs. Curley, to accept the minutes of the November 2016 meeting as submitted and to place them on file.

MOTION CARRIED

Chairman Webb arrived at the meeting at this time and Vice-Chairman Smith turned over the meeting to her.

5. Call to the Public – No member of the public wished to speak at this time.
6. Correspondence & Information
 - A. Correspondence
 - B. Information
 1. SEMCOG – Regional Update – November 21, 2016
 2. Healthy Herald – December 2016
 3. Monroe County Museum – Grapevine Newsletter
 4. Monroe County Health Department – Christmas Tree Recycling News

Motion by Mr. Sperling, 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 a meeting December 13th. He stated that there was originally supposed to be a meeting on December 6th, but there was not a quorum, but there was also not a quorum on the 13th. He stated that it is important that the Township gets the Plan in before April of next year so that they are eligible for grants. He stated that the draft plan is approved and ready for release to the public, though, and that the public hearing will be on January 19th and that the Township Board should approve it on January 24th, which will also be a second public hearing.

B. Monroe County Remonumentation Program – Mr. Peven stated that Mr. Boudrie is at a meeting this evening in Temperance regarding the program. This is the final meeting of the year. He stated that he and Mr. Boudrie will be busy the next couple of weeks wrapping up this year’s program and applying for the grant next year.

8. New Business

A. Consent Agenda

TOWNSHIP ZONING REVIEWS

200.1-12-16-35 Frenchtown Charter Township (map)

This is an official request to change the zoning on three parcels totaling approximately 274.822 acres from A, Agricultural District and C-3, Highway Commercial District to PUD, Planned Unit Development District, with underlying zoning classifications of C-3, Highway Commercial, OS, Office Service District and A, Agricultural District. The purpose of the rezoning is to construct a new campus for Monroe Regional Hospital, along with associated medical and commercial uses. The parcel is located on the south side of North Dixie Highway east of the I-75 interchange.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Monroe County Planning Commission advise the Frenchtown Charter Township Board that it recommends approval of the proposed zoning change request, as it would have a positive impact upon economic development and public health in Monroe County. Staff does have concerns regarding traffic and sewer infrastructure that we feel should be addressed by the applicant and the Township.

Mr. Simmons reviewed the case, summarizing the submitted General Development Plan and explained how the Plan called for various allowable uses on four different designated zones of the site. He stated that the proposal also included a bicycle and pedestrian path that would connect from Dixie Highway to the River Raisin Heritage Trail and that the Plan called for a bicycle-friendly site. He stated that the proposed development was technically contrary to the County Comprehensive Plan, but that Staff believes that the adjacent commercial uses, available infrastructure and the economic development and public health benefits of the application justify the rezoning. Finally, he stated that Staff has concerns regarding traffic and sewer infrastructure that should be addressed by the applicant and the Township.

Mrs. Mentel stated that she was reading a letter on behalf of Scott Bentley, the Superintendent for the River Raisin National Battlefield, as he is not in Monroe at the moment. She read the letter, which expressed the desire for trails that would connect to the National Battlefield and to businesses on the west side of I-75, which would include a pedestrian bridge to be constructed over I-75. The letter included a map of where a proposed bridge might be located. She stated that Mr. Bentley was not aware of the Township Planning Commission meeting and she wondered whether she and Mr. Bentley would have to go back to the Township or whether if delivering the message at the County Planning Commission would be enough. Mr. Peven explained that the case will eventually go back to the Township Board just like any other zoning case and that after it is approved then the site plan will eventually be approved, but that would not go to the County Planning Commission.

Ms. Whitney of ProMedica asked if Mrs. Mentel was looking for ProMedica’s cooperation regarding this matter. Mrs. Mentel stated that she was looking for ProMedica’s ability to be a partner regarding

this and that she works as a volunteer for the National Battlefield. Ms. Whitney suggested that some language could potentially be added to the PUD regarding cooperation when it comes to this bridge and that she did not think the Township would oppose it. Mrs. Mentel stated that she would give Ms. Whitney a copy of the letter and map. Ms. Whitney stated that it would be necessary to work with MDOT and Federal Highway regarding a proposal like this.

Mrs. Mentel asked about the possibility of a sidewalk across the existing bridge. Ms. Whitney stated that any solutions would probably not actually be on ProMedica property but that ProMedica is willing to cooperate. Mr. Assenmacher suggested that there may be grant money available in the federal Transportation Alternatives Program for something like this, as this would not be a small project and that one entity is not likely to accomplish this alone.

Mr. Peven asked for clarification regarding the easement granted to connect to the River Raisin Heritage Trail. Ms. Whitney stated that ProMedica has agreed to build this trail. Mr. Peven asked if this would involve building a bridge, stating that there is a waterway separating the two properties. Ms. Whitney stated that the proposed route has not been finalized yet and a bridge would be expensive, but that they have committed to creating the trail. Mr. Simmons clarified that the PUD agreement states that the Township will be responsible for maintaining the trail.

Ms. Whitney stated that, regarding Staff's concerns in their analysis, that a traffic study has been commissioned and that the Road Commission is currently reviewing it and that the Township engineer is in support of their signalization plan. She stated that they are also looking at the sanitary sewer issue. She stated that the plan is for a 134-bed hospital and that they are ensuring that they will meet the needs of the community. Mrs. Mentel stated that she will be in contact with Ms. Whitney and hopefully she will soon be able to talk directly with Mr. Bentley.

Mr. Peven asked Mr. Simmons to clarify the zoning on the front portion of the site, stating that it appears some of the frontage is actually zoned agriculturally at the moment. Mr. Simmons confirmed that this is the case and that this area would now have an underlying zoning of C-3 if the PUD is approved, but that per the agreement the agricultural use would be allowed to continue until ProMedica decides to develop that portion of the site.

Motion by Mr. Brant, supported by Mr. Smith, to recommend approve the proposal as recommended by Staff with the provision that ProMedica considers implementing Mrs. Mentel's proposal.

MOTION CARRIED

200.1-12-16-36 Ash Township (map)

This is an official request to change the zoning on a parcel totaling approximately 0.58 acres from AG, Agricultural District to C-2, General Service District. The purpose of the rezoning is to continue to use the site as a bar and restaurant. The parcel is located on west side of Telegraph Road north of Labo 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 bring the property into conformance with its current land use, and the rezoning would not be inconsistent with the commercial zoning and land use of several of the nearby properties along Telegraph Road.

200.1-12-16-37 Whiteford Township (text)

Whiteford Township is submitting its 2016 Whiteford Township Draft Zoning Ordinance for review. The proposed ordinance is an update of the Whiteford Township Zoning Ordinance, which was last adopted in 2003 and has been amended several times since then.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Monroe County Planning Commission advise the Whiteford Township Board that it recommends sending the Whiteford Township Zoning Ordinance back to the Whiteford Township Planning Commission for further review of the provisions for agricultural land within the Ordinance.

200.1-12-16-38 Bedford Township (map)

This is an official request to change the zoning on a parcel totaling approximately 0.48 acres from C-1, Local Business District to R-2A, One-Family Residential District. The purpose of the rezoning is to bring the residential use of the parcel into conformance with the Zoning Ordinance. The parcel is located on the west side of Whiteford Center Road between Section Road and Hill Drive.

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, the Bedford Township Master Plan and with adjacent land uses, and for the other reasons stated above.

OTHER REVIEWS

200.3-12-16-2 Frenchtown Charter Township Master Plan

Frenchtown Charter Township has released a copy of their 2016 Master Plan for review and comment. The 2016 Master Plan consists of three sections: the Land Use Plan, the Transportation Plan, and the Background Data, which consist of census information, the results of public outreach and surveys and a summary of the 2013 Resilient Monroe joint planning effort with the City of Monroe and Monroe Charter Township.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Monroe County Planning Commission submit the above comments to Frenchtown Charter Township.

Mrs. Mentel stated that she would like Case 200.1-12-16-35 pulled from the Consent Agenda.

Motion by Mr. Sperling, supported by Mr. Brant, to accept the Consent Agenda and the additional case from the Summary of Amendments to the Agenda, but to pull Case #200.1-12-16-35 from the Consent Agenda for further discussion.

MOTION CARRIED

9. Budget & Finance

A. Update on future staffing needs – Mr. Peven stated that he met with the Human Resources Director and the County Administrator regarding the staff vacancies when he and Mr. Markham leave. He stated that they seemed to agree to hire a full-time replacement but that this person would not necessarily be a director but instead a senior planner position. He stated that he did not think they believed that a director position was necessary considering the small size of the Planning Department, but that they would be putting together a job description for this proposed position. Chairman Webb stated that this would help.

Mr. Wilmoth asked about having one planner replace both of their positions. Mr. Markham stated that both he and Mr. Peven are currently working half time. Chairman Webb stated that both of them were originally full time planners, though. Mr. Peven stated that this would cost the County a bit more, though, due to having to pay a new

planner benefits, as he and Mr. Markham are both receiving benefits from their County retirement board. Mr. Assenmacher asked how the hierarchy would work and who the person would report to. Mr. Peven stated that these details were not discussed but that might be how it works, and that he reports to Mr. Bosanac currently, and that he has done so since the new County Planning Ordinance was passed a few years back, as before that the director position was only responsible to the Planning Commission. He stated that Community Corrections who the Planning Department shares office space with is also a small department that works with just a coordinator position and not a director, and that he believed that the idea was that not hiring a Planning Director would save the County money. He stated that this proposal has not gone before the County Board or Personnel Services Committee yet, however, and that he will continue to serve as Planning Director and even possibly overlap staying when a new hire is brought on.

Mr. Brant stated that Mr. Peven agreed to continue on, it gave the County some additional breathing room so that somebody new does not need to be hired quickly before the beginning of the next year. He stated that somebody would eventually need to be hired though so as to not leave Mr. Peven hanging indefinitely. Chairman Webb stated that she believed that if Mr. Peven and Mr. Markham had left and not been hired back part time, then the Planning Commission would have received a replacement Planning Director, but that now the Commission has lost the money needed to hire a new Director that was available before, and that this is sad.

10. Committee Member's / Director's Report

- A. Lake Erie Transit (LET) Commissioner Report – Dr. Miller was not present. Mrs. Mentel stated that the bus wraps on three buses were rolled out that included themes involving the City of Monroe, Frenchtown Charter Township and Bedford Township. She stated that the wraps have been well-received. She stated that ridership can always increase, but that LET is doing great.
- B. Monroe County Parks and Recreation Commission Report – Mrs. Mentel stated that there were 181 reservations in 2016. There were 186 reservations in 2015, so the number decreased by five. Water has been shut off to Waterloo Park and the bathrooms have been winterized. Trash is continuing to be picked up on a regular schedule. She stated that there will be a new kayak landing site there next year thanks to the help of Commissioner Hoffman. Vienna Park also had its water shut off and its lines drained. The native grass and wildflowers were cut for the winter and trash service is continuing as needed. Staff mowed some of Nike Park was mowed due to the warm weather in November, as the contract ran out at the end of October. Native grass and wildflowers were also cut and the water system was shut off. Heck Park had its water shut off and the restrooms winterized. Mowing was also necessary past the contract end time, and all three flags were replaced at the entrance due to wear. The fence near the basketball courts was repaired and staff is awaiting the arrival of a gate. The wildflowers and native grasses were also cut down and trash service is okay there.

Loranger Square had grass mowed as well as being cleaned up in preparation for the holiday season downtown. Trash is also being taken care of. The Navarre-Anderson trading post has also had trash taken care of as scheduled. West County Park has had its weeds cut around parking area and structures and trash service has been scheduled as needed. There is also a gate there now, as well. It was just closed only within the last week because people were still using it due to the weather being so nice. She stated that they will be getting ready for the new year and for shelter reservations next year. Chairman Webb stated that the Jefferson Boy Scouts appreciated being out at Nike Park.

- C. Monroe County Road Commission Report – Mr. Assenmacher stated that the MDOT Traffic Summit took place on December 9th where MDOT, the County Road Commission, the City of Monroe and northwest Ohio share their 2016 completed projects and their 2017 upcoming project lists with each other. He stated that MDOT's main project was the I-75 construction. Mr. Assenmacher went over the Road Commission's projects, stating that they spent \$14.7 million for surface treatments that covered about 212 miles of roads. He stated that the HMA countywide paving program did 36 miles of resurfacing for about \$4 million and that they would like to expand that in the future. He stated that the MCRC's biggest 2016 project was the Ida West project.

Mr. Assenmacher stated that in 2017 the Summerfield Road and Milwaukee Road bridges over US-23 would be redone by MDOT and that they will continue to patch up I-75, as well as perform other preventative maintenance projects.

Mr. Assenmacher stated that the Monroe County Federal Aid Committee meeting was held today and that the Road Commission's 2017-20 Federal Aid project list passed with flying colors and that he is happy to answer any questions about projects included on the list. He stated that they are just about done meeting with the Townships and that this also generates investment into the local road, bridge and culvert system and that discussion will develop in the next few months and they are confident that they will have another busy year. Mr. Assenmacher also mentioned the upcoming 60-mile Road Commission chip seal program, which will increase the chip sealing by about 20 to 30 percent from 2016 to 2017.

Chairman Webb asked about the railroad crossing program. Mr. Assenmacher stated that they are still in the process of being informed about the program, and that the City of Monroe received their notification just yesterday and that the Road Commission has not received their notification yet. He stated that these projects are supposed to be turned in by the railroad companies through the input of road agencies by the middle of next month. Mr. Wilmoth suggested a possible project would be the CN crossing on Vienna Road.

11. Other Items from Members

- A. Mr. Peven brought attention to the proposed Whiteford Township zoning map that was passed out to accompany Case 200.1-12-16-37. He stated that he believed there was a problem with all of the spot zoned residential sites in the Township, and that this was due to their Zoning Board of Appeals granting a large number of variances permitting residences to be built on lots that did not fit the regulations for the Township's agricultural district. As a result, the Township rezoned all of these parcels from agricultural to residential and that this opens up many problems. Mr. Brant stated that it appeared that every parcel that was less than five acres was made Residential. Mr. Wilmoth remarked that, as agricultural sites are allowed by state law to be a minimum of two acres, they are going against state statute rezoning these properties. Mr. Peven stated that it also opens the door to anybody who is adjacent to one of these residential properties to also ask for residential zoning as their justification would be that they are adjacent to sites that are already zoned residentially.

Chairman Webb mentioned the farmland preservation proposal which would allow two houses to be built in the corner of a large parcel while preserving the remaining agricultural land. Mr. Peven noted that Whiteford Township would like to promote development in the Township but that they do not want subdivision development and that they are concerned with their school age population declining. He stated that they are putting some infrastructure in but that you cannot see on the map a specific area where they want to promote residential development.

- B. Chairman Webb asked if there was any way to show on maps the parcels that have been placed in P.A. 116 agreements. Mr. Peven stated that this used to be done but the Department has not kept up with updating the maps. Mr. Brant asked if it is the individual townships' responsibilities to keep records of their P.A. 116 land. Mr. Wilmoth stated that it is their responsibility to keep track of P.A. 162 and P.A. 260 land. Mr. Brant stated that P.A. 116 was taken over by a different act. Mr. Peven stated that it was P.A. 345. Mr. Brant stated that there should be some kind of database of this land. Mr. Peven stated that the Planning Department receives the agreements but has not kept up with mapping them, and that it is not a requirement to do this, but it makes for good planning. Mr. Brant mentioned in the past that a lot of farmland agreements were not even sent to the County Planning Commission and that the State did not catch this.
- C. Mr. Peven read a resolution honoring Mr. Markham for his service to the Monroe County Planning Department. The Planning Commissioners and Staff applauded Mr. Markham after the reading of the resolution. Mr. Markham thanked everybody, stating that it has been a privilege working for the Planning Commission and for his great bosses Mr. Maniko and Mr. Peven.

D. Mr. Smith asked if there is a Michigan law requiring five acres of land to own a horse. Mr. Wilmoth and Mr. Brant stated that there was no such law. Mr. Peven stated that some Townships do have local ordinances. Mr. Wilmoth mentioned that these ordinances do not supersede the State laws regarding farming, though. Mr. Brooks asked how communities can prevent residents from owning chickens. Mr. Wilmoth stated that one just needed an acre of ground to be able to have chickens for 4-H. Mr. Peven noted that a lot of cities are allowing residents to own chickens now.

E. Mrs. Mentel asked if animal control gives out a kennel license does that person also need a license from the Township. Mr. Brant stated that they needed the license from the township first and that the County is not supposed to give a license unless it has already been approved by the township. Mrs. Mentel stated that there is a person who has a license from the County but never got one from their township. Mr. Brant stated that he was not really aware that Animal Control gave out licenses.

12. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 14, 2016 at 7:30 p.m.

13. Adjournment: Motion by Mr. Brant, supported by Mr. Smith, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting concluded at 8:31 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED

MEETING ADJOURNED

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