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DeKalb County Government
Sycamore, Illinois

DEKALB COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
(September 28, 2017)

The DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) met on September 28, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. in the DeKalb County Administrative Building, Conference Room East, in Sycamore, Illinois. In attendance were Commission Members: Cheryl Aldis, Jo Ellen Charlton, Rich Gentile, Russell Kula, John Fisher, Martha May, Les Redden, Becky Morphey, Brian Gregory, Linda Swenson, and Kevin Bunge. Also in attendance were: Dan Nolan (future committee representative from Village of Shabbona); Jim Hutchison; Brad Belanger; Donna Prain; and County Staff members: Derek Hiland, Jolene Willis, and Marcellus Anderson.

1. Roll Call – Commission members Steve Devlieger, Bryan Rhodes, and Elizabeth Peerboom were absent.

2. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Gregory asked the Commission agenda be amended to include a new permanent agenda item, “Public Comment”, which would occur after the “Approval of Minutes” item, explaining that it would give any members of the public attending the Commission meeting an opportunity to address the Committee.

Mr. Gentile moved to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Ms. Aldis, and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes – *Mr. Gentile moved to approve the minutes of the July 27, 2017 meeting, seconded by Ms. Swenson, and the motion carried unanimously.*

Mr. Hiland gave a brief summary of the history and purpose of the Regional Planning Commission.

Mr. Gregory announced that Mr. Pardridge would be resigning from the Commission, thanking him for his fifteen (15) years of service on the Commission and wishing him well in his future endeavors.

4. Public Comment

Donna Prain noted that she was there as an educator, who was at the meeting to learn more about what it did so that she could relay that information about it back to her classroom.

5. Resolution of Appreciation for Les Bellah

Mr. Gregory read a copy of a proposed Resolution in Appreciation to Les Bellah (representative for the Village of Kirkland), acknowledging his participation in and many contributions to the Regional Planning Commission.

Ms. Aldis moved to approve the Resolution in Appreciation to Les Bellah, seconded by Mr. Gentile, and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Election of Vice Chair

Mr. Hiland noted that with the departure of Ms. Haji-Sheikh from the Commission, the position of Vice-chair was vacant.

Mr. Gentile nominated Ms. Aldis as vice-chair, seconded by Ms. Morphey, and the nomination was approved unanimously. No other nominations were presented.

Mr. Bunge moved to approve of Ms. Aldis as the Vice-chair of the Regional Planning Commission, seconded by Mr. Fisher, and the motion carried unanimously.

7. Code Enforcement Best Practices

Mr. Hiland initiated a discussion regarding best code enforcement or property maintenance practices, giving a description of such practices, what they are intended to accomplish, and how the practices followed affected neighboring communities and unincorporated areas of the County.

The Commission had an extended discussion regarding the various practices occurring within their communities and the successes and difficulties they have had in enforcing such practices.

Major topics discussed included:

- The need for Board / Council support of the practice
- The presence (or lack of) and training of code enforcement personnel
- Getting public support of the practices

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- The need for the community to be consistent and persistent in enforcing its codes and property maintenance practices
- Making sure that the language in the community's code adequately and properly support its property maintenance practices, and that said language is current and relevant
- The use of adjudication systems and ticketing
- The need to educate the public and the decision makers regarding the codes and regulations
- The importance of compassion addressing violations and complaints

8. Solar / Wind Farm Moratorium Update

Mr. Hiland informed the Commission that the County had enacted a moratorium on the construction of new commercial solar and wind farms, informing the Commission that the County imposed the moratorium so that it could develop and enact regulations covering the establishment, construction, operation, and eventual decommissioning of commercial wind and solar installations. He then described the County's progress in developing the new regulations, in particular, detailing the DeKalb County Planning and Zoning Committee's recent discussions regarding the language for solar farms.

9. Municipal Development Permits / Projects / Challenges / Champions

Mr. Hiland asked the Commission to consider possible changes to the format of the Commission's packet, namely the Current Development Project listing, and to think about whether the listing was still needed or if its format should be changed.

Mr. Gregory (Sycamore) reported on Sycamore's efforts to address video gaming licenses. This led to a discussion by the Commission on how various other communities were regulating video gaming. He then reported that: a new Hardees was under construction; a new auto parts store was planning to come; D&D Jewelers had relocated to a different location in the city; that the Sycamore branch of the Illinois Community Credit Union had finished construction on their new building and had moved into it; the Pantry Café, a new eatery, would be opening downtown; and, Suter's was expanding their location.

Mr. Hiland and Mr. Bunge (DeKalb County) noted that the County was developing solar farm regulations, and described the development of the new Northwestern Medicine Wellness Center, which was under construction. Mr. Bunge also noted that the County was still encouraging the development of new agribusiness in the County.

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Ms. Morphey (Somonauk) reported that Somonauk had one permit so far, and that a new restaurant, the Somonauk Pancake House, would be opening that week. She also noted that they had received three (3) video gaming inquiries.

Mr. Pardridge (Shabbona) reported that not much was happening in Shabbona. He then introduced Dan Nolan, who would be taking his place as the representative from Shabbona at future meetings.

Mr. Fisher (Kingston) reported that things were quiet in Kingston, but that the Village was in the process of trying to get an economic grant from the DeKalb County Community Foundation.

Ms. Charlton (DeKalb) described the City's Annie Glidden North Revitalization Plan. She reported that the City was informed by the DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation that there was a group looking to potentially locate a new business in the City. She also highlighted efforts of the City's Economic Development Planner, and the efforts of the City to get the word out about the City as a prime potential business location.

Mr. Redden (Sandwich) noted that the City was wrapping up a few projects. He described a new 20-unit apartment complex is almost done, and reported on three (3) businesses that have taken advantage of their Enterprise Zone. He added that they may be getting a new fast food restaurant in 2018. He also talked about the City's moratorium on liquor licenses.

Ms. Swenson (Waterman) reported that things were pretty quiet there. She described that the Village was still having a problem with the well that was supposed to have been put in by one of the developments. She also noted that the Lions club was working together to build a new gazebo in the Village park.

Mr. Gentile (Genoa) reported that a new Dunkin Donuts was coming to Genoa, and that a Mexican restaurant would be opening in the vacant Rosati's location. He also noted that a new barber was coming to town.

Ms. Aldis (Cortland) reported a number of happenings in Cortland: they have issued fourteen building permits this year; two 5-unit townhomes under construction and 4 single-family homes; the plans for the new Casey's is under review; and, work on the municipal parking lot was to begin next week, and will include a new electronic sign. She then described a situation where a local restaurant was applying for a liquor license so that it can put in video gaming, and discussed with the other members about how they have dealt with similar requests. Ms. Aldis also

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described a request they have received for a small, wireless cell tower, and discussed with the other members how they have dealt with such requests.

Mr. Gregory proposed that it might be a good idea to submit to Mr. Hiland on a quarterly basis a listing of the permits issued, new restaurants opened, etc., as a way of compiling some useful economic information.

Mr. Kula (Hinckley) reported that the Village was quiet, but that there was a new bakery in town. He also noted that they Village was working with the DeKalb County Community Foundation to on an economic grant.

Ms. May (Lee) reported that the Village was working on removing an eyesore on its main street.

10. Next Meeting Date

Mr. Hiland noted that the next scheduled meeting date would be on November 23, 2017, at 6:30 p.m. in the Conference Room – East, DeKalb County Administrative Building, which would be the night of the Thanksgiving Holiday. The Commission decided to reschedule the meeting to November 30, 2017.

Mr. Hiland asked that the Committee members please contact him with topics they would like discussed at the next meeting. He noted that several possible topics that he had noted were: a code workshop; property maintenance; specialty gaming licenses; electronic signage; and, small cell providers.

11. Adjournment – Mr. Pardridge motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Morphey, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Gregory
Chairman, DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission

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