

Note: These minutes are not official until approved by the DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission at a subsequent meeting. Please refer to the meeting minutes when these minutes are approved to obtain any changes to these minutes.

DeKalb County Government
Sycamore, Illinois

DEKALB COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
(January 28, 2016)

The DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) met on January 28, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the DeKalb County Administration Building, Conference Room East, in Sycamore, Illinois. In attendance were Commission members Rich Gentile, Linda Swenson, Les Bellah, Misty Haji-Sheikh, Brian Gregory, Kathleen Curtis, Becky Morphey, Martha May, Les Redden, Anita Sorensen, Bob Iversen, and Derek Hiland. Also in attendance were Paul Borek, Mark Pietrowski, John Frieders, Greg Milburg and Mark Tuttle of the DeKalb County Farm Bureau Board, and County staff members Paul Miller and Rebecca Von Drasek.

1. **Roll Call** -- *Commission members Don Partridge, John Fischer, and Cheryl Aldis were absent.*
2. **Approval of Agenda** – *Mr. Bellah moved to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Mr. Gregory, and the motion carried unanimously.*
3. **Approval of Minutes** -- *Ms. Curtis moved to approve the minutes from the October 22, 2015 meeting, seconded by Mr. Gentile, and the motion carried unanimously.*

Ms. Swenson arrived at 7:03 pm. Ms. May arrived at 7:05 pm. Ms. Sorensen arrived at 7:10 pm.

4. **DeKalb County Unified Comprehensive Plan: Amendment Regarding Business Development** – Mr. Miller explained that the DeKalb County began discussing last Fall the issue of how the County might become more “business-friendly.” On October 21, 2015, the County Board passed Resolution R2015-75, which directed the Planning, Zoning and Building staff to initiate the necessary processes to allow possible amendments to the DeKalb County Unified Comprehensive Plan and DeKalb County Zoning Ordinance related to making it easier for businesses to locate in unincorporated portions of the County.

Mr. Miller further explained that the DeKalb County Unified Comprehensive Plan can be amended by action of the DeKalb County Board via ordinance, following at least one public hearing conducted to collect public input on the proposed amendment. However, an important element of the Unified Comprehensive Plan is the cooperation it embodies with the municipalities within the County’s boundaries. The Regional Planning Commission provided oversight and involvement by the municipalities in the 2003 and 2011 Plans, and endorsed the adoption of those documents by the County Board. Updates and amendments to the Plan should likewise involve the municipalities. This is of particular importance given that part of the reason why the cities, villages, and towns cooperated with the County on its Plan is the policy of discouraging all nonagricultural uses to develop within or immediately adjacent to municipal borders. Mr. Miller noted that this policy

means that cities do not have to worry about competing with the County for much needed business development. The new policy under discussion creates just such possible competition, and could allow business developers to play the County off the cities in order to broker a better deal.

Ms. Swenson agreed and stated that she understands the farming community's need to diversify. She opined that the current regulations for business in the County can be arduous. She observed that tourism dollars for activities like the Waterman winery also brings people to the Village of Waterman.

Mr. Gregory inquired if businesses in unincorporated areas would also need to provide adequate services (i.e. police and roads) and meet building standards (i.e. fire suppression, utility connections, etc). He observed that the municipalities were better equipped to provide many of these types of services. Mr. Miller agreed that the responsibility to provide these services would fall to the County if the developments were located in unincorporated areas.

Ms. Morphey noted the potential for the hypothetical businesses to not be "ag" related.

Ms. Haji-Sheikh suggested that the County had a long history of protecting farmland and noted that the suggested revision would open the door to non-agricultural uses.

Mr. Hiland stated that he did not think the municipalities would object to incubator-sized businesses in the County, but noted it would be direct competition with the communities if large-scale developments could be in the unincorporated areas.

Mr. Pietrowski was recognized. He suggested that this amendment, in conjunction with the Enterprise Zone, are steps the County Board is taking to encourage employers to chose DeKalb County. Mr. Pietrowski stated that he had not anticipated large developments in the unincorporated areas.

Mr. Miller informed the Commission that the Planning and Zoning Committee had not suggested limitation on the scale of business, and did indicate that this is an attempt to attract all prospective employers. However, the proposal is also tentative, and the Committee is looking for input from the municipalities and other interests.

The Commission briefly hypothesized about various types of business developments which can and cannot fit into the agricultural areas.

Mr. Redden objected to businesses not being directed to the municipalities, noting the importance of centralizing services to keep store fronts open.

Mr. Bellah agreed that every business in a downtown area is important.

The Commission discussed the suggestion that the businesses proposed were "Ag-compatible", meaning that although not related to farming, the proposed activities would not disrupt surrounding farm operations. The Commissioners discussed the notion that "compatible" would not necessarily

mean “Ag-related”. They noted that some projects might be appropriate in the agricultural areas versus the municipalities but that generally that would only be businesses that were based in agriculture. The Commissioners observed the difficulty of creating a definition of which businesses would be appropriate in the agricultural areas.

Mr. Bellah moved that the Regional Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that any revision to the Comprehensive Plan be for “agriculturally-related business developments”, rather than any businesses whatsoever, in the unincorporated areas of DeKalb County, and that other business developments continue to be directed to the municipalities, seconded by Mr. Hiland, and the motion carried with Commissioners Mr. Redden and Ms. Swenson voting “no.”

Mr. Frieders was recognized, he stated that the intent of the revision is to accommodate more employers.

5. Annual Dues – Mr. Miller reminded the Commissioners that the Regional Planning Commission voted in 2007 to assess annual dues to its member communities. He explained that these dues are intended to offset the County’s costs of providing staffing, meeting room, and materials. An invoice was sent to each member community for the \$500 dues. Dues are requested to be received by the end of February 2016.

6. Member Re-Appointments

Mr. Miller pointed out that the following member’s terms were due to expire in April of 2016:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>Appointed</u>	<u>Alternate</u>
Village of Maple Park	Elizabeth Peerboom	Kathleen Curtis
Village of Waterman	Linda Swenson	Roger Bosworth
City of DeKalb	Derek Hiland	open
Village of Malta	Anita Sorensen	open

He asked these individuals to work with their city council/village board to forward in writing to County Board Chairman Mark Pietrowski the names of a representative to the Regional Planning Commission and an alternate. The names of the member representative and an alternate need to be received no later than March 29, 2016, so that the County Board Chairman can make appoints at the April 20, 2016 meeting of the DeKalb County Board. Mr. Miller said hopefully the same representatives can continue to serve and that, once appointed, the terms would be for a three-year period.

7. 2016 Agenda Items

Mr. Miller explained that the Regional Planning Commission has, since its inception, served as an important forum for communication, coordination and cooperation between the units of local government on issues that cross jurisdictional boundaries. Each year, several such issues are discussed and related information is shared. He inquired what issues are currently taking place within member communities, with an eye toward sharing lessons learned from experiences and

seeking input and ideas from each other. He suggested that some possible topics could include: leaf burning regulations; planned developments as a flexible regulatory tool; review of floodplain, wetland, and stormwater management regulations; and Illinois Accessibility Code requirements.

Ms. Haji-Sheikh suggested a discussion on State budget issues, and consideration of what happens when service agencies can no longer provide services due to lack of funding.

8. Municipal Development Projects/Issues

Ms. Morphey noted the late hour and asked if any community wanted to highlight a development.

Mr. Bellah stated that the Dollar General was now open in Kirkland. He also announced that Hines Lumber has suggested that with the acquisition of Triumph Truss & Steel that they would be expanding the number of work shifts.

Ms. Swenson stated that Waterman was suppose to have a Dollar General by Fall of 2016.

Ms. Haji-Sheikh encouraged the Commissioners to take a tour of the DeKalb Library.

Mr. Redden reported some warehousing expansions were in the works in the City of Sandwich.

9. Next Meeting Date -- The Commission agreed that the next RPC meeting would be held March 24, 2016 at 7 pm in the Conference Room East of the Administration Building.

10. Adjournment -- *Ms. Haji-Sheikh moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Hiland, and the motion carried unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Morphey
Chairman, DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission

RGV:rgv

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