

DEKALB COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
June 3, 2010

The DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) met on June 3, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the DeKalb County Administration Building, Conference Room East, in Sycamore, Illinois. In attendance were Commission members Cookie Aldis, Bill Beverley, Suzanne Fahnestock, Rich Gentile, Derek Hiland, Becky Morphey, Don Partridge, Anita Sorensen, and Jerry Thompson. Staff included Paul Miller and Marcellus Anderson.

- 1. Roll Call** -- *Commission members Frank Altmaier, Ken Andersen, Mike Becker, Dave Maroo, Bill Nicklas, Jerry Olson, and Linda Swenson were noted absent.*
- 2. Approval of Agenda** -- *Mr. Beverley moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Ms. Morphey, and the motion carried unanimously.*
- 3. Approval of Minutes** -- *Mr. Beverley noted that on page 2, paragraph 5 of the minutes from March 25, 2010, the City referenced should be the City of Sandwich, not the City of Sycamore.*

Mr. Beverley moved to approve the amended minutes from March 25, 2010, seconded by Mr. Gentile, and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Sorensen arrived at 7:05 p.m.

4. County Comprehensive Plan Update:

Mr. Miller reminded the Regional Planning Commission that at its March 25, 2010 meeting it had discussed a process for updating the DeKalb County Unified Comprehensive Plan, which was adopted in 2003. As a way of kicking-off that process, staff proposed that the June 3, 2010 Commission meeting be devoted to a community-by-community review of each municipality's future land use plan. In this way, Commission members would be updated on the plans for growth and development throughout the County, and hopefully be better positioned to address any issues for the update to the County's Unified Comprehensive Plan.

To facilitate this goal, a paper copy of the latest future land use plan (of which the County is aware) for each municipality was provided to each Commissioner. Commission members were encouraged to review their respective plan, including marking any changes, and be prepared to talk about future development in their community. Staff had a digital version of the future land use plans that were displayed on a screen during each member's presentation on their community's plans. Mr. Miller noted that any changes to municipal future land use plans will be integrated into the County's Unified Future Land Use Plan for presentation and commentary at public meetings that are part of the County Comprehensive Plan update.

City of Sycamore:

Mr. Miller informed the Commission that Mr. Nicklas had advised staff he would not be able to attend the meeting and asked Mr. Miller to discuss with the Commission members the future land use plans for the City of Sycamore. Mr. Nicklas also provided Mr. Miller with copies of the City of Sycamore's 2008 Comprehensive Plan to distribute to the Commission members. Mr. Miller displayed the City's 2003 Future Land Use Plan on the overhead screen and directed the Commission members to the July 1, 2008 Future Land Use Map, Exhibit B of the Comprehensive Plan, so that they could compare the two plans. He then iterated various points of difference between the 2003 and the 2008 versions of the City of Sycamore's Future Land Use Map. Mr. Miller also noted that Mr. Nicklas particularly wanted attention called to Table 27: Proposed Land Uses, on page 64 of the plan, which shows the change in the mix of proposed uses designated within the mile-and-a-half area from the 2000, 2003, and 2008 versions, especially the increase in the amount of area proposed for agricultural use.

Ms. Aldis and Mr. Beverly asked about the boundary agreement between Sycamore, Genoa, and the County that created the "green space" between Lloyd and Whipple Roads. Mr. Gentile and Mr. Miller explained the history of the boundary agreement, its impacts, and elaborated on some of the misconceptions about those impacts. Ms. Aldis commented that more effort should be made to better inform the residents within the "green space" area of just what will happen should similar boundary agreements be proposed by other municipalities. This would give residents a chance to offer their input. Mr. Gentile also related how similar issues were brought up during a proposed boundary agreement between the City of Genoa and the Village of Hampshire. In the end, Genoa decided that it would show the area between the two as "agricultural" rather than enter into a boundary agreement with reserved green space.

A brief discussion was had about the merits of using areas designated as flood plain as park space rather than said areas remaining open space. Ms. Morphey then inquired about the Regional Detention area indicated on Sycamore's 2008 Plan, and how it was determined. Mr. Miller responded that the Regional Detention area appeared to reflect those areas designated on January 1, 2009 Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), as part of the 100-year flood plain. He informed the Commission members that a digital version of those FIRM maps are available on the DeKalb County web site, through the County's GIS system, and demonstrated how to navigate to that system on the County's website. He also informed them that there has been some discussion about putting together a workshop for elected public offices and staff to instruct them in how to use the various features of the County's GIS system, and that he would inform them if such a workshop is created.

City of Genoa:

Mr. Gentile informed the Commission members that the 2003 Future Land Use Plan is Genoa's most recent version. However, he added that the City is considering updating this plan to change the date of the Plan's adoption.

Mr. Gentile discussed the various elements of the City's Plan, explaining how and where they expected development to occur in the potential growth areas, such as Commercial along the State

Route 72 corridor and Industrial along Derbyline Road. He mentioned that there has been discussion about the possibility of converting many of the unimproved alleys within the City into trails and pathways in the future, although the funding is not currently there for such a project. He also mentioned the need to acquire the funds to update or construct new bridges around the City. Mr. Gentile also stated the need for communities to abide by their comprehensive plans in the face of development pressures, and gave an example of a situation the City of Genoa had dealt with concerning this issue.

Mr. Miller noted how the City of Genoa used the South Branch of The Kishwaukee River as the community's natural boundary to its future growth, even though the area beyond it still fell within one mile and a half of the City. He pointed out that the City of Sycamore had used a similar approach, and he then went on to elaborate on the merits of this approach.

Mr. Pardridge noted that there seemed to be too much commercial designated on the City of Genoa's Future Land Use Map. Mr. Miller and Mr. Gentile explained that the City took an "ultimate build-out" approach with their plan, so as to encompass the next 40-50 years of potential growth. Mr. Beverly stated that he felt that this approach was a good idea and noted some of the problems the City of Sandwich has had in keeping commercial uses.

Mr. Gentile explained that though they have no changes to make to the 2003 Future Land Use Plan, he did feel it would be a good idea to have the City re-adopt the plan as their 2010 Future Land Use Plan. He and Ms. Aldis elaborated that a benefit of re-adopting the plan, even without any significant changes, is that it will help the current City Council and Planning Commission better understand it and feel more invested in supporting it. Ms. Aldis noted that even changing the date on a comprehensive plan requires at least one public hearing.

City of DeKalb:

Mr. Hiland noted that the 2005 Comprehensive Plan Update is the City's most recent plan, and that they hope to update it again sometime in the near future. He explained the various features of the City's Future Land Use Plan, noting the locations of the boundary agreements with the City of Sycamore and the Town of Cortland. He also noted how the industrial uses are being kept east around the Peace Road Corridor and south of State Route 38, and that new residential uses are being directed toward the west side of the community. Finally, Mr. Hiland pointed out that the area around the new high school had been designated for a variety of mixed uses.

Mr. Hiland stated that in regard to the discussion early about designating floodplain areas as park land, the City of DeKalb's policy does not allow areas designated by developers for detention or retention ponds as counting towards their Land-Cash credit responsibilities. He noted that this was an issue with the development to be built around the new high school. Mr. Miller inquired how the developer was responding to this policy, and Mr. Hiland stated that there has been no problems as yet.

Mr. Hiland pointed out that one unique issue the City has with implementing its plan is the location of Northern Illinois University (NIU) within its boundaries. He noted that NIU is its own governing body, and has its own master plan. He hoped that the City and NIU would be

able to work together to combine their plans for future growth of the campus. Mr. Miller also voiced his hope that NIU would join with the municipalities in incorporating their plans into the County's Unified Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Hiland highlighted that one deviation from the Comprehensive Plan involved the industrial area near the intersection of Peace Road and State Route 38. The developer of this project brought the City a market study indicating they would need some nearby rental properties to facilitate the proposed industrial growth. Mr. Hiland pointed out that in reviewing this request, the City partially based its approval of this change on the fact that the City's East Lincoln Highway Corridor Plan called for a higher concentration of residential uses in that area. Mr. Miller opined that allowing some higher density residential to be developed in proximity to industrial areas made sense, as it reduces the travel time for employees.

Village of Maple Park:

Mr. Miller explained that the County did not have a future land use plan for the Village of Maple Park because at the Village was not a part of the Regional Planning Commission at the time the County created its Unified Comprehensive Plan. He added that the County hoped to be able to acquire a copy of the Village's future land use plan so that it may be incorporated into the County's updated Unified Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Fahnestock indicated that she did not have a copy of the Village's future land use plan with her, and was unsure of the adaptation date of the plan. She inquired as to when the County would need her to forward a copy of the plan to them. Mr. Miller responded that the county staff would contact her within the next couple of weeks about acquiring an electronic copy of the plan. Ms. Fahnestock also inquired that since the Village is located in both DeKalb and Kane Counties, whether the County wanted the entire Maple Park plan or just the DeKalb County portion. Mr. Miller responded that the County would only need to DeKalb County portion.

Village of Malta:

Mr. Thompson informed the Commission members that the 2003 Future Land Use Plan was the Village of Malta's most recent version. He also noted that the Village has no plans to change or update the existing plan.

Ms. Sorensen noted that the Village's Plan should be updated to reflect the changes in planned density of the Prairie Springs Subdivision.

Mr. Miller noted several features of the Plan, including areas of low-density residential and park space, and the proposed Malta Road extension that would extend from State Route 38 down to Lang Road.

Village of Shabbona:

Mr. Pardridge noted that the Village of Shabbona recently annexed a sizable area, designated Industrial, to the west of the Village. The area lies in a triangle formed the BN&SF Railway,

Challand Road, and US Highway 30. The properties have four commercial wind towers on them.

Mr. Miller inquired about the area designated for institutional uses along the north side of Preserve Road and East of Shabbona Road. Mr. Partridge indicated that the area contained Indian Creek Highschool, Shabbona Elementary School, and the Village waste water treatment plant. It was noted by Mr. Miller and Mr. Partridge that the waste water treatment plant did not appear to be annexed, even though they believed it was supposed to be incorporated. Mr. Partridge said he would look into that issue further.

Mr. Miller noted that the Village's Plan indicated mostly low-density residential and neighborhood parks, some medium density near the parks, and commercial along US Highway 30. Mr. Partridge indicated that the Village had no plans to make any changes to the existing plan, other than to incorporate the recent industrial annexation into the plan.

Mr. Gentile and Mr. Miller noted that it is a good thing to bring to the attention of planning commissions and village boards that they should consider the kind of development a village wants, such as what kinds of residential use and the physical design of those uses (road widths, sidewalks, setbacks, etc.). Mr. Partridge stated that the Village likes wide streets.

Village of Somonauk:

Ms. Morphey noted that the 2003 Future Land Use Plan for the Village of Somonauk is its most current plan, and that it has no plans to make any changes to it at this time. She also noted that the Village had been busy updating parts of its infrastructure.

Mr. Gentile noted that the Village's Plan, though ambitious, was well done.

Ms. Morphey noted that the Village was using Somonauk Creek as a natural easterly boundary, in the same manner that the Cities of Genoa and Sycamore were doing. Mr. Miller and Ms. Morphey noted and discussed the various elements shown on the 2003 Future Land Use plan.

City of Sandwich:

Mr. Beverly noted that the City's 2003 Future Land Use Plan is its most current version and that there are no plans to make any changes to it. He stated that there has been planning activity in the area near Platt Road but that it has all died out. He also noted that the City is committed to the idea that a regional detention area needs to be established in the area north of the City, but that they have had problems with getting such a project implemented.

Mr. Miller inquired about the areas of the Future Land Use plan identified as "Land Reserve". Mr. Beverly noted that he was unsure as to the meaning of that particular designation. Mr. Miller also noted that the areas between the existing parts of the City and those identified for Land Reserve, were mostly designated for low density-residential uses, and he pointed out the potential impacts of such an approach, especially the issue of the high cost of extending public facilities (water and sanitary sewer) through areas of large-lot residential uses.

Mr. Beverly mentioned that one of the projects that the City has been working on is the Fairwinds Boulevard extension. The Gletty Road railroad crossing has been vacated so that the new one on Fairwinds Boulevard could be established.

Town of Cortland:

Ms. Aldis informed the Commission members that the Town of Cortland's 2007 Future Land Use Plan is its most current version, and that there is currently no action planned to revise the 2007 plan. She added that the Town of Cortland has since entered into boundary agreements with the Cities of DeKalb and Sycamore and the Village of Maple Park, and that whenever the Town next takes action to update its Future Land Use Plan it would include revisions to reflect those boundary agreements.

Mr. Miller noted that one significant change from the 2003 plan to the 2007 plan is that the 2007 plan shows the entire DeKalb County Landfill, including the proposed landfill expansion area, with that area designated as industrial. He also observed that the area around Hinckley Road, where it crosses I-88, has been designated for commercial uses. Ms. Aldis elaborated that the change was done in anticipation of a proposed I-88 and Hinckley Road interchange.

Mr. Gentile inquired about the curvilinear nature of the roads in the proposed development located along the north side of Barber Greene Road. Ms. Aldis responded that the road plan shown reflected a specific developer's residential development proposal, and that the density is needed for a possible SSA. She also noted that the development was still in the preliminary plat stage. She added that the Town had worked with the Fire and Police Departments in designing the proposed roadways, and that some of the proposed roads would be one-way so as to better facilitate traffic flows.

Mr. Miller inquired about an area on the plan that appeared to be a proposed drainage area. Mr. Aldis informed him that area indicated was actually the proposed Richland Parkway, which would be a trail system stretching through the proposed growth areas to the north of the Town, down into and through the Town, and south across of State Route 38 to new development areas there.

Mr. Miller informed the Commission members that staff would be contacting those members who could not attend the meeting to verify that County has the most up to date version of their community's future land use plans. The County will then compile these plans into a single unified plan for presentation to the public as part of the County's Comprehensive Plan update. Mr. Miller informed the Commission Members that the County will be having a series of at least three open houses as part of its effort to update the Plan. He then asked them for input as to what dates they felt would work well for these open house meetings, informing them that the County was considering sometime between late August to mid September. After some discussion, the Commission Members agreed that mid September, probably around the week of the 13th.

5. Municipal Development Projects/Issues:

It was noted that all new projects were discussed under the above topic.

6. Next Meeting Date -- The Commission agreed that the next RPC meeting would be on July 22, 2010 at 7:00 pm in the Conference Room East.

7. Adjournment -- *Mr. Pardridge motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Morphey, and the motion carried unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl "Cookie" Aldis
Chairman, DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission

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