

**DEKALB COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
October 28, 2010**

The DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) met on October 28, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the DeKalb County Legislative Building, "Gathertorium," in Sycamore, Illinois. In attendance were Commission members Cookie Aldis, Frank Altmaier, Bill Beverley, Suzanne Fahnestock, Becky Morphey, Bill Nicklas, Derek Hiland, Don Pardridge, and Martha May. Staff included Paul Miller and Rebecca Von Drasek.

**1. Roll Call** -- *Commission members Ken Andersen, Les Bellah, Rich Gentile, Dave Maroo, Linda Swenson, Jerry Thompson, and Jerry Olson were noted absent.*

**2. Approval of Agenda** -- *Mr. Pardridge moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Nicklas, and the motion carried unanimously.*

**3. Approval of Minutes** – *Mr. Pardridge moved to approve the amended minutes from July 22, 2010, seconded by Mr. Beverley, and the motion carried unanimously.*

**4. Discussion Item - GIS Maps Workshop**

Mr. Miller noted that the latest Informational Seminar sponsored by the Regional Planning Commission occurred on September 30, 2010 in the DeKalb County Community Outreach Building in DeKalb. He emphasized that the seminar was well attended, with approximately 40 persons from a number of different communities and organizations, including DeKalb County departments. Rob Linke with Trotter and Associates, an engineering firm, presented information on the dynamics of surface drainage and ground water, and on alternative methods of stormwater management and techniques to eliminate pollution and improve drainage. Techniques reviewed included rain gardens, filtration strips, ground water recharge facilities, and permeable concrete. Mr. Miller informed the Commission that Mr. Trotter's PowerPoint presentation is now posted on the County's web site, [www.dekalbcounty.org](http://www.dekalbcounty.org) under "Regional Planning Commission." Also presenting at the Seminar were Sheila Santos and Joan Hansen of the DeKalb County Information Management Office (IMO), who reviewed the County's Geographical Information System (GIS) maps. Particular emphasis was placed on the land use and stormwater-related data. Mr. Miller noted that a technical glitch prevented many in attendance from using the County GIS maps during the workshop, but IMO staff offered to come to any municipality or organization and provide one-on-one instruction. Mr. Miller encouraged the Commission members to utilize this resource for their municipal staffs.

**5. County Comprehensive Plan Update**

Mr. Miller explained that DeKalb County has initiated an update process for the DeKalb County Unified Comprehensive Plan, which was adopted in 2003. Mr. Miller presented the Commission with the updated Unified Future Land Use Map, depicting the current municipal boundaries and future land use plans. He explained that if the municipal boundaries were to build out in all the future land use areas the plan would support an additional 46,000 to 113,000 more people within

the County without requiring the conversion of any land designated to remain in agricultural use. Mr. Miller asked the Commissioners for their input prior to the finalization of the draft updated Plan. The draft would be presented at three Open Houses to be held the week of January 10, 2011.

Mr. Nicklas indicated that the City of Sycamore could host one of the open houses.

Mr. Beverly offered the City of Sandwich meeting room for one of the open houses.

Mr. Nicklas noted that while considering the City of Sycamore's future land uses, a prospective developer had recently approached the City with an alternative development which would be very low density residential (approximately 5-7 acres per residence) to allow for a "Horse Community". He noted that the intent of this type of a development would be quasi-agricultural and pseudo-residential. Mr. Nicklas highlighted some of the benefits and risks of considering such a development.

Ms. Aldis noted that remediation of possible water contamination is one of the issues Cortland has recently been addressing. She stated that the risk of contamination stems from properties within the corporate limits that are not tied into the municipal water system. Specifically, she noted that a "horse community" would most likely use private wells which might become a source of future problems. Mr. Nicklas responded that the IEPA did not require developments to connect to municipal water systems, however, the City can require it as part of the annexation.

Mr. Beverley added that the City's standards for roads and their maintenance might also be an item to review.

Mr. Partridge observed that including all the stipulations into the annexation agreement regarding water, roads, etc. would require a very well-constructed agreement. He also hypothesized that allowing one such development might encourage similar applications.

Ms. Morphey noted that this type of development has taken place near Oswego.

Mr. Miller noted that this type of development may limit the growth of a community because the large lots can constrain growth due to the added cost of providing services to developments further away from the municipal connections. There may be situations where this is desirable, especially when the community does not wish to grow beyond a certain point, or where geographic features prohibit further growth in one direction.

The Commission briefly discussed the effectiveness of the County's efforts to encourage development within the cities, rather than in unincorporated areas, and the possibilities included with the County Zoning Ordinance to develop outside of municipal boundaries. Ms. Fahnestock asked if the Commission felt the Communities were in direct competition with one another to attract businesses. Mr. Nicklas noted that the way the State disburses sales tax revenue insures that municipalities are in competition with one another over tax revenue generators. Mr. Miller

noted that the County attempts to not compete with the municipalities, and noted that developers are generally encouraged to contact nearby municipalities regarding possible non-agricultural developments. The Commissioners determined that the process and the pros/ cons of annexations could be the topic for a future RPC sponsored workshop.

Ms. Aldis noted that on page 26 of the draft Comprehensive Plan there is a reference to “farm.” She suggested that the reference be amended to include the term “structures” to clarify that the areas to be protected from flooding do not include farm fields.

The Commission briefly discussed the agricultural predominance within the County’s Comprehensive plan and noted that the County’s rich soils, heritage, and technological farming successes as reasons why agricultural is considered essential to future development plans.

Mr. Miller concluded the discussion by encouraging Members to reach out within their communities and request feedback regarding the proposed Comprehensive Plan. He explained that staff’s next step will be to take all of the suggestions and create a final draft for public input and review prior to final a vote by the County Board.

## **6. Countywide Stormwater Management Plan and Ordinance**

Mr. Miller informed the Commission that DeKalb County had recently adopted Phase 2 of the Countywide Stormwater Management Plan and Countywide Stormwater Management Ordinance. He explained that the changes from Phase 1 of the Plan and Ordinance featured additional layers of data on the County GIS system, including two-foot contour intervals, watershed boundaries, and a wetland inventory. Changes to regulations included requiring delineation of wetlands where proposed developments would possibly impact these features, the requirement for grading plans for agricultural structures that disturb more than an acre of land, and a provision to allow the use of alternative “green” stormwater management facilities. Mr. Miller explained that the next step will be to develop and integrate regulations to take a watershed-based approach to stormwater management.

Ms. Aldis asked why the alternative “green” measures were optional rather than mandatory. Mr. Miller responded that the decision to have the alternative methods as optional allowed municipalities the flexibility of working with a developer rather than the County dictating to the cities the specific types of measures.

Ms. Aldis also noted that similar to the Comprehensive Plan “farms” rather than “farm structures” were called to be protected and she asked that this be amended.

Mr. Miller thanked the Commissioners for their thoughts and asked that the revised Stormwater Plan and Ordinance be shared with their municipal staffs. He also reminded the Members that the municipalities were exempt from the County requirements provided they were enforcing as stringent of standards without County oversight.

## **7. Municipal Development Projects/Issues:**

Ms. Aldis asked for any changes to the development project report. She noted that Cortland had four new home permits. She also reiterated that the Town was identifying properties not connected to the municipal water supply and requiring them to connect when the houses are sold.

Mr. Hiland stated that DeKalb is working to complete unilateral annexations to incorporate areas that are surrounded by the municipal boundaries and are under 60 acres in size. He noted that staff had found 35 parcels which qualify for annexation. Mr. Hiland also reported the Noodles & Co is now open, and that the Hobby Lobby development was nearing completion.

Mr. Altmaier had nothing new to report for Kingston.

Ms. Fahnestock reported that Maple Park had hired a new engineering firm, Lintech Engineering. Additionally, she noted that the Village had received grants and a loan which will pay for updates to the Village's water and wastewater systems.

Ms. Morphey reported that Somonauk's water tower has been completed. In addition, the Village had also qualified recently for a 75/25 matching grant to address stormwater.

Mr. Beverley reported that Sandwich would be completing the required improvements for the Fairwind subdivision using the financial guarantee. He also reported that individuals were still without power due to the recent wind storm.

Mr. Pardridge had nothing new to report for Shabbona.

Ms. May noted that there were no proposed projects, and she stated the Village of Lee planned for the surrounding areas to stay in farm land.

Mr. Nicklas mentioned that Ideal Industries in Sycamore is now the largest manufacturer of screwdrivers within the United States. Additionally, he noted the opening of a robotics firm called Smart Motion. Mr. Nicklas informed the Commission that the City's new water tower was complete, explaining that the new tower was paid for through water impact fees. He noted that the City was also applying for grants from the IEPA for waste water and sewer improvement projects.

## **9. 2011 Agenda Items**

Throughout the meeting the Commissioners suggested these possible workshop topics.

- 1). A review of the Annexation process and the consideration of Pros/Cons of an annexation.
- 2). A how to discussion of addressing problems within existing subdivisions
- 3). Grant applications
- 4). Staff Shortages

5). Urban Agriculture

**10. Next Meeting Date -- The Commission agreed that the next RPC meeting would be on January 27, 2011 at 7:00 pm in the Conference Room East.**

**11. Adjournment --** *Mr. Nicklas motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Fahnestock, and the motion carried unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

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

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