

DRAFT

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
July 25, 2012**

The Planning and Zoning Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on July 25, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the Conference Room East located in the DeKalb County Administration Building. In attendance were Committee Members Ken Andersen, Dan Cribben, John Emerson, John Hulseberg, Ruth Anne Tobias and Jeff Whelan. Also in attendance were Roger Craigmile, Donna Moulton with DeKalb County Community Services, and Planning, Zoning and Building Department staff members Paul Miller and Rebecca Von Drasek.

Ken Andersen, Planning and Zoning Committee Chairman, called the meeting to order and noted that Committee member Pat Vary was absent.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Whelan moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Ms. Tobias, and the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Emerson moved to approve the minutes of the April 25, 2012 meeting of the Planning and Zoning Committee, seconded by Mr. Hulseberg, and the motion carried unanimously.

GRANT AGREEMENT

Mr. Miller explained to the Committee that DeKalb County has been seeking, since the floods in August of 2007, a grant to mitigate the Evergreen Village Mobile Home Park, located on the north side of State Rte. 64, across from the Sycamore Golf Course, in unincorporated Sycamore Township. The mobile home park, consisting of 129 trailers and a population of approximately 400 residents, is located entirely within the floodway of the East Branch of the South Branch of the Kishwaukee River, and is subject to regular inundation during heavy rain events. The property has had to be evacuated several times in the past, most recently in 2008, at considerable cost to the residents, the County, and the tax payers.

Mr. Miller further explained that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has a program to mitigate developed properties that are subject to repeated flooding. Mitigation entails removing residents that are in harm's way, and demolishing man-made improvements. The program typically provides 75% funding from the Federal government, with the local government to provide 25%. The estimated cost of mitigating Evergreen Village, which includes buying the property, buying and removing trailers (from those owners who do not wish to remove the trailers themselves), providing relocation assistance to the residents, and demolishing the permanent buildings, roads and other man-made features, is estimated at \$5.6 million. The County's portion of the project would be \$1.4 million, and for this reason the County has for the past several years been seeking other sources of funding to provide the 25% local match.

The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) has funds that are earmarked for mitigation related to the same flooding events. DCEO has had an on-going dialogue with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) about funding all or part of some mitigation projects, which would free up money otherwise needed for the 75% Federal match and allow those funds instead to be used as a “global” match to cover the local 25%. The Evergreen Village project has been highlighted by IEMA as a project which would receive this 25% match, meaning FEMA funds would provide 100% of the mitigation project costs.

DeKalb County has worked with a consultant for the past five years to put together a grant application and funding strategy for the Evergreen Village project. On June 24, 2012, FEMA issued a press release announcing that the project has been approved to acquire the park and relocate the residents. The next step in the process is the execution of a Grant Agreement between IEMA, as the agent for FEMA, and the County. This requires the County Board to authorize the County Board Chairman to sign the Agreement, which is then sent to IEMA for its signature. When the Agreement is signed by the State, the project is considered approved. The County then is expected to undertake the tasks set forth in the grant application, and to forward invoices to the State for payment. A requirement of the program is that, once the project is completed and the site has been cleared, it may not be subsequently developed, but rather must be maintained as open area in perpetuity.

Mr. Miller stated that the Planning and Zoning Committee is requested to review the draft Grant Agreement and forward to the County Board a recommendation that the County Board Chairman be authorized to sign said Agreement on behalf of the County. He pointed out that signing does not yet obligate the County to taking any actions or spending any funds. Such signature is needed, however, if the project is to be fully authorized by the State.

Ms. Tobias asked if the residents of Evergreen Village had any concerns regarding this project. Mr. Miller responded that the County has not yet officially reached out to the residents because the project is not yet fully funded. He said that a survey of the residents had been completed as part of the grant application, the results of which indicate that many of the residents are low income or on fixed incomes which limits their housing options. He emphasized that the grant will include relocation assistance for the residents, up to 42 months. Mr. Miller explained that Donna Moulton, Director of the DeKalb County Community Services Department, was working with the Planning, Zoning, and Building Department in anticipation of the relocation aspect of the mitigation project.

Ms. Moulton noted that the residents would receive an extra preference point toward their housing vouchers available through the DeKalb County Housing Authority.

Mr. Hulseberg asked how much Section Eight housing was available in Sycamore. Ms. Moulton stated that there would be outreach to the landlords within Sycamore through the Realtors Association to educate the landlords on offering Section Eight housing. Ms. Moulton said there would be an effort to connect various agencies to respond to the resident’s needs.

Mr. Whelan asked that if the residents could relocate their trailers. Mr. Miller responded that some owners may want to take their trailers and that it was staff’s understanding that funds could

be utilized to cover the costs of moving the trailer to another park. He added that staff was in the initial stages of conferring with a mitigation expert to manage the project, including aspects of relocating the residents.

Mr. Cribben inquired as to the disposition of the property once the trailers are removed. Mr. Miller explained that the grant requires that the property be maintained as open space. He noted that there might be some appropriate passive recreational uses and that the property would need to be maintained by a public agency.

The Committee briefly discussed possible passive recreational uses such as a bike path.

Mr. Cribben clarified that the agreement stated that 100% of the funds would be covered by FEMA. Mr. Miller pointed to the language in item number three of the agreement which stipulates that “the cost-sharing may be met through global match within the disaster mitigation funds”.

Mr. Whelan asked about the payment method for work involved with the mitigation project. Mr. Miller explained that the County would invoice the State as work was completed. Ms. Moulton stated that “pass through” funds from DECO in her experience have been promptly paid and she did not expect that this project would be any different. Mr. Miller said that his understanding was that the funds are dedicated to this specific project and the State could not use them for anything else.

Ms. Tobias noted that the draft agreement had a “Date of Execution” as December 31, 2014. Mr. Miller stated he would follow-up but observed that it may be a typo or some aspect of the Federal government’s requirements.

Mr. Andersen suggested staff contact Sycamore Township regarding its possible involvement with the mitigation project. Ms. Moulton agreed to coordinate with the Township.

Mr. Andersen moved to recommend that the County Board authorize the County Board Chairman to sign the Grant Agreement to mitigate Evergreen Village, seconded by Mr. Hulseberg, and the motion passed unanimously.

MONTHLY REPORT

Mr. Andersen informed the Committee of the upcoming public hearing regarding Kishwaukee College’s application for a Text Amendment to the County’s sign regulations. The Hearing is scheduled for August 9, 2012 at 2 p.m.

The Committee also briefly discussed the Monthly Report.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no comments offered.

ADJOURNMENT

The Planning and Zoning Committee is next scheduled to meet August 22, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the Conference Room East.

Mr. Whelan moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Emerson, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Andersen
Planning and Zoning Committee Chairman

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