

*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**  
(April 2, 2015)

The DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) met on April 2, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the DeKalb County Legislative Center, Gathertorium, in Sycamore, Illinois. In attendance were Commission members Misty Haji-Sheikh, Liz Peerboom, Don Pardridge, Rich Gentile, Les Bellah, Cheryl Aldis, Brian Gregory, Dawn Grivetti, Becky Morphey, Martha May, and Derek Hiland. Also in attendance were James Roderick, John Montgomery, and County staff members Paul Miller and Rebecca Von Drasek.

1. **Roll Call** -- *Commission members Les Redden, John Fischer, Anita Sorensen and Linda Swenson were absent.*
2. **Approval of Agenda** -- *Ms. Aldis moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Gregory, and the motion carried unanimously.*
3. **Approval of Minutes** -- *Mr. Bellah moved to approve the minutes from the September 25, 2014 meeting, seconded by Mr. Pardridge, and the motion carried unanimously.*
4. **Zero Waste Policy**

Mr. Miller explained to the Committee that the DeKalb County Board, in 2013, created a Zero Waste Task Force to consider “zero waste” as a guiding principle of its Solid Waste Management Plan. The Solid Waste Management Plan details how the County handles residential, commercial, and industrial solid waste, and includes goals, objectives, programs and projects. Included in the Plan are the goals of reducing waste and increasing recycling and reuse of waste materials. “Zero waste” is a principle that focuses on waste as a resource that may be reused, re-purposed, and recycled, rather than simply deposited in a landfill.

The Zero Waste Task Force met throughout 2014 and produced a report in August of that year unanimously recommending the County adopt “zero waste” as a guiding principle in the Solid Waste Management Plan. Mr. Miller introduced Cindy Capek of the DeKalb County Health Department to present the findings of the Zero Waste Committee.

Ms. Capek made a brief presentation on the findings of the Zero Waste Task force.

Ms. May agreed with the task force’s findings and she expressed concern about the number of plastic water bottles and disposable diapers sent to landfills.

Ms. Haji-Sheikh observed that waste management is big business. Ms. Capek agreed. Ms. Capek

observed that the Task Force found that a reduction in waste translates to financial savings.

Mr. Miller suggested that the Task Force's recommendations to reduce the amount of waste per person will require leaders to step up and find ways to act such as revising codes to require recycling.

Ms. Capek announced that a new Solid Waste Coordinator was recently hired at the DeKalb County Health Department, her name is Michele Gibson (815-748-2408 or mgibson@dekalbcounty.org). Ms. Capek suggested that Ms. Gibson will be a great contact for questions about waste removal and recycling and receiving information to update on municipal web sites.

## **5. Watershed**

Mr. Miller explained that in 2005, DeKalb County was authorized to create a Countywide Stormwater Management Plan and Ordinance. The Plan and Ordinance were drafted in cooperation with each of the municipalities that are entirely or partially within the County boundaries. All municipalities had to either accept the regulations of the Countywide Ordinance, or develop regulations of their own that were at least as stringent. Each of them did so.

The Countywide Plan, in addition to calling for uniform minimum standards to address stormwater runoff from new developments, also called for a watershed approach to stormwater management. A watershed is an area of land that contains a common set of streams or rivers that drains to a common body of larger water such as larger rivers, lakes, estuaries, wetlands, or even the ocean. Topography is the key element in identifying watersheds. The boundary of a watershed is defined by the highest elevations surrounding the stream with water flowing towards the lower elevations within the watershed.

In 2012, the County received a grant from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) to develop a watershed-based plan for the East Branch of the South Branch of the Kishwaukee River, located in east-central DeKalb County and northwestern Kane County. The East Branch South Branch Kishwaukee River is a major tributary to the South Branch Kishwaukee River in DeKalb County, with the confluence just west of Sycamore. The watershed drains approximately 123 square miles of land into the South Branch Kishwaukee River. The South Branch Kishwaukee River continues to flow west to its confluence with the Kishwaukee River. From this confluence, the Kishwaukee River flows westward through Rockford before joining the Rock River. The Rock River flows to the southwest before joining the Mississippi River in the Quad Cities area (Moline, Illinois; Rock Island, Illinois, Davenport, Iowa; and Bettendorf, Iowa). Collectively, there are 72.7 stream miles in the East Branch South Branch Kishwaukee River Watershed.

The DeKalb County Stormwater Management Committee, consisting of members representing both the County and each of the municipalities, created a Watershed Steering Committee to oversee the creation of the Watershed Plan. That Committee retained an engineering firm, Hey & Associates,

and began working in 2013. Work continued throughout 2014. The Watershed Plan looks at the actual conditions of the watershed (topography, soils, existing physical features such as rivers, streams, ditches, drainageways, soils, wetlands, depressional storage areas), assesses water quality and wildlife habitat, identifies problems such as erosion, flooding, and pollution (direct and non-point source), and makes recommendations for suggested regulations, best management practices, and actual projects to address problems.

The DeKalb County Board, on October 15, 2014, adopted the Watershed-Based Plan as an amendment to the DeKalb County Countywide Stormwater Management Plan. It has since been adopted or endorsed by the City of Sycamore, the Town of Cortland, the City of DeKalb, the Village of Maple Park, the Cortland-Pierce Drainage Districts, and Kane County.

The Watershed Steering Committee is now focused on implementation of the Plan. Projects underway include a grass filter-strip program through the DeKalb County Soil and Water Conservation District, and the creation of a DeKalb County Watershed website (<http://www.dekalbcountywatersheds-il.org>). Future projects are in discussion. It is the intent of the Watershed Steering Committee, the Stormwater Management Committee, and DeKalb County to ultimately develop watershed-based plans for all portions of the County. Mr. Miller concluded noting that future watershed plans will, of course, depend on securing funding.

Ms. Haji-Sheikh noted the importance of protecting the waterways and asserted that it was worth the money to invest in projects that protect it.

Mr. Pardridge observed that farmers in the area appear to be installing more and more tile to move water. He suggested it was important to engage the agricultural community in any project concerning waterways.

## **6. Municipal Development Projects / Issues**

Ms. Morphey opened the floor for comment from the Commissioners.

Mr. Bellah reported on efforts in Kirkland to retain businesses by asking them about ways in which the Village can assist.

Ms. Aldis discussed Cortland's approach to condemnation of three homes which had fallen into serious disrepair.

Ms. Peerboom stated that Maple Park did not have any new home permits in the past year. She reported that the Village Board had adopted a moratorium on collecting impact fees.

Ms. May reported that the Village of Lee has received a third rejection of their grant application to update the antiquated village water system.

Ms. Grivetti indicated that the Village of Hinckley was in negotiations with the new owners of the undeveloped subdivision Royal Estates. She also highlighted recent discussions of creating a TIF district and the referendum for a 1% sale tax. Ms. Grivetti also explained that the community had been approached by a Telepharm company considering locating in the Village.

Mr. Hiland reported on his recent tour of the new library in the City of DeKalb. He also emphasized the recent increase in the number of new cell tower inquiries and inquired if other Commissioners were also finding an increase in applications. The Commissioners briefly discussed the pros and cons of cell towers.

Mr. Gregory announced that Sycamore had a large industrial development. That the City had been approached for a medical marijuana dispensary.

Mr. Gentile suggested development had slowed down in Genoa. He highlighted that the new library was completed.

Ms. Haji-Sheikh reminded the Commission about the Pedal Pal biking program and encouraged members to mention the program to others in their communities.

**7. Next Meeting Date** -- The Commission agreed that the next RPC meeting would be held June 25, 2015 at 7 pm in the Conference Room East of the Administration Building. *This meeting has since been cancelled and will be held July 23, 2015.*

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

Respectfully submitted,

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Becky Morphey  
Chairman, DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission

RGV:rgv

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