

*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**  
(August 27, 2015)

The DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) met on August 27, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the DeKalb County Administration Building, Conference Room East, in Sycamore, Illinois. In attendance were Commission members Misty Haji-Sheikh, Liz Peerboom, Don Pardridge, Les Bellah, Cheryl Aldis, Brian Gregory, Becky Morphey, Martha May, Les Redden, Linda Swenson, and Derek Hiland. Also in attendance were Bill Nicklas, Paul Borek, and County staff members Paul Miller and Rebecca Von Drasek.

1. **Roll Call** -- *Commission members Dawn Grivetti, John Fischer, Anita Sorensen, and Rich Gentile were absent.*
2. **Approval of Agenda** -- *Ms. Aldis moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Bellah, and the motion carried unanimously.*
3. **Approval of Minutes** -- *Ms. Haji-Sheikh moved to approve the minutes from the April 2, 2015 meeting, seconded by Ms. Aldis, and the motion carried unanimously.*
4. **DeKalb County Enterprise Zone**

Mr. Miller explained to the Committee that the DeKalb County Board, on December 17, 2014, entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the cities of DeKalb, Sycamore, Genoa, and Sandwich, the Village of Waterman, and the Town of Cortland, to jointly apply to the State of Illinois for an "Enterprise Zone". Mr. Miller introduced Paul Borek, Director of the DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation.

Mr. Borek gave a presentation on the Enterprise Zone application. He explained that Enterprise Zones provide State and local tax incentives in order to promote the economic growth within a defined area, to reduce unemployment, and to encourage expansion, rehabilitation, and new construction of structures. Mr. Borek highlighted that the DeKalb County application had been approved by the State, and was now pending the necessary certifications. Mr. Borek noted that the Zone could be expanded to include other municipalities or areas of the County as needed. He detailed the process of how the Enterprise Zone is tracked to show that the area is seeing economic growth. He also explained how the Zone might be expanded in the future. Mr. Borek thanked all the communities for their support of the project.

## **5. Fairdale Tornado Response and Recovery**

Mr. Miller explained that in the tornado and storms of April 9, 2015 damaged or destroyed a large portion of the unincorporated community of Fairdale in Franklin Township. He stated that it soon became clear that the response to the disaster entailed not only the emergency response, for which the County has a department (the Emergency Services Disaster Agency) and plan, but short-term and long-term recovery. The immediate needs of the affected property owners and residents of Fairdale ranged from short-term housing, to household items and clothing, to financial assistance, to mental and emotional support services. The long-term needs included rebuilding of houses and businesses, infrastructure improvements, and financial aid. Mr. Miller explained that the disaster-response effort resulted in the formation of the Long-Term Recovery Corporation (LTRC), a not-for-profit organization including membership from the County, the Village of Kirkland, the DeKalb County Community Foundation, and volunteer and civic organizations. Mr. Miller introduced Bill Nicklas, who is serving as the primary source of contact for the residents to access available aid, whether financial, mental/emotional, or material.

Mr. Nicklas explained that the long-term recovery process is complex and ongoing as the LTRC works with the affected property owners to establish a “new normal.” He stated that the LTRC expected that the town of Fairdale will be composed of approximately 50 homes when recovery efforts are concluded. He explained that the LTRC is working on a building a community septic system, bringing in wi-fi, and providing a connection to natural gas lines. Mr. Nicklas emphasized that the “can-do” attitude of all those involved with the process is important to accomplishing these goals.

Mr. Miller detailed for the Committee the ways in which the County will try to learn from this experience. He explained that the County was working on an Emergency Response Plan for future disasters. The Plan will act as a guide for public officials in initiating long-term recovery efforts in the event of a future disaster within unincorporated DeKalb County.

The Committee briefly discussed the tornado, the emergency response, and the rebuilding of Fairdale. Mr. Pardridge asked Mr. Nicklas to report back to the Committee in 2016 on the progress.

**6. Next Meeting Date** -- The Commission agreed that the next RPC meeting would be held October 22, 2015 at 7 pm in the Conference Room East of the Administration Building.

**7. Adjournment** -- *Ms. Peerboom moved to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Swenson, and the motion carried unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

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Becky Morphey  
Chairman, DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission

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