

DEKALB COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

October 22, 2020

6:30 p.m.

VIRTUAL MEETING

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89055472369>

<https://zoom.us/join> or

To connect by phone: 1 (312) 626-6799

Meeting ID: 890 5547 2369

AGENDA

1. Roll Call / Welcome New Members
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes
4. Public Comments
5. Election of Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission
6. Annexation Types, Processes and Resources
7. COVID-19 Updates
 - a. Community impacts, water/utility/permit waivers, restaurant outdoor seating areas, etc.
 - b. DCEO programs, rebuild Illinois, etc.
8. Census 2020 Update
9. Municipal Development Permits / Projects / Challenges / Champions
10. Next Meeting Date
11. Adjournment

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DEKALB COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

(June 25, 2020)

The DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) held a virtual meeting on June 25, 2020 at 6:30 p.m., via Zoom. In attendance were Commission Members: Dan Olson, Alyssa Seguss, Russell Kula, Frank Altmaier, Steve Devlieger, Martha May, Becky Morphey, Brian Gregory, and Steve Faivre. Also, in attendance were: Jack Sommese,; Pete Stefan, DeKalb County Finance Director; and, County Staff members: Derek Hiland, Jolene Willis, and Marcellus Anderson.

- 1. Roll Call** – Ms. Aldis, Ms. Jergens, Mr. Redden, Ms. Wilson, and Ms. Swenson were not in attendance.

Mr. Hiland noted that the Commission Chair, Ms. Aldis, was on vacation and that the Vice-Chair, Mr. Fisher, was no longer on the Commission. He noted that the Commission did have a quorum and asked for a nomination for someone to act as Chair Pro-Tem for the meeting.

Ms. Morphey moved to nominate Mr. Gregory to act as Chair Pro-Tem of the meeting, seconded by Mr. Olson. Mr. Gregory accepted the nomination, and the motion was carried unanimously.

- 2. Approval of Agenda**

Mr. Faivre moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Olson. A roll call vote was held, and the motion carried unanimously.

- 3. Approval of Minutes**

Ms. May moved to approve the minutes of the January 30, 2020 meeting, seconded by Mr. Devlieger. A roll call vote was held, and the motion carried with eight (8) voting yes, zero (0) voting no, and one (1) abstention (Ms. Seguss).

- 4. Public Comments**

None.

- 5. Small Business Development Initiatives through Covid-19**

Mr. Gregory introduced Jack Sommese, D.B.A., Business advisor for the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Waubensee Community College. Mr. Sommese noted that the SBDC helps businesses start, thrive, and survive. He informed the Committee that much of their recent efforts during the Covid-19 crisis focused on “talking people of the ledge”, talking to them about financing and the need for effective communication between them and their employees, customers, suppliers, etc. Mr. Sommese

talked in detail about the kinds of services the SBDC offers to businesses, and gave examples of what had they had been doing during the Covid-19 crisis.

Ms. May inquired whether owning a craft store would count as a small business. Mr. Sommese responded that it does, elaborating that all businesses are basically the same, dealing with many of the same issues and concerns

Mr. Altmaier inquired about the best way to contact him. Mr. Sommese noted that Ms. Willis would be the best source for his contact information. He also noted that if anyone wants him to contact someone, he would do so within 24-hours.

Mr. Sommese explained that that it costs the clients nothing to get help from the SBDC, because they are paid through the State of Illinois Small Business Administration, Waubensee Community College, and Kishwaukee Community College. He also noted that other entities had donated resources to run specific workshops for them.

Ms. Willis reported that Mr. Sommese had been a huge benefit, describing how easy he had been to work with, and what a great resource he, and the SBDC, were. Mr. Sommese talked more about what the SBDC had to offer business owners.

Mr. Sommese finished by talking about the efforts by the SBDC to help small businesses get established and helping them through the impacts of the Covid-19 crisis.

6. Covid-19 updates

a. Community Impacts

The Committee began discussing the impacts of Covid-19, some of the challenges that have arisen, and how they were dealing with Phase 3 and Phase 4. Mr. Hiland noted that the one of things that is done well in DeKalb County is that they (local communities) learn from each other, contacting each other for advice and help. He noted that the pandemic has brought about a change in how the communities all operate. He then asked the members to describe what has worked for them and their communities.

Ms. Willis reported that she was involved with County Board Chairman Mark Pietrowski to get the local mayors together to write a letter to the Governor's office in May to fight for their communities and make sure their voice was heard down in Springfield and Chicago, and described the amount to work and effort that went into organizing it. She noted that they found that all of them wanted the same things, to have their communities open with the safety guidelines, but to not be left behind or ignored. She noted that she wanted to thank all of the communities, their leadership, for participating and making it happen. She also reported on the difficulties Sandwich and Maple Park had in getting opened, and talked about the efforts made to help them out. Ms. Willis wanted the members to know all about the behind the scenes actions taken by the local leadership to fight for their communities and help us all transition through the

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Covid-19 crisis. Mr. Gregory noted that it is hard to make all efforts “all inclusive”, and talked about some of the challenges they (the communities leaders) had in getting the letter together, and talked about the need to be as inclusive as possible and about the lessons that have been learned in the processe.

Mr. Gregory reported that Sycamore had suspended a façade program they had, and re-allocated that money into a project with Upstaging, which is a company providing lighting for concerts and events across America, who had remade themselves during the Covid-19 crisis to make safety shield and safety masks. The City worked with them to provide free safety screens to local businesses. He noted that in response to the issues local restaurants had with the outdoor dining allowed in Phase 3, and described how the City closed a public parking lot and a section of Somonauk Road and set up these areas up with picnic tables and landscaping. He noted that as our region moves into Phase 4, things will change the dynamic dramatically.

Mr. Olson reported that DeKalb had suspended the hotel, bar, and restaurant taxes until the end of the year. He talked about the impacts of the Covid-19 crisis on the City’s budget, and steps, such as a hiring freeze and budget cuts, they were taking to deal with the impacts. He also noted that they had suspended water shutoffs, and were working with people on payment plans. Mr. Olson noted that the City was temporarily allowing a lot of the restaurants to switch to a modified pick-up/drive-up, and to put seats out in their parking lots and on sidewalks.

Ms. May inquired what other communities have done about delaying water or utility bills. Mr. Olson further elaborated on how DeKalb was handling the water bills and shutoffs, and Ms. Seguss and Mr. Devlieger responded that Genoa and Kirkland, respectively, were doing the same thing.

Mr. Devlieger noted that Kirkland did not have as many issues as the larger communities. He did report that they had looked into reducing some of their liquor license fees, and had allowed some of the restaurants additional outdoor seating, which normally would not have been allowed to do so. He also noted that the community really pushed the idea of supporting local businesses. Mr. Olson added that both DeKalb and Sycamore had also put a lot of effort into pushing the idea of supporting local businesses.

Mr. Gregory reported that Sycamore had generally heard a lot of cautious optimism from their businesses, and inquired whether other communities had heard the same thing. Mr. Olson responded that DeKalb had been hearing generally the same thing, but note that while some businesses have done ok to well, some may not reopen.

Mr. Gregory inquired whether other communities were seeing the March sales tax numbers come in, and whether they were roughly where they thought they would be. Mr. Stefan responded that the County had initially predicted approximately a 15% drop in sales tax for the year in total, but did note that their calculations were complicated by the reduction in the airline fuel tax. He noted that they were doing pretty good, all things considered. Mr. Gregory reported that Sycamore was down about 16%, and they were expecting April and May to be about twice that. He noted that car dealers are one of Sycamore’s big revenue producers, and talked about how they have been struggling.

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Ms. Seguss reported that Genoa has done most of the things mentioned already, such as putting off water shutoffs and working out payment plans. She noted however that the City also had a revolving loan program, and had offered to put some of those loans in forbearance to help out the local businesses.

Mr. Altmaier reported that Kingston had taken actions similar to everyone else. He noted that they did not have a lot of businesses, and talked about steps the Village had taken to help.

b. DCEO Programs

Mr. Hiland described a program that the City of Macomb had done, where the City gave a partial rebate on the water bill of people had a series of receipts showing that they were supporting local small businesses. He noted that he had sent information to the local mayors and some city managers.

Ms. Willis noted that several of the communities looked at the Downtown Stabilization Program, and that Sycamore and DeKalb had applicants. She asked for their feedback on how its been going, as she had heard that there was a backlog in the program. Mr. Gregory responded that Sycamore had five applications, but had not heard anything. He added that when they had called DCEO, they were told not to call and they would be informed when a determination was made.

Ms. Willis noted DCEO was rolling out the Rebuild Illinois fast-track, but did not know if any of the communities submitted for that. Ms. May inquired whether the deadline had passed for the program, and Ms. Willis responded that it had. Ms. May commented that she had been told that most of the money was going to Cook County would be getting most of the money, with the rest of the State getting only a little. Ms. Willis responded that she did not know, but that the plans were meant to be statewide.

7. Census 2020 Update

Ms. Willis reported that she had been busy driving around the County visiting the local communities. She noted that the they have been working hard to get their grant spent down, but explained that the Covid-19 crisis had wreaked havoc with all of their plans to do outreach for the census. She reported that working with the DeKalb County Community Gardens, they acquired insulated tote bags that could be distributed in conjunction with all the food drives around the County. She explained how the bags had been locally sourced. She noted that they have done two runs of postcards around the County encouraging people to complete the census. She reported that the bags have been well received and were being used by a variety of people and groups around the County, such as: Libraries, schools, churches, senior centers, farmers markets, food pantries, etc. She noted that bags have a Call to Action card that goes with them, with the website. She noted that she needed to have it all distributed by the end of the month, per the grant. Ms. Willis noted that the count had been extended to the end of October, and the enumerators will be going out in August. She talked about the advantages of completing the census online. She also noted that the County website was posting a bar chart showing what the response rate to the census was for the various communities, and that it compared the current numbers to the numbers from the 2010 census.

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Ms. May inquired as the current count for the Lee. Ms. Willis responded that Lee was 58.7%, the lowest in the County. Ms. May reported that at their last Board she had talked about the census and her fellow Board members told her that, sadly, the responses they were getting that people just weren't interested, even when the benefits were explained to them.

Ms. Willis reported that six communities had surpassed their 2010 numbers, but that those communities should not get complacent, and that we need to get as many as possible. She noted that in the last census, the County had 71.1% responded, and that currently, the County was at 70.9%. She elaborated on all of the things impacted by the census numbers, and the importance of getting an accurate count.

Ms. Seguss asked, of those communities performing well in the counts, was there something that they utilizing in particular to help promote the census. She noted that Genoa had been using social media and were using the promotional items, but had noticed that their response rate hadn't been increasing by much. Mr. Willis responded that part of the problem is that the market has been saturated and that everyone was worn out from everything. She noted that they are hoping that the tote bags will be a new conversation starter, along with several other promotional items. She noted that the pantries had really been doing a great job getting the word out, especially among the hard to count populations.

8. Municipal Development Permits / Projects / Challenges / Champions

Mr. Olson (DeKalb) reported that Project Ventus. The annexation and zoning plans were approved by the City Council on April 27th for an over 500-acre site on the south side of Gurler Road, and that the first building would be around million square feet. He added that the company would be announced within the next two weeks. He that they had been planned a ground breaking with the Governor and local leaders, but with the Covid-19 crisis, they will instead have a virtual announcement and video. He also noted that part of Crego Road was vacated as part of the project. Mr. Olson noted that a candy company was also constructing a distribution center and packing center south of the Tollway. He noted construction would soon be starting on Agora Tower, the new multiuse building was being constructed by John Pappas at North 4th Street and Locus, and that it would have 94 apartment units and some commercial units. He noted that the City had approved Isaac Suites, also being built by Mr. Pappas at the corner of Oakland Drive and Sycamore Road, adding that the building will be four stories and will offer 59 short-term rental dwelling units. He noted that the former Appleby's had been demolished and that a new Raising Cain restaurant was to be built there. Mr. Olson reported that the City had passed new signage regulations in March, noting that they would now allow address digital display signs. He reported that City Hall had moved downtown to the former Nehring Building on June 5th. He noted that the City Council and Planning & Zoning meetings were now being held at the City Library, and were being broadcast on cable and streamed live. Mr. Olson noted that the City Council had held some forms on the protests that had been held recently, with discussion on how best to address them.

Mr. Altmaier (Kingston) reported that they had hired a company to handle building permits and code enforcement for them. He noted that as a result, they needed to go through and update their ordinances

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regulating their permit fees, zoning reviews, etc. He also reported that the record rains that had occurred had caused them big problems. He noted that some streets and residential properties were covered in stormwater runoff, and there had been two consecutive occurrences of this. He noted that they were looking for funds and solutions for their stormwater management efforts.

Mr. Kula (Hinckley) reported that Hinckley was pretty slow. He noted that, due to the Covid-19 crisis, they had postponed the "60520" event scheduled for June 5th to next year. He noted that he had just learned that a new business, the Midwest Sportsplex, providing instruction in hitting, pitching, and fielding, would be opening. He noted there was talk about building four more houses were being talked about for Royal Estates. He also noted that a couple of restaurants were staying closed due to the virus, and that two others had set up outdoor seating.

Ms. Morpheu (Somonauk) reported that the school solar project was just finishing up, and that groundwork on the second one had begun. She noted that they had a new building permit for a house. She also noted that all four of the local restaurants had stayed with carryout, but that they were holding their own.

Ms. May (Lee) reported that things were pretty much status quo. She noted that they had a couple of challenges, but she wasn't going to get into them at this time.

Mr. Devlieger (Kirkland) reported the several of the restaurants were doing well with the carryout, and that some were doing outdoor seating. He noted that one did close down, but that the owner had been planning to retire and sellout anyway. He noted that there were no new permits. He reported they also had issues with the rains that had come through, with the Big Dig project getting damaged and one of the retention ponds being torn out by the heavy rains. Their roads did get flooded, and they had a lot of clean up. He added that it also caused a blocked sewer pipe that they now have to remediate. He noted that they had a company had shown interest in possible locating there.

Ms. Seguss (Genoa) reported that they have had an influx of residential building permits, with permits being up about 50% since that time last year, with two larger subdivisions, River Bend and Brian Grainger's retirement community, growing rather quickly. She noted that they were transitioning from using B&F to having an inhouse inspector. Ms. Seguss reported that a new restaurant was coming to the downtown. She reported that another challenge was that they were getting a huge influx of food trucks, noting that they were just beginning to permit them, and were having to keep track of who has permits, where they are parking, traffic, etc. She finished by informing the Commission that Genoa had received an application for a façade grant.

Mr. Hiland (DeKalb County) reported that a few of the solar gardens which were selected for the State program should be starting construction in the next thirty days, while a some of those not chosen in the first round have are coming forward to renew their special use permits. He explained why the County had set sunset clauses on the permits. Mr. Hiland informed the Commission on the previous night, June 24th, the DeKalb County Planning and Zoning Committee had considered the Aurora Sportsmen's Club (ASC)

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Special Use Permit amendment, elaborating on the changes that ASC were seeking. Mr. Hiland noted that permits were up this year compared to last year. Ms. Willis provided an update on the GIS MOU which was launched earlier in the year, noting they had received the MOUs from Genoa, Sandwich, Kirkland, and Shabbona. She noted that the Covid-19 crisis had started just as things were getting underway, and advised that any communities that had planned to participate to please follow up with them.

Mr. Gregory (Sycamore) reported that they have a 55 and older subdivision being built by Grainger, and that the new Meijers would be opening soon, though he did not know the exact date yet.

9. Next Meeting Date

Mr. Hiland informed the Commission that the next meeting date would be August 27, 2020, but noted that whether it would be virtual or in person was undetermined as yet.

10. Adjournment

Mr. Olson moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Devlieger. A roll call vote was held, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Aldis
Chair, DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission

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DEKALB COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

(August 27, 2020)

The DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) held a virtual meeting on August 27, 2020 at 6:30 p.m., via Zoom. In attendance were Commission Members: Cheryl Aldis, Dan Olson, Russell Kula, Frank Altmaier, Dan Chambers (alternate), Martha May, Becky Morphey, Brian Gregory, Linda Swenson, and Steve Faivre. Also, in attendance were: Pete Stefan, DeKalb County Finance Director; Dan Templin, from the DeKalb County Community Foundation (DCCF), Mim Evans, from the Northern Illinois University Center for Governmental Studies (NIU-CGS), and, County Staff members: Derek Hiland, Jolene Willis, and Marcellus Anderson.

1. Roll Call – Mr. Gentile, Ms. Jergens, Mr. Redden, and Ms. Wilson were not in attendance. Ms. May was in attendance and could hear the meeting, but due to a technical difficulty, was unable to be heard.

2. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Morphey moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Faivre. A roll call vote was held, and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Gregory moved to approve the minutes of the June 25, 2020 meeting, seconded by Ms. Morphey. A roll call vote was held, and the motion carried with eight (8) voting yes, zero (0) voting no, and one (1) abstention (Mr. Chambers).

4. Public Comments

None.

5. CEDS – Community Champions Committee Report

Mr. Hiland introduced Dan Templin and Mim Evans, members of CEDS Team 5 – Community Champions Committee, who gave a presentation on the progress of the CEDS group on countywide collaboration efforts over the past two years.

Mr. Templin informed the Commission that he was the executive director of DCCF, and that he and Ms. Evans were the cochairs of CEDS Team 5. He described the history of the CEDS group and elaborated on the vision that they developed: DeKalb County Thriving Strategic Plan”. He talked about items/ideas put forth by their committee, such as the “Community Champions” concept, which encourage communities to share their experiences with one another. He talked about the DeKalb County Economic Development

Grants program operated by DCCF. He finished by highlighting all of the efforts put forth by Ms. Jolene Willis in support of their efforts.

Ms. Evans informed the Commission that she is with the NIU-CGS, and talked about how the CGS worked with the communities. She elaborated further on the Community Champions Group, explained the importance and origin of the group's name and purpose. She highlighted that the group was uniquely structured around three elements; networking, learning, and sharing, and explained each element in detail. She talked about topics the group has discussed at its meetings and about the things that have been shared at the meetings. She finished by discussing some new groups that could be formed to address specific issues or around some common interests.

Ms. Aldis informed the Commission that she had attended some of the CEDS Group 5 meetings and noted that she found the meetings beneficial.

Mr. Hiland talked about the funding program provided by DCCF and planning grants that they availed to the communities. He also noted that often ideas are developed but are never followed up on due to an inability to find financial backing to support the efforts and ideas. Mr. Templin noted that most of the communities have started the planning process with DCCF, with many having already completed it. He also noted that some have even started projects.

Mr. Templin informed the Commission that DCCF's program was wrapping up, possibly by the end of the year, and that DCCF was in the process of determining what role they will play next.

6. Property Maintenance Codes and Enforcement

Mr. Hiland informed the Commission that one of the topics requested by Commission members was property maintenance codes. He noted that the Commission had discussed this issue in the past, but that it was good to revisit some issues like this again. He explained that the memo included in the Commission packet contained information gleaned from previous discussions and that it also contained the policy on property maintenance for the unincorporated portions of the County. He finished by asking the Commission members to share their experiences in dealing with property maintenance codes and enforcement.

Ms. Aldis noted that resolving property maintenance issues can take a long time, relating that it took Cortland twelve years to resolve the issues with one property and six years with another property. She did note however that one of the properties in question was now a public parking lot. Ms. Aldis informed the Commission that Cortland currently uses the 2006 IRC, and had been planning on updating to the 2015 IRC, but that due to the Covid-19 shutdowns, the process got derailed. She also related that it had been a struggle not having in-house code enforcers.

Mr. Gregory reported that Sycamore had experienced similar issues to the one already described. He noted that communities have to start, pointing out that it will be a journey, but it has to start somewhere.

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He related the City's experiences acquiring a particular property and noted that it seemed like every time they had to tackle issues like these, it seemed to take four to five years to resolve. He noted the importance of setting real expectations and to expect these to be multi-year efforts. Mr. Gregory also noted that the fines should always be a last resort, with compliance being the true goal.

Mr. Olson agreed with Mr. Gregory's statements, noting the need to get started addressing these issues, and highlighting the importance of catching things early on, if possible. Mr. Olson related DeKalb's difficulties in acquiring Campus Cinemas and getting it demolished. He also related their experiences dealing with difficult land owners.

Mr. Hiland noted the importance of having a property maintenance code in place. He reminded them that the County did not have a maintenance code in place, but the communities can have one.

Mr. Altmaier noted that at one point there had been talk about changing the State Laws regarding maintenance codes, in particular, addressing the differences between what home-rule communities and non-home-rule communities can do. He inquired whether there was any interest at the state level to strengthen the enforcement capabilities. Mr. Hiland responded that he did not know the answer, but could look into it. Mr. Hiland did report that the County Board had discussed the issue and that had been determined that it would likely take a countywide coalition to get anything to change.

Mr. Gregory noted that he believed that the City of Genoa may have administrative adjudication, even though they are not home rule. Mr. Altmaier noted that Genoa did, and that Kingston and Kirkland also use the same administrative hearing officer and location as Genoa. Ms. Aldis noted that administrative adjudication did not address all of the issues in question, and that she was aware of legislation being "on the table" with the State, but with no idea when the matter might be picked up again. She also noted some of the shortcomings of being not home-rule. Mr. Altmaier noted that rental licensing ordinances would also be nice.

Ms. Swenson mentioned that a former mayor of Waterman had enough foresight to realize that if the old pizza company factory in the heart of the village ever closed, the Village would be left with a big eyesore similar to what happened with Campus Cinemas in DeKalb. So, he went after them and was able to get the company to sell it to the Village for a dollar. The Village then tore it down and cleaned up the site. She noted that people complain that there is nothing there, but pointed out how much worse the site would have been with an abandoned factory there. Ms. Swenson noted that Waterman has a lot of maintenance issues. She noted that many people seem to think fines are the answer, but she disagrees with that approach.

Mr. Hiland agreed with Mr. Gregory that compliance is the key. He noted that it is not a money maker, and is probably a money loser in terms of a community's budget, but that the return on the quality of life in the community is invaluable. Mr. Gregory added that ultimately it really is a small investment to get neighborhoods to grow and get new construction, pointing out that property maintenance is a good way to maintain levels, and that all communities should prioritize it.

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Ms. Willis informed the Commission about a grant available for returning derelict properties to good use from the Illinois Housing Authority's Revitalization Program. She noted that it was a new program, and that they will be having a webinar on September 1st, and that applications will be due on the 28th. She then relayed the program information to the Commission. She noted that the program was funded out of the State of Illinois' Build America Bond Fund. She noted that the Commission could look into the program.

Mr. Chambers related Kirkland's experience taking down a building and their issues with now having the empty lot. He noted that had received help from Resource Bank. Mr. Chambers noted that in a smaller community like theirs, a vacant property was not easy to fill, and that preservation was more important to them.

7. Covid-19 updates

a. Community Impacts

Mr. Olson related that at the last Council meeting, it was noted that they had 500 late water bills, which was about double that of a normal year. He noted that the City had not done any water shut-offs since March, and that the City's planned to reach out to these people regarding setting set up some kind of payment plan, and to inform them about agencies and resources that are out there that might help them.

Ms. Aldis reported that Cortland had also offered that. She noted that Cortland only had about 1,500 accounts and only billed quarterly, so they did not have quite the problem DeKalb did. She noted that their water operator had pointed out to her that none of the communities with municipal plants were under the Governor's executive order; only those communities using a private operated system run by a contractor that could not be cut off. She noted that Cortland forgave late fees in the March quarter, and that they delayed late fees in the summer. She noted that they have not turned anyone off. Ms. Aldis noted that, unfortunately, no one had come forward to set up a payment plan. She noted that the offers were out there, but that people weren't taking advantage of it.

Mr. Gregory reminded the Commission about the CURES Program put out by DCEO, which had reimbursement dollars for municipalities, and that by October 1st communities are supposed to have an ordinance passed, and certification forms submitted, stating that the community would be participating in the program related to Covid-19 expenditures. He also talked about how the finance numbers were in, and noted that feared trends did not materialize.

Ms. Morpheu related Somonauk's experiences with their water bills, noting that they had been lucky so far, with no delinquent bills.

b. DCEO Programs

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Ms. Willis elaborated on the CURES Program, and asked whether all of the Commission members got emails from DCEO regarding their programs. She noted that if they did not, she could forward the emails to them.

8. Census 2020 Update

Mr. Hiland displayed the current census totals for the County and its communities, and noted that the numbers were looking better than the 2010 Census at a comparative timeframe. He noted that counters were out, and reiterated the importance of getting everyone counted.

9. Comprehensive Plan Status for each Community

Mr. Hiland related that the genesis of the item came from the survey given to the Commission members months prior. He talked about past conversations held by the Commission on the topic, noted that it is good to regularly update Comp Plans. He asked the Commission members to inform staff of the date when their community's Comp Plan was last updated and whether their community had copies available, digital or physical.

Mr. Hiland also noted that an updated member roster for the Commission would be sent out to the members to verify the information on it. He also asked that the members also identify how they represent your community: are you an elected official; an appointed one; and just a member of the community.

10. Municipal Development Permits / Projects / Challenges / Champions

Ms. Aldis (Cortland) reported that their permit numbers were up, and noted that they believed it was because everyone was home because of the Covid-19 crisis. She noted that homes were being built and that they had just issued two new permits. She reported that their projects were on hold, with the Fall Parade getting cancelled. She noted that a challenge they had was an old abandoned school building they need to get rid of.

Mr. Kula (Hinckley) that things had been quiet in Hinckley all summer.

Ms. Swenson (Waterman) reported that she had recently listed the biggest commercial building in downtown Waterman, which also contained a house as part of the building. She noted that she had eight showings on commercial buildings so far. She reported that they had one new house going up, and that lots of houses have sold, with many new people moving in.

Mr. Olson (DeKalb) reported that the Facebook and Candy company developments have been very strong. He reported that Gurler Road was closed, and that a roundabout was being constructed at the intersection of Gurler and Peace Roads. He noted that Homes2Suites hotel was scheduled to open in mid-September, and that Aurora Tower and Isaac Suites projects were under construction. He reported that the Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers restaurant should be open by November. Mr. Olson reported that the City had

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DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission Minutes
(August 27, 2020)

received three RFP's for the old city hall site, noting that two involved tearing down the building and putting in residential uses and one involved adding residential uses to the building. He reported that the Council was leaning towards the project proposed by John Pappas, for the building with 76 upscale rentals and executive suites. Mr. Olson reported that at the last Council meeting, the item getting the most discussion was backyard chickens. He noted that the issue is going to be put to the voters to decide.

Mr. Olson asked if any of the other communities allow for backyard chickens. Mr. Chambers responded that Kirkland did, and had regulations on it. Ms. Morphey noted that Somonauk also allows backyard chickens but that they had a stringent ordinance and regulations, and noted that no one had applied to do so.

Mr. Chambers (Kirkland) reported that housing was moving hot, and that home prices were going up.

Ms. Morphey (Somonauk) reported that the school solar project was finished, and that the second one should be done in November. She noted that they would be starting their sports program as soon as the bat training season was over. She noted that they had received their DCCF planning grant. She also noted that they were still working on their water system, had one house permit, and a lot of pool permits.

Mr. Faivre (DeKalb County) reported that the County had recently received applications for twenty-three solar re-applications, so that they could participate in the second round of the State Community Solar Program. He also noted that Syngenta Seeds had applied for a special use to establish a facility on Route 38, west of Malta. Mr. Gregory noted that this was a great example of communities working together to extend the enterprise zone to help Syngenta to come to DeKalb County.

Mr. Gregory (Sycamore) reported that the Covid-19 crisis had slowed residential starts for them, but that they had quite a few in the recent month. He noted that interest had been shown in some older buildings. Mr. Gregory also reported that the State would be redoing Route 23, from Sycamore to Genoa, and where Route 23 and Route 64 overlap.

Mr. Altmaier (Kingston) reported that they had been reviewing building permit fees to ensure that they were in line with their consultant fees, but that it wound up morphing into a review of the whole building permit process, which has led to other considerations changing. Mr. Altmaier cautioned other communities to look at updating their permitting processes and codes to be prepared for when progress happens. He noted that a nursery/landscaper located on Route 72 was moving out. He noted that a dairy trucking business was looking at the site, but that the use was not allowed on the site. He noted that the Village was considering possibly amending the zoning ordinance to allow for the use.

Ms. Willis gave an update on the GIS Infrastructure program, noting that agreements had been signed with Genoa, Sandwich, Kirkland, Shabbona, Somonauk, and Kingston. She encouraged the other communities to join while it was still free to do so. Ms. Aldis inquired about the fee after the first year, and Ms. Willis responded that she did not have the numbers with her, but that the pricing structure was all in the MOU.

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.

11. Next Meeting Date

Mr. Hiland informed the Commission that the next meeting date would be October 22, 2020.

12. Adjournment

Mr. Altmaier moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Aldis, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Aldis
Chair, DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission

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**DeKalb County
Regional Planning Commission**

110 East Sycamore Street
Sycamore, IL 60178
(815) 895-7188
www.dekalbcounty.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Regional Planning Commission

FROM: Derek M. Hiland, Community Development Director

DATE: October 16, 2020

SUBJECT: Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

The Regional Planning Commission (RPC) elected its current Chairman, Cheryl “Cookie” Aldis at its June 28, 2016 meeting. John Fischer, the Vice-Chairman elected at that time has since resigned from the Commission and the position remains temporarily vacant. Per the Commission’s Charter, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman are to serve two-year terms. Commission members should, therefore, give consideration to nominations for the Chair and Vice-Chair positions, and be prepared to vote for the same at the October 22, 2020 meeting.

DMH:dmh

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**DeKalb County
Regional Planning Commission**

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STAFF REPORT

TO: Regional Planning Commission

FROM: Derek M. Hiland
Community Development Director

DATE: October 16, 2020

SUBJECT: Annexation Types and Resources

The Regional Planning Commission at the beginning of this year identified as a topic for discussion and review the issue of how a municipality may connect or even disconnect property whether through an annexation agreement or by petition. What steps must be followed to undertake either? What challenges have been faced by communities? What successes can be shared by communities?

A local attorney will be in attendance at the October 22, 2022 meeting of the Regional Planning Commission to give an overview on the topic and to answer questions. Commission members are encouraged to consider such situations in their communities and prepare questions, as well as describe the local responses that have already taken place.

DMH:dmh

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