

DEKALB COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

**June 22, 2023
6:00 p.m.**

**DeKalb County Legislative Center
Gathertorium
200 N. Main St., Sycamore, IL 60178**

AGENDA

- 1. Roll Call**
- 2. Approval of Agenda**
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
- 4. Public Comments**

Any member of the public may address the Committee for up to 3 minutes on any topic of their choosing. There will be no yielding of time to other members of the public and agenda time for public comments is limited to 30 minutes in total.

- 5. Presentation and Q&A with Voluntary Action Agency**
- 6. Update on County's Planning Initiatives**
 - a. Dean Johnson with DeKalb County Soil and Water Conservation District will provide an update on the County's Watershed Planning Initiatives [\(LINK\)](#)**
 - b. All Hazards Mitigation Plan [\(LINK\)](#)**
 - c. Wind/Solar Regulations [\(LINK\)](#)**
- 7. Review & Overview Development/Economic Development Resources**
- 8. Municipal Development Permits / Projects / Challenges / Champions**
- 9. Next Meeting Date**
- 10. Adjournment**

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DEKALB COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

(February 23, 2022)

The DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) held a meeting on February 23, 2023 at 6:00 pm, in the DeKalb County Legislative Center, Gathertorium, in Sycamore, Illinois. In attendance were Commission Members: Dan Olson, Alyssa Seguss, Robert Pritchard, Frank Altmaier, Dan Chambers, Theresa Voitik, David Simpson, John Sauter, John Ecker, and Suzanne Willis. Also, in attendance were: County Staff members: Derek Hiland and Marcellus Anderson; and Mike Constant, Trustee for the Village of Hinckley.

Roll Call – Mr. Pietrowski, Ms. Jergens, Ms. Morphey, and Ms. Fahnestock were not in attendance. Mr. Chambers, Ms. Voitik, Mr. Latham, and Mss. Willis arrived after the meeting began. There was no quorum at the start of the meeting, but quorum was reached shortly after the beginning of the meeting.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Pritchard moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Simpson, and the motion carried unanimously. (The vote was held after quorum was reached.)

Approval of Minutes for the October 7, 2022 Meeting

Mr. Sauter moved to approved the minutes of October 7, 2022, seconded by Ms. Seguss, and the motion carried unanimously. (The vote was held after quorum was reached.)

Public Comments

None

New Illinois Laws Summary Overview

Mr. Hiland noted that the Commission packet contained a copy of the New Laws Summary of the 102nd Illinois General Assembly 2022 put out by the Illinois Association of County Board Members and Commissioners, and gave a brief description of the material. He noted that he was sharing this as information that may be useful for the group.

Mr. Olsen talked the requirement that municipalities were now required to notify the Illinois Department of Transportation of annexations and disconnections, pointing out that it was referenced on page 11 of the document. Mr. Sauter noted that it was also required to contact ComEd, and added that he could send the information to Mr. Hiland to share with the Commission.

Mr. Altmaier inquired whether there was something recommended to take back and make available to their Board members. Mr. Hiland responded that the document was meant to be shared with whoever the Commission members felt could use it; not intended to highlight anything specific.

Overview of Minnesota's Extension

Mr. Hiland reported that he had attended an online presentation put on by the Illinois Institute of Rural Affairs, and was presented by Benjamin Winchester of the University of Minnesota Extension. Mr. Hiland noted that the Commission packet contained a copy of the PowerPoint presentation. He described the presentation, giving highlights of the material touch on. Mr. Hiland spoke highly of the speaker and the presentation, and noted that he felt the materials would be very helpful.

Ms. Voitik arrived.

Mr. Pritchard noted that when they look at their small communities, we see all of the businesses that have disappeared, but do not see all of the home-based businesses that have sprung up in their wake. Mr. Hiland agreed with Mr. Pritchard and noted that the presentation also touched on that topic, describing some of what had been presented in relation to it.

Ms. Seguss noted that she had seen the presentation also and that she believed that the presentation could be watched on YouTube, and said that she would search for it and share it to Mr. Hiland. She noted that controlling the narrative was important and related an example he gave.

(The Commission voted on the Agenda and Minutes of the previous meeting, now that quorum had been reached.)

Annual Dues

Mr. Hiland reminded the Commissioners that the annual Regional Planning Commission dues were requested to be received by the end of February.

Member Re-Appointments

Mr. Hiland noted that five municipalities had expiring terms for their Commission members, and asked that they have their communities submit their nominations for someone to fill the position.

Mr. Altmaier inquired whether noticed had been sent out, and Mr. Hiland replied that they had.

2023 Agenda Items

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Mr. Hiland noted that the Commission had a number of new faces and suggested that the members all introduce themselves, which they did. He then introduced himself and staff. Mr. Hiland inquired as to what topics the members would like to explore this year.

Mr. Pritchard inquired whether the One County movement had been discontinued. Mr. Hiland responded that it was not, but that it was on hold at the moment. He noted that he would speak with the County Administrator about its status.

Mr. Latham suggested looking at pipelines and how the areas near them can be developed. He noted that they had a pipeline going right through the City's industrial area. Mr. Hiland said he would reach out to the pipelines and look into having representatives from them come to a Commission meeting.

Mr. Olson suggested looking at the different types of housing that communities are seeing being developed, particularly noting such housing type as: senior living; short-term dwellings; and accessory housing. Mr. Pritchard noted that the number of rentals go up as the cost of housing increases. Ms. Seguss noted that while affordability is important, but so is the ability for citizens to age within a community; pointing out that it is important to plan for this aging of the populace. She also noted that it had been a topic they looked at while developing their Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Chambers arrived.

Ms. Voitik suggested looking into the lack of fresh food availability.

Ms. Seguss suggested looking at the lack of public transportation for seniors and those unable to drive. Mr. Hiland noted that they could look into having Voluntary Action Center (VAC) stop by for a talk.

Ms. Voitik suggested looking at plans for possible train disasters, noting that a lot of trains passed through the area. Mr. Latham noted that this would be a matter for Dennis Miller, the Emergency Services Disaster Agency Coordinator. Mr. Hiland noted that the County does have a hazard mitigation plan in place, but that Mr. Miller also has his own plan. Mr. Hiland noted that he could look into having Mr. Miller stop in to address the Commission. Mr. Chambers talked about the 2015 tornado and its impacts, highlighting the challenges with handling donations and services.

Mr. Altmaier talked about code enforcement and building code issues discussed at the Commission's previous meeting and suggested discussing the challenges and problems with it and possibility of communities pooling resources. Mr. Chambers related the positive experiences they had with B&F, but added that he was aware that some communities had not had such positive

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relations with them. Mr. Ecker talked about Waterman's experiences with B&F, noting that they had been positive. Mr. Altmaier noted that code enforcement should be a topic.

Mr. Hiland noted that he would compile a list and send it out to the group, and then use it as a basis for the meetings. He also asked that the Commission members please contact him if they had any other suggestions for topics.

Mr. Ecker inquired who else was working on a comprehensive plan. Suggesting that further discussion could be had on this topic and maybe the communities could share their experiences and what they had learned.

Mr. Olson noted that Metra was extending towards DeKalb County, and suggested that transportation might be a topic of conversation. Mr. Hiland noted that he could look into having the County Engineer come speak on it.

Mr. Hiland talked about how the Commission had evolved over time, with its purpose changing from when it was first created to current day.

Ms. Seguss inquired whether they could overlap the Commission with DCEDC CEDS groups. Mr. Hiland noted that representatives from the DCEDC had spoken to the Commission before and he was concerned about possible duplication of efforts. He noted he would talk to Mr. Olson about it further. Ms. Seguss suggested looking at things communities could do to work with CEDS to complement each other.

Municipal Development Permits / Projects / Challenges / Champions

Mr. Altmaier (Kingston) reported that the Village was still waiting for the Department of Natural Resources to finish looking at the Village's stormwater maintenance plan for the Windhaven Subdivision; noting the various delays and how it is affecting the Village. He reported that the Village is in the process of making changes to their system for code enforcement, mentioning that the Village had some problem properties along State Route 72, and that they were working with B&F to coordinate code enforcement and adjudication hearings. Mr. Altmaier reported that the Village had put in bids for backup generators for their wells; noting that exceptional expense. He also noted that the Village's Public Works had told their Board that they need new iron filters, which start at around \$250,000, and was turning out to be a big deal.

Mr. Sauter (Sycamore) reported that the City had one new single-family permit, as of the end of January, which was less than January of 2022. He noted that commercial permits were picking up, though slower than last year at that time. He reported that they had a couple of new projects beginning in the next few weeks. Mr. Sauter reported that they would be implementing the BNSA program, which is a municipal software program, both at the Community Development level and

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at City Hall. He noted that he might be able to update the Commission on their progress and experience with this program as they progress along. He also noted that the City of DeKalb uses the same program. He noted the City was making a lot of code revisions, highlighting the changes done to the regulations on fences and sheds and noting that they will be looking at signs next. He reported that they are updating their cannabis ordinances, noting that the state has been making lots of changes. He noted that there was a craft grower looking at Sycamore. He finished by noting that they were in their third round of lead water service replacements.

Mr. Chambers (Kirkland) reported that the Village was looking into the Lead Service Replacement, though not working on it yet, describing it as a “down-the-road” project. He reported that the State had finally finished the sidewalks associated with the work they did on State Route 72. He noted that they had no major permits, and that they were trying to come up with new ways to attract businesses to the community. Mr. Chambers reported that, while he could not give any details, the Village was involved in litigation over some land, and that the case would be before the Illinois Supreme Court on March 22nd. He finished by talking about the Big Dig project, reporting that it was done and describing some of the issues they had.

Ms. Voitik (Lee) reported that the Village had a lot going on. She reported that she would likely be the Village president by the next Commission meeting. She noted, however, that they were also losing their Village Clerk at the same time. She noted that the Village did have someone that will be appointed as the new Village Clerk, and inquired whether any of the Commissioners knew of anyone that could mentor the new Village Clerk. Ms. Voitik reported that the Village had been working on putting in a new village well, but had lost its CBDG grant due to the census, which reported the Village as having very high income per household. This means that their water bills were going to become almost four times higher. She also noted that the Village was buying a used water tower from Mendota, and that well #3 is going to be dug. Ms. Voitik noted that as a new Village President she was hopeful that she may be able to bounce some questions off the other members.

Ms. Seguss (Genoa) reported that the City has begun working on the Comprehensive Plan and just had their first meeting; noting that a lot of questions had been coming out. She reported that permits had been slow coming. Ms. Seguss reported that the Dunkin Donuts should, hopefully, be finishing in the next month or so. She noted that the City was also working on their lead line service inventory, and had applied for an IEPA loan to help with it, though they were not depending on getting it. She reported that they had some downtown projects going on, and talked about a downtown revitalization project they were working on. Ms. Seguss noted that a topic she had considered suggesting to the Commission was that of the struggle with getting grants, and talked about the challenges they have had, and wondered if other communities were having the same issues. Mr. Hiland responded that he would add it to the list of topics.

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Mr. Olson (DeKalb) reported that DeKalb had approved the reconstruction of the former St. Mary's Hospital into a 32-unit apartment building. He reported that the DeKalb had just approved of a cannabis dispensary in downtown DeKalb on Locust Street in a former bank building. He noted that the business had received a conditional license through the State. In terms of licensing, he noted that DeKalb County had been in the northwest Illinois region, but it had been shifted to the Chicago Metropolitan region. He noted that they should hopefully be up and running by the end of summer. Mr. Olson reported that they are amending their parking regulations and talked about some of the changes they were making. He reported that the City had completed an update of its Comprehensive Plan in 2022, noting that they had done it in-house and were willing to work with any of the communities looking to update their plans.

Mr. Latham (Sandwich) reported that in 2022 Sandwich had forty-one single-family home permits and were forecasting about thirty homes for 2023. He reported that Scooter's Coffee had their grand opening. He reported that a developer had put in a large outdoor storage facility, and that interest had been shown for a climate-controlled storage facility to the east. Mr. Latham talked about their proposed water treatment center being rebid, noting that they would also be installing a solar field in that area to help with electrical costs. He reported that they had just finished up the street pavement management program, surveying and finishing an inventory of all 48-miles of the City's streets. Mr. Latham noted a challenge they had lay in delays to projects caused by utilities. Mr. Latham noted that they had a new City Manager. He also noted that they were in the running for a Metra line.

Mr. Ecker (Waterman) reported that Ryan Homes was building, and that they were going through their Comprehensive Plan. He talked about some TIF dollars they had available and the responses they have had. In response to the mentoring request made by Ms. Voitik, he noted that their Village Clerk and Village Manager were very good and might be able to help, and said that he could touch base with them about it. Mr. Ecker reported that they had adopted a new water billing system and had also installed a new splash pad. He talked about the success they had had with grants, and that they were bumping up to the need for a new well. Mr. Ecker reported that they were hoping that Ryan Homes would sell out this year. He noted that mentorship, the One County initiative, and pooling the communities shared experiences would be great.

Mr. Pritchard (Hinckley) introduced Mike Constant, a Trustee for the Village of Hinckley. Mr. Pritchard noted that Hinckley had a number of new businesses. He talked about Dollar General, which was going through the development process and will be on the east side of the Village. He reported that the Village had recently purchased 17-acres of land on the east side of the Village and that the Village had entered an intergovernmental agreement with the high school to put in a solar garden on the property, which is expected to generate significant savings over the next twenty-five years for the School and the Village. Mr. Pritchard noted that the Village was looking at putting in a prairie garden, wildlife area, and walking path on land the Village owns. He also noted that there was an individual who was looking to develop a bike path from Hinckley to Lee.

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Mr. Pritchard talked about an issue the Village was having with landlords that did not want to develop, and suggested that it might be a topic for the Commission to address. He reported on a conversation he had with Jerry Foster who had informed him about an organization called Recast Inc, which specializes in getting small manufacturing into store fronts, and noted that it might be worth the small communities in the County checking out.

Ms. S. Willis (DeKalb County) reported that companies were still submitting applications for commercial solar facilities under the County's current regulations, instead of waiting for the new solar regulations in May. She talked about the County Highway Department's 5-Year Plan, and noted the difficulties they had in acquiring a new snow plow.

Mr. Simpson (Shabbona) reported that US Highway 30 was to be repaved in the spring. He also reported that they had their well finally up and running. He reported that the Village had put together a 501c3 grant, which they will be using to fund filling out the park they acquired in 2022. Mr. Simpson talked about one of the Village's big challenges which is finding a way to make visitors to the State Park aware of the Village and get them to patronize the community.

Ms. Voitik inquired whether any of the communities had started putting in charging stations. Mr. Simpson replied that they are talking about it, and that he had been actually promoting the idea. Mr. Olson replied that DeKalb had a few in their public parking lots.

Mr. Hiland updated the Commission on House Bill 4412, which established statewide standards for commercial solar and wind facilities in the unincorporated portions of counties in Illinois. He talked about how the County had become aware of it, gave a brief history of its path through the state legislature, up to its adoption by the State on January 27, 2023. He described the impact it had on County regulations and the Challenges it created. Mr. Olson inquired whether the language impacted municipalities. Mr. Hiland replied that it did not.

Mr. Hiland talked about the Current Development Project list, asking members if they would like to see it resurrected. After a brief discussion, Mr. Hiland said that he would send out the list to the members so that they can fill it in and return it to him. He emphasized that it would be a resource to the members, but not really one intended for public consumption.

Next Meeting Date

The Commission's next meeting date was proposed to be June 22nd , at 6:00 pm.

Adjournment

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Mr. Latham moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Voitik, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Olson
Chair, DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission

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Highlights:

- 11 Communities have signed up for the Community GIS Project
- 10 of those have submitted data to the County
- 8 Communities have online applications (City of Sycamore In progress will make 9)
- Village of Kingston using their app to add and update Public Works data
- 8 Communities have submitted zoning data that has been added to County's Compass website
- Other potential projects: Sidewalk Inventory, Lead Service Line Replacement, Tree Inventory, Mobile data collection

Community Update – 06/16/2023							
	MOU Signed	Data Submitted To County	Data Collection By Municipality*	Data Added to County GIS	App Created	App in Use	Maps **
Cortland	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DeKalb	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Genoa	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hinckley	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kingston	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kirkland	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Malta	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maple Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sandwich	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shabbona	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Somonauk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sycamore	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Waterman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

* Municipality is actively collecting field data to submit to County GIS.

** Hard copy maps sent to Municipality.