

OTTAWA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED MINUTES

DATE: November 27, 2006

PLACE: Ottawa County Fillmore Complex, Conference Room B

PRESENT: Betty Gajewski, Bill Miller, Robert Rinck, Cornelius Vander Kam, Jim Miedema, Gary Scholten, Jeffrey Wincel

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Mark Knudsen, Tabitha Rowley

GUESTS: Elizabeth Council, Grand Haven Tribune; Jeremy Gonsior, Holland Sentinel

Call to Order:

Chair Gajewski called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. A quorum was present to do business. Invocation was given by Robert Rinck.

Approval of the Agenda:

06-38 Motion: To approve the November 27, 2006 Agenda.

Moved by: Vander Kam Supported by: Scholten **UNANIMOUS**

Approval of the Minutes:

06-39 Motion: To approve the minutes of the September 25, 2006 meeting, with the following amendment:

- Under Action Items, change Item B vote to read as follows:

“Moved by: Scholten Supported by: Rinck **MOTION PASSED**
Yeas: Miller, Rinck, Vander Kam, Miedema, Scholten (5)
Abstentions: Wincel (1)”

Moved by: Rinck Supported by: Vander Kam **UNANIMOUS**

Announcements:

A. Introductions

Mark introduced Tabitha Rowley, the new Secretary for the Planning Department. Elizabeth Council from the Grand Haven Tribune introduced herself.

B. Reports of Meetings Attended

Betty Gajewski attended the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting. She reported that there was ongoing discussion regarding Park 12, located near Holland State Park. Betty also reported that the Parks and Recreation Commission will be submitting two grant proposals, which appear to be strong contenders for approval. The first grant would fund the construction of a stairway and viewing platform on Mt. Pisgah, which would help minimize further damage to the dune. The second grant involves the purchase of property along the Grand River to create a new county park in Polkton Township. In addition, Betty attended the West Michigan Strategic Alliance conference in October. She reported that the meetings focused on green infrastructure.

Bill Miller reported that the state is not funding gypsy moth spraying this year. The county has given the Conservation District \$5,000 to monitor and spray 25,000 acres. Letters have been sent to the Commissioners and the Administrator's office to notify them of the issue. In addition, two areas of the county have tested positive for the Emerald Ash Borer, near Zeeland and Coopersville. Bill also reported that if there is a quarantine put in place, it will have a negative impact on nursery growers' ability to ship their products.

Commissioner Vander Kam reported that the Board of Commissioners is set to take a vote on the proposed ban of phosphorus fertilizers. Mark Knudsen added that there is a State Senate bill that, if passed, would take precedence over local ordinances.

Commissioner Rinck had no report.

Gary Scholten attended the State School Board Association's annual meeting. He reported that a woman from New York City gave a motivational speech about educating young African-American children.

Jeff Wincel reported that he had attended the Park Township Planning Commission meeting. At this time, the township does not have a planner on staff, causing the township's Planning Commission to spend large amounts of time reviewing site plans. Jeffrey requested that someone from the County Planning Department contact their chair and attend the next meeting to discuss what is offered at a county level.

Jim Miedema had nothing to report.

Petitions and Communications:

- A. FYI Folder
- B. Application for Farmland Agreement – Boersen Farms, Inc.

06-40 Motion: To receive for information Items A - B

Moved by: Wincel

Supported by: Rinck

UNANIMOUS

Presentations:

None

Public Comments:

None

Action Items:

A. Tallmadge Charter Township Proposed Master Plan

06-41 Motion: To support the Tallmadge Charter Township Proposed Master Plan. The Commissioners would like a letter sent to Tallmadge Township indicating that while they approve the plan, they are saddened by the loss of agricultural land and have seen this trend throughout the county.

Moved by: Scholten

Supported by: Rinck and Vander Kam **UNANIMOUS**

Discussion Items

A. Ottawa County Board of Commissioners Resolution Regarding Township Zoning Amendments

Mark Knudsen reported that the Board of Commissioners passed the Resolution to waive the requirement that local units of government submit proposed rezoning, new zoning ordinances, and proposed text amendments to zoning ordinances that occur more than 500 feet from an adjacent local unit of government's border. However, townships shall still be required to submit any proposed rezoning involving lands located within 500 feet of the township's border. The Resolution is set to sunset after two years, giving the Commissioners a chance to review the process. Mark also highlighted Item 4 from the Resolution, which encourages townships to submit copies of their zoning changes to the Planning Library.

B. Zoning Board of Appeals Basic Training Evaluation

Mark reported that 40 people attended the training, and that winter and spring training sessions are also being planned. Betty Gajewski would have liked to see data indicating how many attendees were from within Ottawa County. Mark said he would have that information for the next meeting.

C. US-31 Bypass

Mark reported that MDOT held a public meeting earlier this month to discuss their plans. Mark highlighted the map and timeline given by MDOT. He also reported that at this time, MDOT will not be including anything south of M-45. A new Environmental Impact Study will need to be conducted for that area.

D. Road Salt

Mark reported that Chuck Pistis had set up a meeting with MSU regarding road salt testing. The monitoring program that is currently in place measures the salt levels in groundwater from 48 wells throughout Olive, Robinson, and Grand Haven Townships.

MSU recommended two changes to our current testing:

- 1) Test fewer wells more often throughout the year
- 2) Use a specific type of equipment that will give flow and temperature data.

Mark reported that Chris Clement has put these recommendations into two proposals that will be taken back to MSU. Their input will be collected again, and their recommendations will then be taken to the Road Salt Committee.

Mark reported that testing is currently funded by MDOT, the Road Commission, MSU, and the Farm Bureau. Mark also stated that if additional funding is needed, Chris Clement is prepared to submit a grant proposal requesting additional funds.

Commissioner Vander Kam asked why the number of wells would be restricted. Mark responded that MSU had recommended it, believing that the needed data could be better obtained from fewer wells and more frequent testing.

E. Urban Smart Growth Demonstration Project (Update)

Mark reported that the architectural portfolio that was completed by the City of Hudsonville has been adopted. Mark also reported that they are meeting with MDOT this week to begin the process of creating a master plan and how Chicago Drive will affect their downtown area. Mark invited the Commissioners to let him know if any of them would like to attend the meetings.

Mark handed out a digital rendering of a building that implemented the new architectural guidelines. Commissioners Miedema and Vander Kam requested additional information as to whether it was a new building or renovation of an existing building.

Input and Strategy Session

A. Transit Study

Mark gave background information on the transit study, discussed our current funding, and asked for input to develop a Request for Proposal. The Commissioners discussed their thoughts of different aspects they would like to see included in a transit study, including the impact based on gas prices, route frequency, shelter availability, public/private cooperatives, interurban routes, and other topics.

B. Water Quality Study

Mark reported that within Allendale Township, some homeowners have been running out of water. Their aquifers are recharging at a much longer rate of time, and their wells are already down to the bedrock. Al would like to conduct a countywide water study. Mark asked what questions the Commissioners would like answered, and said there is a possibility of developing a list and finding out how much it would cost a consultant to study each issue on the list. From that point, it would be determined what could be studied based on cost. The Commissioners discussed their ideas of what could be studied, including water levels, how much water is available, what the recharge rate is, using gray water or reclaimed water, potability, where water shortages are, and other topics.

The meeting adjourned at 8:44 PM.