

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
McHenry County Government Center – Administration Building
667 Ware Road – Conference Room A
Woodstock, IL 60098

Minutes of Thursday, April 19, 2007

Barbara Wheeler, Chairman
Mary L. Donner Jim Heisler
John Jung, Jr. Mary T. McCann
Peter Merkel Marc Munaretto

Chairman Wheeler called the Planning and Development Committee meeting to order at 8:17 a.m. The following members were present: Barbara Wheeler; Mary Donner; Jim Heisler; John Jung, Jr.; Mary McCann; and Peter Merkel. Marc Munaretto was absent. Also in attendance: Planning and Development Department staff members; Michelle Courier, Assistant State's Attorney; interested public; and the press

MINUTE APPROVAL

Mr. Jung made a motion, seconded by Ms. Donner, to approve the regular session minutes of the Planning and Development Committee's March 15, 2007 meeting. The minutes were approved as submitted with a unanimous voice vote.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Amanda Canfield, of 20617 State Line Road, addressed the Committee and voiced her opposition to Petition # 07-16. This petition is requesting a reclassification from A1 to R1. Her major concern was that a pallet company abuts the property which she felt presented a potential fire hazard. She provided pictures of the area, noting that there is limited fire protection and if the homes are constructed there would be limited access to the pallets that are stored on the legally zoned A-1 property. She stated that she felt that property was unsuitable for R1 reclassification.

PRESENTATIONS: None

SUBDIVISIONS

Tentative Plat Extension – Skyview Subdivision: After a review of the extension request for Skyview Subdivision, Mr. Heisler made a motion, seconded by Ms. Donner, to approve the tentative plat extension request for Skyview Subdivision. The motion carried with all members present voting aye.

Hunter Woods – Tentative Plat: This item was removed from the agenda at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

Sign Ordinance: Ms. Courier had indicated she would like time to review revised sections of the Ordinance and members agreed to postpone a recommendation until the next regularly scheduled meeting. Members then discussed various comments and suggestions from staff. Ms. Ehardt noted that the draft Ordinance distributed to the members includes the suggestions made during the previous meeting. Those include adding definitions for "permanent" signs and "temporary" signs in the Listing of Definitions section. With these definitions Members agreed that the item covering special events could be removed. Ms. Ehardt recommended wording to 301.10 address "flagpoles" and the number allowed, suggesting 1 free-standing flagpole allowed in Residential, Estate and Agricultural Zoning Districts and up to three free-standing flagpoles in Business, Office and Industrial Zoning Districts. Members agreed that it was best to address flagpoles instead of flags. Ms. Ehardt stated it had been determined to deal with structure. Mr. Merkel commented that all flagpoles are constructed to handle certain size flags and if these instructions are not followed the pole could become a safety issue. Ms. Courier stated that the section on special events could be deleted as this issue can be addressed under prohibited signs. She also noted that no sign should pose a traffic hazard. She felt having separate sections for these issues could be confusing. Ms. Ehardt stated that the department would not be issuing permits for temporary signs and agreed this issue could be covered under prohibited signs. Only permanent signs would need a permit. Ms. Ehardt noted that signs in agricultural areas will still not be allowed, which prohibits signs painted on buildings in those areas.

Approved: 5/3/07

She noted there are still some advertisements on farm buildings in southern states, but these are historic signs. After the discussion, Chairman Wheeler stated that this item will be brought back to the Committee at the next regularly scheduled meeting for further consideration.

NEW BUSINESS

Proclamation – May “Look at Local History Month”: Mr. Merkel made a motion, seconded by Mr. Heisler, to recommend the County Board approve a Resolution proclaiming the Month of May as “Look at Local History Month.” The motion carried with all members present voting aye.

2030 Land Use Goals and Objectives: Mr. Jung stated that the Economic Development had added their goals to this document. He stated this is just an FYI and no formal adoption by the County Board would be necessary. Mr. Jung will keep the County Board updated during his monthly reports. Chairman Wheeler asked that a cover letter be drafted for all County Board members to keep them updated as changes are made to this document.

Resolution for Position Reclassification and a Resolution authorizing a seasonal part-time staff position in the Planning and Development Department: Ms. Ehardt reviewed the organizational changes taking place in the P & D Department and noted these two resolutions will help to implement those changes. Mr. Merkel made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jung, to recommend the County Board approve a Resolution authorizing the reclassification of positions #010-E11-021-99 and #010-6-023-05 in the Planning and Development Department and a Resolution authorizing a seasonal part-time staff position in the Planning and Development Department. The motion carried with all members present voting aye.

Land Conservancy Request for Waiver of Fees: Ms. Ehardt reported that a request has been received asking consideration of a waiver of building permit and zoning filing fees associated with the land and building utilized by the Land Conservancy for their office. She stated that this is a Not-for Profit association dedicated to preserving open space, farms and wetlands. Mr. Curran addressed the Committee as the attorney for the requesting parties. He asked for consideration of this request and reviewed the fees involved. The owners of the property, Beverly and Ken Erickson, along with Lisa Haderlein of the Land Conservancy, also addressed the Committee. The Erickson's reviewed how they had updated the building to allow space for a Land Conservancy office after which it was brought to their attention that they would need a permit which would allow for commercial use of the space. Ms. Ehardt stated that there have been requests to waive permit fees for other taxing bodies with a permit for inspection fees only. County Board Chairman Koehler commented that he had been working with these individuals and suggested a waiver of the permit fees, but not a waiver of what is required. He stated the issue is confusing since the owners' son decided to apply under this same petition to allow for an ag business. After a discussion, Mr. Jung made a motion, seconded by Ms. Donner, to waive the permit fee and zoning fees on the portion applicable to the Not-for-Profit Land Conservancy only. Members also recommended separate petitions so as not to confuse these two issues. The motion carried with all members present voting aye.

Waste Tire Collection Event: Ms. Ehardt reported that McHenry County has been tentatively awarded a Waste Tire Collection Event by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA). Upon final approval, this event will be held on June 8-9 at the McHenry County Fairgrounds. She noted that final approval is determined after inspection of the event site. In the past, this event has been very successful. Mr. Heisler suggested putting a flyer in the property tax bills that should be mailed in the near future.

Ms Ehardt reported that staff has been working on a proposal to perhaps modify the subdivision ordinance to include requirements and aspects that would promote conservation design. She noted that several years ago a section of cluster design was in the ordinance. Chairman Wheeler asked members if they would like to go in the direction of conservation design. Ms. McCann stated conservation design would address a number of issues and would be a positive step. Ms. Donner agreed but felt that all involved would need to be educated on the reasoning behind such design. Ms. Ehardt agreed noting that developing the ordinance will be the easy part, but the education process will take time. Members agreed to move forward with this concept and asked that a Resolution be presented for consideration at the next meeting.

Chairman Wheeler announced that she has put going paperless on the "back burner" for this Committee. Ms. Ehardt stated staff will continue to work towards going paperless as time allows.

REPORTS TO COMMITTEE, AS APPLICABLE

Stormwater – Nothing to report

CMAA – The County is hosting a water resource meeting on Tuesday, April 24, 2007 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Anyone wishing to attend should let staff know as soon as possible.

MCCD – The referendum was passed by the voters and the MCCD will be discussing future plans at a meeting scheduled on Tuesday, April 24th. It was also noted that MCCD is researching hiring a firm to look at Glacial Park Lodge and what is needed to get it up and running. Chairman Wheeler stated that two trustee terms are expiring June 30th, an ad had been placed for an application deadline of April 19th, she asked that the deadline be extended to May 8, 2007.

Planning Commission – No additional report

Imagine McHenry County – A meeting is scheduled for May 8th at which time a representative from Utah will address the members.

Agritourism: The next meeting is Monday, April 23, 2007 at 2:30 pm..

MISCELLANEOUS:

Mr. Merkel stated the Emerald Ash Borer will soon become a problem in McHenry County. He stated if the County is under quarantine, they will need to find a disposal site within the County for the trees that will be cut as such trees cannot be exported out of the County. He wanted the members to be aware of the problem and perhaps look at how these issues will be addressed.

Ms. McCann noted that landscape companies are starting to "set up shop" again and this could generate burning problems. Ms. Ehardt pointed out if it is waste that is being burned it becomes a health issue. If it is the burning of landscape generated on the property it is an issue to be addressed by the P & D Department. She added that it is up to the fire protection district to report such events to the P & D Department, noting that some districts do and others do not. Ms. McCann asked if a monthly report on enforcement issues could be provided to the Committee. Ms. Ehardt stated this information is included in the department's annual report and to provide monthly updates would put added work on staff. She noted that burning complaints have not been a big issue, adding that the ordinance is complaint driven. She stated that should any significant issues arise she will bring these to the Committee.

Ms. McCann commented that she did support the Kishwaukee Valley Water Authority referendum. She noted that when the Water Resource Manager position was discussed she felt someone with more experience would be hired. She stated she is disappointed with the candidate as she felt the individual lacked the necessary knowledge for such a position. She stated her expectation was that the County wanted to hire an engineer with stronger experience for this position. County Board Chairman Koehler responded that the final three candidates were all qualified and any one of them could have done a good job for the County. In selecting a final person, communications was a big consideration. The person selected has the local resources and the knowledge that was being sought. Ms. Ehardt stated that the Water Resource Manager must be able to deal with the general public and have a good rapport with the farming community, the individual selected has those capabilities.

Chairman Wheeler announced that Mr. Alten had been selected to chair the Farm Land Preservation Commission. The next meeting is scheduled for May 16th.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Donner made a motion, seconded by Mr. Merkel, to adjourn at 10:25 a.m. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

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RECOMMENDED FOR BOARD ACTION:

Resolution proclaiming the Month of May as "Look at Local History Month."

Resolution authorizing the reclassification of positions #010-E11-021-99 and #010-6-023-05 in the Planning and Development Department

Resolution authorizing a seasonal part-time staff position in the Planning and Development Department