

**MONTCALM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
M I N U T E S**

Monday, March 21, 2005, 7:00 p.m.
Third Floor Conference Room
Administrative Building

Members Present:	Franz Mogdis Lonnie Smith John Johansen Bruce Noll Don Smucker Pete Haines David Raney
Members Absent:	Phil Lund
Participating Members Present:	None
Others Present:	Lisa Lund, Recording Secretary Mark Wyckoff, Planning and Zoning Center, Inc.

Call to Order

Chairman Mogdis called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Mogdis led the group in the Pledge.

Roll Call

Lisa Lund took roll call and announced a quorum present.

Public Comment

Chairman Mogdis opened the floor for public comment. There was none.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the February 21, 2005 meeting were reviewed. Motioned by Bruce Noll to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Lonnie Smith. Motion carried.

Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was reviewed. John Johansen asked to add comments from Don Lehman under Other New Business. Motioned by John Johansen to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Don Smucker. Motion carried.

Old Business and Reports

All attachments noted are on file with the Recording Secretary.

Draft Fact Book

Mark Wyckoff from Planning and Zoning Inc. (PZC Inc.) distributed a draft copy of the Fact Book dated March 21, 2005 (Attachment A).

Mark stated the Public Facilities and Services chapter and Summary are not included in this draft but will be in the final product. Mark further noted that his notes to the Planning Commission are in red and these are things the Commission needs to pay attention to soon. Mark stated the P.A. 116 Map is still being developed. Land Information Access Association has had problems with the composite parcel map that is needed for build out purposes and those problems are being addressed. This draft copy of the Fact Book is intended for Planning Commission members but it not to be made publicly available as it contains incomplete information. Mark suggested that Franz collect each Planning Commissioner's Fact Book revision comments and forward one copy with all the changes on it to PZC Inc.

John noted a correction to the Planning Commission roster in the document. The roster incorrectly listed Lisa Lund as a Planning Commission member. John suggested that Lisa be represented on the page with the correct title of Recording Secretary.

Mark said the Fact Book is longer than the original goal of 50 pages, estimating it was approximately 80 pages. He wanted the group to consider whether the 50 page limit originally discussed was critical for budget or if there were other reasons, and if that was still the top limit. He further suggested there may be ways to edit the document, saying for example that a table or map duplicated in two chapters and may not be needed in both places. He stated very few people read the Fact Book from beginning to end and suggested keeping that format of having charts and tables close to the text for quick reference wherever possible. Mark then walked the Planning Commission members through the document.

Chapter One – Introduction

The introduction provides a description of the information addressed in each chapter. On Page 1-1, John Johansen asked why villages aren't shown on Map 1-1. Mark explained it was due to a data issue, but after further discussion, Mark said would modify the map to reflect villages.

Chapter Two- Demographics

Mark indicated that this was the longest chapter. Counties as comparisons are contiguous to Montcalm County. The estimates provided are the most current available. Discussion resulted when Mark shared information about the projected decline in population and the relationship between influences on population growth/decline, such as jobs and gas prices as it relates to commuters. Mark forecasted a lower population projection than Planning Commission members expected, in part due to the increasing loss of jobs. Franz suggested a data source of building permits as evidence that growth is occurring and population forecasts should be higher, but Mark said those numbers are affected by current low interest rates and may change as interest rates increase. Franz also stated that many of the workers currently working at local businesses are commuters.

Mark said he was approaching this population projection more conservatively based on his experiences, including governmental entities that have made plans for items such as infrastructure anticipating population increases that don't occur. Franz stated the infrastructure is not the issue but the development and loss of farmland, and Mark said that was an entirely different issue which has been allowed through current zoning ordinances. Mark will check with regional projections to see if there are more current statistics- either econometric statistics (jobs based) or cohort based statistics looking at causes (in-migration). [Note: Mark emailed after the meeting that the U.S. Census Bureau population estimates are due to be released in 2 weeks and will be incorporated in revisions.]

On Page 2-6, John asked how we accurately represent the Carson City population figure which was impacted by the prisoner population's move to double bedding. Mark will footnote this.

Mark said the village populations are counted as township residents and it is difficult to get the separated data from U.S. Census.

On Page 2-8, Mark said he is still missing building permit data for Greenville, Eureka Township, and Montcalm Township. Franz and the Planning Commission will together work to obtain the data for Mark.

On Page 2-12, Mark said the population per household numbers were surprisingly high, indicating to him that Montcalm has a high number of children per household. He said 2.4 people per household are more common in rural areas. Members explained the above average statistics may not be a high number of children but rather extended family or non family members sharing the household.

On Page 2-14, Mark will correct the Figure 2-2 chart label to say "Montcalm County" instead of "Mason County." On the same chart, Mark indicated that the Population by Age and Gender chart should look like a pyramid but in Montcalm, the large number of persons in the middle age groups indicates there will likely be a new set of public service costs and demands for the baby boomers as they age. Franz stated that many seniors are retiring here. Mark stated that the results of an increased senior population are increased needs for emergency services, hospitalization/ medical, housing, and transportation. Mark said a trend he has seen in other counties is that well-educated retirees have a tendency to become politically active and may make it more difficult to pass millages for schools. Plus Mark said there will be proportionally fewer school age children.

On Page 2-18, Mark said the Planning Commission will want to monitor if plant closures impact future poverty level statistics.

Chapter Three –Economy and Economic Development

Mark said this chapter provides the most basic information about the labor force, both employed and unemployed prior to the Electrolux closing. On Page 3-7, Mark asked his staff to leave in Electrolux and Hitachi data because of the closing. John noted that there may be some employee numbers that should be corrected. Franz will get those numbers to Mark.

Chapter Four- Natural Resources and Environment

On Page 4-3, Map 4-1 shows watershed boundaries.

On Page 4-5, Map 4-2 is the map used to calculate flood insurance rates but the map in this Fact Book may not show the full details due to the scale of the map.

On Page 4-7, Mark said that Map 4-3 shows that Montcalm has a lot of discontinuous wetlands and is a significant map related to future development in regards to development, preservation, and using this physical resource as an asset.

On Page 4-8 and 4-9, Mark said that the Commission may or may not desire to include Table 4-1 and 4-2. Member reviewed the sites listed on Table 4-2 and Mark said if there are sites that have been taken care of, he needs to know. Two ways to do this are a Department of Environmental Quality inquiry or talk directly to property owners to verify. Mark was asked to change the heading on Table 4-2 to "City of Mailing Address" rather than just "City" as at least one location was outside of Montcalm County although the mailing address was Greenville.

On Page 4-10, Mark noted that Map 4-4 also appears in Chapter 5. Franz suggested that the term "lake" needs to be defined. Mark said that Map 4-4 regarding current land use is not accurate. He said while the data is the most current available, three townships information have 1998 data and the others are 1978. Mark suggested the only way to fix this discrepancy is to data set current (by paying for an up-to-date land use/cover inventory) and doing this may be a consideration as a future County budget item that would provide benefit to Montcalm communities.

On Page 4-13, Mark said that Map 4-5 gives an idea of how the land undulates through the county.

Chapter 5- Existing Land Use and Tax Base

On Page 5-4, Mark stated that Map 5-1 connects tax class and parcels, but also includes 13,560 unclassified acres. The Planning Commission felt that this needs to be addressed. Mark said he would have LIAA print off a large E size map and mail it to Franz, so he can review places that are white (unclassified). Franz said he would involve Dick Reeves to be sure all acres are classified.

On Page 5-7, Mark stated that Map 5-2 is repeated from the previous chapter.

On Page 5-8, Don noted that bees as a business are located here but bees themselves may not be, and stated he will follow up to get additional information on this.

On Page 5-10, Mark stated that Map 5-3 shows property lines and parcels and the date of the information needs to be added to the map.

On Pages 5-12, 5-13, and 5-14, Mark stated that he picked three land section maps for demonstration purposes. If these maps are used in the final document, Rockford Map Publishers will need to be paid a royalty and include a written use permission statement below each map. The Planning Commission will need to make a decision whether or not they will be used. Franz will get back to Mark on this.

Chapter 6- Transportation

On Page 6-2, Mark said Map 6-1 is important because of money received from both the Federal and State governments are based on this map.

Mark concluded his review of the draft document and stated that the incomplete portions include “Chapter Seven- Public Facilities and Services” and the “Summary” which highlights key points used to lead into actual planning. These cannot be completed until all the local infrastructure/ facility surveys are in.

Members discussed the project timeline with Mark. Mark stated he wanted to announce at Town Meetings that the Fact Book would be online soon, leading to the determination of a mid-May Fact Book completion target date and a target date for early May for edits being due. Mark discussed the spacing of the release of the documents. Mark suggested that if the next Planning Commission meeting would not be held ‘til May, a dual reading (intensive and light) would be desired.

Franz requested comments on their individual drafts by April 15 and submit to Mark at a following Community Visioning session. John asked about the best format to submit member edits. Mark responded that the best way to do it is for members to mark the document they received tonight and submit those revisions to Franz for ease of reading, and if members desire to keep a copy of the document, make a copy for their use.

Information needs

Franz asked Mark for a remaining list of missing facility information, and Don suggested that alternate sources may have the information, such as the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission.

Visioning Sessions

Franz distributed a planning packet of information for the Visioning Sessions dated February 28, 2005 (Attachment B).

The schedule for the Visioning Sessions is set as follows: Monday, April 18- Howard City; Monday, April 25- Greenville; and Thursday, April 28- Montcalm Community College.

Mark asked if fliers had been distributed and announcements been distributed and Franz stated they had not but would be in next couple days. Mark mentioned that we may want to encourage early publication to ensure adequate promotion. Franz said we want to make sure with the Daily News and to sit down to explain how this is different from other visioning sessions currently underway. John suggested Don Lehman promote this as part of his Daily News feature article, and also that there be a guest editorial. Franz stated that 500-600 announcement cards will be mailed to Farm Bureau members. Franz will also ask them repeat an article on front page of Buy Line. Mark said the first session needs to have the best coverage and also the second one since there is a small amount of time between the second and the third.

Members stated that some other visioning type sessions were occurring around the county, through Coalition of Greater Greenville and Howard City downtown development. Mark asked for the summary results of the Coalition of Greater Greenville visioning sessions that may help us and if Howard City's results are useful, a copy of them as well.

Mark asked if the recorders had been identified and they had not. Mark suggested that the recorders should be there 15 minutes before program starts and strongly suggested to use persons that have good penmanship. The Planning Commission needs to ensure there are adequate easels. John asked what the maximum group size would be and Mark responded that ten people are preferable but group size depends on different factors such as the number of tables and number of people attending.

Mark stated that Visioning Sessions announcements should be sent to every unit of government asking them to send one representative, and also invite the Community College President.

John asked what a Planning Commission member's role is at a Visioning Session, and Mark replied if a member is not a recorder, a member can be a participant. Members need to decide how many sessions they will attend and if they will record.

Motioned by John Johansen that the Planning Commission combine its meetings on April 18, 25, and 28th with the Visioning Sessions that will be conducted by PZC Inc. Seconded by Bruce Noll. Motion carried. Lisa Lund will notify Controller's Office of this decision and send a request to members regarding their intent to attend and serve as recorders.

Two other planning issues Mark identified are refreshments and decorations. He stated there is one ten minute break and it would be recommended to have refreshments. He also suggested 2-3 helium balloons per table to give the room a different feel for participants.

New Business

All attachments noted are on file with the Recording Secretary.

PZC Invoices for approval – January, February, March

Franz presented PZC Inc. invoices: January- \$5,658.75, Feb- \$7137.59, and March - \$4891.25. Franz said when those invoices are paid there will be a balance of \$59,660.66. The invoices include the activities of PZC Inc. and Land Information Access Association. Motioned by John Johansen to approve the invoices in the amounts noted and recommend payment by the Montcalm County Board of Commissioners. Seconded by Don Smucker. Motion carried. Franz will submit the invoices to the County Controller's office.

No Planning Commission Meeting in April

Previous discussion indicated a reversal of this original agenda item.

Other

Franz distributed information on the Small Town and Rural Development conference to be held at Crystal Mountain Resort, Thompsonville, MI in April (Attachment C). Franz discussed some

of the conference speakers and session highlights indicating that the majority of activity is on April 13th. Franz indicated he may attend.

John made an announcement on behalf of Don Lehman that the Designed for Better Living class was cancelled due to low registrations. John also shared that Don Lehman can attend all the Visioning Sessions except April 28th.

Franz noted the Frequently Asked Questions document that was developed and located at the back of the Visioning Sessions planning packet (Handout B).

Franz reviewed the current Planning Commission meeting schedule as follows:

The April Planning Commission meetings and their locations are as follows:

Monday, April 18 at 7:00 p.m.- Media Center, Tri County High School located at 21338 Kendaville Rd., Howard City

Monday, April 25 at 7:00 p.m.- Community Room, Central Services Facility, Greenville Public Schools located at 1414 Chase Rd., Greenville.

Thursday, April 28 at 7:00 p.m.- Room 305, Doser Building, Montcalm Community College located at 2800 College Dr., Sidney

The May Planning Commission meeting will be held at its regular date, time, and location:

Monday, May 16 at 7:00 p.m.- Third Floor Conference Room, Administrative Building.

Motioned by Lonnie Smith to adjourn. Seconded by David Rainey. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Lund, Recording Secretary