

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

Monday, September 19, 2005, 7:00 p.m.
Third Floor Conference Room
Administrative Building

Members Present: Franz Mogdis
John Johansen
Bruce Noll
Lonnie Smith
Don Smucker
Pete Haines
Phil Lund
S. Michael Scott

Members Absent: None

Participating Members Present: Don Lehman, MSUE
John Berchtold, Administrator/Controller

Others Present: Lisa Lund, Recording Secretary
Mark Wyckoff, Planning and Zoning Center, Inc.

Call to Order

Chairman Mogdis called the meeting to order at 6:00 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.

Don Lehman presented an invoice to the Planning Commission for \$500 (HANDOUT A). According to the budget justification narrative from the Michigan State University build out project grant budget document, \$1,500 was paid by the grant with a \$500 balance committed from the planning commission used to contract with Derrek Moy to develop the website that would be used to present the materials that are collected and developed by this project. Motioned to approve by John Johansen, seconded by Pete Haines. Motion carried.

John Johansen stated that he had the honor of presenting Bruce Noll the Farm Bureau's Distinguished Service Award and congratulated him on receiving the award.

Approval of Minutes

All handouts noted are on file with the Recording Secretary.

The minutes of the August 15 meeting were reviewed (HANDOUT B). Motioned by Lonnie Smith, seconded by John Johansen. Motion carried.

Approval of the Agenda

All handouts noted are on file with the Recording Secretary.

John Johansen asked to add the PA 116 applications submitted by Eureka and Pine Townships for the Planning Commission to review under new business.

Franz Mogdis asked to formally accept resignation letter effective today from David Raney (HANDOUT C). Motioned by Phil Lund, seconded by Bruce Noll. Motion carried.

Franz Mogdis asked Lisa Lund to send letter to David Raney to thank him for his service. Franz wanted to also add project billing update from Planning and Zoning, Inc.

Motioned by John Johansen to approve agenda as amended, seconded by S. Michael Scott. Motion carried.

Reports

None

Old Business

All handouts noted are on file with the Recording Secretary.

Mark Wyckoff distributed a folder of printed materials to each attendee. Mark discussed the materials and issues he would cover at the meeting. Printed materials provided were as follows:

- Major Issues Related to Drafting the County Comprehensive Plan. (HANDOUT D)
- Map 5-2: Current Land Use (Montcalm County Fact Book, Draft September 14, 2005, Page 5-7). (HANDOUT E)
- Montcalm County 2001 Land Use Map. (HANDOUT F)
- Map 5-3: Base Map with Property Lines in Montcalm County (Montcalm County Fact Book, Draft September 14, 2005, Page 5-10). (HANDOUT G)
- Map 5-7: Montcalm County Composite Zoning (Montcalm County Fact Book, Draft September 14, 2005, Page 5-21). (HANDOUT H)
- Montcalm County Build-Out Analysis. (HANDOUT I)
- Map 4-6: PA 116 Farmland Preservation Lands in Montcalm County (Montcalm County Fact Book, Draft September 14, 2005, Page 4-17). (HANDOUT J)
- Population Change in Montcalm County Communities, 1999-2000. (HANDOUT K)
- Chapter 2: Vision, Goals, Objectives, and Strategies (Montcalm County Fact Book, Draft September 14, 2005, Page 2-1). (HANDOUT L)

- Draft Outline of Montcalm County Future Land Use/ Master Plan- Proposal by PZC Inc. for Preparing for Montcalm County Future Land Use Plan, Pages 6-7. (HANDOUT M)
- Community Planning Principles from Michigan Society of Planners. (HANDOUT N)
- Relative Pros and Cons of Alternative Densities and Alternative Density Based Zoning Techniques, by Mark Wyckoff, Pages 1-4, dated March 15, 2005. (HANDOUT O)

Mark Wyckoff referred to the Community Planning Principles document. Mark stated that Planning Commission members need to determine to what degree to which comfortable or not in guiding future land use plan. More than 100 jurisdictions have adopted these but it is up to the group whether or not they want to adopt them. He will not review this document tonight. He considers this a key homework assignment for members.

Major Issues Related to Drafting the County Comprehensive Plan (HANDOUT A)

1. Big Issues to Address

Members were asked to reflect and respond to the following questions: “What is the future role of the county in land use planning and intergovernmental coordination?” “What are the major purposes of the plan?” “Is the plan to take a countywide or subarea perspective, and if subarea, what are they, or is it to address issues strictly functionally (land use categories, infrastructure, etc...)?” “If it is to be used to serve as basis for zoning, is it only for unzoned parts of county or elsewhere and is there to be two levels of detail in the plan?” “To what extent do economic development elements need to be included?” “We will need help in locating desired future commercial and industrial development.”

The group discussed the future role of the county in land use planning and inter-governmental coordination, as well as the major purposes of the plan. Mark Wyckoff noted the member’s comments and group’s decisions for inclusion in the next document draft.

2. Areas to Preserve

Members were asked to review this section of the handout and respond. Some of the issues included, “For long term forestry.” “For permanent natural resource use.” “Where and what to include and why.”

Mark suggested that numbers two and three (Areas to Preserve and Areas to Develop) usually need to be discussed together, but that preservation should be discussed first.

Mark discussed Map 5-2 (HANDOUT E) and 2001 Land Use Map (HANDOUT F). Each was created/ interpreted differently in different seasons. In Map 5-2, the wetland area graphics don’t show up as well; it was satellite photographed as “leaf on” to identify tree types. The 2001 Land Use Map shows more wetlands and more integration; it was created as a “leaf off” document using a hand drawn approach. Mark Wyckoff wanted to ensure members understood the difference to ensure accurate examination of areas they are looking to preserve.

Mark Wyckoff displayed a large county map depicting Important Farmland (dated 1982) to consider in lieu of a digitized modern soil survey that is in development but not ready. A risk or limitation of using the map without a scientific soil survey is that it puts the Planning

Commission in a position of trying to judge prime farmland. Mark Wyckoff stated his preference is to have a modern soils map sorted on variables such as crops and do overlays. Mark Wyckoff suggested the group could focus on how farmers are currently using land as an option.

Franz Mogdis suggested that the land use plan needs to emphasize agriculture as an economic development force and protecting agriculture land and incentives to do that. Franz Mogdis further added that townships that have the most prime agriculture land are in agreement even without zoning. Phil Lund also discussed the desire to preserve rural character but that the motivation may not be to preserving farming as a lifestyle but rather aesthetic value.

Mark Wyckoff recapped the conversation by stating the group seems to have a clear direction toward identification of farmland in agriculture and not important to focus on differences between judge prime and nonprime farmland.

Mark Wyckoff referred to the Map 5-7: Composite Zoning Map (HANDOUT H). Mark Wyckoff stated that they still need to obtain the zoning maps for Winfield, Maple Valley, and Eureka townships within two weeks.

Mark Wyckoff stated that when the Commission meets next month, it will start with discussing agricultural preservation and then the issues under "areas to develop." Members were asked to prepare for this discussion. In addition, to the regular October 17 meeting, Franz and Mark will work to establish another meeting (prior to November 1).

Franz Mogdis asked Mark Wyckoff about the status of the Fact Book. Mark Wyckoff replied that the Fact Book continues to progress and is waiting on a few informational pieces from Franz Mogdis such as the previously mentioned township information.

New Business

All handouts noted are on file with the Recording Secretary.

Planning and Zoning Center, Inc.

Franz Mogdis stated he received billing information that was not an invoice to provide information on the project account (HANDOUT P). August billings were \$802.50, leaving a project balance of \$29,831.00.

PA 116 Requests

The Planning Commission received two Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program (PA 116) applications for comment, one was through Eureka Township (HANDOUT Q) and the other was through Pine Township (HANDOUT R). Franz Mogdis reviewed the details of the applications. John Johansen noted that the comment period for the Pine Township application had already expired. Motioned by John Johansen to respond to Eureka Township that the application was reviewed without comment, seconded by Don Smucker. Motion carried. John Johansen recommended that the Planning Commission send Pine Township a letter that the application they submitted was reviewed but the time for comment had expired.

The October Planning Commission meeting will be held Monday, October 17 at 6:00 p.m.- Third Floor Conference Room, Administrative Building.

Motioned by John Johansen to adjourn, seconded by S. Michael Scott. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:11 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Lund, Recording Secretary