

**MONTCALM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES**

Monday, November 8, 2004, 7:00 p.m.
Third Floor Conference Room
Administrative Building

Members Present: Franz Mogdis
Lonnie Smith
John Johansen
Bruce Noll
Phil Lund
David Raney

Members Absent: Don Smucker

Participating Members Present:

Others Present: Lisa Lund, Recording Secretary; Mark Wyckoff, President of Planning & 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 October 12, 2004 meeting were reviewed. Motioned by John Johansen to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Bruce Noll. Motion carried.

Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was reviewed. John Johansen requested that land use planning meetings be added under new business. Motioned by John Johansen to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Lonnie Smith. Motion carried.

Old Business and Reports

Planning & Zoning Center, Inc.

Planning Commission members introduced themselves to guest Mark Wyckoff, President of Planning & Zoning Center, Inc. (PZC, Inc.) and then Mark briefly introduced himself and the services of his organization. Mark passed around a paper to collect current contact information from those present.

Mark distributed two handouts: 1) Items to Discuss dated November 8, 2004 and 2) Scope of Work to Prepare the First Montcalm County Future Land Use/Master Plan document revised September 5, 2004.

Overview of Work Program and Plan Outline

Mark started with the first item on the Items to Discuss handout which was the overview of work program and plan outline. Mark reviewed the Phase A, B, and C activities described within the Scope of Work handout.

Mark said for Town Meetings (Page 4), a lot of recorders and public attendance motivation will be required for these as he said County-level events are often difficult to draw people to attend. Mark mentioned a December 2001 County Planning Act legislative requirement to send notice that the planning process is starting to all local government jurisdictions within Montcalm County and those contiguous to the Montcalm County border. At the end of the process, a draft plan must also be sent so they can provide feedback.

Mark suggested making contact with both the Montcalm County Road Commission and Montcalm County Drain Commissioner in regards to addressing Chapter Four of the Master Plan on Transportation and Other Infrastructure (Page 7).

The Chapter Five Implementation section of the Plan will include the five year plan review requirement that is mandated per the December 2001 County Planning Act legislative changes.

On Page 9, Mark asked if the Planning Commission has the 1998 Land Use Cover map for the whole county. Members were unsure if it had been completed but said Natural Resource Conservation District's Jason Kimbrough has been working on it. Mark said he would need the map by February at the latest. John Johansen asked Bruce Noll to approach Jason to encourage prompt completion. Phil Lund suggested that Mark coordinate with county departments working on mapping projects to ensure we could develop a consistent base map.

On Page 10, Mark said the project timeline is proposed to be 19-24 months but could be significantly reduced with estimated completion perhaps as soon as 14-15 months. There was agreement that two factors to keep in mind in determining the final project timeline are that project costs must be spread over two fiscal years and the public perception of how timely the project is progressing.

John Johansen asked if one of the public meetings could be the land use coalition meeting for a visioning meeting or if it would be too specific an audience. Franz Mogdis said it may be an option.

Mark concluded that portion of the review and walked through the questions listed under the needed decisions.

Needed Decisions

- *How do you expect to use plan when its done?* Franz started the discussion by saying 1) it would be used to be communicated and presented to local units of government 2) specific implementation steps will be pulled and out and prioritization with initiation in getting

them implemented. John added that it will have use to special interest groups and Lonnie added Health Department for example could benefit. David added that public would be happy to know plan may attract business if plan exists. Phil discussed the united of a common visions/ glue to hold people together where we are heading as a county... widely disseminated and understand it. Don added people would have a better understanding of planning and its benefits to them. Franz added from a county view it would provide an opportunity to initiate discussion with surrounding counties and related impacts. Bruce added he hoped they we could use identify areas that are more beneficial to development vs. haphazard placement. John added that we will be exploring new methodology in planning such as conservation that we are away from cookie cutter and help townships. David added to identify areas that can be preserved to retain uniqueness. December 2001 Statutory obligation to review and comment on draft plans of jurisdictions within county. Get all local comments and then offer own. Implication is that the Planning Commission- big picture view. John asked for Planning Commission responsibilities and guidelines for inter-jurisdictional and implementation. Affirmed.

- *What would be the ideal product and why?* The group discussed this topic. Franz 1) presentation product reasonably simple, 2) support documentation referred to and given for greater detail. Mark stated that Plan is policy- plan, objectives, and policy and guidelines for implementation. Mark stated there will be an Executive Summary. Poster plan is often widely used. Franz suggested if we could have the last two maps (and subset for presentation audience) and some narrative that would be something you could take to explain to people. Phil said needs some sub-regionalization of information may be helpful. Mark said the Planning Commission will need to make decisions about what that looks like. Phil asked what forms the information will be created, and Mark responded that materials will be distributed in both paper and computerized forms.
- *What economic development information must be included and how will it be used for future economic development activities?* Franz Mogdis said one expectation or presumption to be included is that good land use planning supports economic development, and Mark said it that would be easy to accomplish. Phil Lund asked if an economic development philosophy would be included in the Plan and Franz Mogdis noted it is important to state the message that planning supports economic development overtly. Mark stated another dimension some counties consider the role does government plays in economic development as part of the Plan.
- *When to start public participation process?* Mark informed the group it would take from now until about month five to complete the fact book and said they can parallel tasks and do both the fact book and public participation activities simultaneously. No information is required prior to conducting town meetings. However, Mark said the Planning Commission will want to consider the time of year in regards to weather and potential scheduling conflicts (e.g., those persons wintering in Florida, community events, farming), possibly considering March as possible start month. Mark indicated the public has a perception of a faster process if participation is delayed. David Raney asked about downside to starting after Easter/ spring break time and Mark responded there may be some extra work but not a terrible amount. Franz Mogdis suggested that the recent and planned Land Use Coalition meetings will be enough to keep communication and momentum going with a later start on the public participation. The group felt late March or mid April may be good target months for activities. Franz will find out when spring break is scheduled and communicate this with Mark.

- *How to involve the townships?* Mark said we will want to determine where on website will information be posted and how they will be communicated with, opportunities for feedback. Mark commented that one community promoted their website address in the paper. The Planning Commission needs to review what is currently on the website in regards to Land Use Planning and make the project information accessible. Mark suggested putting a place for feedback right on the project site. Don Smucker will act as Planning Commission lead with townships. Franz suggested an e-mail listserve with updates to keep township officials informed.
- *What elements do you anticipate going into a county fact book?* Mark asked if it is preferred for it to be more visual with charts and maps or narrative text? The group responded that more visual is better with a minimum of jargon and narrative. Mark added categories would be used for significant things
- *When will materials related to the project begin to be posted?* Mark suggested at time of fact book is ready. Notice must be sent when we are ready to take and respond to questions.

3. Status of local planning and zoning

Mark distributed four maps created by MSU for the group to review. These maps were titled: 1) Michigan Municipalities with a Comprehensive/ Master Plan, 2003; 2) Michigan Municipalities with a Zoning ordinance, 2003; 3) Michigan Counties with a Zoning Ordinance, 2003; 4) Michigan Counties with a Comprehensive/ Master Plan, 2003. Mark asked for any known discrepancies in the presented information. Phil Lund asked if there would be reference to the statewide maps such as these in the Fact Book and Mark suggested a website link instead of inclusion of the maps to maintain a county focus and because some of the information may not be accurate. Through discussion, the members determined that 6 of 20 townships do not have zoning.

4. Local Leader Survey

Mark said the Planning Commission members need to identify what 80 people will receive the local leader survey. Through discussion with Mark, the resulting list of leaders should include every township supervisor, every village and city mayor/ president of council, Planning Commission members, and the County Board of Commissions. Mark said the remaining number is at the discretion of the Planning Commission. The survey is targeted to local leaders that represent a cross section of the county and have an understanding of their communities but it is not a random sample. The Planning Commission needs to give Mark the list so he can follow up with those that do not respond. Mark stated this survey is single most valuable input of entire project and also mentioned using the two previous attitudinal surveys done by the Montcalm Alliance. Mark requested information from Franz on the past surveys' open-ended questions. Mark said citizens and leaders usually provide information on different sets of issues. Mark provided Franz a set of return envelopes and the survey tool. Mark recommended the mailing go out soon as it has a December 30 return deadline.

5. Visioning Town Meeting Parameters

Mark said the facilities selected should have free accommodations that can provide ten round tables, be available on the desired dates, and be in a location to draw people from the community. For every table we need a recorder to record observations and conversations. Mark recommended

thirty people so they do not need to be there multiple times. John Johansen suggested that we contact our participating Planning Commission members to involve them in the activities.

Mark concluded his discussion and thanked the group for his input.

New Business

2005 Meeting Schedule and Educational Representative Appointment

Franz also said that the Montcalm County School Board Association recommended Pete Haines as the Educational representative. Franz proposed that the Planning Commission meeting be changed to the 3rd Monday due as Pete has a regular school board meeting on the second Monday. Motioned by Phil Lund to change the Planning Commission meeting date to the third Monday starting in January, 2005 and to accept the recommendation of Pete Haines as Educational representative appointment and forward to the Board of Commissioners for final approval. Seconded by Don Smucker. John clarified that we would still meet December 6 and the new schedule would not take effect until January. Motion carried. Franz said Lisa should contact Pete to let him know of the December meeting and the next steps.

John announced reservations for the November 16 Montcalm Township Association meeting must be submitted by tomorrow. John also discussed the Soji presentation map that highlights that Montcalm is one of 11 counties in first tier qualification for farmland preservation and suggested we follow up in the future on related opportunities.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 6, 2004, at 7:00 p.m. Note that this date is changed from the regular meeting date due to Montcalm County's December meeting schedule.

Motioned by Lonnie Smith to adjourn. Seconded by John Johansen. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Lund, Recording Secretary