

NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE
McHenry County Administration Building
667 Ware Road, Woodstock, IL 60098

MINUTES OF FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2009

Chairman McCann called the committee meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. The following members were present: Mary McCann, Chairman; Virginia Peschke; Anna May Miller; Pete Merkel; Barb Wheeler and Yvonne Barnes. Scott Breeden was absent. Also in attendance: Peter Austin, County Administrator; Kristy Hecke and Patty Nomm, Health Department; Dennis Sandquist, Mark Phipps, and Alicia Law, Planning and Development; Cassandra McKinney, Groundwater Resources; John Hadley, Facilities Management; Jim Heisler and Ersel Schuster, County Board Members; interested public and the press.

Mary McCann, Chairman	
Yvonne Barnes	JS "Scott" Breeden
Pete Merkel	Anna May Miller
Virginia Peschke	Barbara Wheeler

PRESENTATIONS

LEAM model focusing on watershed impacts: Mr. Hansel presented the LEAM computer modeling results to the committee. LEAM is a stress analysis modeling system that is being used to model 16 different land use scenarios for the McHenry County Regional Planning Commission. Mr. Hansel demonstrated the LEAM modeling to the committee and provided the committee with the web address and login information. He walked the committee through several different scenarios and showed the committee the impacts of the modeled development on the watersheds.

Draft Goundwater Recharge Map: To be presented at the next committee meeting.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Committee members reviewed the committee minutes the Natural and Environmental Resources Committee of February 11, 2009. Chairman McCann noted that Mr. Kennedy attended the February 11th meeting. Ms. Miller made a motion, seconded by Ms. Peschke to approve the committee minutes of January 12, 2009 as corrected. The motion carried with all members present voting aye on a voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS

Groundwater Task Force Recharge Policy Draft: To be considered at the next committee meeting. Committee members were requested to save the draft for review at the next committee meeting. Ms. McKinney provided an overview of the policy for committee members. This information is available on the website for those interested. Every stakeholder has been invited to be a part of the policy.

Resolution Supporting Funding for Ag Easements: Committee members reviewed a Resolution Supporting Senate Bill 286 to create a funding mechanism for County Farmland Protection Programs. Senate Bill 286 gives counties the opportunity to generate local funding allowing voters to decide through a referenda, for counties to purchase agricultural conservation easements. Ms. Peschke made a motion, seconded by Ms. Barnes to recommend approval of the above Resolution as presented. The motion carried with all members present voting aye on a voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS

Ag Easement/Commission Ordinance amendment: Committee members reviewed the Ag/Easement/Commission Ordinance Amendment. It was noted there were a number of grammatical changes that have been made within the ordinance. Changes made are in red and blue. Ms. Peschke made a motion, seconded by Ms. Wheeler to recommend the County Board approve the change made to Ordinance as discussed. The motion carried with all members present voting aye on a voice vote.

Summary of existing County Watershed Plans: Committee members were presented with a Summary of Existing County Watershed Plans. The six watersheds have been divided between the Fox River and Kishwaukee River. These plans have been completed by different groups and the stakeholders vary from plan to plan. In some cases there was quite a bit of coordination to complete the plans. The summary identified the Watershed, the plan title, who the plans were prepared by, the date of the plan and the contact information for the plan. It was noted that there currently is no plans available for the Piscasaw Creek and Coon Creek. Committee members were informed that DeKalb County has a plan available for the Coon Creek Watershed. This information is also available on line for those interested. There is also a series of maps available for the whole area, which also includes the Crystal Lake watershed. The Coons Creek watershed goes past the study area so the plan areas may be different than the watershed areas. As plans are updated, they will help with the Stormwater Plans. As part of the FY2010 Federal appropriations requests, the county is requesting \$1 million in funding to help with the flooding issues of the County. With these plans, the County will be able to build on information already gathered. In the past some of these plans focused on water quality, now these plans can be expanded to look at other issues as well.

NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

February 27, 2009

Page 2

Committee two year work plan: Committee members continued discussion of their two year work plan. The work plan of this committee will be based upon the work being done by the Water Resource Manager. Ms. McKinney noted that the goal for the Groundwater Taskforce was to work toward the development and implementation of an intergovernmental entity to jointly develop a strategy for a sustainable water supplies for the future for the entire County. Each month, through July, the taskforce will talk about one or two of the topics and adopt policies as developed by the Groundwater Task Force. They will need additional outreach to communicate the information available for all stakeholders, including but not limited to, the Public Works Directors and Elected Officials. The policies and issues will not apply to all Communities so it is very important that we create a dialogue to invite all to get involved. Public outreach has been done by McCog Sessions (McHenry County Council of Government) to inform them of what is going on at the County level. The policies will be created one at a time and will be reviewed line by line with Ms. McKinney requesting public and stakeholder input for all policies. This week the US Army Corp of Engineers and the Consultants installed the "data-loggers". The information received will not immediately be useful. It will create baseline information to be used over a number of years. This information will help explain what happens when it rains etc. Information will be downloaded quarterly and overtime this will create the baseline information needed.

The taskforce will be starting year two of the County Hydrogeologic Mapping Project. With this project a 3D map of the County's geologic makeup will be available on GIS beginning in the Fall of 09/10. The complete hydrogeologic makeup map should be completed in the Fall of 2010. Ms. McKinney attends all CMAP meetings and will track the work of the Regional Water Supply Committee. She stated she is excited to be involved in the regional process. She noted that they ask for our input on a regular basis. It is important to note that water crosses all boundaries, if too much water is pulled from an areas, springs can dry out. Everyone needs to be conscious on how all systems work together. It was noted that the Conservation District should be included in the recharge maps and they should be involved in the plans.

Ms. Nomm and Ms. Hecke joined committee members to provide an overview of the Solid Waste program in the Environmental Health Department. They noted there are 5 points of priority. These five points include, personal pollution prevention, pharmaceutical disposal, solid waste management (this includes illegal dumping and burning of trash and they will try to address specific issues, they would like to increase recycle rates and support the creation of the Environmental Health Advisory Committee. The Board of Health has created this committee as a think tank to address and bring forth the issues coming before the Environmental Health Department. Ms. Nomm noted that recycling in the county was down 27% in 2007. The department is gathering information to try to find out why. Part of the issue is the reporting process, noting that the department needs to keep track of what is available in the County. Committee members questioned if there was a safe way to recycle food. They noted that large quantities of good food is being thrown away and with so much need being seen in the community, there has to be a good safe way to recycle this product. It was suggested that the restaurant association be involved with this issue as we need to make sure the food is handled safely.

REPORTS

MCCD: Mr. Merkel noted that the MCCD has been very active in their land acquisitions. They are creating a master plan of their sites. With the depressed market, they have stepped up their purchase of additional properties. They are working on their strategic plan updates as well. Glacial Park is scheduled for remodeling. Major renovations have been planned for the site. There are two openings on the MCCD board and they are actively recruiting for these positions. These are non-paying board members. The Natural and Environmental Resources Committee will be handling the interviews for these appointments. Committee members were informed that the MCCD is creating a brochure on what the Conservation District does, what the time commitment would be and what the role of a board member is. This information is to be sent out with the applications for the appointment. The committee will schedule time to hold the interviews. It was suggested that Mr. Lehmann create a press release regarding these open positions.

Ag Conservation: The matrix has been finalized. If funding is received they can look at rankings for the farms.

Committee members noted they have attended several meetings recently by the local food networks. They stated that if we continue on the same track, by 2025 the Chinese can consume all foods produced in the world. It was noted that in this area of the country, we do not feed the people with food grown in the area. The food grown in this area is going to the animals. It is important to have resources to feed the people in the areas that they live and it is important to keep an eye on this issue.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Kennedy thanked committee members for the presentation of LEAM. With this map they are able to see what impacts would be on the 23/90 exchange. She also thanked the Environmental Health Department for addressing the solid waste issues in the rural townships. With the changeover of the TV frequencies, they will see additional dumping of these items.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

ADJOURNMENT

NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

February 27, 2009

Page 3

Ms. Miller made a motion, seconded by Ms. Barnes to adjourn at 10:07a.m. The motion carried with all members present voting aye.

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RECOMMENDED FOR BOARD/COMMITTEE ACTION:

Resolution Supporting Funding for Ag Easements
As Easement/Commission Ordinance amendment

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