

McHenry County Regional Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
March 26, 2009

Members Present: Jerry Davenport, Nancy Schietzelt, Jim McNutt, RB Thompson, Mike Rein, Ron Bauman, Jeremy Shaw, Bill Swenson, Dennis Dreher and Frank Harrison

Commissioners Absent: Charlie Eldredge and Craig Hubert

Staff Present: Dennis Sandquist, Matt Hansel, Cindy Sassaman, Sean Foley, Darrell Moore and Ben Wellington

Also Present: Tina Hill, Mary McCann, Kathy Bergan Schmidt, Sue Draffkorn, Ken Koehler; County Board Members, Pat Kennedy, Conor Brown, Don Dilsaver, Tom Harding, Anna Bicanic Moeller, Jessica Dexter, Andrew Celentano and Tammy Valentine Garza

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

In the absence of Chairman Charlie Eldredge and Vice Chairman Dennis Dreher, Jim McNutt, Secretary called the meeting to order.

Public Participation

Pat Kennedy commended the Commission for asking staff to explore various options on responses regarding the population projections. She hopes the Commission will adopt the CMAP numbers as they are required to be used by MCDOT for the County's transportation plan and this also gives a common ground.

Tom Harding mentioned that he has seen and heard conversations and read a lot about urban growth boundaries around municipalities. This concept sounds good and has merit, but has been a classic failure in most areas where attempted. Most people coming here are looking for a certain quality of life. A segment of the buying public wants a rural setting which he feels does not exist in the 1-3 miles radius around the municipalities. A vast majority of the land in McHenry County has been bought by investors for transition, not for prime farmland. It does not make sense to call this type of land farmland when it is really is land in transition. He felt that most land is not held for farming purposes it is being held for development. If development is forced within the 1-3 mile radius area surrounding the municipality you force the property owner to litigate and give the municipality total autonomy.

Director's Comments

Ms. Sandquist said there are many important agenda items and requested the Commission to stay on track and complete the items on the agenda.

Mr. Dreher arrived and directed the meeting.

Old Business

Population Projections – Mr. Sandquist briefly reviewed comments in the various memos. Commissioners asked several questions regarding projected employment relating to the growth in population. Mr. Harrison mentioned that the County has grown in the past 20 years without employment growth and that this area has been recognized as a commuter community. Ms. Schietzelt would like the Commission to use the most scientific material available to base the population number; LEAM, CMAP and NIPC. Mr. Davenport provided 2005 NIPC figures to the Commission and explained that he does not agree with their methodology.

Mr. Davenport motioned to adopt the subcommittee’s population number of 558,000 at the 2.4% growth rate, seconded by Mr. Swenson. Ms. Schietzelt asked that Mr. Sandquist explain the options he proposed in his memorandum. Mr. Sandquist explained that depending on if the Commission chose a range or a specific number it will impact what will happen on the land use map. He explained that it would be more difficult to produce a land use map based on a range instead of a specific number. If the Commission chose a range, then two maps could be produced; one with the high number and one with the low number. Mr. McNutt felt that if the Commission was confused with the range that the general public would be confused with two sets of maps. He was hoping the Commission could reach a compromise. The Commission voted on a roll call vote. Aye: Davenport, Swenson Naye: Harrison, Thompson, Shaw, Schietzelt, Bauman, McNutt, Dreher and Rein. Motion failed.

After a brief discussion, the Commissioners each gave their “ideal” population number.

Motion by Mr. McNutt seconded by Mr. Harrison to adopt the population number of 540,000. The Commission voted on a roll call vote: Aye: Dreher, Schietzelt, McNutt, Rein, Bauman, Shaw, Swenson, Davenport and Harrison. Naye: Thompson. Motion passed.

Municipal/Public meetings- There will be 4 meetings scheduled at the Administration Building. The room setup will include tables arranged in groups with 12 people at each table. Of those 12 people there will be a planning commissioner and a planning staff member. There will be a 30-45 minute presentation followed by a group discussion at each table as mentioned in the memo from Mr. Sandquist. The Commission liked the plan as presented. Mr. Dreher asked about recording comments. The member at the tables will take the comments, as well as, accept comment cards. Mr. Harrison noted that he is only available to attend on April 20th. Ann Moeller, MCGG, reported that she appreciated the flexibility in scheduling. It was suggested that one meeting be changed to a morning meeting, perhaps on April 22nd. Mr. Sandquist said that press releases and direct mailings will be accomplished, as well as, posting on the County website. It was the consensus of the Commission to go ahead with the plan as described in the memo and to change the date of April 22nd to a morning time.

New Business

HLA Plan Text– Mr. Sandquist requested that the Commission identify factual errors or policy statements that are inaccurate in the draft. Mr. Sandquist said that there will be policy statements that are debatable and that is the reason to take the plan out for comment. The review at this meeting is to determine if the document is an accurate reflection.

Modifications to DRAFT 2030 Plan (first complete draft):

- Community Character should be Community Character and Housing, with a Housing Content and Policies section.
- Photos are not reflective of the county. Add pictures of suburban, retail, industrial, municipal character (not only rural).
- Captions /locations for photos.
- Not just “maintain” quality of life, “enhance” quality of life.
- Change all population projections to 540,000.
- Order and categorize policies.
- Consistent listing of chapters/sections.
- Delete each reference to policies/plans in titles.
- Need a glossary – use those provided by RPC.
- General – Cover Memo.
- General – Clearly mark as DRAFT.
- Throughout – Date all maps.
- Throughout – Provide the source of all maps.

PAGE-BY-PAGE CHANGES —

Pg. 5, Paragraph 2 – Add economic development, housing, and mining experts to the list of experts the RPC heard presentations from

Add demographic information to the beginning

Acknowledgements – Inaccurate RPC district numbers

Pg. 3, Paragraph 4 – Wrong suburbs listed. Needs more general reference to municipalities/cities

Pg. 4, Paragraph 8 - Check date of 2020 Unified

Pg. 10 + 11 – Add headings to columns

Pg. 24, Category 7 under “Key Terms and Concepts” – Fix LE description/definition. Use 100 based number

Pg. 10, Paragraph 3 – School systems, not school system

Pg. 28 + 29 – Maps should be replaced with single 80+ soils map

Pg. 25, Paragraph 1 – Two typing changes (“It is often forgotten that” and “McHenry County is among the leaders in production...”)

Pg. 26 – Add something about community supported agriculture

Pg. 26, Category 5 under “Key Terms and Concepts” – Move “Impervious Surface” description to Water Resources section

Pg. 27 – Change “tourism” heading to “agri-tourism”

Pg. 27, Paragraph 3, - Quantify “small and medium farms” as 5 – 10 acres

Pg. 33 – Delete Policy 3

Pg. 33 – Modify Policy 6 and Policy 10 to start with verbs

Pg. 33 – Insert policy headings based on headings used in text

Pg. 33 – Insert policy and text on nurseries, sod farms, and equestrian uses

Pg. 39, Paragraph 2 – Insert reference to map in Ag section

Pg. 40 – Delete map

Pg. 40 – Insert “Chicago Wilderness” map. [*Or is this the same thing as the next item below? -SF*]

Pg. 45f (?) – Insert Chicago “Green Infrastructure” map of McHenry County (Darrell has it filed in [\\mcgcus\shared\\$\planninganddevelopment\PLANNING\NEW RPC\Working files-planners\infrastructure maps](\\mcgcus\shared$\planninganddevelopment\PLANNING\NEW RPC\Working files-planners\infrastructure maps)) .

Pp. 48-51 [*SF: There was some discussion about seasonal nature of **Greenways**/bikeways and also some discussion about the multi-uses of trails (such as for snowmobiling and skiing). It may be worth noting that there is a huge difference in the way federal funding sources are allocated, depending on if a trail is designated as “recreational” or for “transportation” purposes.*]

Pg. 49 – Figure 6: **Oak Savannah Woodlands Ecosystems** – Talk to Ed Collins: Different map, caption map. Change legend labels (remove “Savannah”). Check map resolution.

Pg. 53 – **Policy Statements:**

Policy 32 – SF: Frank Harrison commented that this policy is in conflict with the Economic Development element. He was concerned about the role of railroad/utility access to industrial areas in particular. [*It may be worth pointing out that MCCD owns 25-foot-wide strips of land on either side of the UPRR Belvidere line, which may lead to rail access impediments where these strips might be proposed to be crossed by rail spurs or roads.*]

Pg. 54 – Fix two typos. Fix Bullets. Need more definitions for **Water Resources**.

Pg. 58 – **Why Plan for our Water Resources** – Typos:

Paragraph 2 – Remove “the quality...of the County.” After “relates to” add “preventing increases in flooding and erosion.”

Paragraph 3 – Remove “The great majority of” clause.

Paragraph 4 – Add “in some parts of the country” after “local sources”.

Paragraph 3 Change “control” to “prevention.”

Pg. 60 – Figure 8: **Groundwater Capacity** – Per Nancy Schietzelt: Graphic should be the same (colors) as the Baxter and Woodman H₂O website (<http://www.baxwood.com/> [?]). Legend Typo – replace “Storage” with “shortage.”

Pg. 62 – Unnumbered Figure: **Water Balance** – Dennis has better diagrams.

Pg. 62 – Figure 10: **Aquifer Sensitivity** – Update map from Cassandra (as adopted by the Groundwater Taskforce with A&B). Map: Water too faint.
Map: Move Port Barrington label (to the east of Oakwood Hills).

Pg. 63 – Unnumbered Figure: Reference the (copyrighted) “**Root Systems of Prairie Plants**” diagram and make it bigger and easier to read.

Pg. 67 – Figure 11: **Existing Surface Water Resources** – Fix Colors. (Matt: Fix Colours.)
Map: Like map on page 62, move Port Barrington label (to the east of Oakwood Hills).

Pg. 72 – **Policy Statements** – Add policy categories to match headings from text. Dennis Dreyer: Broad policy categories are Water Supply, Groundwater, Surface Water (?), Stormwater.

Pg. 79 – **Objectives**: Bullet 3 – Change text – add “of” after “the use” and remove “~~namely the Fox River, State parks, and agriculture industry.~~” Add a period/full-stop after “resources.”

Pg. 80 – Paragraph 5 – **Quality of Life Connection** – Eliminate duplicate language (rework paragraph).

Pg. 80 – Box – Improve definition of “**Skilled Workforce.**” (Bill Swenson will provide it.)

Pg. 81 – Change photo – Replace the duplex with a picture of an industrial park. [*They had a specific industrial park in mind.*] And —

Pg. 81 – Fix the population number.

Pg. 82 – **Household Income & Housing Value** – Move whole section (including text boxes and tables) to the **Community Character** section.

Pg. 83 – Words “below” and “above” transposed (logically).
[*Ronald Bauman: Would like to know the number of people that commute to McHenry county to work.*]

Pg. 89 – **Commercial Growth** – Paragraphs 2 and 3 (remove)
“**Sites**” table figure is unnumbered.

Pg. 89 – *Photo: contains a fallen-down fence.*

Pg. 89* – Cross-reference – Refer to the **Technology/Communications** section found on page 115 of the **Infrastructure** element [**Suggested by MCOG, but she didn’t say on what page in the Economic Development element it should be placed*].

Pg. 91 – Reference to page number of (unnumbered) table, “on page 89.” Remove “adjacent.”

Pg. 91 – **Aggregate Resources** – Paragraph 4 –Rework text (Discussion was about mining and contamination, not about mining activity but permeability of underlying strata).
Paragraphs 9-11 in column 4 – Emphasize protection of agriculture.

Pp. 95-96 – **Policy Statements** (Economic Development)

Policy #13 – Move to **Community Character**.

Policy #15 – OK as is.

Policy #31 – Delete.

Policy #37 – Delete (same as 9).

[*Frank Harrison – Not impressed with photo of the gravel road.*]

Pg. 96 – Presenters and Sources missing (Economic Development).

Pg. 103 – Details on Transportation Plan. (Charlie/Bill Swenson: why are McDOT list of projects/re-writes missing? D.S: P&D direction was to rely on McDOT plan). And —

Pg. 103 – Change “230,000” (to 540,000).

Pg.104 – Figure 18: **Vehicular Transportation Plan** – map is incorrect (Algonquin bypass, Route 14, etc.).
If a map remains, it needs a citation. [*May conflict with the adopted County Transportation Plan; it may be possible to show further-afield plans (time-wise), or show transportation needs or deficient areas, etc.*]. Citation of source needed.

Pg. 106 – **Figure 19: Existing Bus and Commuter Rail Services** – Show all the proposed train stations.
[*SF: might be informative distinguish between “sited” and “potential site” stations, if known. Huntley hasn’t decided an exact location and is still awaiting feedback from Metra.*]

Pg. 109 – Paragraph 4 – **Electricity** – Compare 21% increase in demand to figure on page 113.

Pg. 110 – **Figure 20: Major Gas/Crude/Electric Easements** – Need clear image; “Too busy,” show roads and utilities, not municipalities; Needs legend. [*Counter-point: You need enough locator-references to be able to understand where the utilities are (Bill Swenson).*]

Pg. 113 – Paragraph 6 – add word “into” after “vibrations.”

Pg. 113 – **Nuclear Power** – Paragraph 1 – See “50%” and compare to page 109.

Pg. 113 – **Compressed Air Energy** – Delete paragraph.

Pg. 114 – Figure 22: **Facility Planning Areas** – Map is hard to read. Delimit the FPAs with outlines or color differentiations. Highways missing (only numbers show, IL-47, I-90, U.S.-14, etc.). Show streets and highways.
Dennis Dreher: Should read “Wastewater [Facility] Planning Areas” to inform public of the true function of these districts.

Pg. 115 – Paragraph 5 – **Past Planning Initiatives and Pertinent Entities** – “Non-Motorized Transit Plan...” (D.S: What is this?)
Technology / Communications (Matt: Cross-reference back to Economic Development). [*Cf. note at pg. 89*.*]

Pg. 116 – Policy Statements

- Policy 1 – Remove “a degree” after “promote.”
- Policy 2 – ??? (Matt)
- Policy 6 – Remove “to” after “should.”
- Policy 7 – UFO.
- Policy 8 – Typo: “area’s” not “areas.”
- Add policy regarding the energy grid.

Pg. 117 – Outside Presenters and Discussions – Fix alignment of bullets.

The comments will be presented to the Planning and Development Committee on Thursday, April 2. The comments that the Committee decides to change will then be forwarded to HLA. At that point the document will be used at end of the month for the municipal/township meetings.

Mr. Dreher requested that the Planning and Development Committee is informed that the Community Character and Housing sections are not yet completed.

Mr. Harrison said he is uncomfortable having public meetings with several issues not completed. He asked if the public meetings could be pushed back to May to give the Commission more time to resolve certain debatable issues. Mr. Sandquist reminded the Commission of the drop dead July County Board meeting and said that he is committed to meet the deadline. The Commission is meeting with the municipalities to get their input to help resolve the areas of conflict so the meetings should not be pushed off.

Mr. Sandquist will request the text for the Community Character section so that it can be reviewed at the next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on April 9th and LEAM models will be discussed and the draft of the housing section.

LEAM Models- The Mega-scenario is completed. Mr. Sandquist asked that this item is postponed.

MCCG

Ms. Moeller asked if the housing section will be released in time for review prior to the municipal/townships meetings.

Member’s comments

None

Chairman Comments

None

Public Comment

Pat Kennedy said that she has let things slide. She would like to comment on Mr. Swenson's statement regarding presentation of the 2020 Plan. She mentioned that she was at every meeting and there were good comments, questions and agreements. She was disappointed at the incorrect presentation of what those meetings were like.

Conor Brown asked who would be developing the map for the housing component and how it would be developed. Mr. Sandquist reported that there would most likely be maps with density analysis as to how many units are available, how many are needed, value changes and affordability. He also asked if there will be hotspots for residential growth. Mr. Dreher explained that much of that information is something that would be included in the future land use map.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Harrison, seconded by Mr. Davenport. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:06 p.m.