

MINUTES
McLEAN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 2006, 4:00 P.M.
GOVERNMENT CENTER, ROOM 404
115 EAST WASHINGTON STREET, BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS

Members Present:

Don Fernandes, Chair; Scott Lay, Vice Chair; Bernard Anderson, Erin Elder, John Hanson, Mark Klinger, Jeff Kowalczyk, Carl Teichman, Joe Underwood.

Members Absent:

Chris Brauer, Shane Rutherford

Others Present:

McLean County Regional Planning Commission: Paul Russell, Executive Director; Jennifer Sicks, Transportation Planner; Rick Nolan, Community Planner; Teresa Casselman, Office Manager; City of Bloomington: Ken Emmons, City Planner. Town of Normal: Mercy Davison, City Planner. County of McLean: Mike Behary.

Call To Order:

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m. by Chairman Fernandes.

Consent Agenda:

Mr. Fernandes inquired about a receivable aged over 90 days and asked whether there was a problem collecting the amount. Ms. Casselman explained that the amount was expected to be received. Mr. Fernandes also pointed out discrepancies between the consistency review chart and map. Ms. Casselman explained that some projects were located beyond the outlines of the map, but she would review the map and chart for accuracy. Mr. Hanson moved the consent agenda be approved. Mr. Teichman seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Regular Agenda:

None

Items of Information or Discussion:

Update on Normal Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Russell reported that the Normal Town Council adopted the proposed comprehensive plan showing an east side highway corridor by a vote of six to one. The dissenting vote was a council member who thought all corridor alternatives should be shown on the plan. The council vote was preceded by the Normal Planning Commission's action. The Planning Commission considered the corridor component separately from the plan and was deadlocked at three to three on a vote whether to remove the corridor from the map, but unanimously approved the balance of the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Russell reported that staff would begin final production of the planning reports for Normal. He explained staff would also resume printing of the Bloomington Comprehensive Plan, which had been suspended due to copier problems.

Follow-Up on Context Sensitive Solutions

Mr. Russell indicated that Ms. Brauer had suggested that the Context Sensitive Solution process be considered for the east side highway project. The Illinois Department of Transportation staff were pleased with the suggestion and consequently, CSS has been incorporated into the RFP for the next phase of study, which the councils and county boards are expected to authorize in the near future. Mr. Russell noted that CSS is not expected to resolve all issues, but can facilitate the planning process.

Mr. Fernandes asked how the CSS process would be applied to the east side highway project. Mr. Russell responded that the process would involve stakeholders and the public as early as possible in the process. Stakeholder groups would be represented on the study advisory committee, along with government and other interests.

Update on Main Street Corridor Plan

Mr. Russell reported that the Commission had been asked to coordinate and administer the Main Street Redevelopment Plan that is being undertaken by Bloomington, Normal, Illinois State University, Illinois Wesleyan University, and BroMenn. Staff would be involved helping to choose the consultant, coordinating meetings, invoicing participants and making payments to the consultant. Mr. Russell indicated that it may include an interagency agreement between the Commission and the participants, and most likely include an agreement between the Commission and the consultant. If so, the agreement(s) would be presented to the Commission at a later date for approval. Mr. Russell explained that the consultant selection committee will be interviewing consultants in the near future.

Mr. Russell reported that the Commission staff have prepared an application to IDOT for \$45,000. Other local commitments for the project total \$100,000, but costs could increase as the project moves into later phases.

Mr. Hanson asked for an explanation of the focus of the project. Mr. Russell replied the project is intended to produce a redevelopment plan for the corridor that will address preserving the traffic flow. The project will focus on transit and pedestrian-friendly development, economic development within the corridor, environmental factors, trail and greenway development, and other urban design aspects. Mr. Hanson inquired about the north/south extent of the project. Mr. Russell responded the project extends from I-55 on the north to Veteran's Parkway on the south.

Mr. Fernandes added that he was pleased that the entities see Regional Planning as a resource for them and had requested the Commission be involved. Mr. Teichman stated that Illinois State, Illinois Wesleyan, and Bro-Menn are interested in the Main Street Corridor as it impacts their Master Planning efforts. Mr. Hanson asked for a time frame regarding the project. Mr. Russell responded that the plan is expected to be completed within six months of its start in April or May, and redevelopment would take place in the next five to twenty years.

Articles from *Urban Land*

Mr. Russell indicated that the articles in the current issue of *Urban Land* were summaries of the rebuilding efforts of New Orleans. He indicated the New Orleans' council had rejected the Urban Land Institute's recommendation to rebuild in higher, safer areas.

Status of Information Forum

Mr. Nolan reported staff were coordinating with Mr. Hudnut regarding his speech. He indicated that a news release would be prepared the coming week to promote the event, and Mr. Hudnut had expressed

a willingness to do pre-publicity for the event if desired. Mr. Lay asked how the publicity had described the event. Mr. Nolan responded approximately 1,000 invitations had been mailed to community and business leaders describing the theme of the event and Mr. Hudnut's background and that a press conference would be scheduled for the day of the event. Mr. Russell added that attendance is not limited to those receiving invitations, and Mr. Anderson suggested the information be provided to the Chamber of Commerce for their weekly e-mail alert. Mr. Nolan indicated he would follow-up on the suggestion. Mr. Fernandes asked that an electronic version of the invitation be provided for their use in forwarding to interested parties. Ms. Casselman indicated she would create and provide one.

That Which May Arise

Mr. Klinger asked if the recently hired GIS Director was yet on board. Mr. Russell said that Mr. Hasan had not yet started, but recent progress had been made by the attorney in the hiring process.

Adjournment:

Mr. Anderson moved the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Teichman seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Teresa Casselman
Office Manager