

**MINUTES**  
**McLEAN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**REGULAR MEETING, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 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, Mark Klinger, Jeff Kowalczyk, Janet Smith, Carl Teichman

**Members Absent:**

Erin Elder, Chris Brauer, Shane Rutherford

**Others Present:**

McLean County Regional Planning Commission: Paul Russell, Executive Director; Khalid Hasan, GIS Director; Ryan Williams, GIS Specialist; Teresa Casselman, Office Manager; City of Bloomington: Ken Emmons, City Planner. Town of Normal: Mark Peterson, City Manager; Lauren Kerestes, Associate Planner. McLean County: John Zeunik, County Administrator. Linda Olson, McLean County Farm Bureau. Joe Butcher, District 87 School Board.

**Call To Order:**

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

**Consent Agenda:**

Ms. Smith moved the consent agenda be approved. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**Regular Agenda:**

None

**Items of Information or Discussion:**

Introduction of GIS Staff

Mr. Russell reported that the GIS department has recently become fully staffed with the hiring of the new GIS Director, Khalid Hasan, and the new GIS Specialist, Ryan Williams. Mr. Hasan and Mr. Williams provided the Commission with brief biographies.

Workshop on the Role of MCRPC

Mr. Fernandes introduced Mark Peterson and John Zeunik, who were in attendance to explain the role of the Commission.

Mr. Peterson explained that the role of the Commission has changed over the years, but the local governments look to the Commission for long range planning, special planning projects such as the East Side Highway, and providing comprehensive plans and updates to local jurisdictions.

He noted GIS coordination was a critical function and because of the substantial investment in GIS, it was essential that it be up-to-date and accurate, and uses for data application be aggressively pursued.

Mr. Peterson indicated the Commission has an important role in educating local officials, as well as the community at large. He added that speakers were an important part in the education and at times might be controversial, but their message should be heard and local horizons expanded.

He explained the consistency rating process is a good review tool that needs to be periodically evaluated, and added there are effective ways to use the information. He indicated Normal had started using the rating more prominently in presenting developments to the council. He also indicated the consistency review process should be communicated to the local developers. He explained education could result in recognizing good development techniques that are consistent with the comprehensive plans, and good development would be reinforced through acknowledgment and advertisement.

He indicated the regional greenways initiative was not progressing as quickly as he would prefer, and he would like to see the committee re-energized.

Mr. Zeunik indicated the comprehensive planning process is the most important service provided by the Commission to the communities in McLean County. He added that while much of the change in McLean County is in Bloomington and Normal and the five miles around the urban area, the Commission provides that important service to the smaller communities in the County. He indicated that the Commission is a catalyst for local governments and the community at large to think about development issues. He indicated that when the Commission was reorganized, it was intended that they would make the “hard calls” and provide an outside look at projects by those not involved with the political process or the local zoning or short-range development process.

He indicated the GIS was a useful tool and the most important aspect of the GIS from the County’s perspective is the cadastral layer. He explained that the parcel layer update is critical to the property tax bill cycle, which impacts every office in McLean County government.

Mr. Anderson asked what incentives are or might be provided to developers for greenways. Mr. Peterson responded the Town has parkland fees, but will sometimes grant some flexibility in planned unit developments in exchange for adding desirable features to the development. He also indicated that developers have begun to understand that trails can provide a positive marketing feature for development.

Mr. Lay asked about potential future GIS applications. Mr. Peterson responded the uses are endless, and include law enforcement, building inspection, and fire departments as well as others. Mr. Zeunik responded the County could use the GIS in the health department for septic, well, and food permits, MetCom for emergency response, and the building and zoning department. He added that it can be used in the property tax system for assessor records and had been used by the County Supervisor of Assessments office for implementing Bulletin 810, which was a farmland valuation change.

Mr. Klinger stated he thought recognizing good development was a good idea, and Mr. Fernandes added that both good and bad development can be identified through the consistency review process.

### Information Forum

Mr. Russell indicated Bryan Powell, a developer and attorney from Portland, Oregon, has indicated his availability to speak at the next Information Forum, which is currently scheduled for March 7th on the topic of “Encouraging Mixed Use Economic Development.” Mr. Fernandes stated that he thought Mr. Powell was a good fit for the forum, despite not being as well known as the previous forum speaker, Bill Hudnut. Mr. Kowalczyk stated he thought it was not as important to get the most well known

speaker, but to schedule the forums and promote them. Mr. Fernandes added Commission members themselves should encourage and promote participation. There was a consensus among the Commission members to ask staff to make arrangements with Mr. Powell and proceed with the forum planning. Mr. Russell asked if there were any preferences regarding time. A discussion ensued regarding what times might be best for certain groups of people.

#### Resignation

Mr. Fernandes indicated Mr. Underwood had resigned, and the Commission needed a replacement appointed by the County.

#### **Adjournment:**

Mr. Kowalczyk moved to adjourn the Commission meeting. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

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Teresa Casselman  
Office Manager