

BENZIE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
MARCH 13, 2008  
MINUTES

**Members Present:** Clifford Graves, Mary Pitcher, Kathy Ralston, Don Tanner, Alan Luedtke, Karen Roberts, Anne Damm

**Members Excused:** Mike Moorman, Katherine Ross

**Staff Present:** Craig Seger, Zoning Administrator, David Neiger, Planning Director

**Others Present:** Robert Bishop, Robert Bigelow, Garth Ward, Deb Lindgren, Eric Van Dusen

**I. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER** The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and announced that we have quorum.

Pledge of Allegiance

**II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**III. Approval of the Minutes:**

December 13, 2007 **Motion** by Ralston seconded by Roberts to approve the minutes of the Dec 13, 2007 Planning Commission meeting with the following correction: To change the heading for VII.A.2 from "Next Steps" to "County Master Plan Update" and to insert 10:30 as the time of adjournment. .

Jan 2, 2008 **Motion** by Pitcher seconded by Luedtke to approve the minutes of Jan 2, 2008 Planning Commission meeting with the following correction: delete "have 2 \_ \_ \_" at the bottom of page 2, so the phrase reads "have to funnel" and to delete the second item D of the public hearing and renumber from that point beginning with the letter E. Ayes: Pitcher, Ralston, Tanner, Luedtke, Roberts, Damm, Graves Excused: Moorman, Ross Nays: None **Motion Carried**

Jan 10, 2008 **Motion** by Roberts seconded by Pitcher to approve the minutes of Jan 10, 2008 Planning Commission meeting Ayes: Pitcher, Ralston, Tanner, Luedtke, Roberts, Damm, Graves Excused: Moorman, Ross Nays: None **Motion Carried**

Feb. 6, 2008 **Motion** by Damm seconded by Ralston to postpone approval of the minutes of Feb 6 , 2008 for staff research and fill in blanks regarding correspondence on page 6. Ayes: Pitcher, Ralston, Tanner, Luedtke, Roberts, Damm, Graves Excused: Moorman, Ross Nays: None **Motion Carried**

**IV. Public Input:** Chairman Graves read the procedure for public input. Robert Bigelow, 6169 Crystal has concerns about the boat launch and litigation. Asks for information to become a member of the CAC. Mostly concerned about the 3 mile stretch from Mollineaux Road to Beulah along Crystal Lake and how zoning and master planning will affect that area. Chairman Graves explained what the Citizens Advisory Committee, Master Plan, and Zoning Ordinance Rewrite Committee's are. Eric Van Dusen asks that the Planning Commission send out draft meeting minutes as soon as they are available.

**V. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

A. Zoning Ordinance Rewrite Committee (ZORC) Seger states Planning Commission will be sent a package for the G district. Tanner discusses zoning of the

townships. Graves says there is also consideration for changes to section 3.28. Tanner wants to make sure all government controlled lands are dealt with. Other discussion regarding the G district and Section 3.28. Graves asks that all townships be notified for issues regarding the G-District and Section 3.28. Tanner asks that the Attorney General's office and boating division of the MDNR also be notified for issues regarding the G-District and Section 3.28. Also included in package will be Renovation Part 2. Graves explains that the Stone Ridge Lake Views issue and the Special Land Use Package are before the ZORC.

#### B. Updating Comprehensive Plan

1. New Citizens Advisory Committee Neiger explained reasons for delays. White papers are moving along with CAC. This is an update, not a total rewrite of the master plan. Development of final format for action strategies are not done yet. A priority of white paper processing has been developed. He explained there are 2 groups: the Steering Committee will receive work from staff and send to 2<sup>nd</sup> group, a 20 member group that will solicit information from townships and other interested groups. It will not be as formal or widespread process as the CAC process. There will be a process for public involvement. Final action is the planning commission will amend the Master Plan. Pitcher asks how individuals can be added to groups, she asks that a more comprehensive list and effort be made to include all interested parties. Ralston clarifies that a model is being created for white papers. Neiger explains that no electronic versions are available for the white papers. Next steps are to assemble the steering committee. Graves asks when the task schedule will be available? Neiger directed to email to steering committee and planning commissioners. Neiger states his intent will be to send this out a week and a half prior to the next Planning Commission meeting.

2. Implementation of Intergovernmental Strategies Ralston cites recent report sent via email that gives update to the summit. Next step will be to schedule another summit meeting and possibly to coordinate summit work with Master Plan work. She also wants to coordinate with Grand Vision.

Tanner says the Parks and Recreation Commission has been working on cultural plan as a component of the recreational plan and they are working with Neiger on this document. At the State level, cultural funding is available, but the county must have the cultural plan in place to access this funding. The Commission is seeking help from a planning consultant or graduate student for help with the cultural plan. Funding amounts for grant preparation in the past was around \$3,000.

C. Grand Vision Pitcher and Seger give an update of the Grand Vision. Champions are helping to advise on the project. The Benzie workshop should be in May. Mead and Hunt is looking at the 6, 7, or 8th of May. Pitcher will ask that these dates be moved to later in the month. The Chamber of Commerce is putting on a brown bag on Monday at 11:30 am at the Mills House in Benzonia.

## VI. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Goals and Objectives Graves leads discussion on 2008 Goals and Objectives. All points on list were briefly discussed. Neiger suggests that since planning and zoning are separate, there should be separate lists for planning and zoning. Many good goals from last year's list have been accomplished: Karen Roberts Socio-Economic Study, The Benzie County Summit and the ZORC committee's work. Damm suggests the next level of detail, an action plan, then assign tasks and move forward. There was discussion that once Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance are completed, the Planning Commission should look at the latest tools for planning in Benzie County. Roberts suggests finding out why townships are so mad at the

County and why they are making the decision to leave county zoning. There was discussion that outreach could include simple communication by going to them and talking. It was mentioned that one step is being invited to Homestead Twp. to attend a planning workshop. There was discussion that Planning Commission members should get out and contact key members of the townships on an informal basis. There was discussion on the statement Inland Township made during the Inland Oaks Public Hearing that “we are watching you” and it is good for the Planning Commission to get this kind of input. We are Benzie County and we are to do the best we can. The PC has good intentions and works hard. Goals and Objectives for the April agenda are:

- Zoning Ordinance Rewrite Committee Activities - Graves and Seger
- Master Plan Update - Damm and Neiger:
- Intergovernmental Cooperation - Ralston
- Outreach - Roberts
- Planning & Zoning Analysis Committee update – Pitcher

Tanner explains that he went to Joyfield Township and was going to resign from the Planning Commission. Further discussion between Tanner and Pitcher regarding working with townships and the Planning & Zoning Analysis Committee (P&ZAC). To clarify what the Planning Commission wants from the BOC, P&ZAC should provide more communication to the Planning Commission. Clarity for the Planning Commission should be established for how the PC could be involved with implementation of the Benzie County Analysis Report (Wyckoff Report).

B. Planning Commission Training Program: No new information on Planning Commission training. Neiger will resend survey of training needs. Neiger discusses Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (MZEA) amendment.

**VII. NEW BUSINESS** None

**VIII. Zoning Administrators Report** Seger discusses Grand Vision, Request for Qualifications for consultant, Transfer of Development Rights Conference in late summer 2008.

**IX. Planning Director’s Report**: Neiger discusses Elberta recreation plan, Regional non-motorized plan from the NWMCOG, MZEA, no tribe funds for master plan, looking at other resources and Almira Twp’s Waterfront park. There was discussion on whether this requires an amendment to the county recreation plan and to let the Parks and Recreation Commission know.

**X. Correspondence** Homestead Inland Joint Planning Commission (HIJPC) response to Benzie County Planning Commission review of HIJPC Master Plan.

**XI. Presentations and Announcements**

A. Garth Ward – Michigan Wind Power. New technology is much less complicated. Can be used commercially or by household. 2 kilowatts. Can be ganged together for more than 2 kilowatts. Can be use anywhere with 220 volts and a hill. Only needs to be 33 feet tall, (height of telephone pole) and only produces 45 decibels of sound (most ordinances call for 60 db maximum). This is about the same as the wind blowing through the trees. Height of wind generator is the top of the thing that holds the blade. Reach is how far the unit would reach if it fell. These are small units for household use. His request and reason for presenting to the Planning Commission is this type of wind power should be a use by right in the Benzie County Zoning Ordinance. See Long Lake township language. Under net metering, you can only

produce the amount of power that you need. Net metering means you are generating power you are not using and is pushed back across the electric meter, then you actually pay to get it back. You must be a certified power producer to sell power. An Island in South America has 80 of these units and powers the entire island. Must be set up properly. New technology allows for more units in a denser area. Michigan Wind Power uses American made products. Need electrical and building permit. Size this unit to the size of your house and the amount of power you use. Life expectancy of the unit is 20 years. Expected pay back is approximately 5 years. Zoning should address the fact that these are not very tall, but there may be more than one unit. The difference between household and commercial is that 30 kilowatt is residential and 100 kilowatt is commercial. Discussion on awareness that companies are now looking in Benzie County for land to lease windmill space. It was stated that NWMCOG is sending a bus to look at Huron County wind farm. Agenda item for April regular agenda – Pitcher for Huron County wind farm.

Alan Luedtke explains that it has been a privilege to serve on the PC with all current and past members.

**XII. Public Input** Eric Van Dusen: wonders why consultant is being considered for zoning ordinance review. What is cost of permit for a WECS. Some discussion by Neiger. Deb Lindgren comments on why people don't like the Planning Commission. It is guilty by association. The Board of Commissioners and County Administrator are the ones with a hidden agenda and don't have control over good communication. Al Brown explains that some government entities are not allowing good public communication at their meetings. Tanner explains recent NWMCOG presentation on planning was informative and thought inspiring for addressing good zoning policy. Tanner explains that Joyfield township is looking for possible alternatives to current planning and zoning issues. **Motion** by Tanner seconded by Ralston to publish/distribute draft meeting minutes of Planning Commission meetings to Planning Commission mailing list in lieu of the approved minutes immediately upon initial preparation and to be timely in compliance with the open meetings act. Ayes: Pitcher, Ralston, Tanner, Luedtke, Roberts, Damm, Graves Excused: Moorman, Ross Nays: None **Motion Carried**

**XIII. Adjourn** Chairman Graves adjourned the meeting adjourned 10:30 p.m. The next meeting will be a Special Meeting on April 2, 2008 for a public hearing. The next regular meeting is April 10, 2008.

Respectfully Submitted:

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Kathy Ralston, Secretary

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Chris Flynn, Recording Secretary