

BENZIE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
JUNE 12, 2008  
MINUTES

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Graves, Moorman, Ross, Pitcher, Damm, Roberts, Ralston  
**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Tanner  
**STAFF PRESENT:** Neiger, Seger, Flynn  
**OTHERS PRESENT:** None

**I CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER** Chairman Graves called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**II APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA** The agenda was amended by moving Unfinished Business item 4 "Planning & Zoning Analysis Committee Update to item D under Committee Reports and adding number 5 New Planning Commission Ordinance, bylaws, rules of procedure to Goals and Objectives 2008. **Motion** by Moorman seconded by Roberts to approve the agenda as amended. Ayes: All Nays: None Excused: Tanner **Motion Carried**

**III APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES** There was consensus to not approve the minutes until the July meeting as there hadn't been time to review them. Recording Secretary Flynn reports that they had been sent out twice by email and Don Tanner(excused) had picked up his copy.

**IV. PUBLIC INPUT – ITEMS ON THE AGENDA** None

**V. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

A. Zoning Ordinance Update Committee Seger reports that ZORC finished Articles 2, 3 and most of 16. There is still some work to do on 16, specifically farming and value added farming. He asked Moorman for a report on his ordinance/map presentation at the Colfax Twp. meeting. Moorman says he did a good job, the board was receptive, and each member of the board will provide input. Seger reports that we are working with Platte, Colfax and Gilmore and there is agreement on what has been proposed to date. Graves reviewed the ZORC "Mission Statement". Comments that there is growing interest in the ordinance writing, but some confusion on who can be on the committee. Would like a motion to adopt the mission and to send out to all the townships with a cover letter **Motion** by Ross seconded by Damm to adopt the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite Committee Mission Statement and to forward the Mission Statement to all of the Townships with a cover letter to be signed by the Chair. Pitcher appreciates the Chairman's work on this. Discussion on where to bring up individual or small groups issues and there was consensus that it should be during public input, and then make an agenda item for later. Ayes: All Nays: None Excused: Tanner **Motion Carried**

Graves additionally reports on a motion made at the ZORC directing the Zoning Administrator to go to the Townships and asks that the Planning Commission confirm that in the context of the Master Plan, the ZORC empowers the Zoning Administrator to meet with the townships to communicate the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite efforts, including zoning districts and zoning maps. **Motion by Ralston seconded by Ross to confirm the directive of the ZORC.** Seger reports he thinks this motion is the opinion of the ZORC that the townships be involved in the process. Seger feels it's important enough that he asked the ZORC to do this. There was considerable discussion on how the townships might develop expectations on how their

input will be handled. Seger reports on how enthusiastic Platte Township is about being involved in the decision making process. Neiger comments that it is a major turn around from Wyckoff's recommendation against not finishing all the text before doing the maps. It could lead to confusion and problems if the districts are done before the text is adopted and we haven't adopted Articles 2, 3 or 16 yet. There was discussion on the mapping process and the handouts Seger presented to be reviewed. There was discussion that it should be made clear to the townships and the public that there isn't going to be a public hearing any time soon on the maps or the districts. Neiger states he hasn't seen the handout, it so he doesn't know if the maps presented are current. There was discussion that they are the maps from the current master plan and the current zoning ordinance. Neiger says the hand out doesn't include any open space, scenic vistas, or natural resource preservation maps and that they should be in the packet. Ayes: All Nays: None Excused: Tanner **Motion Carried**

B. Updating the Comprehensive Plan

1. New Citizens Advisory Committee Neiger reports that some information is in his Directors Report and listed the members of Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (CPUC), and stated the next meeting is June 18. He reports that they have been working on the membership of what will be two committees. A letter was sent to all units of government to appoint someone to the committee. He explained what other white papers will be looked and commented that he thinks there needs to be a wind energy report. He states they will address strip growth along major corridors, and hopes to pick up some new stuff on P.U.D.s. He stated the Socio-Economic report is ready for public hearing. He also reports that he has created a table addressing the strategies/goals for implementation which will go out to agencies for their review and reporting on whether or not the goals have been met. The Committee will be looking at oil and gas leases and air rights for wind energy. **Motion** by Damm seconded by Roberts to set Aug 6, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. for a public hearing on the Socio-Economic Report, subject to meeting any changes required by the enabling act. There was discussion that the decision will be a motion to amend the Comprehensive 2020 Plan. There was discussion on planning act requirements for County Board review. Neiger will look into this. Ayes: All Nays: None Excused: Tanner **Motion Carried**

2. Implementation of Intergovernmental Strategies Ralston reports she needs to get an update from the committees. She comments that education is the most active, working an alternative education initiative. Minutes of the committee meetings are available. She reports the Communications Committee is being resurrected with help of Sharon May. Ralston read the Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee proposed mission statement. Will keep Mark Roper and Jim Sheets in the loop. Ralston will get Chris Flynn a copy for the Planning Commission and file.

C. Grand Vision Seger thanked all those who participated in the Grand Vision process to date. He reported that the information gathered will be reviewed and collated over the summer, and next fall the "options" would be presented.

D. "Planning & Zoning Analysis Committee Update Pitcher reports there hasn't been a meeting for a couple of months, but that Seger's performance evaluation is done, and Neiger's is about 50%. Damm reports that what is left on to do on the Wyckoff r report could be finished by the Planning Commission and suggests the committee be disbanding. Reviewed the things that have not been done, (see Wyckoff report #1). Graves isn't comfortable with disbanding the committee until he is sure that someone else has taken ownership. Damm recommends that the Planning Commission take on completing the recommendations.

## VI UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### A. Goals and Objectives 2008

#### 1. Zoning Ordinance Rewrite Committee Activities

Seger reports that he hopes to have the districts/maps complete and that the Planning Commission will have been told when to expect the new ordinance, by December. Graves states that he expects article 16 to be done at the next ZORC and be ready to be set for public input. Graves read off the articles that hopefully will be done by December. Considerable discussion on the cost of copying documents. Discussion on what and when documents should be posted on the website. There was considerable discussion on the website. The website committee meets July 25, 2008 at 9 a.m in the commissioner's room. Karen Roberts and Cliff Graves will attend to find out more about what can be on the website.

#### 2. Master Plan Update

Neiger 4 reports could be completed if they can be run concurrently. Graves reports that the new planning legislation requires the Planning Commission make an annual report to the County Board.

#### 3. Intergovernmental Cooperation

Ralston reports her goal is to start planning the next summit. Will be involved in updating the Master Plan white paper Intergovernmental Cooperation. There was discussion on the white papers that still need updating.

##### a. Outreach

Roberts reports on meetings to develop a survey. She has suggested having a focus group later in the summer and then do the survey. Might need an objective facilitator. Focus group would determine what questions and how to word the questions on the survey. Neiger suggested the CPUC committee could act as the focus group during the update of the intergovernmental cooperation paper. Emphasized renewing and maintain a good relationship with the townships. Include report by Karen Roberts "Outreach" as part of Intergovernmental Cooperation report.

#### 4. Planning & Zoning Analysis Committee Update – moved to Committee Reports.

#### 5. New Planning Commission Ordinance, bylaws, rules of procedure

Graves reports that new enabling legislation requires a new ordinance creating the Planning Commission. Graves and Neiger working on Ordinance. Neiger/Graves/Flynn will work on bylaws. Graves/Flynn will work on rules of procedure. Neiger reports that if you have to redo the Planning Commission and want do it slowly you need to start the process right now, otherwise you have to do it all at once and that can be difficult. Seger comments that in the handout tonight is an announcement for another training session on the enabling legislation, by Dick Figura. Graves reports he was impressed, was a power point presentation that went through the major changes, plus a 3 ring binder of information. Was interesting because he had some true examples that brought it home. The next session is June 18 in Kasson Twp. and is \$10.00 paid by the County.

### B. Zoning Department RFQ

Seger reviews his request for RFQ. Is asking the Planning Commission to allow the zoning staff to distribute the request and appoint a review committee. Graves asks if the committee is Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. Discussion on budget and funding. Seger reports that if the Planning Commission doesn't want to approve this, the Zoning Ordinance already gives him the authority to do so. Requests moving forward with getting a consultant to help with zoning permit reviews when staff is overloaded. Discussion on costs and budget issues. Pitcher very concerned with the budget. Graves states that he is in favor because we need a consultant to review our proposed zoning ordinance. Neiger says it's not just certification; you need someone experienced with writing zoning ordinances. Discussion that we need both, backup for overload, and review of ordinance. **Motion** by Roberts seconded by Ralston to approve Craig's request for RFQ to select a professional planner consultant, and set a committee made up of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and staff, to help with the selection of consultant for zoning and planning services. We will look for

a consultant who can provide both services. Seger reviewed list of companies that RFQ will go out to. Neiger comments that he sort of supports this, but he has a role in site plan review. He feels that he is concerned that this is an attempt to take away part of his job and he has been here 17 years. Graves, would agree to put Neiger on the RFQ list. Moorman asks if the intent is that whoever is chosen will review every special land use or just when needed. Graves ~~states~~ asks Seger to confirm<sup>(cf)</sup> that outside consultants will only be utilized when in house staff cannot for whatever reason do it. Seger asks to withdraw his request, he feels the Planning Commission has made a decision not to work with him. Neiger states that the special land use process and the zoning ordinance require that the Planning Commission will have input anyway. **Motion** by Pitcher seconded by Moorman to table the ~~RFQ~~ **Motion**<sup>(cf)</sup> until the July 10, 2008 meeting. Ayes: All Nays: None Excused: Tanner **Motion Carried**

C. Zoning Ordinance Rewrite Renovation Part II Motion by Moorman seconded by Pitcher to schedule a public hearing for Renovation Part II. Graves asks if we can address the numbering issues as much as possible at this time. Craig will look into this and talk to Dick Figura. Ayes: All Nays: None Excused: Tanner **Motion Carried.**

## VII NEW BUSINESS

A Planning Commission Membership Graves reports that he is working with Damm on redoubling efforts to fill seats on the Planning Commission, and the County Board temporarily reduced the members to 9 so that we can keep quorums.

B. Accept from CPUC the Socio-Economic White Paper, set Public Hearing for Amendment to the White Paper and Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan 2020 Discussed and public hearing set during Committee Reports

## VIII ZONING ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Seger reviewed the portions of the legislation pertaining to the Planning Commission, commenting that the most important zoning enabling legislation is the 15 days prior to publish public hearings. Encourages the Planning Commission to read the legislation. Reports that he has been named Deputy Drain Commissioner, and they are working on the Eden Branch creek to take care of the flooding issue and have a couple of plans in mind. Comments that this will involve the county, a township and a village working together. He also reports that with the approval of the County Board, the County will be providing zoning Administration services to the Village of Beulah, beginning July 1, 2008.

**IX DIRECTOR'S REPORT** Comprehensive Plan info has been presented above. Neiger reports that Parks and Recreation Commission hired a college student to work on their plan including the cultural and historic plans. He also reports that he has been invited to work with the Tart Trail on a connection between Thompsonville and the Tart Trail. Everything else is in his written report.

**X CORRESPONDENCE** None

**XI PRESENTATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS** Graves reports on serious flooding in Iowa. Pitcher reports that county has been charging for copies for 15 years. The auditors have calculated all the costs of making copies and we charge no more than that. Discussion on costs and other groups that are doing more work electronically. Dave reported the death of Telfer Mook.

**XII PUBLIC INPUT** None

**XIII ADJOURN** 10.05

Respectfully Submitted:

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Kathy Ralston, Secretary

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Christi Flynn, Recording Secretary