



CHARLEVOIX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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Approved Meeting Minutes January 12, 2017

I. Call to Order

Kiersten Stark, Planning Coordinator, called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. in the Commissioners' Room at the Charlevoix County Building.

Members present: Bob Tidmore, Bob Draves, Larry Levensgood, Michael Buttigieg, Patrick Howard, and Ron Van Zee

Members absent: Mike Webster

Others present: Kiersten Stark (Planning Coordinator), Ron Reinhardt (County Commissioner Liaison), and Dave Skornia

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Planning Commission recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Introduction of Members

The Planning Commission dispensed with the introduction of members, as there is only one (1) new member, who was absent.

IV. Election of Officers

1. Chair

Kiersten opened nominations for Chair.

MOTION by Michael Buttigieg to nominate Bob Draves for Chair. Bob Tidmore seconded the motion. No further nominations were cast.

MOTION by Michael Buttigieg to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Bob Draves as Chair. Ron Van Zee seconded the motion. Voice vote: Yeas 5, Nays 1 (Bob Draves). Motion passed.

2. Vice Chair

Chairman Draves opened nominations for Vice Chair.

MOTION by Ron Van Zee to nominate Larry Levensgood for Vice Chair. Patrick Howard seconded the motion. No further nominations were cast.

MOTION by Bob Tidmore to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Larry Levensgood as Vice Chair. Michael Buttigieg seconded the motion. Voice vote: all in favor. Motion passed.

3. Secretary

Chairman Draves opened nominations for Secretary.

MOTION by Ron Van Zee to nominate Bob Tidmore for Secretary. Patrick Howard seconded the motion. No further nominations were cast.

MOTION by Michael Buttigieg to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Bob Tidmore as Secretary. Larry Levensgood seconded the motion. Voice vote: all in favor. Motion passed.

V. Approval of Agenda

MOTION by Michael Buttigieg to approve the tentative agenda as presented. Ron Van Zee seconded the motion. Voice vote: all in favor. Motion passed.

VI. Public Comments Unrelated to Agenda Items

No public comments unrelated to agenda items

Ron Van Zee introduced Dave Skornia (seated in the audience), who is Chair of the Bay Township Planning Commission and was a member of the local Farm Bureau Land Use Committee that developed the Farmland & Open Space Preservation Ordinance for the County in the past. Van Zee had invited Dave Skornia to attend the meeting, as the Commission will be discussing the ordinance.

V. County Business Items

Approval of Minutes of November 3, 2016 Meeting

MOTION by Ron Van Zee to approve the minutes of the November 3, 2016 meeting as presented. Larry Levensgood seconded the motion. Voice vote: all in favor. Motion passed.

Larry Levensgood complimented Kevin Clements on the minutes.

Correspondence and Communications

Kiersten reviewed the following items:

- MDEQ compliance communication to Richard Gillespie regarding unauthorized solid waste disposal at his property on Beaver Island

Larry Levensgood said the issue of how to dispose of solid waste on Beaver Island came up when the County Solid Waste Plan was being developed. Discussion took place regarding how solid waste is currently managed.

- Email from Tom Darnton, encouraging the Planning Commission to support the continuation of the annual Planners Forum held at the Charlevoix Public Library by MSU Extension

Kiersten emphasized the value of the Planners Forum and said she would be willing to assist MSU Extension with continuing the program.

- 2017 Master Citizen Planner Webinar Series flyer
- Registration flyer for “Regulating Medical Marijuana Facilities: A Workshop for Local Government”

Michael Buttigieg would like to attend the program. Kiersten also plans to attend.

Planning Commission Comments

Ron Van Zee – Hayes Township has been successful in obtaining \$912,000 in grant funding for Camp Sea-Gull. The Township Board also approved applying to the County for a Parks Millage Appropriation this year. They’ve been digging test holes at Camp Sea-Gull in areas where they’d like to put in roads and parking areas to ensure the soil will support it. The plans have been completed for their Waterways grant for the boat launch. Bay Township is working on proposed text amendments to their zoning ordinance to regulate outdoor wood-fired boilers. The American Lung Association has an incentive program for upgrading existing wood-fired boilers (gasification) to reduce air pollution. Van Zee said he is still receiving applications for parcel reconfigurations. Bob Tidmore asked if the MDEQ had held a public hearing on the proposed boat launch at Camp Sea-Gull. Van Zee said Hayes Township has not yet received word on whether the MDEQ will hold a public hearing on their permit application. He said the plans for the boat launch have been scaled back. Van Zee has worked on fundraising efforts for the improvements at Camp Sea-Gull. The Township is considering hiring a professional fundraiser. Some of the Township citizens who were initially opposed to the plans for the park have since come forward in support of the project, including donating funds.

Patrick Howard – The Chandler Township Zoning Administrator as well as the Zoning Board of Appeals Chair, who was also a member of the Planning Commission, recently resigned. Another member of the Planning Commission may also have to resign soon due to health reasons. The Township Clerk is fielding calls regarding zoning issues until a new Zoning Administrator can be found. Howard said finding a new Zoning Administrator will be a challenge. Van Zee said some of the Township Supervisors in the area had talked about meeting soon to discuss collaboration between communities to provide services, such as zoning administration. Howard said Chandler Township has developed good working relationships with Boyne Valley and Melrose Townships to provide fire protection, and he would like to see the Township move in a similar direction for zoning administration. Kiersten offered to provide a list of potential zoning administrators in the area, if needed. Howard also reported that the Melrose/Chandler Township Fire Department is about one year into their partnership with Emmet County for ambulance service. In the last election, Chandler Township approved an emergency medical services (EMS) millage in addition to the Fire millage, so

they're fully funded into the Emmet County system. One-quarter (¼) mil covers ambulance service for all of Chandler Township as well as training for Melrose and Chandler Township fire stations. The continuity of training for all of the ambulance crews has been very effective. Melrose, Hudson, and Boyne Valley Township Fire Departments all have advanced life-saving equipment now, which is impressive considering they are small rural townships.

Michael Buttigieg – He attended the Planners Forum in November and the session on Tiny Homes was interesting. Buttigieg also reported on a study of the TCE plume in the Mancelona area caused by past industrial activities; the plume has been moving over time. He also reported that the coordinator of Michigan Mountain Mayhem bicycling event has not yet received a bill from the Sheriff's Office for the traffic control they provided at last fall's event. As soon as the event coordinator receives the bill, Buttigieg said he will share a copy with the Planning Commission.

Larry Levensgood – He attended the Planners Forum in November. He also attended a program on how to help create a local food and farming community. Levensgood also attended the Charlevoix Conservation District Annual Meeting where Dave Skornia gave a presentation on the history of his family farm, which has been in his family for 135 years. Levensgood reported that the Conservation District is sponsoring a Hunting Access Program (HAP) workshop on January 19th at the Charlevoix Public Library to promote hunting. The program offers landowners payment and liability protection in exchange for providing hunters limited access to their property. Commissioner Reinhardt said the landowner can specify what animals can be hunted on their property. Levensgood also reported that he attended the Master Citizen Planner webinar on regionalism for park development. He didn't think it had much application in our region. Levensgood also said he received information on a program to be offered on January 20th at Networks Northwest. Van Zee said it's a Community Solutions Think Tank, a breakfast discussion on how local policy impacts community health, safety and welfare issues.

Bob Tidmore – Beaver Island officials are working on the Master Plan Update for the Island. He also reported that the Emerald Isle broke down in Lake Michigan recently. The ferry was on its way to Beaver Island, but was safely able to return to Charlevoix where they resolved the problem. Tidmore said the population on the Island is down to about 300 people for the winter. He also reported that the St. James Township EMS millage passed in the November election and they're now sending out a request for proposals (RFP) to outsource management of the emergency medical services.

Bob Draves – The Jordan Valley EMS Authority will be getting a new ambulance. It's a demo with 3,000 miles on it. They expect to have it paid off in two (2) years.

County Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Reinhardt reported that Denny Way was appointed to the Road Commission Board and Russell Magee is now Chair. A Merit Network fiber optic line was just run to the Road Commission and County Transit in Boyne City. E.J. (East Jordan Iron Works) will start building their new plant in Elmira this spring. Wilson Township is considering which roads in their township to recommend for improvements to the County Road Millage Steering Committee. State Representative Triston Cole was successful in getting legislation passed that requires the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to identify all logging roads on state-owned forest land. The new law will allow off-road vehicles (ORV) to use these logging roads. If the DNR wants to keep certain logging roads closed to ORV use, they will have to justify it and, if authorized, post signs indicating those roads are closed to ORV use.

Staff Comments

Kiersten reported on the following Planning Department activities in November and December:

- Boyne City to Charlevoix Trail project
 - **Phase 1**
 - Began preparing grant reimbursement request to DNR for Trust Fund Grant
 - Trail adjustment within the Boyne City limits – Spring 2017
 - Temporary snow fence will be replaced with a permanent fence – Spring 2017
 - Cedar trees will be provided to one (1) property owner along the trail in Evangeline Township to replace shrubs removed, per signed agreement – Spring 2017
 - Install benches along the trail – Spring 2017
 - **Phase 2**
 - Pre-construction meeting was held on November 17th
 - Contractor worked on clearing trees and brush along trail route in November & December
 - A site visit was conducted to meet with a property owner to discuss concerns related to tree cutting along his property last Spring
 - Informational session was held on December 10th at the Hayes Township Hall for property owners along the trail route to present the trail plans and answer questions/address concerns
 - Intergovernmental Agreement between the County and Road Commission for grant administration for Phase 2 was approved by the Road Commission Board and the County Board
 - Still working on obtaining quotes for an appraisal of an easement donated to the County for the Trail – only 1 quote received to date
 - Trail construction will be from April – July 2017
 - **Phase 3**
 - Contacted Bay Township Zoning Administrator to discuss a zoning issue at Park of the Pines, which needs to be resolved before the Township will consider giving zoning approval for the proposed Trailhead
 - Finalizing conceptual plans and determining cost estimates for Phase 3 Trail and Trailhead at Park of the Pines
 - Would like to apply for grants this spring
- Attended Parks Committee meetings in November and December
 - Proposed online reservation system on the County website for campground reservations at Whiting Park
 - Discussion of wireless internet service at Whiting Park
 - Reviewed 2017 project list for the Parks – maintenance items and minor improvements to the facilities
 - Attended Planners Review & Advisory Committee (PRAC) meeting at Networks Northwest in December
 - Discussed the Planners Education Network and if it should be continued
 - Decided to keep PRAC in place and meet 5 – 6 times per year

- Regional workshops on planning/zoning related topics will continue to be offered
- Planning Department moved to second floor office in December

2017 Meeting Schedule (Resolution)

The Commission reviewed the proposed meeting schedule for 2017.

MOTION by Ron Van Zee to adopt the following resolution setting the 2017 meeting schedule. Bob Tidmore seconded the motion. Voice vote: all in favor. Motion passed.

Resolution Setting the 2017 Meeting Schedule

WHEREAS, in 2011, the Charlevoix County Planning Commission was re-established under the auspices of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008, as amended), and

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires the Planning Commission meeting schedule to be adopted by resolution,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Charlevoix County Planning Commission will hold their regular meetings on the first Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Room at the Charlevoix County Building, 203 Antrim Street, Charlevoix, Michigan 49720, with the understanding that meetings may be cancelled or rescheduled due to lack of a quorum, inclement weather, lack of agenda items, or scheduling conflicts, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the January 2017 meeting and the January 2018 meeting will be held on the second Thursday of the month, in accordance with the Planning Commission Bylaws.

2017 PC Member Notebooks

Commission members had each received materials to set up their 2017 notebooks. Kiersten asked if anyone would like a new notebook, table of contents, or dividers. She said if anyone needs new materials in the future to please let her know.

Discussion of Farmland & Open Space Preservation Ordinance

Commission members discussed the Farmland & Open Space Preservation Ordinance. Commissioner Reinhardt said the majority of the County Board members were in favor of the Planning Commission studying this issue further. Discussion took place regarding the farmland ordinance. It was noted there's a difference between a conservation easement owned by a conservancy versus an easement that's part of a purchase of development rights program (PDR) for farmland preservation. Van Zee said he would like to move forward with updating the farmland ordinance. Commissioner Reinhardt explained how a conservation easement for farmland protection would work. There was discussion of prime farmland locations in the county. Dave Skornia (seated in the audience) said he was a member of the local Farm Bureau Land Use Committee. He provided some background information regarding how the committee developed the farmland ordinance, which was based on guidelines and regulations in place at the time. Moving forward, Skornia recommended educational efforts to better inform citizens about the importance of farmland preservation. He said Old Mission Township (Grand

Traverse County) has a purchase of development rights ordinance, which would be a good example to reference. Skornia emphasized that farmland preservation doesn't just benefit farmers, but the local economy as well. It enhances economic value and quality of life. Buttigieg asked how this program would be administered. Commissioner Reinhardt and Dave Skornia explained how a purchase of development rights program would work, noting that it's a voluntary program. Skornia said the farmland ordinance, as presently written, is out-of-date and needs to be revised. It could also be simplified. After further discussion, the Commission decided to form a subcommittee to work on this project. Chairman Draves said he would like to attend a meeting at Old Mission Township to learn more about their PDR program.

Draft Future Land Use Plan Update

Kiersten reviewed a list of revisions that had been made to the Draft Future Land Use Plan Update since the last meeting. Commission members concurred with most of the revisions and also had some additional changes to be made.

MOTION by Larry Levengood, seconded by Michael Buttigieg, to recommend sending the Draft Future Land Use Plan Update, including the changes discussed at this meeting, to the County Board for their review and approval to release the draft plan to the local units of government for review. Voice vote: all in favor. Motion passed.

VIII. Townships, Cities, MDEQ & Corps of Engineers Items

None

IX. Any Unfinished County Business

None

X. Adjournment

MOTION by Michael Buttigieg to adjourn the meeting. Ron Van Zee seconded the motion. All members were in favor of the motion. Motion passed.

Chairman Draves adjourned the meeting at 9:48 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted By,

Robert L. Tidmore
Secretary

RLT/kjs