

**St. Clair County Metropolitan Planning Commission  
200 Grand River Avenue, Conference Room B  
Port Huron, Michigan 48060**

**W e d n e s d a y**

**A u g u s t 1 9 , 2 0 0 9**

**3 : 0 0 p . m .**

**Minutes**

Chairman Murphy called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m., followed by the pledge of allegiance.

**1. Roll Call**

Present: Cooper, DeBoyer, Heidemann, Hildebrand, Lockwood, Murphy, Sass, Secory, Sheehy and Tansky

Excused: Andrews

Guests: Ron Olkowski, Jr., Rapid & Reliable Process Services; Chris Crary, Village of Capac

Staff: Diedrich, Donaldson, Floyd, and Fulton

**2. Changes in Order/Additions/Deletions to the agenda**

**Motion** by Heidemann, supported by Sass to approve the agenda as presented.

**3. Citizens Wishing to Address the Commission**

Mr. Crary was interested in the Wind Energy Ordinance, however, did not wish to address the Commission. Mr. Olkowski attended to pass out subpoenas to some of the planning commissioners.

**4. Comments/News from the Planning Commissioners and Staff**

Commissioner Lockwood stated that the LG company representatives visited the City of St. Clair on Sunday. LG is looking at five sites in all and were non-committal when they left the city.

Commissioner Sheehy referenced the article in the Planning and Zoning News that was written by Director, Bill Kauffman. Commissioner Sheehy thought it was a good article.

Commissioner Sheehy received notice from MAP that he will receive a 20-year Member Certificate at their annual awards. He cannot attend the conference and requested if anyone was attending to please pick up the award for him.

Commissioner DeBoyer informed the Planning Commission that the city of Algonac voted to approve going for a grant for a bathhouse and Clay Township has donated \$25,000 toward their match money.

Clay Township is moving forward on their master plan update. On September 23, there will be another visioning session. The first session went well.

Clay Township has had three fire districts and just approved going to one district for the entire township, which means all of the out islands will be included. Previously the township was not reimbursed for those runs. Now there will be tax dollars to cover those runs.

The Clay Township Park is progressing nicely.

At their meeting of August 18, the Township Board approved attendance of the Americas Town Meeting in Washington, D.C., where the State of Michigan will be highlighted.

Kara Diedrich stated that she did see a lot of people come and help clean up and show LG what a great city St. Clair is.

Commissioner Tansky stated that the college business is good, with an 18% increase in registration. Unfortunately, property tax revenues for the college have remained the same since 1999. Sixty percent of the students are receiving some kind of government aid. Tuition has not been raised as they were informed by the Governor that they would be taken care of. That has not taken place.

Commissioner Heidemann stated he attended a conference that relates to the success Commissioner Lockwood has had in St. Clair. His understanding is that LG is very interested in the quality of life in an area.

One thing St. Clair County has going for it is their parks and recreation projects. As many know, the county has a parks and recreation millage, and the way it is set up is unique in that 25 percent goes back to the local municipalities so they can continue their park and recreation within their municipality. Because there is a millage, St. Clair County and local units of government can match money from the Natural Resources Trust Fund. As of 2008, St. Clair County has received 14.142 million dollars since the Trust Fund was set up. The county has received a lot more Trust Fund dollars than Macomb County that has a much larger population than St. Clair County, but does not have a designated millage for parks and recreation.

The Fort Gratiot Lighthouse is next for economic development, specifically tourism. Commissioner Heidemann thinks it will be a positive cash flow item for the county and city, not just in terms of paying for itself but in attracting tourists in the area.

Geoff Donaldson Informed the commissioners that staff will be at the Michigan Association of Planning Conference next month.

Commissioner Murphy stated he also read Bill Kauffman's article and thought Bill did an excellent job in preparing it. There were some visuals and highlights of the county.

Also of interest was the article on a possible four-year university. It has very good points on the fact that when students leave town to attend a university outside of the county, they are spending nine months in other areas, which means they are spending their money somewhere

else. Typically, in university towns the students come in and spend their money in the local area.

**5. Approval of Minutes**

**Motion** by Tansky supported by Sass to approve the minutes as distributed. Motion carried unanimously.

**6. Acceptance of Communications**

In addition to the communications in the regular agenda packet, there was one article in the supplemental packet about LG visiting the City of St. Clair. **Motion** by Cooper, supported by Sheehy to receive and file the communications. Motion carried unanimously.

**7. Financial Reports**

Commissioner Lockwood had questioned one area where the revenues are reported. Dale informed him that he was correct and the *Total for the Department* should be the same as *Planning to Date*. **Motion** by Hildebrand, supported by DeBoyer to acknowledge receipt of the financial reports with the correction stated. Motion carried unanimously.

**8. Consent Agenda**

A. St. Clair Township Text Amendment – Pond Ordinance

- *The proposed amendments are consistent with the planning components and goals stated in the St. Clair Township Master Plan.*
- *The proposed amendments are consistent with the planning components and goals stated in the St. Clair County Master Plan.*
- *The St. Clair Township Planning Commission recommends approval of the proposed changes.*

*Staff recommends that the Metropolitan Planning Commission concur with the St. Clair Township Planning Commission and recommend approval of the proposed text amendment to their Zoning Ordinance because it will strengthen their Ordinance by adding clarification to their regulations for their pond and retention excavating process.*

B. China Township Text Amendment – Wind Energy Systems Ordinance

- *The proposed amendments are consistent with the planning components and goals stated in the China Township Master Plan.*
- *The proposed amendments are consistent with the planning components and goals stated in the St. Clair County Master Plan.*
- *The China Township Planning Commission recommends approval of the proposed changes.*

*Staff recommends that the Metropolitan Planning Commission concur with the China Township Planning Commission and recommend **approval** of the proposed text amendments to their Zoning Ordinance because it allows for an appropriate balance between the need for clean, renewable energy resources and the necessity to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.*

**Motion** by Lockwood, supported by Sass to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

## 9. Work Program Reports

### A. Kara Diedrich

Diedrich reported that she and Director Kauffman had attended a meeting at SC4 on how to determine emerging occupations. SC4 has a new program they are creating which relates to specific industries, automation alley, industrial development, etc. They have a unique computer program that mixes data that Diedrich has been working with on emerging occupations. There will be more meetings in the future to learn more about the SC4 program.

### B. Geoff Donaldson

*EDA Fact Sheet* - Donaldson stated that there was a request from Administration to put together some guidance documents to assist them in their meetings with the EDA and Pat Nowak, the county's liaison. What came out of that request were some fact sheets that were put together in a short period of time using information from the master plan. He passed around a draft version of the work in progress.

*Update on Land Bank* – the immediate focus of a Land Bank Authority will be in the city of Port Huron as that is where the largest concentration of properties coming back would be. In addition, they will be looking beyond the city of Port Huron. There are a series of focus group meetings with the first being September 2. Plans are to have county staff, planning commissioners, treasurer, Equalization, Register of Deeds, local municipalities, non-profit organization, EDA, DDAs, chambers of commerce, brownfield authorities, funders, banks, foundations, credit unions as well as for-profit developers and realtors.

*Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant (EECGB)* – Donaldson reported that there is another change to the application. Staff has been receiving daily e-mails from the federal government with changes in how to submit the applications and other necessary information. Originally, staff was informed to apply for \$250,000 up front of the \$701,000 that the county is eligible to receive. Since that time, they have said that if the initial \$250,000 is not spent up front, then it has to be sent back and “repurposed and re-requested.” Therefore, the initial request is now for \$50,000 to be used to do the energy audit and the rest may be used as a revolving fund to implement the recommendations.

### C. Lori Eschenburg

Eschenburg was not present at the meeting.

### D. Trevor Floyd

Floyd stated he has a request for a watershed map that was produced a few years ago. He is trying to find the original to reduplicate it.

Floyd has been assisting the Equalization Department with their new software. There is one company in Michigan that writes software for equalization departments and it is used throughout the country.

E. Mike Latuszek

Latuszek was not present at the meeting.

F. David Struck

Struck was not present at the meeting.

**Motion** by Sheehy, supported by Cooper to accept the Work Program Reports as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

## 10. Director's Report

Donaldson reported for Kauffman.

LG Visit: Last week we had a request from EDA for some data sets, population information, and information on engineers who live in the area, to share with LG. That information was not readily available. It was presented in a way to show the area surrounding the county and the number of engineers available in that area per the U.S. Census. Discussion was held on the quality of life in St. Clair County and ability to bring people in from surrounding area.

Master Plan: In previous discussions with the Planning Commission, there was talk of doing a general release of the master plan to the local newspaper. Since then it has been decided to set up a meeting with the local newspaper and show them the master plan update and Implementation Matrix that will show what projects are currently being worked on. This way the focus will be on what is being done, not just what is planned.

NSP Grant: Staff is waiting for some clarification from the state on the grant that has been awarded. David has met with several of the project partners and they are in a holding pattern until they hear from the state and federal governments.

Possible Contract with Marine City: The Marine City Planning Commission and Board just authorized the city to work with us on an update of their master plan. This is not a comprehensive update, but more of a master plan update amendment. Bill Kauffman will be working with the new city manager to define the scope of the project and a contract will be forthcoming.

The contract with Marine City could possibly lead to other projects for the city and the county to collaborate on using the new marketing analysis tool the department has just purchased.

Donaldson gave an overview of the SEMCOG presentation that was in the back of the original agenda packet. He explained what the different figures stood for. Basically, the population is trending down for SE Michigan and it is anticipated that the trend will continue

for the next 10-12 years. It is anticipated that a return to the 2008 population figures would happen around 2035.

The report also shows the education levels versus pay rates. In the past, Michigan workers were well paid for having lower educational attainment, mainly due to manufacturing in the area. That is disappearing and Southeast Michigan is now looking at levels of income to be 35th out of the 50 states and of those with a Bachelor's Degree the state ranks 25<sup>th</sup> of out 50. The region will need to import higher educated people in the future to meet the growing needs.

**Motion** by Heidemann, supported by Sass to approve the Director's Report. Motion carried unanimously.

## 11. Chairperson's Report

Chairman Murphy stated that his report is in the supplemental packet. He went over the report.

Items covered included:

SEMCOG Meeting - They discussed aerial photography, and the Transportation Improvement Plan amendment to do the bridge overpass at 9 Mile Road, adding an additional 108 projects and removing of 13 projects.

Columbus Township Hall Meeting – This meeting was held to kick start the Belle River Watershed groups' attempt to get interested municipalities together in order to receive funding for the study.

Green Energy – Commissioner Murphy, along with Bill Kauffman, Charles Andrews at RESA, EDA, SC4 and others meet regarding this project. On August 23, they will get together at Pine Grove Park where SC4 will have a speaker and brochures will be available about Green Energy and possible projects for the county.

Meeting with the Administrator – Chairman Murphy went over some of the questions and answers in his report. Their next meeting is scheduled for October 15.

**Motion** by Cooper, supported by Heidemann to acknowledge receipt of the Chairman's Report. Motion carried unanimously.

## 12. Old Business

### A. Software for Addresses

A report was included in the agenda packet and recommended the Planning Department not proceed with purchase of a program for updating addresses to make them Post Office Compliant due to the costs involved. **Motion** by Lockwood, supported by Cooper to accept the staff recommendation as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

### 13. New Business

A. SCCOTS - Marysville ARRA Amendment Request (Ravenswood Road)

The St. Clair County Transportation Study (SCCOTS) Advisory Committee respectfully requests the Metropolitan Planning Commission, in its capacity as SCCOTS Policy Committee, approve an amendment to the SCCOTS American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) list of approved transportation projects, adding the following:

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Proposed Work</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
Marysville	Ravenswood	Michigan E. 0.25 mi	Mill/Resurface + Culvert Replacement	\$291,164

**Motion** by Heidemann, supported by Sheehy to recommend approval of the TIP amendment as presented. Motion carried unanimously with a roll call vote.

**Ayes:** Cooper, DeBoyer, Heidemann, Hildebrand, Lockwood, Murphy, Sass, Secory, Sheehy and Tansky

**Nays:** None

**Absent:** Andrews

C. Casco Township Review in May

Subpoenas were passed out to several planning commissioners by Mr. Olkowski regarding a review of a map amendment by Casco Township in May 2009. The commissioners discussed what was in the subpoena and requested Corporation Counsel review the subpoena with them.

Donaldson noted that now the summons has been received, if anyone receives phone calls and inquiries to not comment on the case, as it is ongoing litigation.

### 14. Adjournment

**Motion** by Cooper, supported by Heidemann to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 4:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Sheehy, Secretary

Prepared by Dale Fulton, Office Manager