



WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

WORKING SESSION

April 19, 2007

The meeting was called to order by Chair Sizemore at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room, Administration Building, 220 North Main Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Comms. Grewal, Gunn, Irwin, Ping Mills, Ouimet, Peterson, Lovejoy Roe, Schwartz, Sizemore, and Smith.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Comm. Bergman

OTHERS PRESENT: Robert Guenzel, County Administrator; David Behen, Verna McDaniel, Deputy County Administrators; Lawrence Kestenbaum, County Clerk; Anthony VanDerworp, Planning and Environment; Ellen Clement, Donna Nossdorfer, Cindra James, Public Health; Dale Vanderford, Ken Schrader, Information Technology; Jim Zwolensky, Support Services; Kerry Sheldon, Joanna Bidlack, Administration; Jason Brooks, Clerk's Office; various citizens; and members of the press.

Roll Call

Citizen Participation

None

Commissioner Follow-Up to Citizen Participation

None

Discussion Items

Energy Update (On file in County Clerk's Office.)

Anthony VanDerworp and Darrell Stockburger presented the energy update (On file in County Clerk's Office). VanDerworp discussed the step of securing financing for the first phase of the project.

Comm. Ouimet asked who ends up owning the towers, and how long the land would be leased. Stockburger stated that towers being proposed would be temporary and are generally used from up from one year to 18 months. He added that a foundation is not required. VanDerworp stated that towers would be purchased, and towers would be returned to the provider, a form of lease. Stockburger reported that another option would be to place the towers at another location.

Comm. Ouimet asked if a third party could be brought in to front load the expenditure. VanDerworp stated that the University of Michigan is excited about the project, but that it may take an additional 6 to 7 months for them to find a site. Comm. Ouimet asked when financing options would be looked at. VanDerworp stated that 2.5 to 3 months is likely at this stage.

Comm. Ouimet asked about the placement of research on the western side of the County. Stockburger stated that sites with higher elevations have higher wind speeds. He added that there is a lot of public land and protected areas in other parts of the County.

Comm. Ping Mills asked about the cost of the project. VanDerworp stated that the range represents between 1 and 3 towers. VanDerworp stated that he does not feel that a lease will not have to be done on land for this project. Stockburger stated that he believes the budget estimate is high.

Comm. Gunn asked about the partnership with the City of Ann Arbor. VanDerworp responded that Ann Arbor was not asked to participate in this project due to in-kind services with the City. Comm. Gunn asked if the test area is on the DTE grid. VanDerworp responded that it is.

Comm. Gunn asked about placing the towers on large buildings. VanDerworp responded that they are too heavy. He added that Wireless Washtenaw is trying to avoid putting up large towers.

Comm. Irwin stated that he is happy to see this project moving forward. He added that he appreciates the high budget estimate. He stated that his opinion is that this is panning out to be a small project, but it fits in with what Washtenaw County wants to do in the future. He added that green is the new red, white, and blue and these technologies could spur the economy in the County.

Comm. Grewal stated that she is excited about this project. She asked what is driving partners interest in this project. VanDerworp stated that there are three main driving forces. He listed farming viability, the fact that towers do not prohibit farming, and that farmers have trouble managing high winds as the three main driving forces.

Comm. Grewal asked if it matters what is being grown by farmers whose land is being used. VanDerworp responded that it does not. Comm. Grewal asked what kinds of contracts will be put in place on these pieces of land. VanDerworp responded that the County's role is providing the data to third parties to utilize the opportunity. He stated that the role so far is to get the information out there.

Comm. Lovejoy Roe asked if this is the model that was followed in Ohio. Stockburger stated that with the exception of Bowling Green which set up their own project, this is the model. He added that this was not initially visible because of the wrong towers being utilized. VanDerworp stated that there are a lot of jobs to be had in this field. Comm. Lovejoy Roe asked if studies have been done by private firms. VanDerworp responded that not many had been conducted by private firms.

Comm. Schwartz asked if there have been changes in the market place that have made Washtenaw County a better place for wind energy. VanDerworp stated that further tests are needed. Comm. Schwartz asked if this is similar to a feasibility study at this point. VanDerworp responded that it would be similar. Stockburger stated that current data is similar to a computer model, and that testing has not yet been done. He added that in Bowling Green, the information on the web was not extremely positive, but that there was a very substantial increase as elevations rose. He stated that if nothing else, very good data will be provided.

Comm. Schwartz asked about a correlation between wind damage claims through insurance companies and geography. Stockburger stated that there is not a likely correlation. He stated that constant winds, not gusts are looked for when generating wind energy. Comm. Schwartz asked if the airport in the south is the licensed airport. VanDerworp stated that this had not been done as of yet.

Comm. Smith asked how the property gets transformed from a taxable standpoint. VanDerworp stated that research will be done on this topic. Comm. Smith asked if the fiscal feasibility study will include this kind of analysis, and added that purchasing this land would cost more than \$40 million. VanDerworp stated that this is currently beyond the scope of the project. Comm. Smith encouraged the team to revisit the scope. He stated that he would be interested in the financing model that would work best for the County. He stated that he would be willing to support additional funding for the scope search.

Comm. Sizemore asked if there are areas in the state with this setup. Stockburger stated that Traverse City has wind turbines, and that there has been an ongoing project in the thumb area. Comm. Irwin added that there are turbines in the Mackinaw City area. VanDerworp stated that there is a stagnant wind in the thumb area, and that there is substantial interest.

Comm. Sizemore asked for the timetable to payback the cost of the project. VanDerworp stated that anemometers are not being developed as of yet, and that no decision has been made to get into the energy business. Stockburger stated that the design life for wind turbines is 30 years, and that the amortization schedule is set up for 15 years. He added that at the end of 15 years, the project becomes very inexpensive. He stated that the study must be done to estimate the cost of infrastructure. VanDerworp stated that the cost of the towers includes the entire project including labor, materials, and other costs.

Comm. Schwartz stated that he feels that it is important to say that this is a research project.

Comm. Sizemore asked how many towers are needed. VanDerworp stated that one is recommended at first, and after 6 months and additional one or two may be recommended. Comm. Sizemore asked where the tower would be put with regards to order of importance of location as described in the presentation. Regarding the first tower, VanDerworp stated that the Chrysler site would be investigated first, and if no good location is found, the Bridgewater site would be the next choice

Comm. Lovejoy Roe asked that if the Chrysler site is the number one estimate of success. VanDerworp responded yes. Comm. Lovejoy Roe asked if \$12 million would be needed by an outside party to come in and invest. Stockburger responded in the affirmative. He added that a farm producing 30 to 50 megawatts would be viable.

Comm. Smith asked Bob Guenzel about funds for the project. Guenzel responded that a resolution would be brought to the next Ways and Means meeting.

Planning Process: Health Community of Interest (On file in County Clerk's Office.)

Verna McDaniel stated that the Health Community of Interest would be an example of guiding principle number 7. She added that Public Health has created strong partnerships in the community.

Ellen Clement and Donna Nossdorfer gave a presentation on the Health Community of Interest dealing with the 2008/09 Planning process (On file in County Clerk's Office).

Comm. Gunn stated that this was a wonderful presentation. She added that the Governor's recent Executive Order is cutting health. She asked about the projected effect. Ellen Clement stated that there is a significant piece of this year's budget is still undetermined. She stated that the hits have been in a few small areas, but no large effect has yet been felt.

Comm. Grewal commended the presenters.

Comm. Sizemore asked how many community gardens are in the area. Clement stated that Growing Hope has 23 at this time. Comm. Sizemore asked for maps to these locations.

Comm. Grewal asked how literature gets to members of the community. Clement stated that it is taken off to sites on every opportunity. She added that the website has also played a large role. Clement reported that Cindra James made an effort to go out to local governments with flu pandemic information. She added that she would like to strengthen relationships with local units of government.

Comm. Peterson asked about the tracking of substance abuse figures in terms of youth. He asked who is coordinating the treatment, and whether there is a system feeding into tracking. Clement stated that this is an area the Public Health has taken large steps. Clement stated that a more in depth analysis will be done on needs of the community, and that more studies are coming on underage drinking. Comm. Peterson asked about those born with addiction. He stated that figures do not really appear. She stated that she could not agree more, and that Public Health has been working on getting these figures. Comm. Peterson asked who tracks the numbers of babies born with addiction. Clement stated that she will have to look into data collection and monitoring. She stated that birth certificate reporting may underestimate the problem.

Comm. Peterson stated that many of these children fall into the life of addiction. He stated that many of these children are expected to act normal. Clement reported that there is a link between SIDS deaths and parents under the influence of alcohol and drugs when looking at children born with addiction. She stated that she will look into tracking of birth with addiction.

Comm. Peterson stated that he is concerned about firewalls in terms of data collection. He stated that he hopes that more work can be done in collecting data. He added that he hopes that the Board will work on access to this information.

Comm. Peterson asked how well home visitations are touching citizens. She stated that nursing is still being provided at home. She added that there are still a significant number of nurses on staff. She stated that many children being born do need these services. Donna Nossdorfer stated that in the area of mental health the focus has been on having a full range and continuation of services. She added that there is a home based treatment program for children and families. Comm. Peterson stated that it would be interesting if Public Health came back around budget decision time to give a lead on how many families and children are being affected, and the needs of the community.

Comm. Peterson stated that he hopes for access to dental services. He asked how dental care can be expanded with health care. Clement stated that she would very much agree with that vision. She added that applications are coming from middle class people that are unemployed. She reported that dental care is one of the biggest gaps in terms of provided services. Clement added that Public Health is launching a study on children without dental coverage. Comm. Peterson stated that many children go without care for years.

Comm. Sizemore asked about the Head Start Program regarding dental services. Clement stated that Head Start has received a grant to improve dental services to children, as well as conduct more education in the area of dental care.

Comm. Ouimet stated that prenatal care is critical to the entire system. He added that he feels that more can be done about education, resulting in less of an issue with later problems. Comm. Ouimet stated that the births that happen outside of hospitals are often the people affected by addiction.

Comm. Schwartz asked if there is any evidence that pregnant women with addiction will not seek help because of the fear of a criminal penalty. Clement stated that public health nurses are highly trusted. Comm. Schwartz stated that he would like to see the message sent that help will be provided.

County Administrator Report

None

Space Plan Update

Zwolensky presented the "Space Plan Update" document.

Comm. Ouimet stated that this is a good start. He asked what type of information will be prepared for the Board in a numerical sense. Zwolensky responded the budget will be the next step. He stated that tracking will take place on current expenditures. He stated that this will be done as the project develops further. Zwolensky stated that there are quality controls in place.

Comm. Lovejoy Roe asked if information if this information will still go to the Commissioners. Comm. Irwin stated that reports will still be forthcoming.

Comm. Sizemore asked about the percentage of cost being paid to the Owners Representative. Zwolensky stated that there fee is based on the estimated construction cost (Just under 6%).

