



WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

WORKING SESSION

May 22, 2008

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. Bergman, Grewal, Gunn, Irwin, Ouimet, Ping, Lovejoy Roe, Schwartz, Sizemore, and Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT: Comm. Peterson

OTHERS PRESENT:: Bob Guenzel, County Administrator, Verna McDaniel, David Behen, Deputy County Administrators; Tony VanDerworp, Planning and Environment; Nancy Thelen, Cathy Grant, Theresa Gillotti, MSU Extension; Ken Schrader, ITS; Kerry Sheldon, Administration; Jason Brooks, Clerk's Office; various citizens; and members of the press.

Roll Call

Citizen Participation

Tom Partridge stated that residents of the County have unmet needs. Partridge added that the Commission needs to do more for seniors as well as disabled residents.

Commissioner Follow-Up to Citizen Participation

None

Discussion Items:

Aerotropolis Update

An update was given on the Aerotropolis project (On file in County Clerk's office).

Comm. Gunn asked about competition in other parts of the U.S. Rothwell reported that the primary competition is Chicago. He added that the entire world should really be considered competition.

Comm. Ouimet asked about the mechanism for assembling the land Rothwell reported that eminent domain will not be used and added that this will require a partnership. Comm. Ouimet asked how success will be judged through this process. Rothwell stated that there is a lot of impatience. He added that this can only be judged by investments that are made. Comm. Ouimet stated that he feels it is critically important to remember that it is important to take a long view politically on this issue.

Comm. Irwin thanked all at the presentation. He asked about the vision for regional transit. Tyler reported that a plan is being assembled. He added that transit options between Ann Arbor and downtown Detroit are being examined. Tyler reported that talks have taken place with rail companies. Comm. Irwin stated that developments in transit are critically important to Washtenaw County. He stated that more funds need to be spent on public transit infrastructure.

Comm. Grewal stated that the first time she saw the plans for the project she was blown away. She thanked participants for progress to this point. Comm. Grewal asked how this presentation is differentiating this project from other similar projects around the world. Rothwell reported that the business case is ultimately what is going to matter to a company. He added that data needs to be gathered to provide specific information to a client.

Comm. Bergman asked about potential infrastructure for the goods transfer business. Rothwell stated that more will be known after the business attraction study is complete. He added that he feels that this Aerotropolis would be more attractive to companies needing to get people in and out quickly. Tyler reported that he feels traffic to Asia is going to be coming through Detroit. He added that business has been attracted to downtown Amsterdam since their Aerotropolis project.

Comm. Schwartz asked about standards for the plan in the presentation. Rothwell stated that this is a strategic master plan, and added that local communities have been working on planning and zoning requirements. Comm. Smith asked about residential development. Tyler reported that lifestyles of communities are coming into play in this project. He stated that he feels communities can build onto their appeal.

Comm. Smith asked about green development strategies. Tyler reported that all partners involved believe that sensitivity and sustainability needs to be considered in this package. Comm. Smith asked about the Aerotropolis project playing into a greener strategy. Rothwell reported that environmental responsibility is a strong selling point. Comm. Smith thanked Wayne County as well as leadership in Washtenaw County for work on the project.

Comm. Lovejoy Roe thanked presenters and discussed progress made since she saw the initial presentation on the project in 1999. She stated that quality of life is always a top consideration on these projects. She added that speed in getting to the airport is critical. Comm. Lovejoy Roe asked about Ann Arbor branding and how that fits into the plan. Rothwell reported that the business attraction study will come prior to the marketing. She added that she is pleased that a plan is coming forward to present to world businesses. VanDerworp reported that major interstate influence had to be taken into consideration. He added that study went to U.S. 23. He stated that the ability to live in small city areas will be an appeal along with job opportunities near by.

Comm. Sizemore stated that he is glad to see the partnership between the Counties. He added that he would like to see more freight going through Willow Run Airport as well as an expansion of Rawsonville Road. Comm. Sizemore thanked the presenters. Tyler reported that there is a full time employee committed to this project, and thanked her and DTE for their commitment.

County Administrator's Report

None

Items for Current/Future Discussion

None

Pending

None

Citizen Participation

None

Commissioners Follow-up to Citizen Participation

None

Adjournment

Comm. Ping seconded by Comm. Grewal moved to adjourn until Thursday, June 5th, 2008, at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room, Washtenaw County Administration Building. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Rolland Sizemore, Chair

Lawrence Kestenbaum, Clerk/Register

By: Jason Brooks, Deputy Clerk

APPROVED: