



**Washtenaw County
Office of Strategic Planning**

**Planning Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 23, 2009**

Members Present

Blackmore, Blistein, Dopkowski, Gray, Kelly, Lewis, Nystrom, Smith, Solowczuk, Walz

Members Absent

Bobrin (excused), Pratt (excused), Williams (excused)

Staff Present

Dale, Denig, Kowalski, Lenart

Guests Present

Jeff Kahan

Call to Order and Roll Call

Lewis called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m. Roll Call was taken there was a quorum.

Kowalski administered the oath of office to those members who were reappointed and present.

Approval of Minutes

Blackmore moved to approve the minutes from the January 26, 2009 meeting with some minor corrections to the adjournment time, new meeting date and a couple of typos, Solowczuk seconded and the motion carried.

Approval of Agenda

Solowczuk moved that the agenda be approved as presented and Blackmore seconded with the addition of item D under New Business – Establish Nominating Committee; the motion carried.

Public Comment – none

Report of the Vice Chair – none

Old Business – none

New Business

City of Ann Arbor Master Plan Update

Anya Dale presented the staff report, noting that the update consolidates four area plans and updates goals. Dale reported that she broke the staff report into chapters corresponding with the Master Plan in order to make it easier to read. Staff noted that there is a good emphasis on cooperation, good focus and connection between various issues, and a lot of information on non-motorized connections. While this plan does not have as much transportation detail as some other Master Plans, staff also notes that Ann Arbor has a separate transportation plan. Overall, the update is consistent with *A Comprehensive Plan for Washtenaw County*.

While not relating to the consistency of the County Plan, the following recommendations were made to enhance the overall plan: the incorporation of the Washtenaw Metro Alliance Parkland and Open Space Plan, clarification of Map Key and Study Site discrepancies, clarification of intent for densities within the Central Area recommendations, consideration of the impact of the University of Michigan's planned transit center in Lower Town, and the inclusion of specific redevelopment recommendations for the Maple Village shopping center along West Stadium Boulevard.

PAB members discussed how the City and the County in general can engage the County's universities in planning decisions, along with some comments on language clarification. Solowczuk moved that the Update be forwarded to the Board of Commissioners, and then amended his motion to include comments from the PAB referencing SEMCOG low-impact development guidelines, clarifying setback language and reducing repetition under Chapter 5-Land Use; Kelly seconded and the motion carried.

Financial State of the County Discussion

Smith reported that the financial state of the County is not good, but there have been ongoing meetings to discuss possible actions to take. The BOC has been engaging employees, citizens and public officials in finding solutions. This budget crisis is the worst that the county has faced since the Great Depression, and presents many challenges. The BOC is focusing on prioritization and looking for help in finding strategies to rise to this challenge. The most recent presentation at the BOC meeting focused on revenue, noting that it has gone down significantly. It is almost certain that there will be cuts at the County. The mission adopted by the BOC for this challenge is to focus on community stabilization (slowing the rate of foreclosures and slowing the decline of property values in the community) and long-term prosperity, utilizing the Community Success process and Economic Development. The PAB is the first Board/Commission that the BOC is addressing over this issue, and Smith noted that the PAB has an important role to play in the budget process. There is discussion over changing some fee structures, including within the Brownfield program, and addressing the use of federal incentives.

The BOC is also looking at a variety of types of cuts to lower expenditures, including speaking with personnel about reducing those costs. Another tactic in both the revenue and expenditure areas is to expand intergovernmental cooperation; an example of this is the recent collaboration for Human Resources with Pittsfield Township. The Federal Stimulus program is another area that the BOC is looking forward to working with over the next several months; an example of one opportunity relating to that is the energy program. PAB members discussed some ideas for collaboration and staying with these goals.

Establish Five Year Review Committee for County Comprehensive Plan

Brett Lenart summarized that this subcommittee is to review the County Plan for any necessary updates or amendments. The committee would help develop an approach for the review and potentially provide technical review assistance for considering the amendments as they progress.

Solowczuk moved to nominate a subcommittee to provide advisory functions for the review and potential update/amendment of the County Plan to comprise Terri Blackmore, Mona Walz, Rachel Blistein, Vince Nystrom, and Pat Kelly. Gray seconded and the motion carried.

Establish Nominating Committee

Solowczuk moved to establish a nominating committee for PAB officers of Charles Gray, Pat Kelly, and Conan Smith. Robert Dopkowski seconded, and the motion carried.

Report of the Director of Community Planning – none

Other Items for Discussion

Regional Group and Outside Agency Updates

Pat Kelly reported that the CAPT/DART groups are going to postpone work on a LIAA grant and instead focus on opportunities for collaboration around fire safety.

Robert Dopkowski reported that MORE was meeting later in the week and had no updates.

Brett Lenart reported that the Washtenaw Metro Alliance was meeting in early March to discuss the Ann Arbor Region Success Strategy and public safety collaboration and opportunities. He reported that the Manchester Community Joint Planning Commission continued to make progress on a joint plan.

Charles Gray summarized that he was disappointed that the Parks and Recreation Department would not be recommending to the Parks and Recreation Commission that they accept the Rawsonville School. Mr. Gray stated that this building was the last structure from the Rawsonville Village.

Stephen Solowczuk indicated that the Parks Commission was considering another NAPP purchase in the Milan area and that the estimated price per acre seemed very reasonable.

Terri Blackmore summarized that the stimulus funding process was still evolving and that WATS was working with communities to position them to be able to take advantage of funding that could be available.

Public Policy News

None

Committee Reports – none

Public Comment – none

Adjourn

Solowczuk moved to adjourn at 8:15 p.m. and Pat Kelly supported.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for March 23, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. in the **Annex Large Conference Room**.