



**Washtenaw County  
Department of Planning & Environment**

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**Planning Advisory Board  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, May 21, 2007**

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**Members Present**

Bobrin, Dries, Gray, Grewal, Lewis, Lovejoy-Roe, Meyer, Solowczuk, Walz

**Members Absent**

Kelly, Sizemore, Smith, Williams

**Staff Present**

Dale, Denig, Fleece, Kowalski, Krcmarik, Long, Milton-Pung

**Public Present** – none

**Call to Order and Roll Call**

Grewal called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. Roll Call was taken and quorum was met.

**Approval of Minutes**

Meyer suggested a change to the April 23, 2007 minutes under the “City of Chelsea Master Plan Update Review” to clarify that the Master Plan would encourage non-motorized transportation. Gray motioned to approve the minutes with the suggested change, Bobrin supported; the motion carried.

**Approval of Agenda**

Grewal noted changes to this month’s agenda: moving “HB 4485 & 4486” and “County POCCS Regulation Proposed” up into the New Business section. Dries moved to approve the agenda with the suggested changes, Lewis supported; the motion carried.

**Public Comment** – none

**Report of the Chair** – Grewal mentioned a new addition to the agenda, of “Public Policy News” under “Other Items for Discussion.” Grewal also indicated that she would be interested to hear any other suggestions for changes from the PAB members, and that interested members should contact her or Patricia Denig.

**Old Business** – none .

**New Business** –

Van Buren Township South Side Master Plan Update Review

Associate Planner Anya Dale gave a report on the Van Buren Township South Side Mater Plan (Plan). Van Buren Township is adjacent to Washtenaw County and was therefore reviewed in an effort to better address regional planning and land use issues. Dale stated that the Plan has a strong transportation section, which could be further strengthened by including specific measures to address congestion at Huron River Drive between N. Haggerty and S. Haggerty. Further, in

order to support the Township's efforts to maintain a rural character on the south side of the Township, as well as to use resources efficiently as development progresses, it was recommended that gravel road capacity should be considered. A study completed by the Huron River Watershed Council was referenced.

Dale noted the inclusion of a Greenway and Trails map and supporting language. She stated the plan could be strengthened by the extension and addition of specific bicycle lanes and the provision of bike parking in mixed use and recreational areas. WATS had suggested typing in the non-motorized network to the Washtenaw County border-to-border trail.

Dale commended the concentration of new residential development near the City of Belleville to support the downtown while preserving the rural character of the area south of Hull Road. She suggested including more language and implementation strategies to support this goal. Regarding the Natural Features map, she suggested identifying areas not suitable for development.

The Plan addresses the potential for an Ann Arbor-Detroit commuter service rail. It is suggested the Plan attend to how residents to get to the planned stop in Ypsilanti, since there is no current plan to create a stop in Van Buren Township. Gray suggested the PAB recommend a stop nearer to Van Buren than the Merriman stop, and Dale said that it was still in the study phase. Gray stated he would try to find more specific language. Walz also mentioned that there should be a stop in Belleville, as Merriman is already close to the airport. Denig said more language could be added to encourage the study to include a stop there.

Walz motioned to approve the Master Plan update, Lovejoy-Roe supported and the motion passed unanimously.

#### HB 4485 & 4486 – Solid waste & Municipal Incinerators

Jeff Krcmarik discussed the two bills that have recently been passed in the State House on solid waste. House Bill 4485 addresses what Washtenaw County does with the Arbor Hills landfill for quarterly inspections. He went on to say that the inspections ensure that the landfill does not contain tires, bottles that have deposits, Freon-filled appliances and other like items. In addition, the bill addresses recoverable materials in municipal incinerators that are not in Washtenaw County. The bill also addresses documentation of the amount of solid waste in the landfill, of which the county is informed every year. Current statistics show that the Arbor Hills landfill has about thirteen years remaining until it reaches capacity. Other legislation is also in the early stages, but sustainable funding does not currently exist. Krcmarik suggested that we need to develop markets for recovered products and find other means of raising funds. He also stated that this should not affect Washtenaw County a great deal at this time because we have a county-wide contract.

#### County Privately Owned Public Community Sewage Systems (POCCS)

Dick Fleece gave a PowerPoint presentation on the regulation. He stated that due to a previous court case the DEQ does not need local government approval for sewer systems and therefore many branches of government are involved to develop this regulation. The Board of Commissioners unanimously passed the regulation on Wednesday.

Advantages to POCCSs include the requirement of pre-treatment, which reduces effluent strength which results in the final discharge to more easily be absorbed into the ground. The

regulation will also review and assure financial resources will be in place to allow perpetual monitoring and maintenance of the systems. The Michigan Public Health Code authorizes County Health Departments to adopt more stringent regulations.

Fleece went on to state that the Regulation will identify issues early in the process, to make sure that everyone fully understands requirements for local zoning compliance, connection to municipal available sewers and other issues such as groundwater availability. Connection to Municipal sewer systems is required and they offer the advantages of long-term financing, motivation and special assessments. Fleece stated that for systems greater than 20,000 gallons per day (GPD) DEQ will set effluent standards and permit construction and operation. The County will do less detailed reviews but still identify concerns. The county regulation will allow for construction oversight, require renewable permits for all systems, have detailed guidelines and procedures and require notification of failures within 24 hours. They are working on guidelines that go along with this – they will be listed on the website by the time the July 1 regulation takes effect.

Fleece also stated that the County will have more authority when it comes to systems that process less than 20,000 GPD. Also, the County will do permitting on individual wells.

Josh Long handed out the draft version of the paper on POCCSs, including a template for an objection letter. The paper includes a more comprehensive assessment of DEQ permit rejections and they have added some sections to make it less biased. Advantages of the public wastewater system include communities' ability to function between sewer expansions, facilitation of open space development and that the system can be upgraded depending on potential environmental impacts. Long stated that a section addressing the Silverman Development, a positive example of a POCCS which allowed for clustered developments and a density bonus, and allowed more farmland to be set aside.

Grewal stated that the next steps in this process will be to get the resolution to the BOC with the following changes: acronyms to agree with the new regulation, add language on areas that can be used as infill development and drain fields and to mention the case study at the top. Denig requested that any additional changes be made within the next week so that this can be finalized. It will be brought back to next month's PAB meeting.

#### Heritage Tourism Presentation

Melissa Milton-Pung, Senior Preservation Planner for Washtenaw County, gave a presentation on a project that created four local historical tours. The project was funded by the Federal Certified Local Government Grant, through the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office. The project includes four self-guided driving tours: the Esek Pray Trail, Greek Revival Architecture, Historic Barns and German Heritage. Pamphlets including maps and descriptions of the sites can be found on Washtenaw County's website.

Walz suggested bringing this information to local schools, and Milton-Pung expressed that she hoped that would be possible in Phase 2 of the project. Solowczuk recommended informing local townships of the project, and Denig and Milton-Pung said that the department is in the process of doing so, as well as expanding technology's role in getting the word out. Dries said that Washtenaw Community College could offer courses in conjunction with the tours, Lovejoy-Roe recommended working with teacher focus groups, and Solowczuk suggested bringing in

National Parks. Milton-Pung welcomed suggestions, and asked that they be e-mailed to her as they come up.

Land Use & Environment “Community of Interest” Business Plan Presentation

Tabled until next month’s meeting. Grewal suggested moving on to “Issues for Legislators” at this time.

**Report of the Director of Planning & Environment – none**

**Other Items for Discussion**

Public Policy News

SB 115 – Joint Planning Commission

Patricia Denig discussed Senate Bill 115, which addresses phase transition of powers. The bill is in the House and will not be pushed through until current budget issues are resolved. Also in Public Policy news, Denig asked that PAB members ask her or Brett Lenart if they want specific information included in the agenda or a memo.

Issues for Legislators

PAB members should e-mail comments to Patricia Denig before the next BOC session, which will be June 21 at 6:30pm.

**Committee Reports**

Solowczuk discussed the Intergovernmental Cooperation on PDR meeting that took place on April 30. He said that there was good discussion at the meeting, but also a great number of misunderstandings – Denig stated that two more meetings are planned for May 30 and June 19 in order to discuss scoring and the makeup of the new ALPAC committee. Walz requested that Denig e-mail the PAB information on any meetings at which members of the PAB should be present; Grewal said that she would do that.

**Public Comment – none**

**Adjourn**

Solowczuk motioned to adjourn at 8:07pm, Lovejoy-Roe seconded.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for June 25, 2007 at 6:00 p.m. in the **MSU lower level Conference Room.**