

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: **Development & Planning (D&P)**

CHAIRPERSON: **Ron Mapes**

DATE/TIME: **May 27, 2008**

PRESENT:

Beth Baranski

Ron Mapes

Sally Toepfer

Merri Berlage

Marvin Schultz

Dorte Breckenridge

Ron Smith

Other Board members:

Others: Dan Reimer, Linda Delvaux, Pat Leitzen-Fye, Darryl Watson – Greenway & Trails Committee member

Ron Mapes called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

1. Minutes

Marvin Schultz made a motion to approve the minutes of April 22, 2008. Ron Smith seconded and the motion passed.

2. Citizens' Comments – none

3. Staff Reports –

a) Economic Development –

1. Monthly Report. In addition to this report, Pat Leitzen-Fye shared that this year's Tri-State Alliance was very well received. If the capital bill passes in Springfield, it might help free up funds for the Highway 20 project, the passenger rail project and others.
2. City of East Dubuque Enterprise Zone. Does the Jo Daviess County want to include land in the Enterprise Zone or stick with the City of East Dubuque municipal boundaries? It was the consensus of the committee to discuss this topic under New Business, item 5c.

b) Building and Zoning. Linda Delvaux reported as follows:

1. Monthly Report. Comparison of fees collected: Construction value for April, 2008 was \$2,702,000; building permit fees are approximately \$9,000. In April 2007 construction value was \$1,313,000; building permit fees were half of the fees collected in 2008. A cumulative report from January to April 2008 reflects \$6 million in construction value and \$19,000 in permit fees. From January to April 2007 the report reflects \$5 million in construction value and \$14,000 in permit fees. The number of zoning requests has remained steady.

The Zoning Ordinance Rewrite Committee met on May 5, 2008. Additional meetings will be scheduled to finalize the draft.

Has been in contact with Jim Stevens, the attorney for the Galena Territory Association. Delvaux will be meeting with him this week regarding the RP district.

Met with DevNet, the software provider. Other software components for the guest accommodation licensing are in development and look promising.

Will be attending a Zoning Administrator meeting this Friday at Starved Rock.

Delvaux distributed copies of a draft text amendment that she will present to the Zoning Board of Appeals in June. The two major amendments are: 1) Residential Ag and Non-Ag residences as Special Uses in an Ag district instead of having to rezone a parcel in an agricultural area for a home; and, 2) changing the lot size in the Ag district for both agricultural and non-agricultural residences from forty acres to eighty acres.

- c) Greenways & Trails (G&T) – Survey. Copies of the survey were distributed via email to the committee for review. Darryl Watson reported in Beth Baranski's absence. Five workshops are scheduled. The consultant plans to mail 1,000 surveys by the end of May, 2008 with feedback expected by June, 2008. Merri Berlage asked, on behalf of several constituents, for clarity on the kind of questions to bring to the workshops. Watson stated five suggested areas about which the public can ask questions and share their thoughts. Per Berlage's suggestion to the G&T committee, Watson replied that the G&T committee agrees that putting the survey on the website is a good method for obtaining feedback. He further agreed that a notice in the local newspapers about the survey being available on the website would be a good idea for generating greater results.

Reimer informed everyone that the total G&T grant amount is \$20,000, once expenses occur reimbursement can be requested; the State recently informed the County that \$10,000 will be reimbursed this fiscal year (ending June 30) and the balance will be available after funds are appropriated in FY2009.

4. New Business

- a) Reimbursement for Economic Development Workshops. Leitzen-Fye explained the purpose of the workshops and asked for approval for reimbursement. Berlage made a **motion** to accept the request to approve reimbursement for Pat Leitzen-Fye to attend two workshops and bill for time spent not to exceed eleven hours under the FAEDF consulting agreement. Ron Smith seconded and the motion passed 6 to 0. Discussion turned to the agreement with NIDA for economic development services and the fact that the written agreement expired on December 1st. Because of uncertainties associated with NIDA the agreement has been continued with the same terms and conditions on a verbal basis. The prior written agreement gave both parties the authority to terminate the agreement with a 10 day written notice.
- b) Draft Refund Policy – discussion and possible action. Delvaux presented a proposed Refund Policy and asked for advise from the committee on the terminology, the various percentages of refunds based on work performed by her department, etc. The policy as presented is geared towards fairness for both the County and the applicant. Smith recommends that the policy should be included or attached to the informational packet given to building permit applicants. Berlage made a **motion** to accept the Refund Policy as presented with exception of revision to percentages as follows: construction fee 50%; prior to additional work 20%; guest accommodations 50% and delete any percentage for guest accommodations after inspection. The wording can remain the same but the italicized section should be deleted. Smith seconded and the motion passed 6 to 0. A draft with these revisions will be forwarded to the County Board for approval at the June 10, 2008 Board meeting.

- c) Determine Route to Connect the Proposed East Dubuque Enterprise Zone to the Freeport / Stephenson Enterprise Zone. Mapes recapped the discussion that took place at the previous Development & Planning meeting, where it was agreed that the County would look into the alignment that would work the best for all parties concerned. He and Schultz were assigned to review the maps and pertinent material and bring back the findings to this committee, who in turn would forward a recommendation to the County Board. Their recommendation is to follow Highway 20 from the Rentech connection to the proposed boundary of the East Dubuque Enterprise Zone. Per Leitzen-Fye, the difference between the different connecting line paths is distance. Berlage **motioned** to recommend the approval of the Highway 20 alignment path to connect the proposed East Dubuque Enterprise Zone to the Freeport / Stephenson Enterprise Zone. Schultz seconded and the motion passed 6 to 0. Continued discussion clarified that this extension will make it possible for other entities to request annexation of additional property to the right-of-way in the future. Schultz and Leitzen-Fye explained that there is uncertainty with Rentech's E-Zone status (to date Rentech has not used the Enterprise Zone). Leitzen-Fye added that the E-Zone states that non-use of E-Zone land within two years can result in de-certification. She will be meeting with Rentech this week to learn what their plans are and will make them aware of the route (to expand the E-Zone) recommended tonight.

5. Other Business

- a) Possible E-Zone policy changes. Leitzen-Fye reported that this committee is considering making the following policy changes:
1. Alignment decisions are made by the applicant and approved by Ron Kane - the County Administrator and the committee.
 2. A fee will be assessed for applications being considered to cover surveying costs.
 3. The application for the City of East Dubuque will be submitted in July instead of June (boundaries are still being determined).
- b) NIDA Search committee is meeting tomorrow. The search for a new Executive Director has been narrowed down to two applicants. The Search committee would like the D&P committee to meet/interview the two applicants and provide input to the Search committee. Mapes initiated a discussion on options for the future economic development direction for the County. On the issue of direction setting at the upcoming Mayor's meeting on June 11, 2008 Berlage was of the opinion that the mayors should not guide the county – they are responsible for the cities, not the county. Several committee members were of the opinion that setting the direction should be a collaborative effort between the cities and the county. Leitzen-Fye stated that the Board will decide the direction of economic development for the county based on input from many sources – the input from the mayors is a beginning point. Regarding NIDA Search committee applicants, it was agreed that Leitzen-Fye will notify Reimer of interview dates for posting.

- c) Berlage asked why the committee time was changed to 7:00 pm. Mapes explained that this would make it possible for Sally Toepfer to attend and also allow the meetings to end a little earlier.

6. Citizens' Comments - none

7. Board Member Concerns

- a) Berlage expressed concern for the County's dairy farm industry. Five dairy farms have been lost in the past year. In economic terms, this is a loss of \$250,000.00 for each farm lost. Berlage and Mapes brought up the issue of the Nora (Mega) dairy farm and that there should be support for this farm in light of the steady decline of smaller family farms. Smith is concerned about a negative environmental impact to the designated area. Berlage shared that the EPA is keeping tabs on all farms; recently a couple of farms were forced to shut down because the farmers found it too costly to comply with the EPA standards. Mapes believes that having Mega dairy will be a great economic boost for the town of Nora. In reply to Dorte Breckenridge's question, Berlage stated that the dairy farm decline is due to high input costs for such items as feed, protein, seeds, not to mention medical insurance, etc. Berlage wondered where the support from opponents to the Mega dairy was for the small farmers. She agreed with Schultz that there is not enough of an incentive to retain dairy farmers. But this needs to be looked at from an economic standpoint because it will affect Jo Daviess County.
- b) Smith reported that he attended an LRA infrastructure committee meeting and a joint economic development meeting last week. A retreat is scheduled for October 23, 2008. Topics include some of the same topics discussed tonight (i.e., economic development, marketing). A press release for a joint venture with a company called Inovations will be published this month – their \$1 million grant (senate appropriation) has been approved. The funds will be allocated to Inovations (40%), Packard Engineering (\$40%) and NUI (20%). The project is energy related and will be beneficial to farms.
- c) Schultz expressed that the East Dubuque E-Zone project should be expedited. In the meantime he would like to put the thought of a county enterprise zone on the table.

Next regular meeting: Tuesday, June 24, 2008 at 7:00 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 8:59 pm following a motion made by Berlage and seconded by Smith.