

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE STATED MEETING - MONDAY, MARCH 31, 2008

The stated meeting for the month of April was held in the Stephenson County Board Room on the above date with Mr. Mikkelsen, the Chairman, presiding. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Committee members present were Mr. Mikkelsen, Mr. Parker, Ms. S. Hooper, Ms. DeVine, Mr. Graham and Mr. Koch. Absent was Mr. Newton. County Board Chairman Blum was not present.

Minutes of the stated meeting of Monday, March 3, 2008 were approved, without reading, on a motion by Mr. Koch, seconded by Ms. S. Hooper.

Mr. Groves introduced two Special Zoning Ordinances in support of the EcoGrove Wind Farm, LLC. He distributed the Findings and Recommendation for each of the two special use permits, associated with the EcoGrove Wind Farm project. On a motion by Ms. S. Hooper, seconded by Ms. DeVine, the Committee recommended approval of the Special Zoning Ordinance for construction of an electrical substation. On a motion by Ms. DeVine, seconded by Mr. Parker, the Committee recommended approval of the Special Zoning Ordinance for construction of up to 30 wind turbines.

Mr. Groves said that the Zoning Board of Appeals would not be meeting in April; there were no applications.

Mr. Groves reported that spring clean-up work has begun along the Jane Addams Trail. The Pecatonica Prairie Path Commission is getting ready to let the bids for the various construction contracts. Mr. Gastel is correcting some plat errors.

Mr. Mikkelsen said that the Enterprise Zone Committee did not meet in March.

The County Administrator distributed a letter from Chairman Blum recommending an additional \$15,000 in near-term support for the Northwest Illinois Development Alliance. There was a discussion on the need for a public – private partnership. Concerns were expressed on whether the new Executive Director for NIDA would have the necessary skills. There was a general expression of willingness to provide short-term funding, but there needs to be visible results before long-term funding would be approved. Mr. Mikkelsen expressed his concern with how Mr. Skurla's departure was handled. Ms. Kneubuehl reported that the Enterprise Zone Committee has already passed their budget. The EZ Committee has yet to finalize their RFP for marketing services. Representative from GVA Williams will be coming next week. Mill Race Crossing is the only heavy industry park in the region. There is a meeting on April 21st regarding US Route 20 expansion. There is a possible new operator for the Kent Cheese factory. The MRC sign on the Titan Tire property cannot be read from the highway. The Village of Lena has an economic development intern for the summer. NIDA is meeting with Jo Daviess County to formalize their relationship. Mr. Graham expressed his concern with the duplication of services for the development of downtown Freeport. The search process has already begun for a new Executive Director for NIDA. On a motion by Mr. Graham, seconded by Mr. Koch, the Committee recommended an additional \$15,000 for NIDA, with the Finance Committee to identify the funding source.

Mr. Mikkelsen said that the Convention and Visitors Bureau Board did not meet in March.

In the absence of Mr. Newton, there was no update on the activities of the Blackhawk Hills RC&D and EDD.

Ms. S. Hooper reported on the Soil and Water Conservation District Board meeting. They are working to prioritize the conservation projects in the County. They are concerned with the number of unsealed wells in the County. They are also grateful for the County Board's support in encouraging the State of Illinois to release the funds appropriated for the Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

There was no additional information on Mill Race Crossing.

Mr. Mikkelsen noted that the Blackhawk Biofuels project has moved to Danville. Some of the local investors are upset because they expected the project to remain in the County.

There was no update on the Kellogg Grove Battlefield and Blackhawk Monument restoration project.

The scheduled Executive Session was not needed.

Claims of \$1,486.21 were approved, on a motion by Ms. DeVine, seconded by Mr. Koch.

The Committee adjourned at 7:31 p.m., on motion by Mr. Koch, seconded by Mr. Parker.

Approved: May 5, 2008

Next Stated Meeting of the Committee:
Monday, May 5, 2008 6:30 p.m.
Stephenson County Board Room