

DEKALB COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
May 22, 2008

The DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) met on May 22, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in the DeKalb County Administration Building, Conference Room East, in Sycamore, Illinois. In attendance were Commission members Frank Altmaier, Mike Becker, Bill Beverley, Jerry Thompson, Rich Gentile, Becky Morphey, Don Pardridge, Ralph Tompkins, and Jerry Olson. Derek Hiland represented the City of DeKalb. Audience members in attendance included Doug Dashner and Laurie Curley. Staff included Paul Miller and Rebecca Von Drasek.

- 1. Roll Call** -- *Mr. Gentile noted that Commission members Cookie Aldis, Dan Godhardt, Bill Nicklas, Suzanne Sedlacek, and Roger Steimel were absent.*
- 2. Approval of Agenda** -- *Mr. Tompkins moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Olson, and the motion carried unanimously.*
- 3. Approval of Minutes** -- *Mr. Pardridge moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Tompkins, and the motion carried unanimously.*
- 4. Resolution of Appreciation for Paul Rasmussen** -- *Mr. Tompkins moved to approve the resolution, seconded by Ms. Morphey, and the motion carried unanimously.*
- 5. Ground Water Project Status** -- Mr. Miller briefly recapped the groundwater resource management project progress over the past five months. He specifically noted that at the March 27, 2008 meeting, the RPC recommended that the local governments with the County should pursue a groundwater study along the lines of the draft Request for Proposals that was prepared by Baxter-Woodman and Wittman Hydro Planning. The caveat on the recommendation was that the method of funding this study, at an estimated maximum cost of \$1.1 million, must be determined. A resolution for the groundwater project reflecting the recommendation of the Commission had been passed and distributed to the member communities. Mr. Miller requested that Commission members share their respective communities' responses to the resolution. He also noted that the ground water project was presented to the DeKalb County Board at a workshop on May 21, 2008. The workshop included a brief discussion of the ground water resolution and information on a concurrent effort related to stormwater management by the Stormwater Management Planning Committee (SMPC). Mr. Miller explained that the SMPC is a separate Committee which was appointed by the County Board Chair to address flooding in the County. He emphasized that stormwater and ground water issues were interrelated and therefore the idea to combine the funding efforts for the two projects has been considered. He explained a brief history of the SMPC, and explained that the SMPC had recommended that the County Board not take any action on jointly funding the groundwater and stormwater studies until it had more time to work out details of the stormwater plan. Mr. Miller also informed the Commission that the County Board took no action on the waters issues at the May 21, 2008 workshop.

Mr. Thompson asked if the Commission would take any additional action on the Groundwater Management Resolution. Mr. Miller explained that the RPC had passed the resolution at the March 27, 2008 meeting and that no additional action was required. Mr. Thompson also asked if the municipalities already had stormwater management requirements why was there a need for a countywide stormwater management planning committee. Mr. Thompson also expressed concerns that the SMPC would intrude upon the growth of communities. Mr. Miller answered that all the existing stormwater regulations relate to new developments and that the SMPC would attempt to address existing flood prone areas. Additionally, he asserted that the municipal growth decisions are made by the municipalities themselves and exempt from the County's stormwater ordinance.

Mr. Olson provided the Commission with a breakdown of the daily water consumption for livestock in DeKalb County. The graph appeared as follows:

**DeKalb County Livestock
Daily Water Consumption
2008**

	Pork	Beef	Dairy	Total Units
Numbers at any given time	210,000	35,000	500	245,500
Gallons/unit/day	5	12	50	
Total Gallons/Day	1,050,000	420,000	25,000	1,495,000

Mr. Thompson inquired as to the various drainage districts' authority over stormwater requirements. Mr. Miller noted that the drainage districts activities varied throughout the County, and that they are exempt from the countywide stormwater management plan. Mr. Thompson asked if the municipalities and the drainage districts are exempt, what areas are left. Mr. Miller explained that the majority of the County is not regulated by municipalities nor drainage districts, and that Phase 2 of the Countywide Stormwater Management Plan is intended to bring all of the jurisdictional bodies together to address existing stormwater and flooding problems.

Mr. Gentile suggested that this item should be added to the agenda for a future meeting, and that it may be a good idea for the Commission to be briefed on Phase II tasks of the SMPC at that time.

Mr. Thompson stated that he would like to avoid adding another layer of government, when the issue can be addressed by an existing governmental entity. He asked Mr. Miller which project was at the top of the list for the SMPC. Mr. Miller stated that the SMPC had yet to create and prioritize a list of areas that require stormwater management planning, however as an example, he noted that the east side of Sycamore frequently experienced flooding which negatively impacted the City of Sycamore and the residents in the unincorporated, Evergreen Village mobile home park. Mr. Miller also noted that other than by a committee of the County Board, an

alternative group to address these water issues could be a water authority, but that this would actually create another layer of government. Mr. Miller observed that the intention was that municipalities would not be ceding any authority but that everyone would contribute to regional solutions of flooding problems.

Mr. Thompson thought that people in Malta were generous however they would not necessarily want to pay to bail out people in Sycamore. Mr. Miller responded that all citizens in the County pay when any area in the County is flooded, because these areas rely on public services for relief. Attempting to mitigate or eliminate flooding issues benefits the entire County.

Mr. Pardridge asked when the SMPC was mandated. Mr. Miller stated that in 2005 state law had given the County the authority to create a countywide stormwater management ordinance, similar to the collar counties, because of a concern that as growth continues and more impervious surface is created by that growth, more flooding would occur if not regulated.

Mr. Gentile again suggested that the issue could be placed on a future agenda for further discussion.

Mr. Beverley agreed that the planning at the regional level might make things easier.

Mr. Altmaier stated that tying the stormwater and groundwater projects would allow for an improved information exchange.

Mr. Gentile then suggested that the group return to the original discussion regarding the community responses to the resolution on the groundwater project.

Mr. Pardridge stated that he had not received a lot of feedback but that the Village Board of Shabbona had listened to his presentation on the subject and appreciated the input.

Mr. Beverley stated that in Sandwich they understood the issue was big in scope but that the City Board was not excited about funding the study.

Mr. Miller asked Mr. Beverley if the County Board decided on how to fund the study, perhaps via a referendum, what would be the City of Sandwich's response. Mr. Beverley stated that this would be a point of action to which the Sandwich City Board could respond, unlike the unknown component in the approved resolution.

Mr. Thompson inquired what options, other than a referendum, were available? Mr. Miller outlined that the funding options included: 1) the creation of a water authority; 2) each community contribute from their existing funds; 3) issuing bonds for the study, although Mr. Miller noted that the distribution of the bond debt is difficult to determine; or 4) a referendum.

Mr. Altmaier stated that the Village of Kingston had passed a resolution of support of the study, but added that the Village Board did express concern about the cost of the study.

Mr. Thompson noted that the Village Board in Malta was not happy with the resolution. He informed the Commission that there was no support for a property tax increase and that the Board questioned the wisdom of the project versus other possible issues on the ballot, such as the jail. He asserted that the water study jeopardizes the jail funding. He rhetorically questioned if the communities were to fund the project from existing funds and some communities were unwilling or unable to contribute would those remaining be willing to pay more. He also asked what the rush was, stating that few feel there is an immediate problem. Mr. Thompson questioned if the groundwater regulations resulting from the study would force communities to cede authority over their growth. He ended by suggesting more time be taken to address other options.

Mr. Miller stated that no regulations changes were currently suggested. Mr. Thompson responded that the remedies to issues uncovered by the study would require regulations. Mr. Miller stated that if regulation changes were requested they would not necessarily result in an imposition on the municipalities. Mr. Miller emphasized that the study result would certainly give local governments better information on which to make land use decisions.

Mr. Beverley and Ms. Morphey asked for a further breakdown of the funding options. Mr. Miller noted that it was Mr. Nicklas who had reviewed some of the bonding options, but did offer that through his conversations with Mr. Nicklas that the referendum appeared to be the most feasible options. He reminded the Commission that Mr. Nicklas had backed off of the distribution of cost on a per capita basis because the inequity in communities' sizes would not result in an equal share of the financial burden.

Mr. Beverley asked if there was a line item in the RPC budget which could contribute to funding the project. Mr. Miller stated that there was no funding in the RPC budget that could pay for the study.

Mr. Thompson asked why the project was so urgent to spend two million dollars. Mr. Miller stated that was a good question and suggested that a problem may already exist or may not, but that the Commission has no way of knowing. Mr. Pardridge echoed the sentiment.

Mr. Thompson responded that from the presentation by the consultants he heard there was no problem. Mr. Miller disagreed, noting that the consultants had emphasized the importance of undertaking the study.

Mr. Beverley stated that the longer it is put off, the worse the problem may become.

Mr. Thompson stated that the Village of Malta did not support the study at this time.

Mr. Miller reported that as of May 22, 2008 there were no other referendums on the November 2008 ballot. This is one reason for considering whether a referendum on funding both the groundwater and stormwater issues was being considered. There could be competing referenda on subsequent ballots.

Mr. Gentile informed the Commission that the City of Genoa concurred with the Village of Malta's objections. The Genoa City Council relayed that they do not have funds to contribute to the study.

Mr. Tompkins said that the Village of Maple Park was very supportive of the idea but concerned about the cost, and added that the Village Board did support a County-funded study.

Mr. Olson stated the Village of Lee agreed with the study but also would not contribute funds.

Mr. Beverley described his brief presentation to the City of Sandwich's City Board. The Board again expressed that the groundwater source in Sandwich is different from the rest of the County and that the City had already joined the Kendall County water study.

Mr. Altmaier stated that informal feedback he had also been asked why the project was being rushed. He noted the existing flooding problems throughout the County and suggested that stormwater may be more important than groundwater.

Mr. Becker stated that the Kirkland Village Board does not support the study or a tax increase, however, the Board did ask that the consultants present their findings to it directly.

Mr. Miller informed the Commission that we would provide the feedback from the municipalities to the County Board. He noted that the study would take a concerted effort, and as a planner, he asserted that it is important to act before there is a crisis. The groundwater study would be an important first step in a proactive response.

Mr. Gentile asked what communication should be taking place between the SMPC and the RPC.

Mr. Pardridge suggested that maybe the presentation by the consultants should go on the road. Mr. Miller noted that this suggestion segued to item six on the agenda, concerning whether the RPC wants to sponsor a public information workshop or meeting.

Mr. Gentile thought it was in the Commission's interest to start looking into water conservation practices and education options.

Mr. Thompson volunteered to attempt to receive some in-depth coverage of the issue in the press, because the local jurisdictions need extra attention on this issue.

Mr. Beverley asked what it would cost to have the consultants make the presentations. Mr. Miller noted that it would be difficult to ask for free presentations. Mr. Gentile noted that the Power Point presentation should be available online. Staff agreed to confirm it was posted on the County's website.

7. Municipal Development Projects:

The Commissioners briefly updated the Current Development Projects report and highlighted ongoing projects within their municipalities.

Mr. Thompson noted the housing developments in town appeared dead in the water. He informed the Commission of the staging area for the Enbridge oil pipeline that is on a lot in the northwest corner of the Village, and reported the Village Board was pleased with the one-year arrangement. He also noted a small strip mall development may subsequently take place on the property.

Mr. Tompkins stated that a developer would soon begin to sell the 40 million dollar bond for the wastewater treatment plant in Maple Park. He also noted that the housing market appeared to be moving at a snail's pace.

Mr. Gentile noted that the Ace Hardware in Genoa was now open for business.

Mr. Hiland noted that the Four Corners Southeast project was renamed DeKalb Commons and this project was going before the DeKalb Plan Commission soon. He also mentioned a new prospective project with a restaurant and two new buildings.

Mr. Beverley stated that Waves of Funs was under construction in Sandwich and not completed as the report indicated. He also said that the prospective widening project on Highway 34 was a large source of complaints. Lastly, he mentioned the possible upgrades of the airport and future meetings to discuss the project.

Mr. Pardridge reported that the assisted living facility was now full in Shabbona.

Ms. Morphey reported that the water tower project was under way in Somonauk.

The next RPC meeting is scheduled for July 24, 2008 at 7:00 pm in the Conference Room East.

8. Adjournment -- *Mr. Beverley motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Hiland, and the motion carried unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

Rich Gentile
Chairman, DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission

RGV:rgv
P:\Zoning\Regional\Minutes\2008\RPCMay08.wpd