

Van Buren County Planning Commission
January 28, 2009
219 Paw Paw St. Paw Paw
Minutes

Call to Order: 6:30 pm

Members in attendance: Ted Thar, , Pam Stermer, Kurt Doroh,, Connie Selles, Richard Corwin, Denise Massey, Scott Cedarquist, Jeff Radtke, Celinda Gilmore

Absent: Jerry Campbell,

Public present: Dave Foerster, Tom Ellis (Bangor Twp.), Ed VanderVries

Agenda: Doroh/Corwin motion, unanimous vote to accept amended minutes to include Berrien County notice of plans to rewrite their Master Plan

Minutes of December 17, 2008: Approved on a Cedarquist/Doroh motion, unanimous vote includes correction of misspelled names.

Public Comment: Foerster congratulated the VBCPC on passage of Phosphorous Fertilizer Ordinance

Reports:

County Commissioner – Commissioner Massey : Massey had not arrived at this point.
Southwestern Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) Representative – None
Local visits –none

Unfinished Business: Discussion of Farmland Preservation & Economic Development

VanderVries spoke regarding his role as Economic Development Coordinator of VBC and what efforts are going on here in the county as well as in the three county region. Foerster inquired what funding may be available for these efforts. Thar discussed conversation he had with LIAA (Land Information Access Assoc.) in Traverse City. Partnership for Change program is set up foster new and expanded cooperation between cities, townships, and villages and carrying out local land use policies that contribute to preservation of cultural and natural resources. He mentioned the First Step Grants which provide up to \$7000, facilitation, training, and expert assistance to open discussion and overcome the barriers to cooperation. Motion Cedarquist/Gilmore to have Thar and VanderVries apply for the First Step Grant adhering to 1-5 reachable goals.

New Business:

Porter Twp. Master Plan Update- Motion (Selles/Doroh unanimous) to Concur with the submitted Master Plan with the following comments:

1. The Porter Twp. Master Plan aligns well with the County Comprehensive Plan.
2. The Goal statements are strong and align well with the designs for future growth and has successfully maintained the character that Porter Twp. holds in high regard.
3. The plan does not include an implementation strategy or action plan with specific steps.
4. The Agriculture /Farmland Preservation section needs to adhere to the following (as taken from County Comprehensive Plan)
 - a. Participating Local Unit of Government - Any Van Buren County Township, City or Village that has a farmland and open space preservation element within their comprehensive plan, a zoning ordinance consistent with this element as determined by the county planning commission and has provided written notice (in the form of a resolution approved by the local legislative body) to participate in the purchase of development rights program as set forth in Section 4.04 of this ordinance.
 - b. Section 4.02 - Farmland and Other Eligible Land and Open Space Planning Requirements
The farmland and open space comprehensive plan element shall, at minimum, contain the following:
 - A. A future land use map indicating the areas intended for the preservation of farmland,
 - B. Text describing the strategies intended to be used in order to preserve farmland, including purchase of development rights and other techniques,
 - C. Language indicating why farmland should be preserved in the county (for example: cost of services studies, economic benefit to the county, etc.),
 - D. A description of how and why the preservation area(s) was/were selected, and
 - E. A description of the process used to prepare the element and the involvement and participation of local units of government within the county, farmland owners (producers) and the general public.
5. No Future Land Use Map was included

Waverly Twp. Zoning Ordinance amendment- Motion Cedarquist/Corwin to concur with amendments to Zoning Ordinance unanimous vote.

Planning Commission Nominations- Nominating Committee recommended to maintain status quo.

Approve Dates for 2009 Meetings- Dates for 2009 Meetings will be 4th Wed of month for all but November and December which will be held the 3rd Wed. of month. Motion Cedarquist/Doroh unanimous vote

Meeting Adjourned- 8:00 Cedarquist/ Stermer Motion unanimous