

MINUTES
KANKAKEE COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING
COMMISSION
LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION SUBCOMMITTEE
OCTOBER 25, 2007

IN ATTENDANCE

Members:

Jeff Jarvis, Ralph Paarlberg, George Washington, Craig Blanchette, Rich Howell, Mel Blanchette, Chad Miller, Loretto Cowhig and Dave Bergdahl

Others:

Del Skimerhorn, Mike Lammey and Jim Greenstreet, Kankakee County; Jason Licon, Greater Kankakee Airport Authority and Mark Regel, METRO

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Howell called the meeting to order at 10:05 A.M.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Chairman Howell stated that the action of the Executive Committee in combining the Transportation and Land Use Subcommittees has resulted in the need for the election of officers for the new Subcommittee. Mr. Bergdahl moved that the slate of Mr. Howell as Chairman and Mr. Bergdahl as Vice-Chairman be elected. Mr. Paarlberg seconded, and the vote was unanimous.

MINUTES

Mr. Miller moved approval of the September 6, 2007 Transportation Subcommittee minutes. Mr. Bergdahl seconded, and the vote was unanimous. Mr. Bergdahl moved approval of the September 13, 2007 Land Use Subcommittee minutes. Mr. Miller seconded, and the vote was unanimous.

GREATER KANKAKEE AIRPORT AUTHORITY

Mr. Lammey stated that the 2007 work program carried a work element for a transportation/land use study around the Greater Kankakee Airport, provided an Illinois Tomorrow grant for the study was approved. He stated that the Illinois Tomorrow grant was not approved, but that staff had determined that the study should be done, with the added element of economic development.

Mr. Lammey stated that staff and members of the Subcommittee needed to have background information on the Greater Kankakee Airport Authority prior to that study been initiated, and that Mr. Jason Licon, Airport Manager, had been invited to provide that background.

Mr. Licon gave a presentation on the history of the airport, the significant projects completed in that history, and current issues. He detailed the income and expenses of the Airport Authority, and discussed some of the plans for the future. Members of the Subcommittee asked numerous questions.

Mr. Lammey stated that planning meetings between staff (including the City of Kankakee) will be held in the near future to discuss the study work plan, and that the Subcommittee would be briefed on this work plan sometime early in 2008.

GO-21 RESOLUTION

Mr. Lammey stated that the organization of GO-21 presented the concept of tax credits for freight rail infrastructure expansion, and that the States Attorney's Office had prepared a Resolution for support of that concept. Mr. Bergdahl moved that the Land Use/Transportation Subcommittee support the Resolution, and Mr. Washington seconded. The vote was unanimous.

COMMUTER TRANSIT

Mr. Lammey reported that the final report from the consultant on the Commuter Transit study is expected in December, and that the last major work element is a computer model run on ridership. Mr. Regel stated that the concept of bus rapid transit offers many more options for service at a much lower cost than commuter rail.

TRANSIT

Mr. Regel reported that River Valley METRO had moved into their new facilities, and that the maintenance facility was being completed. He stated that a number of improvements in the transfer center facilities were being contemplated, along with service changes. He stated that ridership levels were at record levels over the summer.

Chairman Howell offered his congratulations to the METRO Board for the hard work that had been accomplished over the recent past, and stated that people are beginning to change their transportation choices, and that it was nice to have the transit option.

AIRPORT

Mr. Licon stated that a number of the smaller airports in the area north of Kankakee County were undergoing significant changes in activity. He was asked the impact of Bult Field on the South Suburban Airport, and stated that it was unknown at present.

CRITICAL COMMERCE CORRIDOR

Mr. Lammey stated that an application had been made to the U.S. Department of Transportation on the critical corridor of a connection between I-55 and I-65 somewhere in the vicinity of the South Suburban Airport, but that the application had been denied. He urged Subcommittee members to attend the Economic Alliance dinner on October 25 to hear the speaker, Randy

Blankenhorn, discuss this subject.

TRAFFIC CRASH REPORTING

Mr. Lammey stated that accident data has been collected for the years 2004 through 2006 and for the first six months of 2007. He stated that the accidents in the IDOT database are undercounted in the opinion of Kankakee County, due in large part to the area of accidents being coded as “private property” accidents, even though the beginning of the accident occurred on a public right-of-way.

In response to a question from Mr. Washington, Mr. Lammey stated that a training session of local police on the accident forms had not been held in a number of years, and that Kankakee County would likely sponsor such a training session in early 2008.

LAND USE ISSUES

Mr. Skimerhorn reported that the Subcommittee had asked him to contact local engineering firms for their comments on the draft Conservation Design Regulations, and stated that he had received phone calls asking for clarification, but no comments, and that the closing period for comments had been October 16. Chairman Howell stated that he would send out reminding emails to the engineering firms.

Mr. Skimerhorn stated that the Subdivision Regulations are being reformatted, and that they would be sent to the States Attorney’s Office when completed for their review.

Chairman Howell stated that the LESA system needs to be redone, based on a new soil survey. He stated that the Department of Agriculture is willing to assist, but would need a letter of invitation from Chairman Kruse. He stated that an ad hoc committee to assist in this effort, much the same as the stormwater committee would be needed. Mr. Washington moved that the Subcommittee authorize Mr. Howell to develop a letter to the County Board from the Regional Planning Commission asking it to form an ad hoc committee to produce an updated LESA due to the new Soil Survey. The letter will also ask the County Board to ask the Illinois Department of Agriculture and the NRCS for their assistance in the update. Mr. Bergdahl seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

WORK PROGRAM

Mr. Washington moved approval of the Land Use/Transportation Subcommittee Work Program.

Mr. Craig Blanchette seconded, and the vote was unanimous.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Washington stated that the Union Hill elevator issue, where the elevator requested a variance on the weight restriction for a quarter mile of highway, so that a nondivisible load 80,000 pounds could be shipped in a sealed container, is the start of many such requests. Mr. Washington stated that Intermodal issues would be discussed at the November 5 Intermodal Workshop, and urged members to sign up for the workshop.

NEXT MEETING

Chairman Howell stated that the next scheduled meeting is December 20 in the METRO Centre.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Washington moved adjournment, and Mr. Bergdahl seconded. Chairman Howell adjourned the meeting at 11:34 A.M.