



**Calhoun County Planning Commission
Minutes
November 28, 2016**

Present: Commissioners, Sarah Kelly, Dan Kesselring, Linda Freybler, Angie Kline, Terence Lunger, Blaine VanSickle, Dan Livingston. Staff in attendance: Consultant, Jennifer Bomba; Community Development Educator, Ingrid Ault, and Program Assistant, Vera Prince. Quorum was met.

Present, Late Arrival: Tracy Bronson, 4:14 p.m.

Via Phone: Kelli Scott

Excused: Tammi Damerow, Dan Kesselring

1. The November 28, 2016, Planning Commission Meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m.
2. Roll was called by the Program Assistant.
3. Approval of Agenda

Approval of November 28, 2016, Calhoun County Planning Commission agenda, as presented, moved by Terence Lunger, and supported by Dan Livingston.

On a voice vote, Motion CARRIED.

4. Public Comments

Noted: No public attendees; no public comments

5. Approval of September 26, 2016, Meeting Minutes

Approval of the September 26, 2016 Meeting Minutes, as presented, moved by Terence Lunger, seconded by Angie Kline.

On a voice vote, Motion CARRIED.

6. Communication

None.

7. Old Business

None.

8. Subcommittee Reports

Subcommittee Chair, Kelli Scott, joined the meeting via phone, and provided a Subcommittee Report regarding the status of membership applicants. She reported applications were posted on the Calhoun County website, in addition to various websites; the deadline for submitting applications was November 21, 2016. Commissioner VanSickle has confirmed that he would like to apply for the Agriculture Forestry Land Use position; the Subcommittee will be able to add him to that appointment. She also noted that the position of Recreation/Tourism that Linda Freybler is vacating is still open. The deadline for filling open positions is mid-January. Along with the mid-January appointments, the Subcommittee will also recommend the reappointment of Angie Kline and Sarah Kelly, in addition to extending the deadline to also fill the Recreation/Tourism position—working with Linda on recommendations for possible replacements.

Possible replacements for the tourism position include a tourism expert in Marshall, CEO, Scott Fleming, of the Marshall Area Economic Development Alliance (MAEDA), and Ashley Szymanski, Director of Tourism and Business Services, also of MAEDA. Kelli added that Scott Fleming is on a number of committees, including the County.

Jennifer requested that the Subcommittee extend the appointments until the next meeting on January 23, 2017. She also requested that the recommendations and appointees are extended in order to gather recommendations for additional candidates for the two open positions (Recreation and Tourism and Economic Development). The extension would allow the Committee to assess all of the candidates collectively. The next phase is for the Membership Subcommittee to make the recommendation, and the Planning Commission making a full recommendation to the Board of Commissioners for final appointments. Jennifer also noted that the information Kelli provided serves as an update to the Planning Commission; the Planning Commission is not seeking any action at this time.

9. New Business

A. 2017 Meeting Schedule

Jennifer provided the Committee with the 2017 Calhoun County Planning Commission meeting schedule, which remains the same as in previous years—the fourth Monday of every month with the exception of December. In the past, the month of May is also taken off due to the Memorial Day holiday; however, the holiday does not conflict with next year's schedule, therefore, a meeting will be held in May. Once the meetings are approved, the schedule will be posted, and will also meet the Open Meetings Act requirement.

The 2017 Calhoun County Planning Commission meetings were moved for approval by Angie Kline; supported by Sarah Kelly.

On a voice vote, Motion CARRIED.

B. Other New Business to Come Before the Commission

None.

10. Township Planning & Zoning Coordination

A. 11-16-01, Athens Township: PA 116 Application for Daniel & Mary Steury

Jennifer provided supporting documentation to committee of the PA 116 Application for Daniel and Mary Steury. She stated that the property is located in Athens Township, and is a little over 100 acres in Section 12. The majority of the land is classified as swamp and woodland; however, together with cultivated land and cleared pasture, it qualifies as having greater than 50% active agricultural land. The property has five buildings, and is zoned and master planned by the township as Agricultural. The Calhoun County Master Plan also designates the subject property as Agricultural. She recommended for approval.

Moved for approval by Terence Lunger; seconded by Linda Freybler.

On a voice vote, Motion CARRIED.

B. 11-16-02, Athens Township: PA 116 Application for Ryan & Emily Frost

Jennifer provided supporting documentation of the PA 116 Application for Ryan and Emily Frost. The Frost's property is also in Athens Township. The property is in Section 18, and consists of approximately 22 acres. 13 acres of the property are cultivated, and does not contain any buildings. The property is planned and zoned as agriculture by the township and the county, and Jennifer recommended for approval.

Moved for approval by Dan Livingston; seconded by Linda Freybler.

On a voice vote, Motion CARRIED.

C. Other Planning and Zoning Coordination to Come Before the Commission

None.

11. Department Report

Hunter Access Program

Jennifer noted that as this is the last meeting of the year, this meeting would serve as an opportune time to assess upcoming items for next year. She stated that, as noted in the previous meeting, Kelli Scott reported on Michigan's DNR interest in working with the Planning Commission and the Economic Development Agencies to hold a Town Hall Meeting during an upcoming winter month to invite farmers, or anyone with a large amount of land willing to grant easements, donate, or sell property to the State. The program is called the Hunter Access Program (HAP). Jennifer has been in contact with Michigan DNR. She shared the Calhoun County properties that are currently enrolled in the program with the committee, including the website for anyone wanting to view additional properties in other counties.

Currently, Calhoun County has only two farms that provide access to the public for hunting. The goal is to increase the acreage in Calhoun County. Calhoun County Planning Commission will be assisting Michigan DNR to host and plan a meeting—targeting larger land owners with acreage for farming. There will be an opportunity for the farmer or land owner to be compensated for

participating in this program. Jennifer added that she has been in contact with Michigan DNR via email to determine who to invite, where to hold the meeting, etc. The logistics are contingent on what type of presentation Michigan DNR will present, and what type of information they have to share. She also suggested that the two people currently participating in this program should be in attendance to discuss the benefits. The meeting should occur during a slow season, so that the landowners are able to attend. The Planning Commission's role will be to assist Michigan DNR with this program.

Commissioner VanSickle also noted that previously Michigan Farm Bureau has tried to join hunters with landowners, particularly in areas that were overpopulated with deer. He stated that he would contact Michigan Farm Bureau's Regional Rep, Kim Kerr, to inquire if the Bureau still has this program, or would be interested in the working with the current program Michigan DNR is attempting to organize.

Updating the Calhoun County Plan

Jennifer distributed a copy of MSU Extension's Public Policy's Guide to Public Planning for the committee to review as a sample for planning basics (e.g., what our authority is, what our role is, and how we will proceed in updating the County Plan). She also noted that Calhoun County needs to undergo a substantial update due to statistics and census data that have been updated. The Plan distributed at the meeting consisted of a very general Plan; however, it provided useful checklists, steps to follow (e.g., after the Plan is completed, was it advertised properly, where is the Plan stored, etc.). She added that updating the Plan will be a huge project for 2017, and that the five-year review should be completed and adopted in 2018. Jennifer noted that she is currently working on that timeline and staff will assist in putting the Plan together. She is currently working behind the scenes to provide an outline and timeline, including estimated goals and deadlines. Additionally, the data collected and included in the Plan (e.g., population projections, land-use data), will be shared with the local units and will also require feedback, goals and objectives from local units, as well as the public.

Review of Current By-Laws

Jennifer also reported that the Committee will be reviewing its current By-Laws, which may also require adding an additional By-Laws Subcommittee.

Annual Report

The County Planning Commission is responsible to produce an Annual Report, as required by statute. Jennifer noted that her goal has been to have the Annual Report completed within the first quarter. The Planning Commission is the adopting agency and approval agency; however, the report is also sent on the County Board, as an informational component that summarizes what the Commission has done, including their action, direction, as well as upcoming projects.

Jennifer also reported that the Commission is reviewing the possibility of organizing a group of individuals for a City-Wide Transit project. Kelli Scott has been involved on the administrative side of this project—working with local officials to review the gaps that currently exist in public transit service. Jennifer noted that she has been working with the City of Battle Creek to identify funding opportunities. Additional details will follow in 2017, regarding either action items, or to provide additional information on this study.

12. Member Comments

Dan Kesselring was not in attendance at this meeting; however, Jennifer noted that she had a card for everyone to sign to thank him for his service. She will forward the card after collection of signatures.

Linda Freybler also inquired if calling in for a meeting is allowed, and if not, is this a By-Laws requirement. Staff member, Ingrid Ault, replied that this is a State requirement that Committee members that call in for a meeting cannot serve as a voting member. She also added that currently, there is legislation to amend this requirement. Jennifer added that a member may call into a meeting to participate, but the caller would not count as a quorum.

13. Public Comments

None.

14. Announcements:

Jennifer Bomba stated that there will not be a meeting during the month of December; therefore, the next Calhoun County Planning Commission Meeting is scheduled for January 23, 2017, at 4:00 p.m.

Note: The deadline for Sub Committee membership applicants will be backed up one week earlier to allow the deadline to end prior to the next Commission Planning meeting scheduled on January 23, 2017.

15. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:27 p.m.