

KMCPC Members:
Neil Sikora, Chair
Joseph Hohler III, Vice-Chair
Steven Cook, Secretary
John Gisler, Commissioner Liaison
Virgie Ammerman
Joel Amos
Vince Carahaly
Martin Janssen
Heather Ricketts
Jon Start
Vacancy

Minutes

Kalamazoo Metropolitan County Planning Commission Meeting of Thursday, November 5, 2015

MEMBERS PRESENT: Virgie Ammerman, Joel Amos, Vince Carahaly, Steve Cook, Martin Janssen, Neil Sikora
MEMBERS EXCUSED: Joseph Hohler III, John Gisler, Heather Ricketts, Jon Start
OTHERS PRESENT: Lee Adams, SMPC

I. Call to Order

Chair Sikora called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm in Room 207A at the Kalamazoo County Administration Building at 201 W. Kalamazoo Ave, Kalamazoo MI 49007.

(Ms. Jarnefelt was absent due to illness, and had requested that Mr. Lee Adams, Director of Southcentral Michigan Planning Council (SMPC), prepare and present staff reports. Kalamazoo County is a member county of the 5-county regional planning organization SMPC, which offers planning and related services to its members).

II. Approval of Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes of the last regular meeting held on October 1, 2015. On a motion made by Mr. Amos and seconded by Mr. Carahaly, the Commission approved the minutes from the meeting.

III. Citizens' time

No citizens were present.

IV. New Business

1. Climax Township: Review of Master Plan. Staff review-Action Item.

The Climax Township Master Plan staff review, prepared and presented by Mr. Adams, was discussed thoroughly. The Plan was found to be acceptable, although suggestions were made that could have made the Plan carry more weight– such as ways to address unique issues in the Township through strategic planning and implementation strategies. Mr. Adams brought his perspective to the review. It was noted that it differed some from the way Ms. Jarnefelt customarily focuses on such items as comparison of Future Land Use with the neighboring units. In the absence of Ms. Jarnefelt, a customary approach to responding to the township was supported. Mr. Amos noted that he is a member of the Climax Township Planning Commission and he is also a Climax Township Trustee. He will therefore abstain from the KMCPC vote regarding the Master plan.

Members expressed a desire to see copies of the letters that are sent to the units regarding KMCPC recommendations. Also the role of a County Master Plan as a guiding document was discussed.

ON A MOTION MADE by Ms. Ammerman and DULY SECONDED by Mr. Sikora, the Planning Commission voted to RECOMMEND APPROVAL of the proposed Master Plan and determined that it is CONSISTENT with the planning and zoning of the neighboring governmental units in Kalamazoo County. Motion carried with Mr. Amos abstaining.

2. Comstock Township: Request for review of Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act of 1974 (known as PA 116) application PA 116, Case Nr PA2015-3, in section 13 and 14; applicant Nathan Mollberg. Staff review-Action Item.

Mr. Adams presented a review of the PA116 application. Property is in close proximity to the City of Galesburg, which is directly to the southeast of the property. It is located in the southeastern part of Comstock Twp which is home to more commercial and industrial uses than other areas in Eastern Comstock Township. Discussion ensued about the 90-year time span of the application, which is seen as excessive assuming the pressure to develop at least part of it for other purposes within that time span. The Board noted that they did not have access to the Future Land Use Plan for Comstock Township, which generally guides the decision whether to support a PA116 application, or prompts a recommendation to adjust the Future Land Use Map to match a potential long term agricultural use.

ON A MOTION MADE by Mr. Cook and DULY SECONDED by Mr. Carahaly, the Planning Commission UNANIMOUSLY RECOMMENDED APPROVAL of the proposed PA 116 application, contingent on consideration of a lesser term than 90 years, and also contingent on the subject property being designated in a suitable category in the Future Land Use Plan of Comstock Township (presumably Agriculture).

V. Other Business/Discussion

The resignation of Mr. Smith from the KMCPC was acknowledged. There was a desire to acknowledge his service in an appropriate way. Chair Sikora suggested that the item be placed on the December KMCPC agenda.

VI. Report from Parks Commission liaison Ms. Ammerman:

Ms. Ammerman, KMCPC Liaison to the Parks Commission, provided an update from the Parks Commission meeting. She noted that the meetings take place in the various parks, which is enjoyable. The two main items were the new County Animal Shelter potentially locating on property near the Expo Center, and the Garden Club's use of a County Park building.

VII. Correspondence

None

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 pm.

**Respectfully submitted by L. Jarnefelt with support from Mr. Adams.
Next scheduled KMCPC Meeting is Thursday, December 3, 2015.**