

**Colfax Township, Weldon Township and
Village of Thompsonville
Joint Planning Commission**

Meeting Minutes – February 2, 2012

The meeting was called to order at 7:32pm by Sue Meredith followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present at roll call: Jack Richter, Shelley Greene, Peggy Minster, Sue Meredith, Bryan Matthews, Don Suchocki and Craig Meredith. Pat Workman and Eugene Allen joined the meeting in progress. Debra Franke absent (unexcused).

Guests: Harry Burkholder, Mark Roper, Terry Money and Bryce Gibbs.

Citizen Matters. None.

Approval of Minutes. Peggy moved to accept January 5 minutes; motion seconded by Bryan. Ayes: all; motion carried.

EDC Benzie County Update. Mark Roper and Terry Money addressed the group on changes concerning the EDC fund. Their intent was to inform the JPC as citizens who are interested in the matter and not as official representatives of the EDC. The EDC has been working with existing and new employers to create jobs in Benzie County. Mark advised that Benzie County EDC monies will be moved to a regionalized six-to-eight county fund in approximately nine months. The county will still be able to request funds under the new structure but securing them isn't expected to be easy. Mark and Terry are working with a few others to focus on jobs. If they can get permission, they want to use existing funds so the county may purchase some commercial property to try to attract and work with new businesses. They wanted the JPC to be aware of these developments related to commercial property potential as it goes through the planning process. Terry said the number one EDC problem is the lack of an inventory of county or privately owned commercial property to show potential employers. Don asked about the effect on the tax base of county owned property; Mark and Terry said the process needs to be proactive and eventually the tax base would rise. Bryce Gibbs noted that the village's water system is a positive factor along with good roads and power system. Gene asked if there is a minimum parcel size; Terry said any size would work and the village has an advantage with its infrastructure. Mark and Terry stressed the importance of an inventory as a first step to provide it to groups such as county departments, banks and realtors. Property must be zoned commercial to use EDC funds. They offered to attend future meetings at the JPC's request.

Master Plan Project Session. Harry asked for the JPC's decision on a master plan name. Suggested names were discussed. Don moved to use the name Greater Thompsonville Area Master Plan; motion seconded by Jack. Ayes: all; motion carried. Sue will send Intent to Plan letters. Harry reviewed updated goals and objectives. An updated draft Action Plan was reviewed and revisions noted. Discussion was held on a public meeting/open house which will give citizens an opportunity review and provide feedback on the Action Plan. Postings will be made around town and notices published in the Record Patriot. It was agreed to hold the event on Thursday, March 1 from 6:30 to 7:30pm at the Thompsonville Village Hall with setup at 5:30pm. Pat will confirm hall availability. The regular JPC meeting will be held at the Weldon Township Hall. Sue suggested taking the Action Plan to the boards/council to keep them updated. Harry said to let them know it is a working draft. At the next meeting, Harry said we

will review public comments and then start work on a future land use map. He will continue writing the plan itself which is generally a summary of what the community is. Craig is still working to get various data from Crystal Mountain. Shelley spoke with Dean Rhodes about photos as well as the Benzie County Museum. Craig said Bryce Gibbs also has photos. Timelines and responsibilities will be developed at the next meeting if time permits.

Zoning Ordinance Estimate. Harry gave a verbal estimate of \$8,000-\$10,000 using the Weldon ordinance as a framework and said spreading the cost over a two-year period may be doable.

Unfinished Business

Budget. Discussion held on the proposed 2012-2013 budget presented by Jack. Don moved to accept the budget as presented; motion seconded by Bryan. Ayes: all; motion carried. The budget is to be presented to the boards/council meetings in February for approval.

Administrator. Pat and Craig will update Sue on zoning administrator duties and she will send to Shelley for publication of a help wanted ad in the Record Patriot.

Insurance. Ongoing. Craig to contact Inland and Homestead townships and Jim Sheets for costs to them, Gene to check with the village on coverage under their policy and Shelley is waiting to hear from Burnham & Flower. Jack believes we will need one policy.

Legal Advisor. Ongoing.

Training. Shelley could not attend the Signs Workshop due to winter storm. The Planning & Zoning Center sent workshop materials; bill to be submitted to Fran Griffin. Peggy was thanked for the training she conducted for the group. Sue will ask Fran to enroll herself, Shelley, Gene, Peggy and Craig in the Planning for the New Economy training on February 21. Peggy will conduct Zoning Basics training on Saturday, March 3 from 1-3pm at the Weldon Township Hall.

Surveys. Ongoing.

Wind Tower/Marijuana Collectives Update. No change.

New Business

Election of Officers. Jack moved to cast a unanimous ballot for the existing officers for the term year 2012; motion seconded by Peggy. Discussion; Pat withdrew as vice chair and the motion was rescinded. Shelley moved to elect Sue chairperson for the year 2012; Jack seconded motion. Ayes: all; motion carried. Peggy moved to elect Jack vice chair for the year 2012; Don seconded motion. Ayes: all; motion carried. Peggy moved to elect Shelley secretary for the year 2012; Pat seconded motion. Ayes: all; motion carried.

Annual Report. Shelley will create a document giving an overview of JPC activities over the past year including expenditures to date. This report is to be provided to the boards and council in March.

Correspondence. Covered earlier -- Planning for the New Economy training.

Adjournment. Don moved to adjourn, seconded by Jack. Next regular meeting is March 1 at Weldon Township Hall after the public meeting. Meeting was adjourned at 10:22pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Greene
Secretary

Minutes are proposed until approved at the next meeting.