

MINUTES OF THE OPEN LANDS PLANNING AD HOC PANEL OF THE VILLAGE OF METTAWA, ILLINOIS, HELD AT THE HOUR OF 7:30 P.M. ON TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2014, IN THE MAPLE BOARDROOM OF THE HILTON GARDEN INN HOTEL, 26225 N. RIVERWOODS BOULEVARD, METTAWA, ILLINOIS.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bohm called the meeting to order at approximately 7:35 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Upon a call of the roll, the following persons were:

Present: Chairman Bohm and Members Cohn, Johnson and Weiland

Absent: Members Lys, Sheldon and Stephenson

Also present: Former Mayor Jess Ray, Larry McCotter of Native Restoration Service; Colleen Liberacki, Deputy Village Clerk. Chairman Bohm declared there was no quorum due to lack of member attendance.

C. Review and approval of minutes.

Minutes could not be approved due to lack of quorum. The approval will be tabled until the July 29, 2014 meeting.

D. DISCUSS/CREATE STANDARD SET OF QUESTIONS FOR VENDORS OF PLANNING PROPOSALS

Chairman Bohm shared and reviewed the copies of suggested questions submitted by Member Lys, Member Cohn and Member Weiland. Member Weiland suggested that they ask each vendor what their view of the village is regarding open lands landscape planning and where they see the village in 5 years, 10 years, etc. She further suggested asking each vendor what their strengths are. Member Cohn suggested addressing the questions in the form of a panel posing the questions, like "C-Span" style. Chairman Bohm advised that this is the village's meeting and Mayor Urlacher would decide on the approach. Member Johnson suggested asking each vendor if they had ever worked on a village's comprehensive plan, since ultimately Mettawa's 2025 Comprehensive Plan would be affected by what a vendor would do.

Member Cohn noted that one of the vendors, Steve Christy works frequently with Larry Falbe of MOLA and Chairman Bohm noted that Conserve Lake County is strong in conservation expertise. Jess Ray liked Member Johnson's idea about being mindful of the affect to the comprehensive plan and pointed out that Christy is a landscape architect, suggesting the question about experience working with villages. Member Weiland liked the system of check and balances that would result if the village worked with more than one vendor on the project and also taking advantage of more than one vendor strength. She felt that this would prevent the work from going on indefinitely under one vendor perpetuating the project. Member Johnson did not think that Conserve Lake County could solely handle the project, but could see them being involved in a role. Jess Ray also noted that Conserve Lake County manages open lands and conservation easements.

Member Cohn questioned the role of Parks & Recreation Committee in this endeavor. Chairman Bohm advised that this panel would have the opportunity to look at each open space and make a recommendation to the Village Board as to how to develop or manage each property. He noted that the Village Board would be the final approver. Chairman Bohm elaborated on this, stating that the panel would evaluate each parcel, deliberate on a plan, consider a budget and recommend same to the Village Board. After that, the Parks & Recreation Committee would execute same. Member Johnson pointed out that at this point, the result would dictate editing of the village comprehensive plan. He felt that this was important as a protection in place as leverage against unknown future board decisions.

Chairman Bohm noted that some parcels are not large enough to bother with, but he would like to see certain parcels considered for open space zoning. He further explained to Member Cohn the difference between open space zoning and a conservation easement, and Member Johnson further elaborated on this. Larry McCotter advised that some villages engage in a 501c3 conservation easement and they can be held in perpetuity and funded for the purpose of anticipated legal defense. Member Weiland now understood the different layers of protection. Jess Ray defined the difference between land planner and landscape architect for the benefit of Member Cohn.

Member Weiland suggested that some of the questions were not necessary, as some of the information requested would be part of what the vendor would share (references, i.e.) but evaluating all the questions submitted, and in the end focusing on three questions to be submitted to the Village Board, that would be asked of all the vendors. Jess Ray suggested the type of questions whose answers would differentiate one vendor from the next, such as key elements, overall approach and design. He further suggested asking “which project they were most proud of” and “what about a disaster they’ve experienced”.

Member Johnson wanted the panel to produce something unique for the village, combining the expertise of a landscape architect and including environmental concerns and conservation efforts. Member Weiland inquired about the TallGrass project on Route 60 and Riverwoods. Chairman Bohm stated that TallGrass was the implementer of the plan that Teska & Associates created. Jess Ray noted that Teska knows a lot about native plants. He further suggested that Steven Christy’s undergraduate degree in English would make him a good communicator in addition to a landscape architect in his efforts to raise the overall stature of Mettawa. Chairman Bohm stated that no more resident interviews were necessary, as they already sought the input from them during the Committee of the Whole meeting. Member Johnson wanted the selected vendor to understand the heart of the community in their design. Member Weiland thought that thru emails Chairman Bohm could collate the questions and ask the committee to rank the most effective ones. She trusted Chairman Bohm in the end to summarize the results and any question that was omitted could be asked later by a resident during the meeting. Jess Ray suggested that Chairman Bohm cc the mayor, Tim Towne of Parks & Recreation Committee as well.

E. DISCUSS OPEN SPACE ZONING DISTRICT

Chairman Bohm distributed the ordinance and Member Weiland felt that they should have sent the letter of support to the Village Board, that she trusted the mayor and village administrator to pursue the open space zoning district. Chairman Bohm also distributed the zoning map and noted the LCFP properties that were zoned R-1 (residential). Jess Ray

suggested asking the village attorney or land planner the benefit of rezoning the property to open space. Member Johnson stated he spoke to Tim Towne, who advised him the benefit would be that the village would be aware of an application of a zoning change if it was already zoned as open land.

Chairman Bohm stated he had a list of parcels that he wanted zoned as open land: Whippoorwill Farm, 701 Riverwoods, Oasis Park, Deerpath Farm Preserve. Member Johnson thought Route 60 & Riverwoods should also be zoned as open land. Chairman Bohm inquired of Jess Ray where his “wish” list should be submitted. Jess Ray replied that it should be submitted to the Village Board and they in turn would submit to the Zoning Committee. Jess Ray also suggested to Chairman Bohm that he inquire with the village attorney about the necessity of a quorum for an ad hoc panel.

F. DISCUSS OASIS PARK DESIGN AND STATUS

Chairman Bohm stated that he saw the seed list, but inquired about the plan for the trees and shrubs. Member Johnson stated that things are still in the preliminary stage. Chairman Bohm reminded those present about the value of a Parks & Rec Committee to prevent annexation by another contiguous park district. Jess Ray noted that only two parks need formal planning to avoid annexation.

G. DISCUSS RIVERWOODS BLVD PROPERTY

Chairman Bohm would like to see the buckthorn cleared out, since it is a high visibility area. Jess Ray thought that the commercial developer should replace the dead ash trees.

H. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT MAY APPEAR BEFORE THE COMMITTEE FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATION TO THE VILLAGE BOARD.

Member Weiland inquired about quality control for the Route 60 and Riverwoods Road project. She wanted to know if there was a comparison check between the actual site and the plan that was shown. Chairman Bohm advised that Teska was supposed to go out to the site. Member Weiland further inquired about her concern for potential contamination of the soil that was being dumped and who was checking on that quality. Member Johnson stated that if a soil was contaminated, the contractor is required by law to dump it in restricted places. Member Weiland felt that the panel should ask for more support regarding quality control. Member Johnson stated that he had been observing regularly the dumping of soil at Oasis Park and was satisfied with the quality.

Chairman Bohm shared a newspaper article with the group about Whole Foods coming to Lake Forest and they were removing 400 trees to make way for construction. He cited this as an example that could have been prevented by pursuing an open space zoning district.

I. ADJOURNMENT

With no further items discussed, Chairman Bohm declared the meeting adjourned at 9:08pm.

Colleen Liberacki, Deputy Clerk

This document is subject to correction as noted on next meeting's minutes.