

Meeting Minutes

Joint Meeting of the Grand Traverse County Planning Commission, Village of Kingsley Planning Commission and the Paradise Township Planning Commission June 19, 2007

At 6:30 p.m., Chairman Vozza reconvened the County Planning Commission meeting and called to order the joint meeting of the County Planning Commission, Village of Kingsley Planning Commission, and Paradise Township Planning Commission at the Paradise Township Hall, 2300 E. M-113, Kingsley, MI.

County Planning Commissioners present: Angelo Vozza, Jim Pascoe, Marvin Radtke, Phil Case, Virginia Coulter, Richard Crampton, Jerry Dobek

County Planning Commissioners excused: Bruce Hooper, John Hagen, Bruce Odom

A quorum was present.

Village of Kingsley Planning Commissioners present: Heather Smith, Robert Torres, Douglas Duffing, Donna Martin

Village of Kingsley staff present: Adam Umbrasas, Village Manager; Russ Casselman, Zoning Administrator

Paradise Township Planning Commissioners present: Jessi Sedlacek, John Conroy, Michael Geisert, Rob Bach, Cheri Tuller, Gene Wadford, Carol Inman

Others present: Marie Dean and Robert Whims, Paradise Township Board; Larry Fleis, Grand Traverse County Commissioners; John, BATA

John Sych, Grand Traverse County Planner, stated that the County Planning Commission wanted to meet with the two planning commissions to see if they could assist in facilitating discussion of common goals between the two municipalities. The County Planning Commission wanted to hear what is happening in the two communities, what are their issues, and what their concerns and opportunities are. He stated that the County Planning Commission has three active committees which are the Land Development Review Committee, Spatial Technology Committee, and the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) committee. Sych explained the function of each committee and went on to say that the planning commission is in the process of amending the County Comprehensive Plan by including implementation strategies. The public hearing for the amendment will take place at the July meeting of the planning commission. The comprehensive plan is due for its five-year review this year and he anticipates this review to take place this fall. He explained that he did not feel there would be changes at this time as the planning commission would like to see the results of the Land Use and Transportation Study (LUTS) report as they feel that will have an impact on the comprehensive plan.

The planning commission has sponsored two educational programs this year and plans to continue with more programs. Sych noted he hopes to establish a scholarship program to assist local units in sending their members to these programs and to the MSUE Citizen Planner Program. He noted the planning commission has offered to fund two individuals from the village and township along with representatives of four other townships and a village to attend the upcoming LIAA conference on Inter-Jurisdictional Diplomacy scheduled for June 28 in Traverse City.

Sych further discussed the CIP and the County Geographic Information System (GIS) and the plans to have the geographic mapping information online for the local units to use. He explained the County is planning training sessions for the local units and that this online information will be available to everyone at no expense.

Adam Umbrasas gave an update on the activities of Kingsley Village. He reported that the planning commissioners recently approved the amended Master Plan and are working on a garage sale ordinance.

Sych asked if the village council had adopted or approved the master plan and Umbrasas replied they had not, it was approved by the planning commission. Sych said it is helpful if the village council does adopt the plan as you get greater support and "buy-in" from the council if they have adopted the plan.

Heather Smith noted that the communication level between the township and village needs to be improved. In the past it has been discussed to meet jointly on a yearly or quarterly basis, but that has not been done. The village has started sending a representative to the township planning commission to foster communication. With the revision of the Master Plan, she stated the commission wants to be more proactive than reactive. They will be working on implementing the master plan.

Other village committees include the DDA and Parks Board. The village recreation plans needs to be updated and Russ Clark, the village planner, will be working with the Parks Board on this. The DDA just changed their meeting schedule to meet quarterly. They will continue their streetscape work this summer. Umbrasas reported they have a developer outside the village that has asked to have village water in his development. He stated they will be talking to the township regarding this request.

Jessica Sedlacek reported that Paradise Township has been working on updating their zoning ordinance and zoning map. She said they have been working on this for the last 14-months. The map has created some controversy and they are addressing concerns expressed. She reported the township wants to work with the village. The township plans to have an infrastructure study completed to see what their needs are. She noted that both communities want to grow and there are things that both communities need. Economic growth is needed in their area.

Sedlacek stated she would have liked to have the village bring their master plan to them for review and discussion. Umbrasas noted that the plan was circulated to the appropriate communities and agencies as required by State statute and the township was sent a copy of the plan.

Rotary Charities provided a grant for improvements at the Mayfield Pond Park, Sedlacek reported. She also gave high compliments to the village for the splash pad at Bronson Park. She also discussed a junk ordinance, Townline Road improvements, and the work on north Summit City Road to create a truck route around the village. Also reported was that a compactor station will be up and running through the joint efforts of Paradise and Union townships. A small fee will be established for this service.

Discussion took place on the difficulty they have had in gaining support for the work the planning commission has been doing on the zoning ordinance and map.

Sych discussed the two planning commissions coming up with one broad common goal and working on that. The two units of government could work together to identify this goal and work on how to accomplish it. Discussion took place on how to identify a goal and how to get the information to the public and keep them informed.

Discussion took place on transfer of development rights, the need for sidewalks if you want a walkable community, a trail system, the recent Trail Summit, the use of surveys, the Development Guidebook, municipal water and sewer, revenue sharing issues, the need to work together, the need for a community bulletin board in the village for the use of the village and the township, and new people on the board/council/commissions creating a whole different outlook. It was pointed out that some of the issues are Board/Council issues and not planning commission issues. A common vision of what is needed for the greater Kingsley/Paradise community needs to be determined.

Questions were asked about a joint planning commission for select issues. Sych stated you can define the parameters as much as you want. Informal joint planning between the planning commissions could take place. There is a need to build trust and find a common ground. Four areas of common interest were determined: the truck bypass around the village, trails, master plan update, and dark skies.

It was determined that both planning commissions would meet on Tuesday, July 24, 2007, 6:30 p.m. at the Paradise Township Hall to discuss the four points of common interest. Sych suggested an agenda committee be established to set the agenda for the meeting. He offered to assist.

General Discussion/Public Comment: Commissioners from all three planning commissions expressed that this joint meeting went well and they were pleased with the outcome. County planning commissioners encouraged the township and the village to start on a small project and work on accomplishing it through communication and respect. This meeting and discussion was a step in the right direction. Marie Dean, Paradise Township Supervisor, stated this was a good meeting. Kingsley and Paradise planning commissioners thanked the County Planning Commission for holding this meeting and facilitating the open discussion.

Tuller referred to Smith on a date that the Village planning commissioners and Township planning commissioners could meet to discuss common goals. The date has been set for July 24 at 6:30 p.m. at the township hall.

Adjournment: At 8:32 p.m. Chairman Vozza adjourned the meeting.