

MINUTES

McLEAN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MCRPC) Meeting

WEDNESDAY, January 5th, 2022, 4:00 P.M.

McLean County Law & Justice Center

104 W. Front St, Bloomington, Illinois

Room 702 and Virtual

Members Present:

In-Person – John Burrill, Chairperson; Carl Teichman, Vice-Chairperson; Bart Bittner; Jim Fruin; Stan Gozur; Dr. Charles Irwin; Jennifer Langley; Tony Morstatter

Virtual – Carl Olson*

Members Absent:

Michael Pettorini

Others Present:

MCRPC Staff – Raymond Lai; Tessa Ferraro; Ana Mendoza; Jennifer Sicks; Katie McShane*

Others – Mike Doherty, Greenways Committee*; Brandon Geber, IDOT*; Mercy Davison, Town of Normal*

*Attended Virtually

1. Call To Order:

Mr. Burrill called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum.

2. Attendance:

See above

All in-person Commission Members voted to allow Carl Olson to attend the meeting virtually for quorum purposes.

[Ms. Langley joined the meeting in-person at 4:05]

Mr. Burrill introduced new Commission Member Tony Morstatter. Mr. Morstatter introduced himself to the Commission Members.

Mr. Burrill introduced MCRPC's new MPO Liaison Brandon Geber, who joined virtually. Mr. Geber introduced himself.

Mr. Burrill introduced new MCRPC staff member, Ana Mendoza. Ana introduced herself. Mr. Lai explained that Ms. Mendoza is MCRPC's new Assistant Planner, and we have 2 more new employees starting soon to bring us back to full staff.

3. Election of Officers (Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Designated Member for the Executive Committee)

Mr. Bittner was appointed as Chairperson pro-tempore to handle the election process.

Mr. Bittner called for nominations for Chairperson. Mr. Teichman nominated Mr. Burrill for Chairperson. Mr. Gozur seconded the nomination. Hearing no other nominations, Mr. Bittner declared nominations closed and called for a vote. Mr. Burrill was unanimously elected Chairperson.

After Mr. Burrill was elected Chairperson, Mr. Bittner turned the rest of the election process over to Mr. Burrill.

Mr. Burrill called for nominations for Vice-Chairperson. Mr. Fruin nominated Mr. Teichman for Vice-Chairperson. Mr. Bittner seconded the nominations. Hearing no other nominations, Mr. Burrill declared nominations closed and called for a vote. Mr. Teichman was unanimously elected as Vice-Chairperson.

Mr. Burrill called for nominations for the designated member of the Executive Committee. Mr. Teichman nominated to re-elect Mr. Bittner. Mr. Fruin seconded the nomination. Hearing no other nominations, Mr. Burrill declared nominations closed and called for a vote. Mr. Bittner was unanimously re-elected as Executive Committee Designated Member.

4. Public Comment:

None

5. Consent Agenda:

- A.** Minutes of the November 3rd, 2021 Commission meeting
- B.** Financial Reports
- C.** MCRPC Staff Report

Mr. Burrill called for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Teichman moved for approval, Mr. Gozur seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

6. Regular Agenda:

- a. Items removed from the Consent Agenda (if any)

None

7. Items of Information or Discussion:

a. Presentation: Greenways Committee

Mr. Lai presented a PowerPoint presentation on Greenways Committee (available for review on file in the office), educating the Commission members on Greenways Committee and its mission and activities/programs. The PowerPoint was prepared primarily by Ms. Deanna Frautschi, immediate past chairperson of Greenways Committee, who unfortunately could not join us today.

Mr. Lai introduced new Greenways Committee Chairperson, Mike Doherty. Mike introduced himself and spoke about his role on the Greenways Committees.

b. Regional Housing Initiatives update

Ms. Ferraro explained that the housing assistance coalition is focused on COVID-19 related assistance. Members of the coalition have provided over \$4.8 million in COVID assistance since May 2020. There is a new IL rental payment program that was available from December 6, 2021 – January 9, 2022. The rental program will be a one-time grant for up to \$25,000 for those who apply, to use towards past due rent balances or future payments. The State is looking to open, in spring 2022, a mortgage relief fund. Applicants could get up to \$30,000 in mortgage assistance.

Mr. Bittner asked about different methods used to get the word out to the community about these housing resources. Ms. Ferraro stated there is a marketing plan to help spread awareness of the COVID assistance. Our partners help by dispersing post cards to the community members. MCRPC also has any assistance open to the public available on our website.

Mr. Bittner asked if any housing assistance reaches to communities outside of Bloomington-Normal. Mr. Lai stated it depends on the source of the assistance funds. The applicants must meet specific criteria to receive the specific funds.

c. Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) Project update

Ms. Sicks explained what the PASER project stands for and the major goals of this project. It will be used to assess and improve pavement conditions. The consultants have turned in their preliminary report to the Town of Normal after taking pictures of the pavement and sensing of pavement conditions. The consultants are currently working on a plan to implement the software they will be licensed to the Town of Normal. The Town of Normal will then be trained on how to use this information and the software so they can continue to make progress on pavement projects.

d. Bloomington-Normal Wireless Infrastructure Guidelines (5G) Project update

Mr. Lai explained what the 5G project is and how it is funded. Staff with the Town of Normal and City of Bloomington have both been working with the consultants. A report is currently being reviewed by the Town of Normal and City of Bloomington and the groups will meet on January 6, 2022, to discuss any questions or concerns.

Mr. Teichman asked if other municipalities are having conflicts with the 5G. Mr. Olson answered on behalf of Central Illinois Regional Airport (CIRA), that there have not been any conflicts yet, but they haven't been contacted about the process. He stated CIRA has been advised of conversations between two federal agencies, the FCC and FAA, and that airports are concerned about possible interference with electronics and aircrafts with 5G technology.

Mr. Olson asked about reports that CIRA has been provided lately concerned cellular towers and facilities being worked on or installed in the area and if this had to do with the 5G project. Mr. Lai advised that the project is for 5G facilities and equipment located within rights-of-way, not large properties such as airports. He will have the consultants reach out to Mr. Olson to answer these questions.

e. Vision Zero/Go:Safe McLean County Action Plan Project update

Mr. Lai explained the history regarding the Vision Zero project and how the project is more of movement that started back in 1997 in Sweden. The overall goal is to bring traffic casualties and major injuries down to zero. The plan focuses on three areas: infrastructure, technology and data, and cultural change. Mr. Lai explained that the Go:Safe Plan pointed out Veterans Parkway being very dangerous and how to make it safe for all travelers. He mentioned that MCRPC applied and was awarded the RAISE Federal Planning Grant to re-envision and re-invest the 80-year-old, auto oriented Veterans Parkway. MCRPC also hoped to use this grant, the only entity allowed such planning grant in Illinois, to address traffic safety along the 10-mile stretch of Veterans Parkway. This would be a major implementation tool for the Go:Safe Action Plan.

Mr. Gozur asked about any additional grants that may be needed to finish these plans. Mr. Lai explained the timeline to complete the RAISE plan is anticipated to be 2-2.5 years, but we will work out details with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) as more details about the agreement emerge. Ms. Sicks added that there are several smaller projects that will be included in the Go:Safe Action Plan that will all tie into the Metropolitan Long-Range Transportation Plan.

f. 2022 Commission Meeting Schedule

Mr. Lai explained that the meeting schedule for 2022 was included in the agenda packet. He also explained when and where the Commission meets each month. He also noted that if needed to cancel a meeting, he will notify in advance.

g. That which may arise

Mr. Olson asked about remote participation for the Commission meetings due to the surge in COVID-19 cases. Mr. Lai explained that we go by the Governor's executive orders. We should know more after this weekend to see if there is an announcement regarding renewal of the Governor's Executive Order about the Open Meetings Act (OMA). Mr. Lai also explained there are still 3 exemptions that can allow someone to attend virtually for quorum purposes. According to our by-laws and the current Executive Order, attendance of at least 6 members in person can be counted as a quorum.

7. Adjournment:

Mr. Burrill called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Teichman moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Bittner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Katie McShane
Office Manager/Executive Assistant