

MINUTES
McLEAN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MCRPC)
REGULAR MEETING (Virtual and Live-Streamed)
WEDNESDAY, April 7, 2021, 4:00 P.M.

Members Present:

Mary Kramp, Chairperson; Bart Bittner; John Burrill; Jim Fruin; Diana Hauman; Carl Olson; Carl Teichman; Mark Wylie

Members Absent:

Michael Pettorini

Others Present:

MCRPC Staff – Melissa Robinson; Alyssa Cooper; Lauren Gibson; Jennifer Sicks, Raymond Lai

Others – Julie Hile, Hile Group; Jonathan Seiden, Hile Group; Monti Gretchen, League of Women Voters; Charley Edamala, ISU; Patrick Dullard, Bike Blono; Ryan Gammelgard, State Farm; Vicki Tilton, Fox & Hounds; Tony Morstatter, Boys & Girls Club; Mercy Davison, TON; Katie Simpson, COB; Robert Nelson, IDOT; Dayna Brown, Unit 5; Patrick Hoban, Economic Development Council; Kathleen Lorenz, TON City Council

1. Call To Order:

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

2. Attendance:

See above

3. Public Comment:

None

4. Consent Agenda:

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

Ms. Kramp called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Mr. Wylie moved for approval. Mr. Teichman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

5. Regular Agenda:

a. Consideration of adoption – Go:Safe McLean County Action Plan

Mr. Lai provided a background on the planning process of the Go:Safe McLean County Action Plan. The Action Plan has been an ongoing process for nine months which was kicked off in June 2020. This project has been a team effort from community members, the Project Steering Committee, Subject Matter Experts, MCRPC staff, and the consultant group. Three virtual Community Conversations were held for public input. Mr. Lai introduced the individuals on the project steering committee and the subject matter experts who were present at this meeting. Julie Hile and Jonathan Seiden, the consultants with the Hile Group, were also present during this meeting.

Ms. Hile thanked all those who worked on this project and expressed that she was excited to bring the Action Plan forward to the commission. She said that this project was started and completed during a challenging time due to COVID but were still able to execute the necessary steps in order to deliver a final product for consideration by the community. She explained that as traffic begins to pick up more, it opens a window of opportunity to consider the Go:Safe Action Plan. Ms. Hile introduced Jonathan Seiden and thanked him and those from the Firebrand Cooperative for their hard work.

Mr. Seiden thanked the entire project team, MCRPC staff, and the commissioners for the opportunity to assist in this project. Like Ms. Hile, he stated that he believes the final product for this project is coming out at a valuable time as safety, especially transportation safety, are being held at a higher concern. Recently, the American Jobs Plan was presented to the U.S., which includes \$20 billion to assist and fund Vision Zero type projects for local communities. Mr. Seiden then gave a presentation on the Go:Safe project and Action Plan, including a summary on the plan development, project team, Community Conversations, and an overview of the Plan. [The presentation (PowerPoint) is attached].

Mr. Lai mentioned that public engagement on this project was great due to project members and community members spreading the word. Mr. Lai also pointed out that on pg. 5 of the Action Plan, there was an item (District 87) omitted on the listing but will be added back in and updated.

Ms. Tilton, a member of the Project Steering Committee, stated that she felt overwhelmed by this project at the first meeting however, after sitting through this presentation she sees how doable this is for the community. Mr. Seiden responded that it is feelings like this, that was an inspiration for this project.

Ms. Kramp drew attention that on pg. 4 of the Action Plan that when this plan is released, it will carry out a shared structure for safety across the transportation system in McLean County. She noted that this is important for the commission to understand. Mr. Lai thanked Ms. Kramp for pointing this out as in the future, the City and Town may want to adopt this plan, yet they can make modifications or add new ideas. As this is a regional

plan, it is not tailored only to McLean County residents but also those who visit or drive through the community. Moving forward, this will take cooperation and collaboration among municipalities.

Mr. Wylie asked who will take the lead in implementing this plan if adopted. Mr. Lai answered that there will be further discussion between MCRPC staff and the three municipalities on how to move forward, as there will need to be a lot of effort put into the implementation by each one of these groups. He explained that there will be an effort for joining the Vision Zero Network per the agreement between MCRPC and IDOT. As discussions continue with staff, the County, COB, and TON, it will determine the best way for implementation and who to lead that.

Ms. Hile commented that the Community Conversations were held to give those working on this project a sense of public interest on this topic. What they found from the three public meetings, was a lively and rich conversation. She expressed that they did not discuss the implementation process deeply yet as they needed to gauge public interest and whether the commission would approve. Ms. Kramp added that a few commissioners, Mr. Teichman, a representative of Illinois Wesleyan University (IWU) on the Project Steering Committee, and other local and state representatives that discussed a variety of safety topics at the three Community Conversations. She explained that IDOT representative Robert Nelson, said that in the past pedestrian safety was not a major priority when planning transportation projects. However, due to these public meetings, pedestrian safety will be taken into serious consideration. Mr. Nelson explained that he found the Community Conversations helpful especially when discussing Main Street and Veterans Parkway. Due to this, he will be collecting data and reaching out to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for more information.

Mr. Seiden explained that those working on this project are hoping that the barriers and hurdles to go through in order to implement this plan are low and that if there are people or groups who want to be a part of this and have funding to do so, then they will be able to adopt the Go:Safe McLean County Action Plan. They want this to be accessible for anyone who wants to execute and apply transportation safety. Ms. Hile added that she knows an individual who was excited and interested to hear about the Go:Safe McLean County Action Plan as they are working on technology and transportation projects.

[Ms. Hauman left the meeting at 4:54pm]

Ms. Kramp called for a motion to approve plan adoption – Go:Safe McLean County Action Plan. Mr. Bittner moved for approval. Mr. Wylie seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Items removed from the Consent Agenda (if any)

None

6. Items of Information or Discussion:

a. Regional Housing Initiatives Update

Ms. Gibson provided an update on the Regional Housing Initiatives. As of April 7th, 2021, the Housing Assistance Coalition has provided \$2.8 million in housing assistance to those in McLean County since May 2020. The eviction prevention program is also available at this time, which is led by Prairie State Legal. The Housing Assistance Coalition is planning on holding a town hall meeting either at the end of April or early May to discuss the new state rental assistance program with landlords and renters.

The application for City of Bloomington (COB) and Town of Normal (TON) Community Development Block Grant programs, which funds 60% of the regional housing initiatives, have been submitted for Fiscal Year 2022 budget cycle, from spring 2021 – spring 2022. Ms. Gibson explained that the regional housing staff committee has been working on a three-year review on the regional housing initiative structure document to capture and reflect the progression of the program since 2018.

Ms. Gibson stated that the draft brief on housing trust funds has been completed and presented to the Housing Staff Committee. When finalized, it will be taken to the municipalities for them to take the recommendations into consideration.

b. Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) project update

Ms. Sicks reminded that the intent of this project is to have the Town of Normal (TON) using the same standard as McLean County and the City of Bloomington (COB) when evaluating pavement conditions. She explained that TON is in the process of completing their consultant selection, which should be completed later that week. They will also be talking with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) about an extension of funding as this project was to be finished by the end of April 2021. The PASER project was delayed due to COVID and other staffing changes. She stated that those working on this project are also looking for alternative funding sources. Once the agreement between the consultant and the MCRPC is finalized and funding is determined, the project will quickly continue.

e. That which may arise

None

7. Adjournment:

Ms. Kramp called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Wylie moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Teichman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Melissa Robinson
Office Manager/Executive Assistant