

MINUTES

McLEAN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MCRPC) Meeting

WEDNESDAY, July 7, 2021, 4:00 P.M.

Government Center

115 E. Washington St, Bloomington, Illinois

Room 404 and Virtual

Members Present:

In-Person - Mary Kramp, Chairperson; Bart Bittner; John Burrill; Jim Fruin; Stan Gozur; Carl Teichman

Virtual - Jennifer Langley; Carl Olson

Members Absent:

Michael Pettorini

Others Present:

MCRPC Staff – Melissa Robinson; Alyssa Cooper; Lauren Gibson; Jennifer Sicks, Raymond Lai; Tessa Ferraro; Shubhangi Rathor

Others - Mercy Davison* and Ryan Otto of Town of Normal; Joe Stefanski and William Varik of Applied Research Associates

*Attended Virtually

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 June 2nd, 2021 Commission meeting
- B. Financial Reports
- C. MCRPC Staff Report

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

5. Regular Agenda:

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

None

b. Authorization to execute a contract by MCRPC Chairperson for consulting services regarding the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) Project

Mr. Lai reminded the Commission that this project is primarily a Town of Normal project that is being funded by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). The goal of this project was for the Town of Normal (TON) to have the same pavement rating scale as McLean County and the City of Bloomington (COB). IDOT covers 80% of the project costs (\$99,200) while TON will provide 20% match. Town staff are working with the consultant group, Applied Research Associates (ARA). William Varik and Joe Stefanski from ARA and Ryan Otto from TON were present in this meeting to provide further insight into the project and answer questions. Mr. Lai explained that MCRPC staff are involved in this project to manage this pass-through grant from IDOT and to oversee TON and the consultant group on this project.

Mr. Teichman asked if this grant requires minimal staff time. Mr. Lai answered that yes, there would be minimal work completed by MCRPC staff, with Ms. Sicks as the primary individual working with IDOT and the consultant group, ARA. Staff will also be reviewing the work completed as the project continues.

Ms. Kramp asked how this pavement evaluation software compares to the City and Town's system. Mr. Otto responded that it is not 100% the same but is similar, as TON is planning on using the PASER software whereas the City uses the D.O.T software. Ms. Kramp asked what software the County is currently using. Mr. Otto answered that McLean County also is using PASER.

Mr. Burrill asked if the consulting group, ARA, will complete the evaluation rating or if they work with another contractor. Mr. Varik replied that they complete the rating themselves as they have their own vans with cameras that scans the pavement. These scans are then analyzed electronically through its automated system and trained individuals.

Ms. Kramp asked how the Department of Public Works (DPW) for both the Town and City would prioritize various pavement projects based on this technology. Mr. Otto explained that with this technology, they will be able to have all roadways be rated in the same system which would give better insight into which projects should be completed sooner and how roadways would be maintained. The Town is also hoping to create a five-year capital plan with this project which will help in determining the budget needs of these projects.

Mr. Bittner asked Mr. Otto if the Town, City, and County would communicate with one another on roadway projects as they would all be on a similar rating scale system. Mr. Otto answered that currently this communication does not happen often but with this new system, they are hoping for more collaboration.

Mr. Fruin raised the question of whether the pavement rating would be communicated with the public or not. Mr. Otto said that once the project is completed, the rating information and data would be made public.

Mr. Gozur asked if the PASER is a one-time license or ongoing. Mr. Varik responded that they are using the governmental created software which stands as a one-time license. Mr. Otto added that the Town is prepared to maintain this license per their budget.

Ms. Kramp asked Mr. Varik if they work with any other cities within Illinois. Mr. Varik named a multitude of cities, counties, and states that they work with from coast to coast.

Mr. Varik shared that the consultant group is expecting their van to be up and running in this area as early as next week. Mr. Otto thanked Mr. Lai and Ms. Sicks for their continuous work on this project and pushing it along despite the challenges and delays faced due to COVID-19.

Ms. Kramp called for a motion to authorize the execution of the contract. Mr. Burrill moved for approval. Mr. Teichman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

c. Election of Officer (Vice-Chairperson)

Due to the recent resignation of Ms. Diana Hauman, there is a vacancy for Vice-Chairperson on the Commission. Ms. Kramp called for nominations for the vice-chairperson. Mr. Teichman nominated Mr. Burrill for vice-chairperson and Mr. Fruin seconded the nomination. Receiving no other nominations, Ms. Kramp declared the nomination closed for the vice-chairperson. She then called for a vote for the vice-chairperson, and Mr. Burrill was unanimously elected. Mr. Burrill then gave a brief background about himself.

6. Items of Information or Discussion:

a. Regional Housing Initiatives update

Ms. Gibson stated that within a month the eviction moratorium will be expiring. She also explained that the eviction prevention program is currently up and running.

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

Ms. Sicks explained that with the approval for execution of the contract with the ARA, staff are excited to see this project move forward quickly. Staff are hoping for this project to

expand and allow the three local municipalities, City of Bloomington (COB), Town of Normal (TON), and McLean County cooperate together in this process.

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

Mr. Lai provided an update on the Bloomington-Normal Wireless Infrastructure Guidelines (5G) project. He explained the consultants are expected to finish their report by fall 2021, as they are currently working with local service providers, Town of Normal staff, and City of Bloomington staff.

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

Mr. Lai explained that he and Ms. Sicks have given presentations to governmental entities and organizations to educate them about this project, including the Rotary Club, McLean County Transportation Committee, and the Bloomington City Council. They are hoping to schedule more meetings with the Town of Normal and other local groups. He stated that with these meetings they can understand better how these local entities feel about the project which will help guide implementation of the Action Plan. Ms. Sicks said that through these meetings there has been great conversation and feedback, especially from those who were not previously aware of the Go:Safe project.

e. Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant application

Mr. Lai informed the commission that staff are working diligently on a federal planning grant application under the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program. There are two grant categories: capital infrastructure grant or planning grant. Staff are hoping to be awarded this grant to re-invent the 10-mile stretch of Veterans Parkway. He provided examples of the hazards that vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, etc. face when utilizing this roadway.

Mr. Lai explained that if awarded this grant, the focus would be sustainability, equity/accessibility, and safety. IDOT has agreed to be a co-applicant along with other local partners on the application which further shows the significance of the need for reinvention of Veterans Parkway.

The RAISE grant is very competitive, with a less than 1% chance of being awarded but staff are working hard on completing the application and collecting support letters as the application due date is July 12, 2021.

Ms. Kramp asked what the total grant amount would be if awarded or if it varied by community. Mr. Lai responded that the total RAISE planning grant program amount is \$30 million, but at least \$10 million is allocated to Areas of Persistent Poverty, some of which are located in our planning area. However, the grant award amount does vary as there are a multitude of things to consider for each application. He said that our project cost estimates are based on realistic expectations and the amount of local matches available.

Mr. Olson stated that the Airport Authority will be providing a letter of support as they agree that this is an important opportunity for the community. He explained that Veterans Parkway is a critical roadway to the airport operations.

Ms. Kramp commented that she is thankful for the MCRPC staff's time and effort in completing the grant application.

f. That which may arise

Ms. Kramp introduced the new commission member, Stan Gozur, who represents Unit 5. Mr. Gozur gave an introduction about himself.

Mr. Lai announced that this would be Office Manager Melissa Robinson's last commission meeting as she is leaving the MCRPC. He expressed his gratitude towards her and stated that she will be missed. Ms. Robinson explained that she is thankful for the MCRPC team, commissioners, and the opportunities she was able to be a part of.

Mr. Lai welcomed the new MCRPC assistant planner, Shubhangi Rathor. Ms. Rathor introduced herself and stated she is excited to be with the MCRPC team.

7. Adjournment:

Ms. Kramp called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Bittner moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Fruin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Melissa Robinson
Office Manager/Executive Assistant