



SCOTT COUNTY

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

September 17, 2013
7:30 P.M.

MEETING MINUTES

First Floor Board Room
Scott County Administrative Center

- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Kent Paustian, Clayton Lloyd, Carolyn Scheibe, Allan Kluever, Katherine Ion, Gary Mehrens, Linda Rivers
- MEMBERS ABSENT:** None
- STAFF PRESENT:** Timothy Huey, Planning & Development Director
Brian McDonough, Planning & Development Specialist
- OTHERS PRESENT:** Approximately 4 members of the public, Dee Bruemmer – County Administrator, Tom Sunderbruch – Board of Supervisors
Presenters: John Dowd – Eldridge City Administrator, Steve Van Dyke – Bettendorf Economic Development Director, Pam Miner – Davenport Community Planning and Economic Development Director, Paul Rumler – Quad Cities Chamber/Quad Cities First, and Mark Hunt – Bi-State Regional Commission

- 1. CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Paustian called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.
- 2. Minutes:** Gary Mehrens asked that his absence as well as Katherine Ion's absence from the September 3rd meeting be noted as "excused" in the minutes. Mehrens made a motion to approve the minutes with this correction, and it was seconded by Kluever. **The motion carried unanimously.**

3. Discussion of Periodic Review of the Scott County Comprehensive Plan – Presentations from Neighboring Jurisdictions and Economic Development Organizations:

Planning Director Tim Huey explained that as part of the Comprehensive Plan update process, surrounding jurisdictions were contacted and each asked to present their community's future land use and economic development plans and objectives.

John Dowd, City Manager – Eldridge, presented first. Dowd mentioned that he had been the city manager for over 20 years. He went over Census information for the city, including their population growth. In 1950 the population of Eldridge was 375, and in 2010 it was 5,251. Population growth in the last 10-20 years has led to a large growth in taxable valuation of property within the city. The exception to population growth in the city was the 1980's during the farm crisis and economic downturn. Dowd mentioned that extensive annexation occurred in the late 1960's, most of which were voluntary annexations. Dowd expressed his opinion that these annexations were largely part of a race between communities to attract the Caterpillar plant. A majority of land in the city of Eldridge remains farmland. Dowd mentioned that recent residential development has occurred along Blackhawk Trail. The city hopes that new rail and the expansion of the Davenport Airport will lead to continued commercial and industrial development along the southern tier of the city. Dowd explained that there are no current annexation plans.

Dowd stated that concerns for the city moving forward include the fact that residential growth is far outpacing that of commercial and industrial. Commercial has remained at approximately 20% of Eldridge's total taxable valuation since 2000. During the same time period industrial has shrunk from 9% to 5% of the city's total taxable valuation. Eldridge is striving to add to the taxable valuation of these property classes in order to keep a solid tax base and support the rapid residential development which is occurring. Other projects include working with the state of Iowa's Main Street program to revive their downtown area.

Huey asked about the commercial/industrial development shown on the future land use map along the southern edge of the city. He asked if there was current infrastructure capacity to serve new development in that location.

Dowd explained the unique topography and drainage of the city. It sits on a plateau compared to the rest of the County and therefore water runs in multiple directions. He explained that there is excess sewer and water capacity currently, barring a large new user.

Kluever asked the location of the proposed new rail spur.

Huey stated it was on the southern edge of Eldridge, and extends into the Davenport Industrial Park. The city of Davenport is building a rail port in the Industrial Park to allow the loading and unloading of shipping containers and other rail and truck freight.

Lloyd asked for an approximate number of acres of commercial and industrial land use shown on the future land use map?

Dowd responded that at least 200 acres was shown as such, likely more.

Huey next introduced **Steve Van Dyke** from the city of Bettendorf.

Van Dyke introduced himself as the Economic Development Director for the City of Bettendorf, and mentioned that he has been with the city for 17 years. He showed the city's future land use map as well as a map of the I-80/Middle Road corridor with traffic trip generation numbers. Bettendorf is looking to diversify their economy. He explained that the city developed as a bedroom community, without many large employers located in Bettendorf. However, he emphasized that the future of the city will depend upon diversification. He presented a watershed map overlaid on top of a city map, and explained the importance of topography and watersheds in infrastructure planning. There are proposed water and sewer extensions along the I-80/Middle Road Corridor. He also presented a future streets map of the city. The goal is for the city to develop this corridor, and Van Dyke presented a development flyer that had been shared with the Quad City Chamber and Quad City First. He explained that high capacity fiber capability makes this corridor attractive to office businesses. He talked briefly about the city's assessed valuation, mentioning that Bettendorf is approaching 3 million in assessed value, and has seen a recent growth of 6%.

Huey explained that dedicated sewer easements have been required when platted subdivisions are approved within the Spencer Creek watershed between Bettendorf and Pleasant Valley. These County subdivisions will be served in the future by sanitary sewer, and these easements allow for that to happen in a seamless manner when the time arrives.

Rivers asked about the city's annexation plans.

Van Dyke explained that annexation has been moderate in recent years, and that it has been a number of years since there has been a large annexation. Existing growth and topography prevent much growth to the east. The river is to the south and Davenport to the west. Therefore, any future growth will be to the north, but no annexations are currently planned, as there is currently excess land to the north. There was a question about average home price in the city. Van Dyke responded that it is around \$290,000.

Lloyd asked how much existing commercial and industrial zoned land is in the southern portion of the city.

Van Dyke said approximately 200 acres or so along the river. He finished the presentation by stating the city's focus on attracting healthcare, office, and commercial businesses. He said they are less interested in attracting industrial land uses at this point in time, and the future land use

map does not contain much industrial. The focus for Bettendorf's infrastructure is to extend the availability and quality of fiber and attract commercial and office businesses.

Huey introduced **Pam Miner**, Davenport Community Planning and Economic Development Director

Miner explained the existing rail spur extension near the city's economic development park. The city hopes this spur will increase economic development nearby. The city is also focusing on redevelopment of existing sites around town. Miner explained that the city has an abundance of existing industrial land, for example along the west end of town. She mentioned the recently completed west end sewer tunnel that will help serve west end development. Overall, she stated that the city is focusing on residential development. She spoke about the Eastern Iowa Development Center – Greater Davenport Redevelopment Authority (GDRC). The GDRC realizes that it is running out of land to sell in its current development park, and annexation issues have held up any expansion plans.

Huey introduced **Paul Rumler** of the Quad City Chamber and Quad Cities First. He explained their mission. They are a member organization serving as a chamber of commerce for a 4 county area and an economic development agency for a 6 county area. Their mission is to strengthen the business environment with business growth and prosperity as goals for the region. They use gross domestic product (GDP) and job growth as their 2 main metrics. Economic development, livability and environment, rock island arsenal, high quality workforce, and world class chamber are their five focus areas. Business retention, entrepreneur and innovation, and business attraction are other goals. They work through website development, trade shows, and personal visits to promote the region. They focus on primary employers, who they define as those businesses that pay more than the average wage, and therefore their dollars have additional impacts and effects on the regional economy. Paul spoke about the certified sites program. This is a program is through the chamber, and separate from a similar state program. It examines up to 200 site factors to determine suitability for certain business. The goal is to identify one site in each Iowa and Illinois for a large scale development. He also mentioned their shell building program. Overall, there is a lack of modern buildings on the market, and this program works to retrofit existing buildings.

Cluever asked how future sites were identified for development.

Rumler stated that some come to the region on their own, such as the fertilizer proposal did last year, while others require marketing and incentives. The certified sites program evaluates over 200 criteria in a site suitability analysis. Among the criteria are: utility access, transportation access, as well as existing land zoned for industrial development. The sites rising to the top are those with existing zoning in place, as well as meeting multiple other criteria.

Huey introduces the last speaker, **Mark Hunt** from the Bi-State Regional Planning Commission. Huey explained that Hunt will focus on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies

(CEDS) document prepared by Bi-State, and that it would be his recommendation that the Commission adopt this document as an addendum to the Comprehensive Plan.

Hunt introduced himself as Bi-State's Economic Development Coordinator. He explained the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant program. He is responsible for helping local communities apply for grants from the EDA. He explained that Bi-State has no authority and does not dictate the actions of local governments, but rather works with them to secure funding and complete planning projects. He explained Bi-State's revolving loan fund, through which gap funding is made available to make up differences in financing for development projects for Bi-State member jurisdictions. Bi-State is not a legislative body and does not tax. They are a regional planning organization, who helps their member organizations apply for and receive federal dollars. The gap funding program is administered through local financing institutions. He explained that EDA grants must align with the CEDS document, which is why it was prepared. It is similar to the preparation of a hazard mitigation plan, which is required in order to receive federal disaster relief funds. 9 million in federal EDA funds have been funneled through to the region. Hunt finished up by explaining the transportation planning that Bi-State provides, and which is a federal requirement for highway funding and a core reason for the development of regional planning agencies all over the country.

Chairman Paustian asked about the link between long range transportation planning and the updating of locks and dams. He stated that waterway transportation is much more efficient in transporting certain goods, such as grain.

Hunt responded that waterway transportation planning is a part of the freight transportation study that will be conducted in the future.

Paustian thanked the speakers for their time and insight, and opened the floor to any members of the public wishing to speak.

With no members of the public wishing to speak, **Huey** read and posted 5 discussion questions to begin a dialogue between the Commission, speakers, and planning staff.

(1) What opportunities are there for Scott County to take the lead on economic development opportunities and when should Scott County play a supporting role?

(2) Are there criteria or thresholds that can be identified for the amount of capital investment and the type or number of jobs created by an economic development opportunity that the County's land use policies should favorably consider for locating such projects outside of city limits, in the unincorporated areas of the County?

(3) Are there aspects of Scott County's current land use policies that impede economic development in the County?

(4) Do any of the cities or regional agencies have recommendations on how Scott County can help improve economic development in the Quad Cities?

(5) How can Scott County continue to encourage intergovernmental communication and cooperation?

Miner stated that the County is a big player in economic development. Certain developments require large sites that are not available in cities. The Certified Sites program initially set a threshold of 1,000 acres or at least 200-300 acres for a development site. The goal of the state program is to have sites set-up and ready to go once a developer chooses a region. She stressed preparedness for large-scale development.

Van Dyke emphasized that the county can help the region by making a certified site. He said that Bettendorf was appreciative of the County's review of their tax increment financing plans. He also stated that "blue zones" or healthy initiatives are important for the region as a whole.

Rivers is open to the certified sites idea. She likes the idea of having the front end work completed in advance of an Orascom-like proposal.

Lloyd commented that 1000 acres is too much to ask for the County to set aside in advance of a development.

Paustian stated that he does not want the County to be in the business of owning land as part of the certified sites program. He said clearly 1000 acres is too much, and even 200 acres may be too much.

Supervisor Tom Sunderbruch expressed what he called his frustration with this process. He said he has yet to meet a resident of Scott County opposed to economic development, but yet there remains a persistent Not In My Back Yard (NIMBY) mentality to overcome. He wanted to voice this frustration, and is looking for answers on how to move forward with overcoming County policies that impede economic development.

Rivers explained that last year's fertilizer proposal was met with a lot of knee-jerk reactions. She believes a certified sites approach would allow people a chance to get used to the idea of a large-scale land use change in advance, and prepare for it.

Rumler stated that both companies and residents are looking for predictability in development. Predictability drives investment.

Hunt stated that EDA funds are often tied to local government ownership of land.

Paustian expressed serious concerns with any County ownership of land. He also expressed concerns related to being subject to federal rules and regulations if applying for federal funding.

Van Dyke stated that investment, dollars per hour pay, and jobs should all be a part of any criteria for a certified site

4. Review and Discussion of Chapter 3: County Profile:

Huey explained the Chapter 3 update to the Comprehensive Plan. He explained two possible options, 1) The Commission hold information gathering meetings and public input gathering sessions around the County as their next step, or 2) The Commission could have another meeting and spend some time preparing for such a public information gathering session. Huey recommended that the Commission go with the second option and spend a little time framing the discussion and preparing questions and ideas, before gathering public input.

Scheibe agreed with Huey, and would like to discuss a strategy during the upcoming October 15th meeting.

Mehrens mentioned the excess land that currently exists within city limits. He does not want to rezone for mega sites out in the County.

Huey responded that it is a difficult decision. He echoed Supervisor Sunderbruch's comments about NIMBYism.

Lloyd said that the Commission needs a schedule of the progress of the state's work on their certified sites program, to see how it interacts with their task of updating the County's Plan.

Paustian concurred.

Huey explained that he would work on gathering information on both certified sites programs and presenting it at the next Planning Commission meeting. He also wanted to be clear that while he understands why the Commission wants to be aware of what's going on with the certified sites program, that the Commission's task of updating the Comprehensive Plan is distinctly separate from that process. The Commission is tasked with updating economic development language and the future land use map. Updating these County policies will make it possible to legally defend a large-scale development rezoning.

Dee Bruemmer stated that there are two certified sites programs, the state of Iowa program and the Quad City First program. The Quad City First program is in the middle of refining its selection criteria and choosing a site, one in Iowa and one in Illinois.

With no new business to discuss, Chairman Paustian entertained a motion for adjournment. It was moved by Kluever and seconded by Scheibe to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:25 P.M.