

**JUNCTION CITY/GEARY COUNTY
METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS**

MINUTES

**April 10, 2014
7:00 p.m.**

**Members
(Present)**

Maureen Gustafson
John Moyer
Brandon Dibben
Ken Mortensen
Chuck Mowry
Mike Watson

**Members
(Absent)**

**Staff
(Present)**

David Yearout
Shari Lenhart

1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

Chair Gustafson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the conference room in the basement of the Municipal Building and declared a quorum with all members present.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Moyer moved to approve the minutes of the March, 2014, meeting as written. Commissioner Dibben seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

3. NEW BUSINESS

Item No. 1 – Seating of and Swearing in of New Member – Gayle Edmiston

Mr. Yearout introduced Gayle Edmiston, the newly appointed member to the Metropolitan Planning Commission representing the City of Milford. Tyler Ficken, Junction City City Clerk, administered the oath of office to Ms. Edmiston.

3. OLD BUSINESS

Item No. 1 – Comprehensive Plan Update Status ~ Presentation by RDG

Mr. Yearout introduced Amy Haase, RDG Planning & Design project manager, for the update of the Comprehensive Plan.

Amy Haase reviewed the proposed Future Land Use map for Geary County as amended from comments made at the March meeting. She indicated two quarry areas are incorrectly designated as “active” and will be changed. The balance of the County is shown as agricultural. Areas around the cities are shown as urban reserve, intending to designate those areas for future urban development from the cities.

Mr. Yearout questioned whether to show the area south of Grandview Plaza south of I-70 as urban reserve because it is not believed the City will grow across I-70. Mr. Yearout also identified a couple of areas in the southern portion of the County that need to be changed to agricultural. These are shown as residential because of some errors in the land use codes of the County's records.

Tom Weigand, Chamber Executive Director, asked if a buffer area around the city limits was established.

Mr. Yearout explained as a Metropolitan Planning Commission created jointly between the City of Junction City and the City of Milford with Geary County, it is recognized the "urban reserve" area functions as a "buffer" and that is taken into account in zoning actions. Further, the intent of this update to the Comprehensive Plan is to strengthen the designation of "urban reserve" around all the cities to protect those areas from incompatible uses in the future.

Discussion was held regarding the potential need to incorporate a "buffer area" around Fort Riley. Mr. Yearout noted Fort Riley is seeking funding to update all its plans and would be addressing noise buffers and other issues affecting the Fort. Mr. Yearout also reminded everyone of the need to address the "wind farm" prohibition in the Plan.

Ms. Haase reviewed the housing statistics for Junction City and Geary County, showing various tables comparing "needs" to "availability". She reviewed the statistical data compiled showing population of different income levels and available "affordable" housing for each group. Another table compared existing housing to estimated needed housing and the number of vacant lots within Junction City. Ms. Haase stated, based on the data, the vacant lots will take approximately 17 years to absorb, based on current demands.

Ms. Haase stated the Plan should still identify where new residential development might occur within the 20-year timeline. It was agreed that the combination of the urban reserve areas and the general land use policies being developed; especially concerning the breakdown of different residential size lots and types (estate residential; single family; multi-family; mobile homes), adequate direction can be given for this Plan.

Discussion ensued on identifying senior living areas, converting mobile home parks into RV area, affordable housing options, mixed use residential (includes some commercial businesses), grants available through HUD, and other means of financing affordable housing. The fact this area has a lot of transit population due to Fort Riley is also an issue in providing housing needs.

Discussion on flood plain issues and the update to the Flood Insurance maps for the County was held. Mr. Yearout noted the preliminary indications are the areas along Grant Avenue and Chestnut Avenue within Junction City should not be affected by the new maps. It is anticipated more detailed information will be available for the rural areas, which should help with development activity in that area.

Ms. Haase reviewed the statistical data on the commercial demands and development. She discussed the ideas of creating mixed uses along some of the major streets and mixing with the residential areas. This exists to a degree and the potential is there to accommodate that activity with some "standards" for future uses.

Ms. Haase discussed the other commercial developments with special emphasis on the Chestnut corridor; downtown commercial development issues; potential commercial corridor developments along Washington Street, 6th Street, and Grant Avenue; allowing a mixture of commercial uses and apartment living in the central business district; and enhancing the “walkability” of the commercial areas.

Ms. Haase opened discussion on the Industrial and Business Park areas. Tom Weigand asked about specific areas for business development.

Mr. Yearout noted the large area to the southwest of Junction City was being identified for future “employment development”. This envisions a new interchange of Taylor Road with I-70 and recognizes the area can be readily served with water and sewer service extensions from Junction City. There are also areas south of I-70 and east of US 77 Highway and south of Walmart that have potential for similar development, along with the lands protected by the extension of East Street to Grant Avenue if that occurs.

Discussion was held concerning creating an enhanced “ag policy” for the rural areas of Geary County. Mr. Yearout noted he is continuing to work with Chuck Otte on this.

Gary Stith, Flint Hills Regional Council staff member, stated that Riley County had established a 20 acre minimum for rural properties but had changed those standards because so many of those properties have now grown up into cedar trees.

Ms. Haase concluded with discussion on the vacant lots and the plans to work with a “land bank” process to manage converting these properties into developable lots as quickly as possible. This will also permit the City to manage the land so the market is not disrupted.

There being no further comments or discussion, Chair Gustafson asked if staff had any further announcements or business items. Mr. Yearout stated no.

4. GENERAL DISCUSSION

Item No. 1 – Metropolitan Planning Organization

Mr. Yearout reported that everything is moving forward and the TDM (transportation development model) should be complete by early fall. Mr. Yearout stated he plans to ask Stephanie Watts, program coordinator, to make a video presentation later in the summer.

Mr. Yearout said a consultant had been retained to develop the Transportation Improvement Plan for the region and that the plan will address the East Street extension, I-70 interchange at Taylor Road, and other major roadway needs in Geary County. Mr. Yearout indicated this information will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan as it becomes available.

Item No. 2 – Other Items

Gary Stith, Flint Hills Regional Council, gave a brief overview of the recent activities of the Regional Council. In particular, he noted that, in addition to the MPO, the Council was active in the creation of an entity to serve as the recipient of federal funding for public transportation that can no longer go directly to aTaBus. This is due to the conversion of Manhattan to an

“urban area” over 50,000 population, which changes the federal program for public transit funding.

Also, the Flint Hills Regional Council staff is actively working on the establishment of an Economic Development District for the region, which will include all of Geary County. Once established, the intent is to have this entity coordinate the economic development activity in the region, and it qualifies the communities in the region for some federal funding for certain projects. It is too early to determine the full extent of the funding availability, but more will be shared as it becomes known.

In response to questions concerning activities within Milford, Commissioner Edmiston stated a few more homes have been built, the community is working on upgrading playground equipment in the parks, and the support of the school activities continues. There are no specific development proposals being presented at this time.

Mr. Yearout stated next month’s agenda is very active and another presentation from RDG on the update to the Comprehensive Plan is scheduled. Mr. Yearout asked if the MPC would prefer to have the RDG presentation moved to the June meeting, or if the members would be willing to meet early for the Comprehensive Plan update. It was the consensus of the Commission to meet at 5:30 p.m. in the basement conference room for the RDG presentation and then convene in the City Commission Chambers at 7:00 p.m. for the normal business items. Mr. Yearout stated food would be provided for the meeting at 5:30.

There being no further business or comments, Chair Gustafson called for a motion to adjourn.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Dibben moved to adjourn. Commissioner Moyer seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Chair Gustafson declared the meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

PASSED and APPROVED this _____ day of May, 2014.

Maureen Gustafson, Chair

ATTEST:

David L. Yearout, Secretary