

MINUTES
BARTHOLOMEW COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION MEETING
MAY 9, 2012 AT 8:30 A.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 123 WASHINGTON STREET
COLUMBUS, INDIANA

MEMBERS PRESENT: Zack Ellison (President), Mike Ferree, Jim Reed, Paul Franke, Jorge Morales, Tom Finke (Secretary), Don Meier, Phyllis Apple and Dave Hayward (City Plan Commission Liaison).

MEMBERS ABSENT: Lisa Moore

STAFF PRESENT: Jeff Bergman, Sherrie Grable, Melissa Begley, Trudi Smith, Thom Weintraut, Derek Naber, Heather Pope, Danny Hollander and Cindy Boll (Deputy County Attorney).

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes of the March 14, 2012 Meeting (Approval and Signing)

Motion: Mrs. Apple made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Reed seconded the motion and it carried unanimously by voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS REQUIRING COMMISSION ACTION

None

NEW BUSINESS REQUIRING COMMISSION ACTION

General Resolution 2012-01 (Northern Gateway Land Use and Transportation Plan) – a resolution approving the Northern Gateway Land Use and Transportation Plan as an Element of the Comprehensive Plan for Bartholomew County and a recommendation on its adoption to the Bartholomew County Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Weintraut presented.

On December 16, 2009, the Bartholomew County Plan Commission authorized the City of Columbus-Bartholomew County Planning Department to prepare a plan for future land use and transportation for the area surrounding the Interstate 65 (I-65) and United States Route 31 (US 31) interchange. This area has been defined as the “Northern Gateway.”

Since that time, the Planning Department has facilitated the work of a steering committee that has reviewed existing conditions, set goals and created the Northern Gateway Land Use and Transportation Plan.

The County-Wide Land Use Plan that was adopted on February 3, 2003, identifies the area surrounding I-65 and US 31 as part of the “Development District” because of the access to two primary arterial highways. The plan did not provide details or specific land use categories.

The intent of the Northern Gateway Plan is to provide specific guidance to Bartholomew County in regards to future development in the area.

The guidance includes future land use recommendations, policies for land uses and transportation and transportations improvements, referred to as transportation action series.

The critical issues represent both current and future strengths, weaknesses, opportunities or threats for the focus area. By identifying the critical issues, potential solutions can be conceptualized.

The focus area has many regional destinations, such as the outlet mall, industrial parks and Camp Atterbury, because of the access provided by I-65 and US 31.

The focus area also contains many large undeveloped agricultural parcels as well as underutilized developed parcels, making this area prime for new development. Certain sections within the focus area have greater potential to host more uses than others due to fewer constraints (nearby residential uses, vehicular access, etc.).

The area is also highly visible from I-65 so any perception visitors might gain from the area will serve as a reflection on Bartholomew County as a whole as well as the Town of Edinburgh and the City of Columbus.

Within the focus area, there are 12 places where public roads intersect with US 31. As future development occurs where should future intersections be allowed and where should they be limited? Will additional traffic volume decrease the safety and efficiency for certain intersections? Also, as development occurs, where should new roads be located to handle the additional traffic?

There are potential solutions which can help solve existing problems or promote continuing positive trends within the focus area. These solutions are identified by the subsequent future land recommendations and policies.

Derived from the identified critical issues, the policies provide specific development guidelines within the focus area. Each identified policy references the specific critical issue from which it was derived.

The land use policies which are described in the text are in some cases identified on the "Future Land Use Recommendations & Land Use Policies Map". The recommended land uses identify the types of future uses recommended for particular areas within the focus area.

The policies for transportation try to improve and maintain the level of service within area. The policies recognize that while Bartholomew County does not have control of the thoroughfares of US 31 and I-65, a coordinated and joint effort is needed to achieve the desired long-term outcomes.

The action series lists the various improvements in a specific order (1,2,3, etc.). As each step is accomplished the result will improve vehicular efficiency. In addition to the numbered steps, there are also items which are not needed to be completed in any order.

Action series one focuses on improving the road configuration within Section 1 (the northeast corner of the I-65 and US 31 intersection). The progress begins by improving internal circulation within Section 1, which will lessen the traffic flow at the intersection of Heflen Park Drive and US 31. Once dependence on Heflen Park Drive is decreased, it will allow the US 31 median break to be closed to ensure vehicular efficiency and safety.

As private development occurs incrementally within Section 4 (the southeast corner of the I-65 and US 31 intersection), the road configuration should be coordinated and planned efficiently. Improvement of the County Road 700 North railroad crossing will enhance circulation within Section 4. The road network in the area (which may be built by private developers), should then not only be connected to US 31 but also to roads that are east of Section 4.

Mrs. Apple asked if Oxford North had an option on the land at the southeast corner of I-65 and US 31.

Mr. Weintraut said he believe there was an option to buy but wasn't sure where they stood on this at this time.

Mr. Franke asked if this was on Bear Lane.

Mr. Weintraut stated it was the land behind Weise Toyota Dealership and the Speedway Gas Station. He has not had any contact with the developer to know what their plans are at this time.

Mr. Morales questioned who was responsible for building the road share at this location.

Mr. Weintraut stated the developer would be responsible for the building of the road.

Mr. Morales questioned the issue of the railroad tracks in the area and wanted to know if it would have any impact.

Mr. Weintraut stated there would have to be cooperation from the railroad with the county to improve that crossing.

Mr. Ellison opened the meeting up to the public.

Mr. Buck Ritz with Milestone Contractors spoke. He wanted to know what type of flexibility a developer would have to modify the future road alignments shown in the plan.

Mr. Bergman stated the plan is only a guide and doesn't have any enforcement attached to it.

Mr. Ferree asked if there were changes to what is being looked at would it be administrative or would that require Plan Commission action? For example if a developer came in and proposed a different kind of connection.

Mr. Bergman stated the plan is only a guide and doesn't have any enforcement attached to it. Most of the cases would be something that would be coming to the Plan Commission through a subdivision plat or rezoning filing. At that time staff would point out how it conforms or doesn't conform to what's shown in this plan and then the Plan Commission would have some discretion to make sure those pieces all fit together the way they were intended to.

Mr. Franke asked about the extension of Hartman Drive. His opinion is a first step needs to be taken in the event that the County would decide to extend Hartman Drive. He asked if that corridor has been reserved would the County have to buy the right-of-way?
By extending Hartman Drive the County could clear up a congestion problem that we have at this time.

Mr. Bergman suggested to Mr. Franke the Bartholomew County Commissioners might want to discuss this option with legal counsel when the time comes. There is language on those plats that commit the developer to building that road at a certain point and he didn't think the language commits them to dedicate the right-of-way to the County. Answering the question may require a little more study.

Mr. Franke stated it is not a very long street but yet it would clear up a dangerous situation.

Mr. Ellison asked if there were any other comments or questions.

Mr. Terry Piatroski, owner of Burger King in Taylorsville: stated that over the past 5-8 years there has been discussion on whether or not a traffic light is going to be installed at US 31 and Bear Lane. He wanted to know if in fact there would be a traffic light installed.

Mr. Ellison stated that was a matter for INDOT.

Mr. Hayward discussed what INDOT looks for before deciding on placing a traffic light somewhere.

Mr. Franke asked if INDOT had been approached about improving the interchange of I-65 and US 31 traffic so Southbound US 31 traffic that wants to go North on I-65 doesn't have to cross US 31 anymore?

Mr. Ellison asked Mr. Hollander if he had heard anything from INDOT regarding this.

Mr. Hollander stated he had not.

Mr. Bergman asked Mr. Weintraut if he had spoken to INDOT.

Mr. Weintraut stated he did have a meeting with INDOT and at that time they did not feel it was necessary to change that intersection.

Mr. Ellison asked if there were any other questions or comments. There were not and he closed the public portion of the hearing.

Motion by Mr. Morales to approve General Resolution 2012-01 (Northern Gateway Land Use and Transportation Plan) and send the plan to the County Commissioners with a favorable recommendation. Seconded by Mr. Ferree. Motion carried unanimously by ballot, 8-0.

Mr. Ellison gave Mr. Weintraut and Mr. Naber a special thanks for all their work on this project.

Mr. Bergman indicated that a date will be selected for this to go to the County Commissioners.

DISCUSSION ITEM

Mr. Bergman reported back to Mr. Morales as to how much was spent on postage for mailings to County Plan Commission Members last month. That figure was \$7.70.

Mr. Ellison stated it was good to remember how it used to be done which was all packets were delivered and it was a lot more expensive.

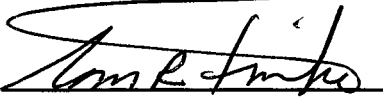
Mr. Bergman stated this Friday all Planners would be going to the Indiana Chapter of the American Planning Association Spring Conference. They will be picking up an award for the department's web site as the Outstanding Marketing Project for the past year. That award recognizes the best public outreach effort by a Planning Department in the State of Indiana for the past year. Everyone on the staff played a part in this.

Mr. Bergman also stated Mr. Naber had passed his LEED AP ND exam. He is one of 5 people in the State of Indiana who has this credential.

Mr. Bergman stated the Flood Regulation Study Committee has made good progress. There should be a draft recommendation within the next several months.

ADJOURNMENT: 9:30 a.m.

Zack Ellison, President



Tom Finke, Secretary

