

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Development & Planning (D&P)

CHAIRPERSON: Diane Gallagher, Chairman

DATE/TIME: March 23, 2021 @ 5:30 p.m.

5PRESENT:

☒ Diane Gallagher

☐ Staci Duerr

☒ Scott Toot

☒ John Schultz

☒ Bob Heuerman

☒ Darcy Wild

☒ Bill Bingham

☒ John Lang

A quorum was established.

Other Board members: None

Others: Mike Dittmar, Mel, Gratton, Emily Legel, Dan Reimer and Eric Tison

1. Approval of Minutes

- a) Review and approve minutes for the February 23, 2021 Development & Planning Committee meeting – **Bob Heuerman made a motion to approve the minutes for the February 23, 2021 Development & Planning Committee meeting. Seconded by John Lang. Motion passed following a roll call vote resulting in all ayes.**

2. Citizens' Comments – None

3. Unfinished Business

- a) Relocation Guide progress – Emily Legel, Executive Director, NW Illinois Economic Development (NWILED) reported that this was a collaborative effort by Janelle Keeffer at the City of Galena, Rose Noble at Visit Galena/Galena County Tourism and Angela DeVere at the Galena Area Chamber of Commerce over the past few months. They have been working on a pdf of the guide that we can use for visitors entering our region or realtors to share with people who are looking to relocate. It shows quality of life, parks and important things. Each community is also represented. Noble did an incredible job with the design work. This guide can be found on the NW Illinois Economic Development (NWILED) website.
- b) Discussion and possible action on Scope of Services for Comprehensive Plan RFP to be requested from possible plan consultants – Eric Tison – Nothing new at this time.
- c) Review and discussion of Chapter 9 of Comprehensive Plan – Eric Tison reviewed Section 9.5 Goal IV: Scenic Beauty Protection, Section 9.6 Goal V: Agriculture, Section 9.7 Goal VI: Rural Character/Quality of Life, Section 9.8 Goal VII: Natural and Historic Resources, Section 9.9 Goal VIII: Cooperative Planning and Section 9.10 Growth and Development of the comprehensive plan. Keeping in mind the aesthetics of the County and these high priority objectives, do these still make sense and are we meeting these objectives? Is this something we may want to focus on changing or amending? John Lang asked if Tison had any recommendations. Tison responded that aesthetics are always important, so he would probably suggest looking at these highest priority objectives. Under Scenic Beauty Protection, item A, number 3 may be not so high priority any more. Long-term that may need to be looked at closer. There was considerable discussion on a vacant property at the corner of Hwy 20 and Hwy 84. Mel Gratton added that it is not if these areas should be developed, it is how they should be developed. Gratton also discussed interchanges. Encourage development near or adjacent to our municipalities. The committee then discussed agriculture. If you look at the zoning map most of the County is agricultural. This County has always had this agricultural importance and the Zoning Board has always been very much aware of that. There are a number of agricultural uses that do not involve the Zoning office. There was discussion on a pamphlet on the code of country living. This is no longer being distributed because there were objections to it because it had a negative tone so it was shelved. Gallagher asked if this could be looked at and possibly rephrased. Tison would be happy to take a look at it and see if there is an opportunity to bring it back with

some amendments or revisions. Gratton commented that we have to keep in mind that the comprehensive plan was developed prior to our current zoning ordinance. Many changes have been made in the ordinance since then and we have updated a lot of the items. Gratton explained the Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (L.E.S.A.) scoring system and the importance of it. The comprehensive plan may need to be updated to include this. Tison feels rural character/quality of life and natural and historic resources are related and in a way connected back to section 9.5 scenic beauty protection. There is an element of fluidity in what the comprehensive plan does trying to keep things protected. Under 9.8, B.5. adopting an historic preservation ordinance, set up a preservation commission for voluntary recognition of local landmarks is an oversight that goes back to his office not getting involved in how things look. This should be up to the individual cities in terms of where the buildings are. There may be an opportunity to combine some of these items, but Tison also feels they stand alone on their own and they are all interrelated. They don't necessarily reflect anything that Tison has to get involved with. It really comes down to is there going to be a detrimental effect on something like this based on a zoning application. John Schultz would like to see added to section 9.7 Rural Character/Quality of Life A. something about the ambulance service. Tison agreed we would want to see that stand alone with its own bullet point. Another potential to be added to the objective is the County Park under section 9.8 natural and historic resources B. The last section, Growth and Development most directly effects the work that the Zoning Board does in relation to the comprehensive plan. This is where the subdivision ordinance would come in to play. The Zoning Board's ultimate task is to determine whether or not the use is appropriate for that particular piece of property. Gratton asked the committee to please keep in mind that the comprehensive plan is only a guide and it does not have the teeth that the zoning ordinance has.

4. New Business

- a) Discussion and possible action on presentation for the Galena Public Library Program regarding what Counties do and how to get involved – Diane Gallagher reported the Galena Public Library is celebrating the library over a two week period by creating YouTube videos on different topics and the Adult Services librarian has asked has asked if we would like to do something for the County. Gallagher and Regez were interested in helping people understand how to get involved in the County and understand what the County Board does. NACO has a very good two minutes video that explains what counties do. We would take the categories under that area to role play a situation or two, then take about a ten minutes presentation before opening it up to questions. They would talk about the census, farmers' markets, fiber, etc. There is a Chamber event coming up on July 31st that they would like to participate in. The cost of a table would be \$250 and it will be held at Ashton Hill Farms, the new wedding venue in Galena.

5. Staff Reports

a) Building & Zoning

- 1. Monthly Report– Eric Tison, Planning & Development Administrator, reported that we are off to a little bit of a slow start. To expect the kind of volume and permit value in revenue last year he may not be so robust given the early returns here. We are at ten permits for the month of February. Last year we were up near 30. Tison doesn't know what is going to happen here long term. We are seeing consistent information that the cost of building materials is skyrocketing. It appears to be extending beyond the wood products into the other finishing products now. It is still early to tell. Tison added something new on page 27 of the packet. He will add to this report each month as they complete zoning cases so that you are all aware of what the Zoning Board is taking action on. If it is listed as a variance, you will not see that at the County Board level. The Zoning Board has final disposition on the variances.

b) Economic Development

- 1. NW Illinois Economic Development Monthly Report – Emily Legel, NW Illinois Economic Development Executive Director, reviewed her report that was included in the informational packet.

c) **Ad Hoc Economic Development Committee** – Diane Gallagher commented that there is a committee meeting coming up next Monday. John Schultz added that they are doing the work that they need to do, but he is not sure that they need to meet monthly. In his opinion, every other month would probably be sufficient.

d) **LRA Board**

1. Update on LRA/Port Authority Discussions – Ron Smith is still our representative for the County Board. Dan Reimer is not aware of any new developments. Steve Keeffer is actually chair of the LRA Board. You may want to consider inviting him to a future committee meeting.
6. **Citizens' Comments** – Mike Dittmar commented that he felt Emily and the others who worked on the relocation guide did a great job. Dittmar expressed his concern with our ability to keep the next generation in Jo Daviess County. He would like to see more input from others in updating the Comprehensive Plan. The most important industries in Jo Daviess County are agriculture, tourism and the future which is economic development.
7. **Board Member Concerns** – Bill Bingham gave an update from the Law & Courts Committee and the Ad-Hoc MDFPD Tower Committee. We found out some good news as to where that tower can go and it will be a significantly lesser cost than originally anticipated. Bingham also reported on a couple projects that are happening with GGMI – Galena Country Tourism. The first is a co-op advertising program which will be offered to all tourism related businesses in the County. The other program is being offered in corporate municipalities. Businesses that participate in this program will pay \$0 with the Galena County Tourism spending up to \$10,200 per city. This initiative will run through March and April. Scott Toot reminded the committee that the zoning ordinance was created by the County Board and is administered by Eric Tison. What he is administering was created by the County Board. Diane Gallagher commented on the call center in Hanover and how diligent the Highway Department staff have been in fixing up that building in a very economical way.

The next regular Development & Planning Committee meeting will be Tuesday, April 27, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m. following a motion made by Scott Toot and seconded by John Schultz. Motion passed following a roll call vote resulting in all ayes.