

City of Ann Arbor

100 N. Fifth Avenue
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Minutes

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

4:30 PM

City Council Chamber

Greenbelt Advisory Commission (GAC)

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Jennifer Hall called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present 6 - Tom Bloomer, Dan Ezekiel, Jennifer Santi Hall, Sylvia Taylor, Christopher S. Easthope and Peter Allen

Absent 3 - Michael Garfield, Gilbert S. Omenn and Laura Rubin

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Ezekiel, seconded by Commissioner Bloomer, that the agenda be approved as presented. On a voice vote, the Vice Chairperson declared the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. 08-0478 Greenbelt Advisory Commission Minutes of April 2, 2008

A motion was made by Commissioner Taylor, seconded by Commissioner Bloomer, that the minutes of April 2, 2008 be approved by the Commission and forwarded to the City Council for filing on 5/19/2008. On a voice vote, the Vice Chairperson declared the motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

1. 08-0539 Greenbelt Strategic Plan

A questionnaire was handed out to the Commission regarding the Greenbelt Strategic Plan.

Commissioner Hall explained that the survey will help the subcommittee in reviewing the strategic plan. A better sense of where the commission stands is needed and whether the plan should or should not be changed and what direction should be taken. She asked that the Commission read over the survey today and turn them in to Ginny Trocchio by the next meeting in June.

A draft copy of the strategic plan will be provided to the commission for their review via email.

Commissioner Garfield arrived at 4:38 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present 7 - Tom Bloomer, Dan Ezekiel, Michael Garfield, Jennifer Santi Hall, Sylvia Taylor, Christopher S. Easthope and Peter Allen

Absent 2 - Gilbert S. Omenn and Laura Rubin

2. 08-0475 Communications One-Pager

Commissioner Ezekiel explained the one page flyer summarizing what the Greenbelt Advisory Commission does. A map of the greenbelt would also be provided on the flyer. The flyer would be updated periodically and at a minimum once a year.

Commissioner Hall suggested placing the flyer on the web and to also make it available to the public by placing them in the City Hall Lobby on the first floor.

The Commission discussed additional changes to the in more detail. The following suggestions were made:

- 1. Include at map depicting the greenbelt area.*
- 2. Include information about the Greenbelt Advisory Commission.*

Commissioner Hall suggested passing this information on to City Council at one of their meetings. It was suggested that the information be presented to Council under their Introduction section of the agenda.

Commissioner Hall also suggested that commissioners reach out to councilmembers in their respective wards, giving them periodic updates about what is going with the Greenbelt.

Commissioner Easthope suggested creating a map that shows the different parcels purchased, how much they cost, and how the money was broken down. He explained that this was a good way for councilmembers to visualize it and help understand the program.

Ginny Trocchio said that she is working the map with GIS staff and would get this information to the Commission soon.

A motion was made by Commissioner Easthope, seconded by Commissioner Bloomer to approve the proposed Greenbelt flyer with changes. On a voice vote the Vice Chair declared the motion carried.

CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS

A motion was made by Councilmember Easthope, seconded by Commissioner Taylor, that the meeting be adjourned so that the Commission could enter into Closed Session to discuss pending land acquisition applications. On roll call the Vice Chair declaring the motion carried, with the vote reading as follows (The meeting adjourned at 4:52 p.m.):

Yeas: 7 - Commissioner Bloomer, Commissioner Ezekiel, Commissioner Garfield, Commissioner Santi Hall, Commissioner Taylor, Councilmember Easthope and Allen

Nays: 0

Absent: 2 - Commissioner Omenn and Commissioner Rubin

MEETING RECONVENED

A motion was made by Commissioner Garfield, seconded by Commissioner Ezekiel, that the meeting reconvene. On a voice vote, the Vice Chair declared the motion carried, and the meeting reconvened at 5:45 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **08-0540** Motion to Recommend to City Council to Increase the City's Contribution to Application 2007-18

A motion was made by Commissioner Ezekiel, seconded by Commissioner Bloomer, that the motion to recommend to City Council to increase the City's contribution to application 2007-18 be approved. On roll call, the Vice Chair declared the motion defeated, with the vote reading as follows:

Yeas: 4 - Commissioner Bloomer, Commissioner Ezekiel, Commissioner Taylor and Allen

Nays: 3 - Commissioner Garfield, Commissioner Santi Hall and Councilmember Easthope

Absent: 2 - Commissioner Omenn and Commissioner Rubin

2. **Welcome to Commissioner Allen**

Commissioner Hall welcomed new Commissioner Peter Allen to the Greenbelt Advisory Commission.

Commissioner Easthope left at this time.

3. **Fair market Value by Appraisal or by Other Means**

Commissioner Garfield said that discussions took place about how the city should approach transactions given the current real estate market. The commission has not figured out a way to solve this in an approach that is feasible. He suggested that the commission think through this more strategically.

Commissioner Allen said that fair market value is changing dramatically in terms of development in the township, in the typical single family detached home on a quarter acre and didn't see a promising future going forward. He didn't think that it would ever recover because of the way it's been over the economic cycle. He added that the commission needs to take advantage of that as fiduciaries for the city and public's interest.

Commissioner Bloomer said that confident appraisals, although they do lag the market, do follow the market. We set ourselves up for second guessing by the public and by other participants or interested people. If we rely on something other than appraisals to us a basis for our decisions, then it is not a wise policy in the long run. Sometimes appraisals will work against us and other times for us. In the long run, the evenness and reliability of that system prevails.

Commissioner Taylor said that we have a double standard in this regard. There is one

standard for the property owner/farmer and one standard the developer who made a bad choice in buying the land. The hardest thing for her is separating the two. It's one thing to be hard on a developer that made a bad investment and take advantage of that and another thing to take advantage of a owner/farmer who feels he was unfairly dealt with.

Commissioner Ezekiel said that as time goes on, some of this will become clearer as to where the trends are moving. He agreed with Commissioner Allen that there will be no change in the current any time soon. There are hard feelings gendered among farmers now when talking about what the true valuations are, but people get used to it. If we keep working steadily, people's expectations and appraisals will get better. He concluded by saying that we will have to wait a while until we have real comparables before we really know what the values are on the PDRs.

Commissioner Hall asked if the graphs reviewed in closed session on pricing could be published without property identifiers. It would be helpful to have that information on the website so that the public could see how the price has changed over time.

Peg Kohring said that she would look into this and report back to the commission.

After further discussion it was suggested that an ad-hoc committee be formed to review the way transactions are approached and create an ad hoc committee to explore this further.

Commissioners Hall, Taylor, Allen, Bloomer and Easthope were asked to be a part of the ad-hoc committee and Commissioner Hall would chair that sub committee.

The survey passed out to the commission should be returned to Ginny by May 15, 2008. Ms. Trocchio said that she would email the survey to the commission and commissioners to respond by the end of next week.

NEXT AGENDA ITEMS

The following items were proposed for discussion at the next regular session of the commission:

- 1. Discussion regarding Ann Arbor Township*
- 2. Mike Williams, an appraiser, to address the commission regarding appraisal trends.*
- 3. Discussion regarding the new manager in charge of the Farmer's Market*

REPORT FROM COMMITTEES

None.

COMMUNICATIONS

None.

1. Finances

Ginny Trocchio handed out a memo regarding land acquisition finances. The memo does not include anything approved by City Council. A copy of the memo is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Garfield, seconded by Commissioner Taylor, that the meeting be adjourned. On a voice vote, the ~~Mayor~~ Vice-Chair declared the motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 6:22 p.m.