

City of Ann Arbor

301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
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Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 14, 2011

4:30 PM

City Hall, 301 E. Huron St., 2nd Floor, Council Chambers

Greenbelt Advisory Commission (GAC)

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Ezekiel called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m. in the Guy C. Larcom, Jr. Building, 2nd Floor Council Chambers, 301 E. Huron St.

ROLL CALL

Present 5 - Tom Bloomer, Dan Ezekiel, Peter Allen, Catherine Riseng, and Liz Rother

Absent 3 - Michael Garfield, Commissioner Laura Rubin, and Carsten Hohnke

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Allen, seconded by Commissioner Riseng, that the Agenda be approved with the following changes:

Move: 11-1180 FY10-11 Financial Report (Consider before Old Business)

On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY PUBLIC COMMENTARY (4 SPEAKERS MAXIMUM - 5 MINUTE SPEAKING TIME - SIGN UP MUST TAKE PLACE PRIOR TO THE MEETING BY NOTIFYING THE CHAIR OR CITY STAFF. THIS SECTION OF PUBLIC COMMENTARY IS LIMITED TO ITEMS RELATED TO THE AGENDA.)

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of August 10, 2011 were not available.

1. **FY10-11 Financial Report**

Kelli Martin, presented the FY10-11 Financial Report to the commission. She said that they brought in less money than in other years. Ms. Martin then answered questions of the commission.

Commissioner Allen recommended that staff graph the key totals for the public and asked that the report be made available online. Commissioner Allen also suggested that big ticket items like revenue and expenses be highlighted in the report for the public as well.

(Councilmember Hohnke arrived during the presentation of the Financial Report.)

Commissioner Hohnke suggested including operational methods to the Financial Report in the future. (A copy of the financial report is on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Present 6 - Tom Bloomer, Dan Ezekiel, Peter Allen, Carsten Hohnke, Catherine Riseng, and Liz Rother

Absent 2 - Michael Garfield, and Commissioner Laura Rubin

2. 11-1180 FY10-11 Activity Report

A motion was made by Commissioner Bloomer, seconded by Councilmember Hohnke, that the commission consider File 11-1180 FY10-11 Activity Report after the FY10-11 Financial Report. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

Ginny Trocchio presented the FY10-11 Activity Report to the commission. After review of the report by the commission, it was suggested that goals for public communication be included in next year's Activity Report. (A copy of the financial report is on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

OLD BUSINESS

1. 11-0852 Greenbelt Boundary

The board discussed the greenbelt boundaries in detail. Commissioner Ezekiel said that the original boundary was created during a campaign during 2003 and was not a part of the ballot that the voters voted on in November of 2003. When the commission began meeting, they found that the boundary set by ordinance by City Council, subsequent to the Election, did not meet their needs.

A subcommittee was created in 2006-2007. The committee consisted of two of the original board commissioners, Mike Garfield and Bob Johnson, who had drawn the original boundary. They felt that the original boundary was approximately right, and served a purpose of setting a greenbelt that was close to the city so that citizens, voters and taxpayers had easy access to view the properties that were preserved, but they also felt that they were unnecessary tight and that there were opportunities just outside those boundaries that had originally been set. There were opportunities for good properties and opportunities to find matching funding outside the original boundary.

The subcommittee made a recommendation to council which was adopted, that recommended bumping out the boundaries by one mile in four townships. The subcommittee has reviewed the greenbelt boundaries again and has come up with proposed changes that the commission would review today.

Ginny Trocchio presented a map of the proposed new areas and went over each area in detail. She explained that the red/pink properties on the map were ones that have been protected. The green properties are properties that have been protected by another agency. One of the proposals that the subcommittee talked about was squaring off the boundaries in Salem Township (northeast corner) as well as Lodi Township (southwest corner). Those townships were not bumped out in the 2007 boundary expansion because those townships were not actively involved in PDR or were not willing partner with the City. Salem Township has passed a PDR Ordinance and has allocated \$200,000.00 a year for the next five years to preserve farmland. Lodi Township has been contributing \$1000.00 for each one that is done in their township.

Commissioner Riseng said that part of the reasoning for including Lodi Township was

primarily financial, because they are now getting contributions from Lodi and Salem Townships but weren't before. They have also found that there are wonderful properties available in both townships, so there is an opportunity to get PDR rights in those areas. They also felt like it was consistent with the existing boundaries that they have, still being within a reasonable distance from the City, so it's not changing the overall mission.

Commissioner Ezekiel said that the 2007 boundaries included language that said if there is a certain farm that has straddled the boundary, partly within and partly without, that could be considered in its entirety. They did not anticipate this situation, but then it happened, that there were two parcels across the street from each other, one within and one without, had the same ownership, everyone thinks of them as the same farm. However, they are different parcels. They bought development rights from the parcel within the boundary and received a huge federal grant to help with it, but was not able to consider the other parcel, which was under the same ownership. Everyone considered it to be the same farm, but technically it's not.

A motion was made by Commissioner Riseng, seconded by Commissioner Bloomer, to expand the Greenbelt boundaries in Lodi Township and Salem Township to be consistent with the adjacent Township's Greenbelt boundaries. In addition, to recommend to City Council to amend the Chapter 42 Ordinance to allow properties adjacent to the Greenbelt boundary that is under the same ownership as property located immediately adjacent within the Greenbelt Boundary to be considered for acquisition. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

Commissioner Riseng said that there are some properties that are high priority bio-reserved properties that have been identified by the Huron River Watershed Council that lay within the buffer area and there may be some other farmland as well as properties that are adjacent to the boundary.

She explained that the stricter criteria could have much stronger financial contributions; where we would require 50% donations, or that it could be that it has a higher value as either agricultural land or as open space bio-reserve type priority.

Commissioner Allen said that the price should go down per acre, in the areas that are further out and the development pressures should be less. But on the other hand, their attention should be focused on the core area and the key 1000 acres block.

Commissioner Bloomer said that it would make sense that the development pressure would be less and the price less as you go out, however, he did not think the difference would be that much because they are not going that far out. They are still well within the development pressure area.

The commission discussed the proposed boundary changes in more detail.

A motion was made by Commissioner Riseng, seconded by Commissioner Allen, to recommend to City Council to amend the Chapter 42 Ordinance to allow properties adjacent to the Greenbelt boundary to be considered for acquisition and to recommend to City Council to amend the Chapter 42 Ordinance to create a one mile buffer surrounding the Greenbelt boundary to allow properties that meet stricter criteria located within the buffer to be considered for acquisition. On a roll call, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion defeated:

Yeas: 1 - Commissioner Ezekiel

Nays: 5 - Commissioner Bloomer, Commissioner Allen, Councilmember Hohnke, Commissioner Riseng, and Commissioner Rother

Absent: 2 - Commissioner Garfield, and Commissioner Rubin

NEW BUSINESS

1. 2012 Meeting Calendar

Ms. Trocchio presented a survey for commissioners to fill out regarding meeting times for 2012 and asked that they be returned at their nearest convenience. The commissioners were asked to rank their preferences for meeting days and times on a scale of 1-4, with one being their first choice.

2. Executive Committee Members

Commissioner Ezekiel announced that there's an opening on the GAC's Executive Committee. Commissioners that are interested should contact Ms. Trocchio. He explained that there would be significant turnover with the commission over the next few years and commissioners whose terms are not expiring soon should consider sitting on that committee. The committee meets on an as needed basis. Commissioner Allen volunteered to serve on the Executive Committee.

3. 2011 Bus Tour

Ms. Trocchio announced that she would be scheduling another bus tour for the fall of this year. Proposed dates are October 15, and November 5, 2011. More information about the tour would come before the commission at a later date.

NEXT AGENDA ITEMS

None presented.

REPORT FROM COMMITTEES

The Greenbelt Advisory Commission went to the Homegrown Festival and were quite busy talking with people who showed an interest in the Greenbelt.

COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Ezekiel said that they received a communication from Lodi Township Treasurer. She indicated that they had jumped the gun and talked about the boundary bump idea at their meeting earlier this week. The consensus so far was that they are not opposed to GAC bumping out the boundary in Lodi in any way. Mr. Ezekiel communicated back to them that we would tell them right away when this commission had acted and made a recommendation. He said that he would make contact with Lodi and Salem Township and notify them of the GAC's recommendation. He added that he would also contact other townships for interest and hopefully receive strong letters of support that could be forwarded on to City Council with this commission's recommendation to expand the boundary.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY (5 MINIMUTE MAXIMUM SPEAKING TIME - NO LIMIT TO THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE SPEAKING IN THIS SECTION.)

None.

CLOSED SESSION

A motion was made by Councilmember Hohnke, seconded by Commissioner Allen, that the Commission enter into Closed session to discuss land acquisition(s). On a roll call, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried and the meeting recessed at 5:35 p.m.:

Yeas: 6 - Commissioner Bloomer, Commissioner Ezekiel, Commissioner Allen, Councilmember Hohnke, Commissioner Riseng, and Commissioner Rother

Nays: 0

Absent: 2 - Commissioner Garfield, and Commissioner Rubin

MEETING RECONVENED

A motion was made by Commissioner Allen, seconded by Commissioner Bloomer, that the meeting reconvene. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried and the meeting reconvened at 6:16 p.m.

Application No. 2011-04

A motion was made by Commissioner Riseng, seconded by Councilmember Hohnke, to recommend to City Council to move forward with the Purchase of Development Rights on property identified in Application No. 2011-04, if at least 20% matching funds are received. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

Application No. 2011-01

A motion was made by Commissioner Riseng, seconded by Commissioner Allen, to recommend to City Council to move forward with the Purchase of Development Rights on property identified in Application No. 2011-01, if at least 20% matching funds are received. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

Application No. 2005-05

A motion was made by Commissioner Riseng, seconded by Commissioner Rother, to recommend to City Council to partner with Legacy Land Conservancy for Purchase of Development Rights on Application No. 2005-24 and contribute up to \$15,000.00. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Allen, seconded by Commissioner Riseng, that the meeting be adjourned. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the

motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

Dan Ezekiel, Chairperson

Anissa R. Bowden
Recording Secretary