

**GREENBELT ADVISORY COMMISSION MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION – JULY 7, 2006**

Commissioner Laura Rubin officially called the meeting to order at 4:42 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chamber, 100 N. Fifth Ave, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

ROLL CALL OF COMMISSIONERS

Present: Commissioners Laura Rubin, Robert Johnson (4:42 p.m.), Gilbert Omenn, Sylvia Taylor, Jennifer Hall, Albert Berriz, Dan Ezekiel, Tom Bloomer, Mike Garfield, 6;

Absent Commissioners Mike Garfield, Gilbert Omenn, Albert Berriz, 3.

City Staff Present: None.

Others: Peg Kohring, and Ginny Leikam, The Conservation Fund

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

None.

READING AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

AGENDA APPROVED WITH CHANGES

Commissioner Taylor moved, seconded by Commissioner Hall that the agenda be approved with the following changes:

OLD BUSINESS

Add: Boundary Adjustment

CLOSED SESSION

Move: Closed Session (**Move to the after Old Business**)

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

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MINUTES OF JUNE 6, 2007 APPROVED

Commissioner Ezekiel moved, seconded by Commissioner Taylor that the regular session minutes of June 6, 2007 be approved as presented. On a voice vote, Vice Chair declared the motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING

None.

OLD BUSINESS

BOUNDARY

Commissioner Ezekiel moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson that the following boundary adjustment recommendation be presented to the Ann Arbor City Council:

1. GAC reaffirms its boundary recommendation to City Council, as approved at the June 6, 2007 meeting as follows:

To better implement our strategic plan, we recommend that the Ann Arbor City Council amend the boundaries of the Greenbelt by moving them 1 mile further west in Scio and Webster Townships, 1 mile south in Pittsfield Township and 1 mile east in Superior Township.

2. We direct staff to develop the legal description of the boundaries, maps, and any other language or information Council will need, without delay, and provide these to Commissioner Johnson this week. GAC waives the need to approve the specific language, maps and other information before they are presented to City Council, as long as they conform to the description above.
3. Staff will present the final language, maps and other information to GAC at the next GAC meeting.

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

Commissioner Rubin welcomed Bloomer to the Commission.

Commissioner Ezekiel announced that staff recently closed the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) on the property in Northfield Township.

RECESS FOR CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Johnson moved, seconded by Commissioner Hall that the regular session of the Greenbelt Advisory Commission be recessed for a closed session to discuss pending land acquisition applications.

On roll call, the vote was as follows:

Yeas, Commissioners Laura Rubin, Robert Johnson, Gilbert Omenn, Sylvia Taylor, Jennifer Hall, Albert Berriz, Dan Ezekiel, Tom Bloomer, Mike Garfield, 6;;

Nays, 0.

The Vice Chair declared the motion carried and the meeting recessed at 4:50 p.m.

Commissioner Johnson moved, seconded by Commissioner Taylor that the regular session of Greenbelt Advisory Commission be reconvened.

On a voice vote the Vice Chair declared the motion carried and the meeting reconvened at 5:23 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

GREENBELT NEWSLETTER

Peg Kohring, briefed the Commission on the Greenbelt News Letter. The Executive Committee suggested including more of the business aspect in the news letter. The news letter will be sent out to all perspective applicants to the greenbelt and also hope to include the newsletter in the City's utility bills. The newsletter is expected to go out some time in September 2007.

COLLABORATION WITH DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

Commissioner Rubin said that this collaboration came out of Commissioner Berriz's encouragement to sit down with development community and talk about different kinds of protection strategies.

Peg Kohring announced that they just broke the 700 acre barrier with the John and Bev Alexander closing. They have 16 million in land value that has been protected and received 7.5 million dollars in matching funds (at a rate of 47% matching funds). Over the years that they have been implementing the greenbelt, there has been a significant

change in couple of areas. One is the amount of matching funds. The Farm and Ranch Protection Program has been reduced from 4 million to 1 million dollars. State funding is sporadic. It's not clear if there is going to be a Farm and Ranch Protection Program or a State Program next year. So the amount of funding that is available is not available as far as matching funds.

There has been a significant change in the real estate market. Some home builders have completely pulled out of Michigan. There are significant numbers of foreclosures of homes and large properties that developers own in Washtenaw County and specifically within the greenbelt. There is an opportunity to take advantage of some of the raw land that is on the market that may not have been looked at before. Commissioner Berriz pulled a number of people together to discuss the changing market. The first thing that was done was to get appraisers together and ask questions of them.

Investment Portfolio Opportunity

The Commission asked that The Conservation Fund to proceed with the Investment Portfolio Opportunity.

Commissioner Hall moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson that the Commission approve the following resolution as presented:

(RESOLUTION REGARDING MATCHING FUNDS POLICY ON GREENBELT ACQUISITIONS)

Whereas, Chapter 42 of The Ann Arbor City Code establishes the Greenbelt District and enables the City to purchase development rights on property within the district;

Whereas, Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program and the State of Michigan Agriculture Preservation Fund grant funds have significantly decreased over the last 4 years;

Whereas, Limited funds are available through the County Natural Area Preservation Program and Township land preservation funds;

Whereas, The Greenbelt Advisory Commission strongly recommends a minimum of 25% matching funds on Greenbelt purchases, provided by either grant funds, other local matching funds or landowner donations;

RESOLVED, That purchases with matching funds greater than 25% will receive a higher priority ranking than other properties, provided that they are consistent with the Greenbelt Strategic Plan;

RESOLVED, That this will not preclude the Greenbelt Advisory Commission from considering purchasing properties which do not have 25% matching funds, but that

have exceptional or unique characteristics that warrant the preservation of the property and are consistent with the Greenbelt Strategic Plan.

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

MATCHING FUNDS POLICY

See resolution above.

PRESERVE WASHTENAW CHARTER

Ginny Leikam presented the Charter for Preserve Washtenaw to the Commission and said that they would like to take it to City Council for approval.

Commissioner Johnson moved, seconded by Commissioner Taylor to create a resolution to send to City Council to approve the Charter for Preserve Washtenaw.

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

NEXT AGENDA ITEMS

OPEN MEETINGS ACT QUESTIONS

CHAPTER 42 ORDINANCE AND BOUNDARY REVISIONS

FINANCES AND BOND PROCEEDS

REGISTRY PROGRAM

REPORT FROM COMMISSION COMMITTEES

SMALL FARMS INITIATIVES

Commissioner Hall suggested that the next step to get together with Ann Arbor Township and other entities working in Washtenaw County that are related to small farm preservation, to talk about partnering to leverage dollars to support small farms.

COMMUNICATIONS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Johnson moved, seconded by Commissioner Ezekiel that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting adjourned at 6:10 pm. The next meeting is set for September 4, 2007 at 4:30pm in City Council Chambers at City Hall.

Laura Rubin, Chairperson

Anissa R. King

Anissa R. King
Recording Secretary