



# Jackson County Planning Commission

Staffed by the Region 2 Planning Commission (R2PC)  
120 W. Michigan Avenue • Jackson, MI 49201  
Phone (517) 788-4426 • Fax (517) 788-4635

## MEETING MINUTES

July 9, 2020

5<sup>th</sup> Floor Commission Chambers • Jackson County Tower Building • Jackson, Michigan

**Members Present:** Mr. Eric Beda, Industry and Economics; Mr. Timothy Burns, At Large; Mr. Roger Gaede, Environment; Mr. Russ Jennings, At Large; Mr. Corey Kennedy, Jackson County Board of Commissioners; Ms. Nancy Hawley, At Large; and Ms. Jennifer Morris, At Large

**Members Absent:** Mr. Ted Hilleary, Education, and Mr. Jim Videto, Agriculture

**Liaisons Present:** Mr. Grant Bauman, Principal Planner

**Others Present:** None.

Item 1. **Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance.** The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Chair Morris. Those in attendance rose and joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Staff introduced Commissioner Beda to his fellow Commissioners who then introduced themselves to him.

Item 2. **Public Comment.** There was no public comment.

Item 3. **Approval of Minutes.** A motion was made by Comm. Kennedy, and seconded by Comm. Burns, to **approve** the March 12, 2020, meeting minutes as presented. *The motion was approved unanimously.*

Item 4. **Approval of the Agenda.** A motion was made by Comm. Hawley, and seconded by Comm. Gaede, to **approve** the July 9, 2020, meeting agenda as presented. *The motion was approved unanimously.*

Item 5. **Request(s) for Review, Comment, and Recommendation.**

a. **Consideration of Township Zoning Amendment(s).** None.

b. **Consideration of Master Plan(s).** None.

c. **Farmland & Open Space Preservation Program (PA 116) application(s).** None.

Item 6. **Other Business.**

a. **Unfinished Business.**

**Jackson County Master Plan.** Staff summarized his memos regarding urban and rural areas, farmland preservation, and social vulnerability and suggested that they be incorporated into Chapter 2 of the Master Plan. There was consensus among the Commissioners for this proposal. Staff will incorporate the information regarding urban and rural areas and social vulnerability immediately. Incorporation of the Farmland Preservation information will be delayed until staff receives the GIS data from the American Farmland Trust.

Commissioners then discussed the proposed goals and actions, using the suggestions provided by Comm. Hawley as a starting point. Comm. Morris went through the suggestions and provided her comments. There was consensus among the Commissioners for the suggestions provided by Comm. Hawley, as modified by Comm. Morris, and staff summarized them:

- **Non-Motorized Facilities**

Action: Promotes Natural Beauty Roads.

Note: The goal of the Natural Beauty Road program is to preserve in a natural, essentially undisturbed condition, certain county local roads having outstanding or unusual natural beauty by virtue of native vegetation and/or natural features within or associated with the right of way. These roads can be shared by both non-motorized and motorized transportation modes, offer connections between trail systems, and save county road maintenance dollars.

Action: Recognize and promote the need to preserve and/or restore the Greenways system (diverse wetland areas, drainage ways, and forest lands) that helps assure high quality surface water, native species, wildlife habitat and movement along non-motorized routes.

- **Natural Resources**

Goal: Preserve the community's scenic and rural character by minimizing the impacts of development on environmental features such as wetlands, woodlands, steep slopes, habitats, wildlife corridors, night sky, ridgelines, and scenic views.

Action: Promote municipal planning commissions to protect the surface, groundwater resources and important habitat against the impacts of the adjacent land uses with natural buffer, and greenbelts along lakes and streams.

Note: Shoreline protection measures that restore natural vegetation reduce polluted runoff and overuse near shorelines can improve water quality as much as a costly municipal sewer system.

- **Form-Based Codes**

Action: Promote the use of form-based codes in developed areas to foster predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the code. Form-based codes offer an alternative to conventional zoning regulation.

Example: Sutton's Bay and Traverse City use form-based codes.

- **Dark Skies**

Goal: Discourage the use of poorly designed outdoor lighting that creates glare and unnecessary up-light pollution of the night sky.

Action: Promote public facility's outdoor lighting to be changed to fully shielded LED 3,000K or less color temperature lights that meets the standards set by the International Dark-Sky Association. -Develop educational programs about the adverse effects that artificial lighting has on our environment, safety, energy consumption and our health. Example: In January 2020, Michigan's 2nd Dr. Lawless Dark Sky Park located nine miles east of Cassopolis on Monkey Run Street,

was open. Breathtaking views of the night sky are not the same today as in the past. We now strain to see a few stars visible to the naked eye. This is due to light pollution caused by poorly designed outdoor lights that not only mask the beauty of the night sky, but also cause negative effects to environmental and human health.

- **Renewable Energy**

Goal: Encourage the development of alternative or renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, and geothermal.

Actions: Promote municipal planning commissions to protect adjacent properties and natural resources from potential adverse effects of large alternative energy systems. -Support future studies that may utilize less productive agricultural lands in the development of alternative or renewable energy sources.

Comm. Kennedy suggested that a goal and actions be added concerning commercial marijuana facilities. He proposed that the JCPC should map the locations of those facilities in order to assess their impact on communities (i.e., the costs associated with roads, utilities, police protection, social services, etc.). In 5-10 years, the JCPC can then use that data when making recommendations on future rezoning requests associated with commercial marijuana facilities.

Staff will incorporate his memos and the agreed upon goals and actions into the master plan. The Commission now has the information it needs to develop a future land use map. Staff will arrange a workshop for the next time the Commission is able to meet in public.

b. **New Business.**

**Special Meetings.** Staff informed Commissioners of a request for a special meeting regarding a proposed rezoning in Leoni Township. It was discussed that although Section 106(B) of the bylaws provides a procedure for calling a special meeting, the Commission has never employed that prerogative and the Chair will not call for one. Either staff or Chair Morris will inform the applicant that a special meeting will not be held if he contacts them.

Item 7. **Public Comment.** None.

Item 8. **Commissioner Comment.** None.

Comm. Gaede voiced his initial concern regarding meeting in person, but appreciated what staff did to prepare the meeting space. Comm. Kennedy thanked Comm. Beda for joining the JCPC.

Item 9. **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned by Chair Morris at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Grant Bauman, Recording Secretary