

**Hastings Charter Township
Barry County
Rutland Charter Township
Carlton Township
City of Hastings
Joint Planning Alliance**

**Draft Meeting Minutes
November 21, 2011**

Members Present: Wiswell, Carpenter, Miner, Medendorp, Warren, Brown, Jasperse, Mansfield, Phillips, McManus, Redman, Carr.

Members Absent: Haywood.

Ex-Officio Members Present: Geiger.

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Byrnes.

At the request of Chairman Carr, the meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m. by Vice-chairman Brown.

Brown led the JPA members and the public in attendance in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by Wiswell, second by Carr to approve the minutes of the October 17, 2011 meeting of the Joint Planning Alliance, and to receive and place on file the agendas for the October 19, 2011 and November 16, 2011 meetings of the Rutland Charter Township Planning Commission, the minutes of the September 13, 2011 and October 19, 2011 meetings of the Rutland Charter Township Planning Commission, and the minutes of the November 7, 2011 meeting of the City of Hastings Planning Commission.

Motion carried.

Brown asked for comments or additions to the agenda for tonight's meeting. No comments or additions were forwarded.

Motion by Redman, second by Carr to approve the agenda for tonight's meeting.

Motion carried.

Haywood arrived at 5:34 p.m.

Brown asked for comments from the public. No comments from the public were received.

Brown asked the representatives from the various jurisdictions to report on any projects or activities in their respective areas.

McManus stated that Barry County was working on development of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). McManus stated that the County was currently contacting and visiting the various townships for their input.

Warren reported that the Rutland Township Planning Commission was currently reviewing a site plan for a new road in the Swan Hollow development.

Mansfield stated that the City of Hastings had substantially completed the Riverwalk Trail project, but that small items of work were still ongoing. Mansfield stated that the City Planning Commission was holding public hearings at their November and December meetings to solicit comment regarding amendments to a variety of downtown zoning ordinances. Mansfield stated that the Planning Commission would be considering a zoning ordinance in January to allow taller buildings (higher than currently allowed by Code) in the downtown.

Carr stated that Rutland Township was still awaiting final development of the urban services agreement prior to taking action on adoption of the amendment to the Joint Land Use plan or any action related to the joint zoning overlay concept.

Carr stated that the Rutland Township Board of Trustees had recently reviewed the two draft agreements prepared by consultant Gerald Fisher as envisioned in the urban services arrangement previously approved in concept by all of the units of government participating in the JPA. Carr reported that the Rutland Board had approved the two draft agreements in concept, and had asked Carr to forward the agreements to the Township Attorney for review and comment. Carr stated that the Township Attorney was currently away from his office, so Carr was temporarily holding the agreements to obtain any additional comment from members of the Board or public.

Mansfield reported that the City Council would be reviewing the agreements at a workshop prior to the Council's regular meeting on November 28, 2011. Mansfield stated that once the City Council had reviewed the agreements and presented their

comments, the agreements would be forwarded to Fisher, the Township Attorney and the City Attorney for final development.

Brown asked for a report from the JPA subcommittee charged with pursuing the opportunity for additional collaboration and service sharing arrangements among the JPA member units and other units of local government. Mansfield reported that the subcommittee (consisting of Brown, Carr, Carpenter, McManus and himself) had met following the last meeting of the JPA. Mansfield stated that the committee had decided that due to the very short timeframe and the relatively limited expense associated with pursuit of collaborative opportunities identified by GVMC, the committee would not pursue grant funding from the State of Michigan for assistance in evaluating the opportunities for collaboration. Mansfield stated that the units of government would continue to pursue these opportunities using their own resources.

Carr reported that he was pursuing possible grant opportunities for funding the work of the JPA with representatives from Prein & Newhoff.

Brown stated that the JPA Education Committee had no report. Redman questioned what efforts had been undertaken in the past to educate and inform the various City, Township and County boards and commissions regarding the work of the JPA. All indicated that their respective boards and planning commissions were receiving the minutes of the JPA meetings. Mansfield stated that he, Carr and Brown had visited the County Commission in the past to present the joint land use plan and other work products, but that no major work products had been developed by the JPA in the recent past that would merit presentation. Mansfield stated that once the urban services agreements were approved and implemented, it would be appropriate to present those agreements to the local boards, commissions, service clubs and other groups.

Brown asked for comment regarding the list of work tasks to be accomplished by the JPA during 2011. The members of the JPA discussed at length possible opportunities for alternative energy and energy efficiency programs.

Wiswell reminded those present that funds remained available under the USEPA Brownfield Site Assessment Grant program.

Brown asked for comments from the public.

Mike Rawson explained the current work of the Barry County Parks and Recreation Commission related to the development of non-motorized trails throughout the County. Rawson stated that the County was making good

progress in the development of trails. Rawson stated that non-motorized trails present a very attractive form of economic development, attracting users and visitors from a broad area. Rawson stated that the Parks and Recreation Commission was seeking alternate routes where property owners opposed the trails, and was working with property owners to address their concerns. Rawson asked the JPA for a letter of support for the development of non-motorized trails in Barry County.

Wiswell questioned the situation currently facing the Barry County Parks and Recreation Commission related to trails, and in what areas they were seeking assistance. Rawson stated that the Commission was currently seeking funds to purchase land for trail development. Rawson stated that the Commission was also seeking assistance with obtaining conservation easements related to trail development. Rawson stated that additional trail development could bring significant economic development revenue to Barry County.

McManus excused himself from the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Redman questioned where the Commission was focusing their work. Rick Moore stated that Eaton County was having a great amount of success with trail development. Moore stated that the Commission was looking at links to Eaton County, and completing the trail between Nashville and Vermontville. Moore stated that he would love to see the trail completed between the City of Hastings and Thornapple Manor / Charlton Park. Moore stated that the Parks and Recreation Commission had recently been honored for their successful work in trail development.

Motion by Carr, second by Redman to have Secretary Mansfield draft a letter of support from the JPA for the development and improvement of non-motorized trails in Barry County.

In favor: Wiswell, Carpenter, Miner, Medendorp, Warren, Brown, Jasperse, Mansfield, Phillips, Haywood, Redman, Carr

Opposed: None.

Absent: McManus

Motion carried.

Carr asked for comments from the members of the JPA.

Redman stated that he had recently been elected to serve on the Hastings City Council. Redman stated that it would therefore probably not be appropriate for him to continue to serve as a representative of Carlton Township on the JPA, even though he continued to own property in Carlton Township. Redman questioned the desire of the JPA relative to his continued participation on the board. Carr stated that Warren had notified him that she intended to resign from the JPA in January, 2012. Redman asked that this matter be added to the December, 2011 JPA agenda for further discussion.

Mansfield stated that the City had applied for funding from the MDNR for further development of trails in the City. Mansfield stated that the JPA's letter of support would be helpful in demonstrating the community's support for non-motorized trail development. Mansfield stated that the new River Trail in the City was getting a very large amount of use.

Brown stated that a new trail had recently been constructed in New York City, and that the trail had increased the value of properties along its length by more than \$200,000.

Brown asked for additional comments from the members of the JPA. No additional comments from the members of the JPA were forwarded.

Motion by Redman, second by Medendorp to adjourn at 6:38 p.m.

Motion carried.

Submitted by:

Jeff Mansfield
Secretary