

Indiana Land Resources Council
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 22nd 2011
12:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Indiana Government Center South, Conference Room 17

Present: Bruce Everhart, Joe Kelsay, Mary McConnell, Bob Burke, David Compton, Gene Schmidt, Eric Kelly

Absent: Nancy Cline, Jon Craig, Fred Walker

The meeting began with a motion by Gene Schmidt to approve the April 2011 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mary McConnell and passed unanimously.

The council then received an update from Amy Cornell regarding county assistance provided on behalf of the ILRC since the last meeting. Mike Baise and Sarah Simpson gave a summary of the APA-IN Fall Conference presentation that took place on October 21, 2011 in Brown County. The council requested that Amy send a link to the statute regarding DHS review of building plans. Gene Schmidt encouraged Amy to reach out to conservation districts to make them aware of ILRC resources. This relationship is important in counties that do not have a planner.

Mike Dale, Executive Director of the Hancock County Plan Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals, provided a summary of the Hancock County Agribusiness Ordinance. A farmer began an agritourism business under a temporary permit. Eventually the operation expanded beyond the scope of the temporary permit. The county elected to defer code enforcement by BZA in order to draft an agribusiness ordinance. They have been working on the ordinance for about a year. Mike will present the document to the plan commission in early 2012. Eric Kelly likes the tiered approach. The council suggested a temporary use permit for multiple years. Mike explained that the county has already examined this issue and the rural residents did not support a multi-year permit. The council acknowledged all the hard work and expressed its appreciation to Mike for being the first to tackle the issue of an agritourism ordinance.

Amy Cornell requested council feedback regarding an agritourism model ordinance. Mary McConnell expressed concern that there might be a potential conflict of interest because the chair of the council has an agritourism operation. Eric Kelly made a motion that after a thorough discussion of the issue the council determined that no conflict exists. Bob Burke seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Bruce Everhart made a motion that Amy Cornell draft an agritourism guidance document that draws on resources developed by other states. Gene Schmidt seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Eric Kelly presented a draft version of the Smart Growth Guide for Indiana. The council agreed with the overall design and approach of the document. Mary McConnell suggested a “how to get started” section for county planners and suggested changing The Nature Conservancy Indiana Chapter to Indiana Land Protection Alliance. Eric Kelly will continue to develop this document in accordance with feedback from the council.

The council also reviewed the ILRC website. Amy will send a link to the site so that each member can provide feedback. Bruce Everhart suggested adding commentary for links to additional resources.

The council discussed several ideas of projects that they could address next. Mike Baise, an audience member, suggested annexation of rural lands. Although this topic presents several challenges, it is a hot issue in Vanderburgh County and Center Grove. David Compton suggested economic development in rural areas. The council could discuss what the state can do to promote economic development. Representatives from OCRA would need to be involved in this discussion. Rural septic systems, drainage law and conservation issues were also discussed. Mary McConnell suggested that the council set aside time during the next meeting to brainstorm.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy K. Cornell
Executive Director