

The Knox County Regional Planning Commission
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January 16, 2025

The regular meeting of the Knox County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) was held on Thursday, January 16, 2025 at 7:30 p.m. in the Memorial Building, 112-114 E. High St., Mount Vernon.

Chairman, Roger Yaman called the meeting to order. Darrel Severns, Secretary for the Commission, called the roll.

The following voting representatives were present:

James DeChant	Berlin Township	Dave Marietta	Monroe Township
Steve Bratton	Brown Township	Alan Doup	Morgan Township
Joe Fritz	Brown Township	Tim Smith	Morris Township
Chodd Armfelt	Clay Township	Curt Bechtel	Pike Township
Roger Yarman	College Township	Darryl Frazier	Union Township
John Norris*	Harrison Township	Jeff Furay	Danville
Jason Rogers*	Hilliar Township	Ray Brewer	Fredericktown
Monica Severns	Jefferson Township	Elizabeth Bonaudi	Gambier
Marta Hill	Liberty Township	Robert Collins	Martinsburg
Kris Caldwell	Milford Township	Barry Lester	Commissioner

Others present:

Darrel Severns	Knox RPC	Jeff Gottke	ADF
Kyle Shackle	KPH	Drenda Keesee	Commissioner
Landon Magers	KPH	Ed O'Connell*	College Township
Rob Clendenning	KSWCD	Cheryl Splain	Knox Pages
Donna Hochstetler	Clinton Township	Karen Norris	Guest: Harrison Township
Maggy McKinley	Guest: Jefferson Township	George Blocker	Guest: Milford Township

**Alternate*

A quorum was present with 20 voting representatives.

Approval of Minutes – Roger Yarman

Mr. Bratton moved to approve the November 2024 minutes. Mr. Bechtel seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken with a unanimous aye vote. Motion carried.

Financial Report – Roger Yarman

Mr. Yarman presented the Financial Report for November 2024. The expenses were \$53,439.31. Income for the month was \$1,635.50. The month began with \$132,094.27 and ended with \$80,290.46.

Mr. Yarman presented the Financial Report for December 2024. The expenses were \$2,456.78. Income for the month was \$7,679.00. The month began with \$80,290.46 and ended with \$85,512.68.

Mr. Bechtel moved to approve the November and December 2024 financial reports as presented. Mr. Bratton seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken with a unanimous aye vote. Motion carried.

Old Business

Null

New Business

Executive Committee Report—Darrel Severns

Null

Secretary's Report —Darrel Severns

Mr. Severns stated we have 12 townships that have sent in their resolutions and membership dues. Cutoff for membership is March. If you have a township meeting before and have gotten the invitation, we would like to see you send it in. As said earlier at the orientation meeting, this should be a pretty active year for the RPC and we would like to have all your voices there.

The RPC office has been busy with trying to get the Comprehensive Plan process going. Day-to-day office work has been pretty slow since early December. We just got in today the first storm water permit application, which is unusual being this far into the month. Lot splits have been coming in fairly steady. We are getting things finished up from the end of the year. Mr. Severns has a bit of work to do on the record keeping for the KSWCD in getting all the lot splits that were done in 2024 entered into that system. Hopefully, by the end of the month they will all be entered.

Question was asked about the 12 townships being paid and there are 10 townships that have not sent in their dues or resolutions. Last year we had all townships but one (1) (Clinton), and all but one (1) village (Centerburg). We would definitely like to welcome them back.

Land Use – Steve Bratton

The update of the Berlin Township Zoning Resolution revision was reviewed Tuesday. The handout goes over the major changes. This, again, was done by Compass Point out of Cincinnati. They have done Pleasant, Howard, and Berlin townships. There were a few recommendations that are on the handout. Mr. Clendenen's comment about how many acres are needed to become agricultural that conflicts with the Ohio Revised Code (ORC). There are a couple of grammatical errors, and a few sentences that need to be rewritten.

The Land Use Committee is recommending the RPC approve Berlin Township's Zoning Resolution revision update.

Mr. Bechtel moved to approve the Berlin Township Zoning Revision as presented. Mr. Norris seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken with a unanimous aye vote. Motion carried.

Social Improvement and Economic Development Committee – Shelia Adams

Null

Education and Outreach Committee – Darrel Severns

Null

Transportation Committee – Jim Hughes

Null

Nominating Committee – Roger Yarman

Null

Knox County Commissioner – Barry Lester

Null

Knox Public Health – Kyle Shackle

Null

Knox Area Development (ADF) – Jeff Gottke and Darrel Severns

Printed copies of the revised Comprehensive Plan draft were handed out to the representatives of the townships that were in attendance. Some of them will be hand delivered for those that are not here. The role of townships in the whole planning process, within the ORC, Ohio is one of the only states that doesn't require any special requirements for adoption of a comprehensive plan. Basically, the way comprehensive plans work, and updates to them, is it originates with RPC and the Land Use Committee refers it to the full RPC for vote. There is no statutory requirement on how the RPC evaluates the plan draft. It will be up to you. If you feel that this is complete enough and is good for the county, then you would refer it to the county Commissioners, and there is no statutory rule on how they would handle it. They would go through their own system. They would then officially adopt it. Townships have no prescribed role according to the ORC, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't have a say in it. This is the first step in RPC's approval process, but also the county Commissioners' process as well. These are not binding, although helpful to craft your own zoning resolutions and land use map, and other things around them or do something completely different.

The Commissioners are asking for township feedback within 30 days. This allows you to go through your process for a full review and get public input in that time frame. We are asking that feedback be delivered through the website togetherknox.org with a form to give feedback. All the feedback will be collected and attached to the plan as an addendum and will act as guidance in the future.

Historically, the process that has taken place through the RPC is presented, which we have here, and then we schedule two (2) public hearings that the RPC hosts. After the two (2) public hearings are done, theoretically, we will have those scheduled and at our next RPC meeting on February 20th, we can take a vote on whether or not to recommend moving it forward to the county Commissioners. Our duty tonight is to set the dates for two (2) public hearings. In going through the calendar and get the scheduling right so we can get it advertised in the newspaper and online, if we can get it scheduled tonight, we can get it into the January 25th public notice section. We can have our first public hearing on Wednesday, February 5th morning at 10:00 in the chapel where we meet for the RPC meetings. The second hearing would be February 13th at 6:30 pm in the Memorial Theater. There should be a time limit for the questions and comments to about three (3) minutes, otherwise your time will run over. We can also discuss this at the RPC meeting on February 20th. That RPC meeting, we would be voting on the plan.

Mr. Frazier moved to approve the Public Hearings of February 5th at 10:00 am and February 13th at 6:30 pm. Mr. Rogers seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken with a unanimous aye vote. Motion carried.

We have two more sets of meetings coming up with about 12 public meetings for the comprehensive plan. Because there are a lot of entities involved with the city, county, RPC, we thought it would be helpful if all three of those organizations could meet together in one spot. The planners will be there walking us through the plan, doing a little bit of an orientation, and an education session for questions. Hopefully, everyone can get on the same page. No dates have been set, but Mr. Severns will get the information out to you. After we would like to do regional county meetings as well. We will divide the county up into quarters and invite mostly elected officials, trustees, village, etc. plus the public can come too. We will have regional county meetings with dates to be set.

Knox Soil and Water Report – Rob Clendening

Mark your calendar for noon on Friday, March 21st, for the annual KSWCD Pancake luncheon held here in the basement of the Memorial Building. An invitation will be mailed out to the township house. Consider yourself invited tonight. Call the KSWCD office to let us know you are coming.

Mr. Yarman asked Mr. Clendening about a comment he made at the Land Use meeting regarding farmland that if you want to keep it rural, but you are building houses on farmland and saving the woods and hills and stream areas. Mr. Clendening stated it was just an observation that a lot of times we talk about the process of moving forward with the Comprehensive Plan, a lot of times we get wrapped up in the idea that we want to save wood areas or something that may be labeled as an environmentally sensitive area. Sometimes when we're saving those, we are pushing development into prime farmland areas instead. As you are reading the Comprehensive Plan and trying to make planning decisions, that is one of those things that you have to consider. Residential, commercial, and industrial

properties can afford to mitigate, and it is no skin off of their nose in terms as being able to develop those areas. But agriculture cannot afford to do that. It was just an observation that sometimes when you are thinking about planning decisions, things don't always work the way you think they might.

County, City and Village Reports

Brinkhaven/Gann – Sheila Adams

Null

Danville – Jeff Furay

We have new builds going on for single family homes. The old trailer park is being revitalized with possible two to three family homes. We are going to have a new playground put in this year at the park. We are in the process of electrical upgrades at that same village park for food trucks in the future. We are working with our local business group, Main Market and Beyond, to renovate our memorial at the park. Our Zoning Officer, Todd Bender has done an outstanding job at bringing in revenue with his efforts.

Fredericktown – Ray Brewer

Null

Gambier – Roger Yarman

Null

Martinsburg – Robert Collins

Null

Mount Vernon – Matt Starr

Null

Speaker –

Null

Others from the floor

Null

Mr. Furay moved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

The next meeting of the Knox County Regional Planning Commission will be February 20, 2025, in the Knox County Service Center 117 E. High St., Mount Vernon, OH at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Darrel Severns
Executive Secretary