

Notes from meeting with Lansing Comp Plan Committee – Oct. 9, 2013

Present – committee – Maureen Cowen, Lynn Leopold, Susan Miller, Susan Tabrizi, Jase Boese, Phil Snyder, Ruth Hopkins, Kathy Miller, Jon Kanter

Ag Committee Members – Skip Hardie, Kay Moore, Larry Moore, George Frantz, Monika Roth

M. Roth shared powerpoint overview of plan. Key points:

Ag is alive & well in Lansing.

Recommending change from RA to AG zone in most of N. Lansing.

Zoning review (Frantz) – objectives: make zoning ag friendly; ensure consistency with Ag & Markets Ag District Law; AG zone would send a message that **Agriculture is the prime use in the zone**, may reduce land completion and issues arising from non-farm rural neighbors; strengthening agriculture will strengthen ag development opportunities; also recommending some definition modifications in current zoning law.

Questions/Discussion

Susan Miller pointed out strategy that seems to be contradictory...Farm Friendly Zoning – 1-e – avoid zoning that is too restrictive for farmers; need to clarify this statement. **Are farmers supportive of or concerned about the new zone?** Skip stated that the sentiment from the farm community seems to be in support of the new zone. Frantz suggested the new zone may reduce density in the ag areas putting less pressure on farming operations and reducing competition for land.

Add a list of permitted uses to text in addition to the uses that are suggested for removal from the zone.

**How does the new zone prevent rural sprawl, stop development from encroaching?** -- may just slow it down...less sprawl means farmers operate more efficiently, therefore, they are more viable which is what keeps land in ag

**Are there more parcels that should be identified for protection thru State program?** Suggestion made to add this as a strategy to the plan. In particular, parcels that serve as buffers in the southern part of the town would be useful to protect ag in the northern part. Need criteria for targeting parcels...as high priority for PDR/protection by permanent easement.

**What about climate change implications?** Skip indicated that he has noticed changes during the past 50 years...more hay cuttings, longer season varieties. Farmers are pretty adaptable to weather changes.

Larry mentioned that having high OM in the soil is one way to reduce the impacts of drought.

Encourage conditions that allow for a diversity of farming enterprises, including small enterprises that raise food for the community.

**There are many non-farmers in the RA zone, how will they be impacted by the change?? Will they support this change???** Need to spell out what it means for them...What rights do they lose, what are the benefits?

Some concern expressed at end pertaining to large farms and water quality impacts. Also, another person mentioned large farm neighbors and manure odors.