

**WILL COUNTY BOARD**  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES**

Immediately following the Forest Preserve Meeting, but not prior to 9:45 a.m.

Will County Office Building – County Board Room  
302 North Chicago Street  
Joliet, IL 60432

**July 9, 2009**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Moustis called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present were Members:** Bilotta, Adamic, Anderson, Deutsche, Singer, L. Smith, Weigel, Dralle, Wisniewski, Kusta, Maher, Traynere, Goodson, B. Smith, Gould, May, Rozak, Konicki, Seiler, Brooks, Stewart, Winfrey, Babich, Wilhelmi and Moustis.

**Absent were Members:** Riley and Blackburn.

**Also Present:** B. Friefeld.

**Present from State's Attorney's Office:** M. Tatroe; M. Manning.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**

Mr. Thanas led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

No minutes were presented for approval.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**City of Joliet to Present its City Center Plan**

Mr. Moustis stated we have been working with the City of Joliet as they go forward with their planning – we are a large part of that plan; the city considers us an important component. They have revised their plans and thought it would be a good idea since we are partners to hear that plan.

Mr. Thanas presented the Concept Plan for downtown Joliet. We would like to see it ripen into an implementation plan; a plan that has a definite scope and has financing and your approval to move forward with it. We need to make sure we engage in the revitalization of downtown Joliet together as a partnership. The primary focus is

on expanding the courthouse; another main issue is parking. We will make many of the one way streets into two way – creating Chicago Street as the main thoroughfare as it was many years ago; the other key boulevard is Jefferson Street. The Transportation Center is getting a lot of feed back; we felt there is stimulus money available for this project. We are proud to be county site; we want to partner and continue to collaborate on this, on the county's mission to serve the citizens.

Mr. Gould left during the presentation.

Mr. Maher indicated this is a great presentation; it has come light years ahead of what we saw 2 years ago. He expressed concern with the narrow streets.

Mr. Thanas stated Chicago Street will be peeled back to its old form, taking out the brick bump outs to have traffic lanes and parking. The main initiative is we want to work with the existing buildings.

Ms. Konicki commented on the Rialto Square Center; the ice skating will be a tremendous offering to children.

Mr. Thanas indicated our vision is to make this a Daley Plaza; this is a great feature for our community, such as the Friday morning Farmer's Market. This is an ideal location; this type of effort, the ice skating is the kind of energy we would like to develop.

Mr. Bilotta asked about the residential component.

Mr. Thanas answered that is something we have heard in Washington –the buzz word is livability. When we made our presentation for the transportation center the first question is where are the houses? The administration's initiative is to create public transportation but also create housing close by. On the lines that we see north of here, there are condos right on the train line. But the administration is looking beyond; it is a function of the economy. It is something we are now working on with staff and our consultants.

Mr. Maher questioned if having a co-use type with public and residential is part of your discussion.

Mr. Thanas replied the residential component is important. Do you build the residential first and hope retail and others will come? We want to create a place where that type of residential development would be available. We have to give people a better sense of security; we know that is an issue and we feel it is safe now. We will have 7 or 8 cameras installed in downtown Joliet, which will help with some enforcement issues. The developers feel the key components are there.

Mrs. Rozak commented this is absolutely fantastic and she hopes to see it some day. Something needs to be done with the infrastructure leading into downtown Joliet both north and south. She hopes that is also part of the conversation; the state has to take care of Route 53.

Mr. Thanas stated a key component is Route 53 going south. We have a lot of challenges - a lot of work to do.

Mr. Anderson commends the city for having this vision. What is the cost? Can this be done under current economic conditions? What type of time frame?

Mr. Thanas replied regarding the Transportation Center, Joliet needs to take full responsibility for pursuing state and federal money; there is money available for projects like this and now is the time. We have been promoting Joliet as the first stop for high speed rail. With the courthouse project, we do not think there will be stimulus money available. What will be available is some bonding authority that we have as public agencies – both the county and city where there are a couple of different forms of bond issues now approved through the stimulus package. We want to get in line with this; the secondary potential funding for the courthouse is private equity. We are getting interest from private equity companies that are interested in working with the county, the city and PBC. That is another avenue we need to pursue.

Mr. Moustis commented on the Build America bonds; this is part of the overall stimulus package from the federal government. It appears that we recently did see our allocation for Will County, what would be available for those bonds. We do need to move in a fairly timely fashion; there seems to be a fairly short window on these bonds.

Mr. Babich questioned if there are plans on providing a link from the Transportation Center to the proposed airport.

Mr. Thanas replied that is another key component. We have been working with Pace and Metra on linking the Transportation Center to many things, for example the Elwood Intermodal and the future Joliet Intermodal; people would take the train and have a bus to take them to the Intermodals. The same thing with the Speedway, to have trains coming in from Chicago and bus people to the Speedway for the race. The CED has taken the lead in that.

Councilman Brophy commented the city and the county have come a long way.

Councilman Shetina stated he served on county board many years ago; there has been a metamorphosis between the city and the county. This is a big vision and we

will work hard to make this work. We need your trust; we have come a long way in doing that.

Councilwoman Quillman indicated we support this project 100%. You have my total commitment to make this happen. We hope we can all move forward and make this happen and we appreciate your cooperation.

Mr. Moustis stated this board is a forward thinking board; we want to go forward with the city.

Mr. Thanas thanked Mr. Moustis and Mr. Walsh for letting us working with your staff and for your time today.

**Other Business**

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Ms. Konicki, second by Mr. Maher, to adjourn the meeting at 11:15 a.m. All in favor.

MOTION CARRIES.