

Meeting Minutes-United Growth Coalition

May 16, 2006

Present: Marsha Wilcox, Cynthia Price, Carol Townsend, Herb Ranta, Jim Dsehinger-Smedes, Jill Myer, Tom Cary, Mike Williams, Jim Ferro, and Kevin Wisselink.

Cynthia Price called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. The minutes from the previous meeting were approved by Herb and seconded by Marsha.

The issue of Commerce Center designation was discussed at length. It was mentioned that Commerce Centers are a state funded program targeting resource centers that have a potential to grow. In the proposed pilot program, twenty population centers would be selected with ten having populations greater than 40,000 and ten less than 40,000. However, all committee members agreed that the proposed legislation is vaguely defined, and that the committee should further define it. Tom brought up the possible connection between various agricultural/environmental projects and the Commerce Center project. The Commerce Center plan could possibly be pushed through the Coalition's connection to the Michigan Land Use Institute through Andy Guy. Tom moved to approve the "concept" of commerce centers as written in the position paper, and Herb seconded. Members also questioned whether Michigan Township Association supports the project. The motion to approve the project passed unanimously.

The next issue discussed was the Community Sustainability Partnership. The committee felt that the goals of the Partnership were similar to those of the UG Coalition. Kevin moved that the UG Coalition sign in as a partner, and Tom seconded. The committee questioned how other groups could become part of the core group of Sustainable Partners. The motion to become a community sustainable partner was unanimously approved.

Next, Herb reported on behalf of the Urban Committee about where the City is currently in the zoning process. He also reported that the principles for the Urban Committee are still being developed.

Tom gave an update on the Rural Committee which is trying to recruit members. They're also working on the PDR campaign, and trying to get more farmers to participate.

It was reported that Merry Malfroid is working on the Coalition newsletter, and is trying to get more articles.

Carol reported that she is trying to get Zenia Cotval to come in and speak. A November date was mentioned as a solution to alleviate scheduling conflicts. The upcoming Growing Communities Conference was also discussed. Also, Tom suggested that the Coalition join WMEAC.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 a.m.