

Fort McCoy Joint Land-Use Study (JLUS) Public Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 26, 2012
6:00 PM
14345 County Highway B, Rolling Hills - Auditorium
Sparta WI 54656

Attendance:

Mark Aumann, U.S. Representative Ron Kind's office
Allan Balliett, DPW, Environmental Div., Fort McCoy
Gail Chapman, Town of Adrian, Monroe County Board
Alison Elliott, Monroe County Zoning Department
Linda Fournier, Public Affairs, Fort McCoy
Randall Heimke, Town of New Lyme
James Kuhn, Monroe County Board
Doug Path, Monroe County Board
Violet Prihoda, Town of Lafayette
Dick Smith, Town of Lafayette
Wayne Tuchalsky, Town of Little Falls
Steve Witt, Town of Greenfield
Richard Yarrington, Monroe County

Staff:

Bryan Law, Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission (MRRPC)

1. Welcome and introductions

James Kuhn, Monroe County Board Supervisor, introduced himself and Bryan Law from the MRRPC, and welcomed everyone to the last meeting of the Monroe County/Fort McCoy Policy Committee. Mr. Kuhn then turned the meeting over to Bryan Law from the MRRPC. Mr. Law asked those in attendance to introduce themselves. After going around the room and getting introductions from each attendee, Mr. Law moved onto the next topic.

2. Policy Committee Business

- a. Minutes from April 24, 2012, meeting were approved.
- b. Presentation on Draft JLUS – Bryan Law, MRRPC

Mr. Law presented a brief summary of the JLUS process. The Policy Committee had met four times previously, heard presentations on likely sources of land-use incompatibility in the future (noise from the Fort, which would be problematic for any residential

development that might be attempted along the boundaries of the Fort), taken public comments at each meeting, discussed the draft JLUS twice before, and made suggestions for improvements to the document.

This discussion was focused on the recommendations of the JLUS, which would need to be approved by the Policy Committee. These recommendations include: (1) maintaining the agricultural character of Monroe County and the Towns surrounding Ft. McCoy through farm-friendly practices; (2) maintaining the rural character of Monroe County and the Towns surrounding Ft. McCoy through environmentally friendly practices toward forests and waterways; (3) maintaining positive relationships between Ft. McCoy and the surrounding civilian communities with greater communication, collaboration, cooperation, and formal partnerships; (4) investigating payments that Ft. McCoy might make to the Towns to compensate for the undevelopable federal land within their boundaries; and (5) encouraging unzoned towns surrounding Ft. McCoy to adopt land use controls. The language in that last recommendation was carefully composed by the Policy Committee to elicit the optimal positive public reaction, and avoid some politically sensitive terminology.

The first recommendation, above, includes a discussion of real estate disclosure – that is, requiring that land buyers be made aware of Ft. McCoy’s presence near the property, and the nature of operations there that can affect life outside the base. This was a major tool that the Policy Committee identified in avoiding land-use conflicts in the future. Not only would such disclosure prevent purchasers from being surprised about the nature of operations at Ft. McCoy, but it would also make them aware of noise, dust, lights at night, etc. that are realities of mechanized farming. Since new landowners – especially those intending to build residential properties – would be aware of these activities on lands near their property before they made the purchase, they would be less likely to complain about the activities. Not only would this help prevent conflict between Ft. McCoy and civilian neighbors, it would also help ensure that people who bought property near Ft. McCoy would maintain its agricultural or forested character, which is a major goal of the community comprehensive plans in the area. The second recommendation, above, was amended by the Policy Committee to include a discussion of any possible purchase of conflict-prone land outside the boundary of Ft. McCoy, essentially creating a buffer. This discussion was included while acknowledging that the representatives from Ft. McCoy said any such buy-outs were highly unlikely from the federal government any time in the foreseeable future.

After discussing a few changes that would be made to the wording of the recommendations, the Policy Committee prepared to vote on approving the JLUS.

c. Approval of JLUS by Policy Committee

The Policy Committee unanimously approved the JLUS, as amended.

The JLUS recommendations will need to be adopted by the County and municipal governments to have the efficacy intended by this JLUS. With the Policy Committee's work completed, Mr. Kuhn re-iterated that Monroe County's Sanitation, Planning & Zoning and Dog Control Committee will take control of the effort to get the JLUS recommendations approved by the County Board and Town Boards. Members of the Policy Committee and Technical Advisory Groups are invited to continue with this effort, going forward.

3. Adjourn

The Policy Committee meeting was adjourned.