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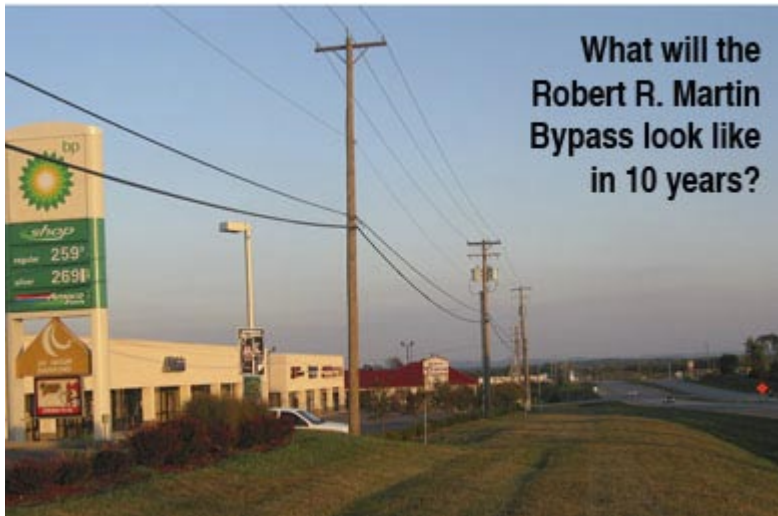
VOTER

Vol. 39 No. 1 September 2005

<http://lwvbmc.iclub.org>

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Berea & Madison County

Forums to urge 'smart' land-use planning



Berea to host first LWV meeting Sept. 22

Madison County 2025: What's YOUR Vision? is the theme adopted for our league as we resume our activities this fall.

LWV advocates greater cohesion between the planning commissions and elected government officials of Berea, Richmond and Madison County as they revise their comprehensive plans for the future.

We are sponsoring two public forums which will continue a dialogue on the principles of responsible growth in our cities and county, an issue which has received lots of attention at this time when local governments are reviewing and revising their five-year comprehensive land use plans.

Citizens have turned out in

numbers that have shocked elected officials in Richmond and at the county planning commission meetings.

Our forums hope to energize and educate citizens in planning for the future of our communities.

Public forums

- **7 p.m. Sept. 22** at Berea Municipal Building. Presenters include Dr. Alice Jones, EKV Planning department.
- **7 p.m. Oct. 20** at Richmond City Commission chambers. Presenters include planner and land use expert Steve Austin of Bluegrass Tomorrow and planning consul-

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Stating League's Position

Excerpts from statement made by LWV director Harriet "Jenny" Bromley at Aug. 29 public meeting on 2005 Madison County Draft Comprehensive Plan.

All three governments are revising their comprehensive plans this fall. All three drafts call for "coordination" of their planning staffs, their planning commissions, their comprehensive plans and their governments. (See page 5.)

But we do not believe these statements urging coordination are strong enough. Economic initiatives taken by one entity affect all of us in Madison County. Annexation decisions by Richmond affect the county and the city of Berea.

We believe this comprehensive plan will be strengthened if it includes a way to simplify and streamline the process of planning and land use decision-making taken in this

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Leader's Corner

Return to 'Active Duty' with LWV

Dear League members:

I hope you had a great summer, full of good work and relaxation. Even though the League doesn't have member meetings over the summer months, the Board has been working hard to plan what we think is an exciting year for us all!

As the saying goes, democracy is not a spectator sport. It takes participation from everyone to make it work.

This month, the League is introducing a new theme that exemplifies what we hope to accomplish this year and in the next several years: Madison County 2025: What's YOUR Vision?

This theme captures all the important work the LWV takes on here in Madison County, from candidate forums, to voter registration, to public meetings on important issues, and everything in between.

We want to challenge each other to create a vision for our communities for the next 20 years, and then work to make it happen!

want to explore creative ways to communicate with our elected officials and inspire a greater number of people to consider running for public office.



Annriette Stolte and Elizabeth Crowe talked about plans for League at a pot luck dinner at the home of Leigh and Pat Jones in Berea on August 5.

Does this mean the League has changed its focus? Absolutely not. However we hope this linking our events in this forward-looking manner will change the way we do business for the better.

We want to uplift the work taking place in government and among non-governmental groups in our cities and county. We want to gain the wisdom and insights of people in our community who may feel as if they don't have a voice in community decision-making.

We want to explore new, creative ways to communicate with our elected officials and inspire a greater number of people to consider running for public office. And last but not least we want to have fun!

We hope you'll jump out of the stands and join us in creating and implementing our programs and theme.

Please note the VOTER calendar for events this Fall, participate when you can, and let the Board know about your vision and ideas!

— Elizabeth Crowe lives in Berea with her daughter Hannah, husband Robert, and their cat Genevieve. She works at the Kentucky Environmental Foundation for the Chemical Weapons Working Group.

CALENDAR

■ **Sept. 22 FORUM**
7-8:30 p.m.

Madison County 2025: What's YOUR Vision? Berea Municipal Building

■ **Oct. 20 FORUM**
7-8:30 p.m.

Madison County 2025: What's YOUR Vision? Richmond City Commission Chambers

■ **Nov. 12 WORKSHOP**
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

How to run for public office: learn what it takes to be or support a candidate. Richmond branch of Madison Co. Public Library.

■ **Dec. tba HOLIDAY PARTY**
Bill & Annriette Stolte home

VOTER DEADLINES

Oct. 1 for Oct. Voter
Oct. 31 for Nov. Voter
Nov. 27 for Dec. Voter

The Voter is a monthly publication of the League of Women Voters of Berea and Madison County. To report ideas or corrections, contact Voter Editor Libby Fraas at <libby.fraas@eku.edu> or call 859 624-1292. You may also mail information to our post office address: LWV of Berea and Madison County, P.O. Box 254, Berea, KY 40403.

Copies of the Voter are also on the Web at <http://lwwbmc.iclub.org>

Bromley states LWV's position at Aug. 29 county meeting

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county. Instead of three planning commissions, we need a joint planning commission made up of appointed representatives from the three governments.

We need to add to this draft comprehensive plan a specific goal, objective and strategy to develop one joint comprehensive plan that will embrace Berea, Richmond and Madison County in a united vision for decisions about growth and development. In five years, when by law we revise our comprehensive plans again, we need to be writing one comprehensive plan.

Why do we take this position?

- 1) to make land use planning and decision making more harmonious in the county.
- 2) to simplify the process of monitoring land use decisions for citizens and to streamline the process that developers must go through in the three different jurisdictions.
- 3) to reduce the cost to taxpayers of redundant planning processes and duplication of infrastructure for three different jurisdictions
- 4) to adopt joint instead of competing approaches to inevitable growth and development

Where is support for a joint comprehensive plan?

- 1) from the very state law that gives land use planning to local government. The county is envisioned as the most logical level to coordinate planning for both incorporated and unincorporated areas in the county.
- 2) from Dr. Ron Marionneaux, our planning consultant, whose work with the three governments is ending this year. He has stated repeatedly that a united approach would result in better decisions about land use.
- 3) from the Richmond Chamber of Commerce which lists as its No. 1 goal the development of Madison County United and the championing of a county-wide Community Strategic Plan.



Berea Mayor Steve Connelly, Madison County Judge-Executive Kent Clark and Richmond Mayor Connie Lawson will be responsible for leading their respective governments to adopt their 2005 final comprehensive plans. Are they willing to consider a unified plan that unites Berea, Richmond and Madison County in land-use decisions?

- 4) Finally support comes from a map of Kentucky showing the location of planning commissions around the state. We are the only county surrounding Fayette County that has independent planning staffs, commissions and plans. The county and the city governments in Scott, Bourbon, Clark, Jessamine, and Woodford operate with one joint comprehensive plan, one joint planning commission, and pool their resources to maintain one joint planning staff. And look at what you might call our "sister" county, Warren County, which also includes a major regional university and the multiple cities of Bowling Green, Oakland, Plum Springs, Smiths Grove and Woodburn: Warren County writes a joint comprehensive plan and operates with a joint planning staff and a joint planning commission.

An invitation to leaders

To make this happen here, the LWV invites Duane Curry and his staff, the Madison County Planning Commission, and the Fiscal Court to participate in our programs for this year on the theme: Madison County 2025: What's YOUR Vision? We are issuing a similar invitation to the city of Richmond and the city of Berea and their planning units.

What will Madison County look like in the next 20 years and what can we as citizens do to shape its future growth and development? Let this draft be revised to include the means to ensure we answer those questions with one rather than three competing visions.

Public forums set for Berea, Richmond

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tant Dr. Ron Marionneau.

Why should you come?

We want to encourage a united vision that embraces our entire county. We want to develop ideas for how we can make that happen. We also want to improve the process for monitoring our land use decisions.

We want to discuss how "we the people" can ensure that our elected officials are accountable for following the goals, objectives and strategies for planning and land use presented in the plans.

Web links

For more information, visit these Web sites:

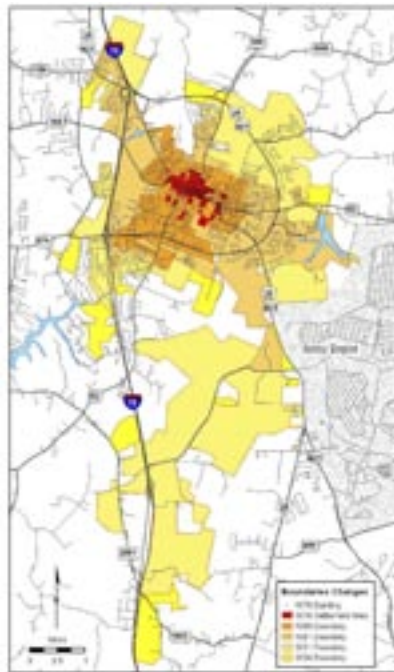
■ Voters for Responsible Growth (<http://users.adelphia.net/~lfraas>)

■ League of Women Voters of Berea and Madison County (<http://lwvbmc.iclub.org>)

■ Bluegrass Tomorrow of Berea and Madison County (<http://www.bluegrass tomorrow.org/>)

Issues arising from GROWTH

in Berea, Richmond, and Madison County



■ Richmond's expansion

P. 38 of the Draft Comp. Plan for Richmond lists seven factors in the 1999 comp plan that should be considered in annexing land.

#2 "Land being annexed should take place outward from the core area in a concentric fashion and not be skewed in one direction."

On p. 39 it is noted that the pattern of annexations has left a number of unincorporated areas completely surrounded (islands) or largely surrounded by city property. Changing from a fairly regular geometric shape for much of its past, to the present elongated shape increases the cost and effectiveness of providing city services."

■ Commercial sprawl

Carriage Gate Shopping Center on the Eastern Bypass in Richmond used to be the home for Lowe's, K-Mart and the Rite-Aid pharmacy. Rite-Aid abandoned its building and relocated about a half-mile eastwards to be closer to the intersection of the northern bypass. Empty parking lots and vacant box buildings are left.

How is the city accomplishing this goal in the 2005 plan? "Focus attention on development of land that is contiguous to the developed portion of the city and to the in-filling of vacant lots and re-use of vacant structures."



■ Loss of farmland to development

Conflicting goals? The Madison County Draft plan suggests "supporting programs to maintain agriculture as an important activity" while also "encouraging new residential subdivision development to take place in areas where plans for upgrading the infrastructure are imminent."

Q & A about the draft comprehensive plans

What is a comprehensive plan?

The state requires each planning commission to prepare a comprehensive plan, which serves as a guide for public and private actions and decisions to assure the development of public and private property in the most appropriate relationships. At least once every five years, the commission shall amend or readopt the plan elements. The amendment or readoption shall occur only after a public hearing before the planning commission.

What does each draft plan say about working with the other planning commissions?

• 2005 Madison County Draft

“process for moving toward greater degree of intergovernmental cooperation and coordination in regards to planning and development; joint meetings of planning and codes personnel; joint meetings of representatives of the three planning commissions; joint meetings of representatives of the three governments.”

• 2005 Richmond Draft

“coordinate with the city of Berea and Madison County in planning for future development in the Richmond-Berea Corridor. It is recommended that the planning and codes officers of each government as well as representatives of each planning commission meet on a regular basis to discuss common planning and development issues.”

• 2005 Berea Draft

“Participate in a coordinated effort with Madison County and the City of Richmond, to plan for future growth and development in the Berea-Richmond Corridor. Ensure that such a plan provides for a greenspace buffer that will separate Berea from encroaching development (and) thereby maintain the city’s unique character. “

It’s time to join, rejoin and support the League

Our newest member Suzanne Robinson joined the League in August, bringing our total to 66. Let’s see if we can’t have two or three new members each month.

Remember that the best way to recruit is for each of us to ask friends and acquaintances to join in our effort. We have a terrific program outlined for 2005-2006, a perfect time for new members. Please do your part by inviting someone to meetings and membership.

Annual dues are \$40 payable to LWV of Berea & Madison County. We hope many of you receiving this newsletter will take the time to support our activities by joining or making a donation.

To join the LWV, **to renew your membership**, or to support our activities, please send your name, address, contact information and check to our Treasurer:

Pat Jones
226 Peach Bloom Hill
Berea, Ky. 40403.

For information about joining LWV, call Elise André at 985-4569.



MEMBER UPDATES

■ Our newest member is Suzanne Robinson, a life-long resident of Berea. Suzanne graduated from EKV in 1990 with a business degree and she and her husband, Ben Robinson III, own Appalachian Arts and Crafts Store near College Square. They have two sons, ages 2 and 9. Please welcome Suzanne Robinson, 204 Peachbloom Hill, Berea, KY 40403 859-986-7342

■ Jeanne Hibberd, a former president of the Kentucky LWV and our own local LWV, is taking a new position at Hindman Settlement School in Hindman, Ky. She will continue to live in Berea. Her e-mail is jmhibberd@hindmansettlement.org

■ Best wishes to Leigh Jones who underwent open heart surgery on Aug. 29 and is now recovering at home.

■ Also to Joan Peoples, who is recovering from her second knee replacement surgery.

Nov. workshop on running for office

Have you ever wondered what it takes to run for public office? Do you think you already have what it takes? Do you have a vision for your community and want to work with others to put it into action?

If so, the LWV invites you to a unique workshop "Running for public office: Why not YOU?" The workshop will explore the ins and outs of running for public office in Kentucky and encourage citizens to participate in the political process

The date is Saturday, Nov. 12 in the Richmond branch of the Madison County Public Library. The time is 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. and includes lunch.

Several years ago, League members Joan Peoples and Nancy Lee-Riffe participated in a "candidate training" workshop sponsored by the League in Louisville. The idea of doing a workshop here in Madison County has been simmering for a while, and the Board felt that, since there will not be any candidate forums this fall, this is the perfect time for such a workshop.

Details on the workshop are still coming together, but so far several local public officials, as well as political

Election 2006

There are no candidates this fall, but look out for next year.

All local offices are up for grabs including the mayors and city officials in Berea and Richmond as well as ALL county offices from county judge-executive to county clerk to magistrate. State senate and representative races will also be on the ballot.

The deadline for filing for office is January 31, 2006.

and media strategists, will be on hand to share their insights with us.

We will also have resource materials so you will know exactly what to do, and by what deadlines, to throw your name in the hat, come the next election cycle.

The workshop cost will be \$15 with a reduced rate of \$5 for students.

Look for more information soon in local newspapers and on the LWV website at <http://lwvbmcc.org>. In the meantime, please contact LWV director Elizabeth Crowe at 985-0641 if you have any questions.

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