

PLAN COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
TOWN OF GRANT  
August 22, 2017

**PRESENT:** Sharon Schwab, Ron Becker, Nathan Wolosek, Tom Reitter, (Committee Members), Kathleen Lee (Secretary), Marty Rutz (Zoning Administrator - arrived at 8:00 pm)

**EXCUSED:** Jim Wendels

**GUEST:** Kristen Johnson

**CITIZENS:** None present

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm by Ron Becker.

**STATE OF PUBLIC NOTICE**

It was stated that the agenda was posted at two posting stations (the Grant Town Hall and the Grant Transfer Station) and on the Town’s website.

**MINUTES**

It was moved by Nathan Wolosek and seconded by S. Schwab to approve the July 18, 2017 Plan Commission Minutes. The motion passed with unanimous ayes.

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Chapter 4 Review

The most recent edits were minor and involved starting the words, First Responders, with upper case letters and spelling out numbers of ten or less.

Additional suggested edits included:

- On page 32, under D. Solid Waste & Recycling Facilities, add to the list of items found in the second paragraph “and filters” following motor oil and add “metal” following electronic waste.
- On page 33, under Section 4.3 B.3., there are currently 5 First Responders.
- On page 38, under F., do not specify the location of the Health Department in Wisconsin Rapids as has been relocated for the second time in few years.
- On page 39, the second complete paragraph, add a comma after Plover Road and remove the comma after the word “both.”

Chapter 5 Review

Edits were reviewed and several recommendations were made.

- On page 50, last paragraph the list of creeks should include Quinnell Creek and not Canal Creek. In the previous paragraph the spelling of Quinnell should be corrected.
- On page 56 - Discussion regarding the water table map took place. The 1981 National Geological and Natural History Survey – Water Table Elevation map forwarded by J. Wendels cannot not be reproduced and edited by the County. That map was compared to the Known Well Depth map produced by the County. There is no discernable difference between the maps. It was questioned if other maps are available including groundwater flow and groundwater elevation maps from the DNR. Kristen Johnson will check with Jen McNelly. At this time we will use the 1981 map. The Town should consider asking the County to increase the well monitoring conducted in the Town of Grant. Doing so may decrease citizens’ fears if they learn that groundwater levels have changed little since 1981.

- To better fit items onto page 57, item 5, Corrosivity/Saturation Index will be changed to #4. Item 4. Tannins will become #5. The Tannins item will follow Map 5.7 and 5.8 on page 60.
- On page 57, item 2 Nitrate-nitrogen, the third sentence, there is an error. It is accurate that Nitrate-N dissolves easily in water, but it is not accurate that it does not absorb in the soil. An accurate statement would be “Nitrate-N does not attach to the soil particles which allows it to travel easily into groundwater.”
- It was verified that a Native American Burial Mound is mentioned on page 67 in the second to last paragraph.

### Chapter 6 Review

The previously made edits were accepted and no additional edits were suggested. It was noted that one link in Chapter 6 has changed. Prior to completing the Comprehensive Plan revision, all links should be checked.

### Chapter 7 Review

Edits were reviewed and several recommendations were made.

- On page 69, the sixth line of the first paragraph, a comma is needed after the word Rudolph.
- On page 69, item C. 2., line 4, the word “through” will be changed to “with.”
- On page 70, in the first full paragraph beginning with State Stature 60.565, the two uses of the word “them” will be removed.
- On page 71, item 4, sentence 3, the comma was removed following “every drainage district.”
- On page 71, item D., the current last sentence (DATCP) was repositioned to be the second sentence.
- On page 71, Section 7.2, the first two sentences were combined into one sentence and will read – “The Town Plan Commission identifies specific conflicts with other governmental units which need further attention.”

### Chapter 8 Review

The Land Use Map was discussed.

- At the last meeting, the Commission had started to look at the Existing Land Use map (8.1). There were questions regarding recently converted land at the southwest corner. It had been suggested to look at the Farmland Preservation map. That was done and the FP map does not include the recently converted land.
- Because the land in question is no longer undeveloped, forested land; the Existing Land Use map should indicate the land is agricultural. Previously X’s were added to a map to indicate which parcels should be added to agricultural. Those X’s were reviewed and deemed to be accurate. A corrected Map 8.1 will be made.
- There was a question about existing land designated as commercial. That land may need a different designation and Avis Schroer should be contacted regarding the designation.
- K. Johnson has received a list of all of the new resident building permits from M. Rutz. She will use the list to update the 8.1 map.

Suggested edits to the language:

- In Section 8.1, second sentence of the first paragraph, the sentence should end with “Kellner Area” and the redundant “at the western edge of Grant” removed.

- On page 74, Section 2 item B, adding a comment regarding Farmland Preservation was suggested. “The Town has established a Farmland Preservation District as part of the Zoning Ordinance” could be included as a separate sentence or mentioned at the end of the existing sentence. The FP map will not be included. Farmland Preservation should also be included as an Objective or Policy later in the chapter.
- On page 72, Section 1 item E, the sentence will end with “cemeteries” by removing etc.
- On page 72, item G. The section will be edited to clarify that forested land is included in the “Undeveloped” category.
- In Section 8.2, A. – The new wording about Open Space Design Option and Lot Averaging was viewed as good. It was recommended to address this topic as the Zoning Ordinance is updated.
- On page 74, item D regarding land values was reviewed. Table 8.2 reflects tax values and illustrates something different than the Existing Land Use map. Therefore terminology differs. The Transfer Station land was designated as industrial because it is not known what type of contamination may exist and the land should not be used for residential.
- In Section 8.3, the word “existing” will be removed prior to farm operations.
- In Section 8.4 B, a third objective will be added – Encourage increased use of lot averaging.
- In Section 8.4 C 1, add “and quantity” following “quality.”
- In Section 8.4 B add “Consider developing a Nuisance Ordinance” as a fourth objective.
- In Section 8.4 C. add a policy to “Promote use of the A1a Farmland Preservation Zoning District.”

At the next meeting review edits of Chapter 8, including map 8.1, and then continue the review with Section 8.5.

## **CITIZEN INPUT**

### ATVs

There have been a number of ATV complaints including excessive speed, use beyond the designated hours, and driving off routes. R. Becker received a complaint for ATVs operating between 10:30 pm and 1:30 am on Griffith Ave. at a high speed with lots of noise. Calls to law enforcement need to be encouraged. Citizens should call the sheriff non-emergency number at any time, day or night; and should do so with each incidence. The Town can judge how the ordinance is working based on the number of complaints. If there are no complaints, a problem does not exist. Complaints should also be forwarded to S. Schwab and the Town supervisors. Members of the ATV club have had conversations with violators.

M. Rutz stated the website does not include a map of the routes. S. Schwab will ask Rod Sutter for new map that could be placed on the website.

The ATV signs in the Town are not consistent with other Portage/Wood County signs. The Town needs to avoid confusion. If not signed, the road is not a route.

### Damage from Trucks

N. Wolosek expressed concern that one of his fields was torn up by pick-up trucks. Again, it was recommended to report it to law enforcement. If more complaints are made, patrols may increase. Individuals caught by law enforcement may more likely be charged if there is a known, repeated problem in the Town. Future activity may be discouraged if word could get out that the illegal activity

is taken seriously. Concern was expressed that in the past it has appeared as if little is done by law enforcement unless the officer witnesses the infraction. Trail cameras in the Town were suggested, but cameras typically only identify the vehicle and not the driver. It was suggested that infractions also be reported to the Town Board.

It was suggested to learn how other towns are dealing with similar situations through the Wisconsin Towns Association.

### **ZONING ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

**Permits:** Permits were issued for two new residence, six accessory buildings, three addresses, a pond, and a UAP for a total of \$950.

**Time sheet:** M. Rutz's time sheets were distributed. During the month of July, he recorded 26 hours and 15 minutes of work.

### **CUPs:**

- A list of CUPs was distributed. Three of the CUPs have expiration dates. This includes the LaBarge CUP. She will likely need to be placed on the September agenda to start the process of obtaining an extension. Russ Brody and Dean Altman have been reminded of the expiration date for the Brody pond CUP.
- Discussion took place on monitoring compliance of CUPs. It was asked if the permitted activity ceases for a certain amount of time, should the CUP expire. The Commission did not come to consensus regarding revoking the CUP versus keeping the CUP with the property. N. Wolosek suggested new CUPs state that if the activity ceases for a certain period of time that the CUP would lapse. He stressed it must be in writing at the time the CUP is issued otherwise the CUP would continue with the property. R. Becker stated an option for previously issued CUPs, would be to notify the CUP owner that a CUP would lapse if the activity has ceased for 3 years unless the owner comes forward requesting the CUP to continue.
- Citizen input was received in July regarding CUPs during a Plan Commission Meeting. Those concerns seem to be directed toward the current status of CUPs and if the conditions were being upheld. S. Schwab suggested that the Town exert due diligence to ensure the conditions are being met. The time involved in monitoring the CUPs was discussed. There are currently 65 CUPs on the books. It was suggested that it could take two to three hours per CUP at the cost of \$20 per hour to monitor the CUPs. The benefit versus cost needs to be considered. N. Wolosek suggested there needs to be a level of trust. Complaints should be followed up, but annual monitoring is not indicated for all.
- Wording of CUPs should only include conditions that are within the Town's jurisdiction. If the jurisdiction is at a county or state level, it should not be part of the conditions. Licenses mentioned in previously issued CUPs are not the Town's jurisdiction. If proof of a license was listed as a condition, it should be the responsibility of the CUP owner to submit it to the Town Clerk and not the Town's responsibility to make a site visit to collect it. If a person lies about having a license when applying for a CUP, the CUP could be revoked based on the deception.
- The approved CUPs are public documents. Citizens should be aware that they can view a CUP if they have a question about it.

- The process of having applicants sign the CUP the night it is approved works well. The applicant could be asked to bring any required licenses to the meeting. The CUP would not go into effect until the documentation is provided.
- A plan needs to be developed regarding what to do with the CUP list. The topic should be discussed again in a month after Commission members have reviewed the list.

### **TOWN BOARD REPORT**

S. Schwab attended the Wisconsin Towns Association – Portage County Unit meeting. Chris Mrdutt gave a presentation on dealing with dilapidated dwellings and structures and condemnation of buildings. He reminded Towns that they have condemnation authority. The County can step in after one year of no habitation, but the building must be condemned by the municipality. There is a specific, bullet-pointed procedure for condemnation. It is possible that this procedure could be used for the Rekoski property. A lot of complaints have been received about the property. The building could be razed. There are a lot of items on property even if building is razed. M. Rutz suggested hiring someone to remove the items and charging the property owner on taxes.

A questionnaire on groundwater programing had been submitted by Cecile Stelzer-Johnson, our Groundwater Citizens Advisory Committee delegate. Responses to the questionnaire were due by August 17<sup>th</sup>. The questionnaire has been removed from the Town website.

A report was completed by UW-Extension on Portage County’s High Speed Internet Needs Assessment Survey. T. Reitter will review the report.

Information about the Portage County Hoarding Committee was given to K. Lee for inclusion on the Town website.

S. Schwab had a question regarding a large sign at 90<sup>th</sup> and W. It has a religious message. Our sign ordinance needs to be reviewed regarding the possible need for a permit, but the ordinance may not apply. It may be a freedom of speech issue. This lead to a discussion of the pink, cow, anti-CAFO signs.

It was asked, what our definition of a pool is. Does it include both in-ground and above-the-ground pools? When is a permit required? R. Becker suggested something that is permanent, whether in-ground or above-the-ground, would require a permit. This is something that needs a clearer definition as it is on the permit fee schedule. This should be done when the Zoning Ordinance is revised.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:23 pm

Respectfully submitted,

*Kathleen D. Lee*

Plan Commission Secretary