

PLAN COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
TOWN OF GRANT  
May 16, 2016

**PRESENT:** Jim Wendels (Chairman), Nathan Wolosek, Ron Becker, Sharon Schwab, Tom Reitter (Committee Members), Marty Rutz (Zoning Administrator), Kathy Lee (Secretary)

**GUEST:** Kristen Johnson (Portage Co. P & Z)

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 pm by Jim Wendels, Chairman.

**STATE OF PUBLIC NOTICE**

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

**MINUTES**

It was moved by Ron Becker and seconded by Sharon Schwab to approve the April 20, 2016 Plan Commission Meeting Minutes. The motion passed with unanimous ayes.

**CITIZEN INPUT:** No citizens present.

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**Chapter 3:** The recommended changes from the 4-20-16 meeting were reviewed and approved.

**Chapter 4:** The recommended edits from the 4-20-16 meeting were reviewed. Comments and suggestions were offered.

- Strike “of an extensive marshland” from Storm Water Management.
- Solid Waste & Recycling – Specify two times per year for the “Choose to Reuse” program. Designate “useable” when describing “unwanted items.” Explain the purpose of the program is “to keep them out of the landfill” while striking the last sentence.
- Minor cleanup of wording by removing the word “out” when it appears before a city as “out of” and removing “as well” from the end of the paragraph describing United Emergency Medical Response.
- Schools – change “Township” to “Town” and strike “in the Town of Grant” in the paragraph describing Grant Elementary School.
- The actual name of the cemetery is “St John Lutheran Parish Cemetery.”
- Add something about the Wood County Health Department being housed on the fourth floor of the Riverview Clinic Building.
- Don't tie the specialty clinics to Aspirus, many of them are self-standing clinics. Add “et cetera” to the end of the list of specialty clinics.
- We had previously reworded all the issues to start with a verb and now believe an issue should not be started that way. The wording of the issues will be changed to a statement that does not begin with a verb or to a question.
- “Cooperate with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to maintain Buena Vista Wildlife Area for wildlife related recreational activities” will be added to the Policies.
- Check on spelling of “picnicking.”

**Chapter 5**

K. Johnson led the discussion on the proposed edits to chapter 5 (Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources):

- Wording from the State Statute 66.1001 that applies to Chapter 5 was inserted at the start of the chapter to clarify what is covered in the chapter.
- Maps were discussed. Maps 5.1 and 5.2 are acceptable. Map 5.3 is viewed as “very general.” It was suggested to add a comment “Refer to the Natural Resources Conservation Survey (NRCS) Soil Survey (yr?) for detailed information” to both the text and the map legend. Because of the level of detail found on NRCS soil survey maps, they would not be legible if inserted into the Comprehensive Plan.
- Much discussion took place regarding Section 5.2 A (Productive Agricultural Soils). The only soil, based on the USDA Soil Survey of Portage County, which is classified as productive in the Town is the Friendship loamy sand. This land is identified on Map 5.1. Some of this land is located in areas that are currently subdivisions. While the map is accurate based on the USDA Soil Survey official definitions, it does not reflect all soils that are productive in the town and which are currently farmed successfully.
- N. Wolosek questioned what we are trying to depict in the maps in Chapter 5. Map 5.1 reflects productive agriculture soil based on current definitions, but does not reflect soils rendered productive through the use of contemporary farming practices and technology. It was recommended to add a map that shows irrigated lands and cranberry marsh lands. That map would more accurately depict the productive land in the Town.
- K. Johnson had recommended removing the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph under Section 5.2 A. That paragraph will be reinserted with several changes. The final sentence of the paragraph will be removed. “Aerial spraying” will be removed. The word “prime” will be changed to “productive” and the word “highly” struck. Again, it was recommended to add an irrigated land/cranberry marsh map. The map could be added to this section. K. Johnson will talk with Steve Bradley (County Conservationist) about the paragraph.
- “Best management practices” have resulted in productive land. It was suggested to add a disclaimer about technology and farming practices making these lands productive despite not meeting the state definition of productive.
- Regarding Map 5.3: Soils 8 & 9 are actually “productive” soils. With the appropriate farming methods and technology, the areas of Leola-Pearl Association (8) and Roscommon-Meehan-Markey Association (9) (as identified on Map 5.3) have been made into useable farm land.
- Throughout the discussion, the group struggled to find the terminology to describe the contemporary farming practices used. “Intensive farmland management” and “best management practices” were two suggestions for the technique used. Additionally, a word different than “productive” will need to be used to describe the land. “Enhanced agricultural lands” was a suggested term.
- S. Schwab would like to provide a history of farming in the area. She will send historical farming information about blue grass stripping used for seed harvest to K. Johnson. This type of farming took place in the 30s. A variety of types of farming have taken place over the past 100 to 150 years.
- It was suggested to add a groundwater flow map.
- It was suggested to add a new section B – Managed Agricultural Lands. This section would include the new “irrigated land/cranberry marsh” map.
- K. Johnson noted there are currently no dairy farms in the Town. The number of dairy farms has decreased in the surrounding towns.
- The map with the center pivots (irrigated land/cranberry marsh) should be mentioned in the Farming Systems, Demographics, and Land Tenure section – paragraph 2.
- The last analysis of aerial photography of the area was completed in 2000. A request could be made to Jeff Schuler for an updated aerial map analysis. S. Schwab will make the request.
- The accuracy of the census data regarding agricultural related employment was questioned, but accepted as written.
- K. Johnson reported a comment about the Portage County Farmland Preservation Plan and a description of two laws has been added to the text.

- After being introduced as an abbreviation, DNR should be consistently used instead of switching back and forth between Department of Natural Resources and DNR. Because there is no abbreviation for the Portage County Drainage District, after it first use, it will be referred to as the “District.”
- It was questioned if there is a serious flooding problem along County U. K. Johnson will contact Doug Passineau (Highway Commissioner – Wood County) to determine if ditch clean up and culvert additions have corrected the problem.
- Nathan commented on the 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph of Section 5.2 E1. Obtaining a permit is not a problem. Ditches have been mapped and cannot be dredged any deeper than the historic ditch bed profile. It was recommended to remove “Although some permits have been granted”. “The permitting process has been streamlined” will be added. It was suggested to look in the Portage County Drainage District Handbook to determine the best term for “historic ditch bed profile and elevation.”

### **FUTURE MEETINGS**

Monday, June 6 at 6:30 pm

Tuesday, July 12 at 6:30 pm.

### **ATV PUBLIC HEARING**

Final preparations for the ATV/UTV Ordinance Public Hearing were made. Maps were distributed and large maps for wall display were presented. A copy of a preference/comment sheet was circulated. The comment sheets will be collected from attendees at the end of the meeting allowing verbal comments to be heard prior to submission. During the hearing introduction, S. Schwab will announce when the Board hopes to make a decision.

Anyone attending the hearing and wishing to speak will be asked to state their name and address prior to speaking. The initial citizen speakers will be those who indicated a desire to speak on the sign-in sheet. They will be given 3 minutes to make a comment. After those individuals haven spoken, a call for additional one minute comments and/or rebuts will be made.

Roles of the Plan Commission members: T. Reitter will be the time keeper. J. Wendels will provide an opening statement about the ordinance. He will provide a projector for use during the meeting.

N. Wolosek will man the door. K. Lee will develop a sign-in sheet that includes questions regarding Grant citizenship and desire to speak. She will take minutes at the meeting. S. Schwab will develop a meeting agenda, determine if the Wild Horse Banquet Hall has a PA system, and request several hundred chairs be available.

### **FARMLAND PRESERVATION**

An email from Dan Bowers to Jeff Schuler was discussed. The exact implications for the Town were not immediately clear. It does appear that Portage County has no objections to our map and they are willing to incorporate it into the county-wide map. For tax purposes, our ordinance is not approved by the County. It will need to be approved by the State. We will send the proposed ordinance and map to Scott Karel for approval. Once approved at the state level, it can be sent to Portage County.

### **ZONING ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

- The property to the north of the Town Hall is being cleaned up and vehicles removed. The brother of Jake Slusser (renter) has bought a property and many trucks have been moved to that location. Mr. Slusser has not completed Livestock Premises Registration. Dave Tosch (owner), whose name is included on the CUP, will talk to Mr. Slusser.
- Mr. Stencil wants to place an accessory building on his commercially zoned property (corner of County U and County W) for personal use. The cost of a personal use, building permit is \$100. The cost for a commercial building is \$400. It was thought that the \$100 permit would apply. The size of the property was reported to be 3 acres, but that was called into question.

- The Ricoski property was checked and pictures taken. A lot of items are in the right of way, as well as on adjacent DNR land. On the southeast corner, the DNR had a survey marker placed. It was suggested that the Town count add a pin on the property line to mark the right of way.
- A total of \$535 in permit fees were collected in April including a raze, a CSM, and a collocation.
- Wysocki Farms wants to place an irrigation pipe under a road. It would likely be considered a utility and require a UAP permit because it is perpendicular to the road. M. Rutz will issue the permit.

#### **TOWN REPORT**

- Jim Sturm plans to sell some property. M. Rutz stated he will need a second fire number because there are two parcels of land.
- Sharon asked for feedback on an inquiry about the potential purchase of a house on Griffith Ave between 100<sup>th</sup> and 110<sup>th</sup>. The interested buyer drives a semi and at times comes home with a full load. It was recommended to reply with a statement that the Town has concerns because the road is not capable of handling the heavy loads throughout the year. If road damage occurs, the potential buyer would be billed. It was commented that the Town should not interfere with a sale because the road is not posted. One suggestion for the buyer would be to park the trailer in another location.

#### **ADJOURN**

Nathan moved to adjourn the meeting. Ron Becker seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 pm

Respectfully submitted,

*Kathleen D. Lee*

Approved 6/6/2016