

PLAN COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
TOWN OF GRANT
August 18, 2021

PRESENT: Thomas Reitter (Chairperson), Charles Gussel, Nathan Wolosek, Ron Becker, (Commissioners), Kathleen Lee (Secretary)

EXCUSED: Ron Patterson

CITIZENS: Brett Thompson, Jeff Budelier, Dale Winkler, Sharon Schwab

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 pm by T Reitter.

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 N, Wolosek and seconded by C. Gussel to approve the July 28, 2021. The motion passed with unanimous ayes. C. Gussel commented that it is easier to hear discussions when Plan Commissioner members speak from the stage and not from the audience floor.

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CUP) APPLICATION

Brett Thompson has submitted a CUP application for a dog training and boarding business with the potential for sale of dog related merchandise on property zoned general agriculture at 8320 Evergreen Ave, Wisconsin Rapids.

Mr. Thompson is the former Executive Director of South Wood County Humane Society (SWCHS). This role included financial management of SWCHS, fundraising, and coordinating activities associated with the care and adoption of animals. Additionally, he is a certified animal behaviorist. He has used those skills to verify that dogs are adoptable. His vision for the business, ABC Dog training, LLC, is to provide “a better companion” for pet owners. He is interested in training dogs for hunting (bird dogs and retrievers) and pet dog training.

Jeff Budelier, Mr. Thompson’s step-father, is purchasing the property. Mr. Budelier stated, that while aggressive or problem dogs may be taken in for training, that type of dog is the exception.

Services offered will be basic obedience, advanced obedience, dog sports, and hunting dogs. There will be a discharge of firearms. The last part of the training for hunting dogs includes shooting birds over them. Initially starter pistols are used to acclimate the dogs. Not all of the gun training will take place on the property. Places such as Willow View Pheasants on 95th Street and public land are used. It is essential to train hunting dogs in various sites.

A Portage County Kennel License will be required. If he wants to sell dog related merchandise, he will need a seller’s permit. A multi-dog license is required. That license coverage can be transferred to any rabies vaccinated dog.

The dogs will be housed in a 60x100 foot building at night. Over half of the building is insulated and heated with hydronic heat through a concrete floor. Mr. Thompson is not certain of

the maximum number of dogs the building could house. It is thought that the space would accommodate fifty 5x8 kennels in the concrete portion of the building. The building includes an indoor training area. When outside, they will be in a fenced area.

A concern is noise from barking and gun shots. Limited shooting of homing pigeons will take place on the property.

Mr. Thompson will work with SWCHS if they have a problematic dog. This is so it can get to an adoptable level. He currently does this as a volunteer. Not all types of aggression can be fixed. If it cannot be trained, it would be returned to the humane society.

Most training with dogs is one-on-one. If dogs are being trained for socialization, a group of 3 dogs may be worked with at a time. Some group training is done based on customer requests.

He is interested in a sign, not larger than 4x8 feet. Illumination of the sign is a possibility. Illumination is not needed for advertising, but may be helpful for pet owners to find the driveway when it is dark.

Mr. Thompson anticipates collecting dog waste in large garbage bags and placing the bags in a commercial dumpster. The possibility of land spreading the manure on the property was discussed, but he is not interested in doing that at this time. The property is large enough for land spreading, but manure would need to be spread over a vegetative area to prevent nitrogen leaching into the ground water. Approval from the Town Board for land spreading would be needed.

Vegetation for a sound buffer was discussed. There is a wooded area to the west of the property, some trees to the south, but limited trees on other edges of the property.

Customers will be entering the building, so a fire inspection will be required. Electricity will need to meet commercial standards, running water for cleaning the floors is needed, and method to collect that water. Mr. Thompson plans to have the kennels sit on top of the concrete.

Noise was discussed. There have been some noise complaints at the current ABC Dog Training location. This was attributed to the covering over the kennels, which created an echo chamber leading to an amplification of the sound. The kennels were moved to an insulated garage and there have been no further noise complaints. Previous dog related CUPs have addressed noise and similar wording will be included if this request moves forward. Mr. Thompson stressed he is interested in being a good neighbor.

The dogs should not be housed outside. The number of dogs left out at the same time is limited and done selectively.

The birds owned by Mr. Thompson are limited to homing pigeons. He is not bringing in quail or rock doves. He travels to game farms for the training. If he were to expand to other types of birds, he would pursue a DNR gaming license.

The actual training will take place between 9 am and 7 pm, but dogs may be outside beyond those hours. Dogs are typically inside by 9 pm.

In upholding the Town of Grant Dog Ordinance, Mr. Thompson should recommend to people from the Town of Grant who do not have a current dog license that they should get one.

The Dog Star Resort CUP and other dog related CUPs were used as a guide to develop conditions. The recommended conditions are as follows:

1. If nuisance noise from dog(s) becomes a concern from neighbors, measures must be taken by the Owner to comply with noise reduction efforts and those measures should be documented and shared with the Town Board.
2. Groups of dogs engaged in outdoor play or exercise may only be conducted between the hours of 6:00A – 9:00P daily. A single dog may engage in outdoor activities beyond this timeframe, if supervised by a staff member.
3. Waste generated from the ABC Dog Training, LLC business operation cannot be disposed of at the Town of Grant Transfer Station and Recycling Center, or on site. A commercial waste container and disposal service is required.
4. An illuminated, non-flashing advertising sign up to thirty-two (32) square feet may be installed on the premise off roadway right-of-way.
5. A valid and current Seller’s Permit (if applicable) issued by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue shall be kept on site.
6. The Town Board requires an annual fire inspection of the ABC Dog Training, LLC with full compliance to any safety code violations discovered during the inspection.
7. Adequate customer parking shall be provided that allows for no on-street parking.
8. Allowed to release live birds if in compliance with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources regulations.
9. Uphold the Town of Grant Dog Ordinance and obtain a Portage County Kennel license.
10. Dog containment fencing shall be installed as necessary.

It was motioned by R. Becker and seconded by N. Wolosek to recommend the Conditional Use Permit to the Town Board with the stated conditions. The motion passed with unanimous ayes.

The public hearing for the CUP will take place on 9-8-2021. The applicants were reminded that they must be present. Citizen Winkler stated the Clerk should be reminded to send notification of the public hearing to neighbors at least 15 days prior to the hearing date. K. Lee will remind her.

The application was revised to indicate the correct name of the company purchasing the 8320 Evergreen Ave property.

CITIZEN INPUT

Town Chairperson Schwab commented on the minutes from the July Plan Commission meeting. The voting booths need to remain at their current location to meet the American Disability Act regulations. T. Reitter does recommend curtaining off the voting booths and having meetings run from the east wall of the hall. He would like to see something done with the old voting booths so that it is not “dead space.” N. Wolosek stated whatever configuration is used, that multiple small screens should be installed. He also asked if there is any clarification on how the Covid recovery money can be used. S. Schwab explained the Wisconsin Towns Association (WTA) does not have a clear idea and is not able to provide guidance at this time. Monies can be used for broadband, but whether it can be used for modernization of our own

technology equipment is still unknown. It is possible that money could be used for bridges, but not general road construction. In regards to the layout of the building, S. Schwab stated having the Board on the stage allows for more space for the assembly on the main floor. There was agreement that the building is not conducive to Zoom meetings. It is possible to use the grade school for meetings. The only cost to the Town is for janitorial time. Future discussion by the Board could include a new town hall.

S. Schwab addressed the frustration with late minutes by the clerk. The Town chairperson is not the boss of the clerk, the citizens are. She reminded the group that the citizens wanted to retain their right to vote for a clerk, as opposed to switching to an appointed town clerk. The clerk ran unopposed in the most recent election. If the Plan Commission is frustrated with the lack of minutes, they have the right (as individuals or a Commission) to take complaints to the district attorney. Minutes are the most visible activity of the clerk. There are many items behind the scenes that the clerk does well and in a timely manner. S. Schwab wanted commissioners to know what their options are. There was no interest in working with the DA, but the commissioners would like the Board to do more. In addition to the lack of minutes, R. Becker is concerned about the filing system at the hall. He said the history of roads relies on memory and not documentation. Schwab responded that records retention is based on the guidelines from the State. C. Gussel said legal advice may be needed regarding how to deal with the situation. Maybe the WTA could provide guidance. There should be a method to learn what happened at a town meeting in a timely manner. A clerk can hire a deputy clerk to perform duties that clerk wishes to delegate. By statute, the clerk shall take money from his/her salary to pay the deputy clerk. Clerk Zimmerman is not interested in doing that.

D. Winkler stated there is a sign at 8221 Lake Road advertising eggs, maple syrup, salsa, and jam. He is questioning how the property is zoned and if a CUP exists for the business and the chickens. It is zoned high density. The property is owned by S. Provost. **A letter will be drafted to invite Mr. Provost to a Plan Commission meeting to discuss an apparent business in a high density residential area that may require a conditional use permit. Additionally a permit may be required for the chickens.**

Town Treasurer Hakala has reported that Adam Flatoff at 9350 Mill Road is interested in operating an auto repair business from his property. Mr. Flatoff is wondering if a CUP is required. **A letter will be sent to Mr. Flatoff to invite him to the September meeting. A CUP application will be enclosed.**

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

There were 5 permits issued for a total of \$240 dollars. This included two accessory buildings, a pond, and address, a driveway (no fee for WI DNR), a certified survey map, and a UAP.

M. Rutz was contacted by Tom Trzinski, a surveyor from Lampert-Lee & Associates, regarding some lot splits. It involves land zoned Exclusive Agriculture. The Okrays are interested in doing some lot splits. One is a 4.09 acre lot and the other 17.1 acre lot. Minimum lot size in Exclusive Ag is 35 acres. The 4.09 lot is located on the west side of County F where a storage building is located (3111 County Road F North, Plover, WI). The 17.1 acre lot is the location a group of buildings located at 3811 County Road F North, Plover, WI. Mr. Trzinski

believes the Okrays may wish to separate the assessed value items from the agriculture land. N. Wolosek suggested the Board of Adjustments would need to make the decision as it is outside of the zoning ordinance. Jim Okray had intended to attend this meeting, but then was unable to do so. M. Rutz needs to talk with Tracy Pelky. Apparently Portage County zoning has an exemption for situations like this. C. Gussel suggested if a lot split was allowed, a deed restriction should be added. M. Rutz said a re-zone could be used, but that would result in spot zoning. The 4.09 lot size would be too small for general agriculture (5 acre minimum). More information is needed. **The Okrays will be invited to the next meeting.**

IMPLEMENTS OF HUSBANDRY

Deferred to next meeting.

MEETING ADJOURNED

The meeting was adjourned at 9: 15 pm.

Topics for the next meeting include:

- Flatoff Auto Repair
- Activity at 8221 Lake Road
- Request for land split by Okray
- Review of IoH roads
- Zoning Ordinance

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen D. Lee

Plan Commission Secretary

Approved 9/16/2021