

PLAN COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
TOWN OF GRANT
September 21, 2016

PRESENT: Jim Wendels (Chairman), Nathan Wolosek (arrived 7:10), Ron Becker, Sharon Schwab, Tom Reitter (Committee Members), Kathy Lee (Secretary)

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

CITIZENS: Dale Okray (Portage County Sheriff's Office), Don Bohn (Grand Rapids FD), Matthew Fleming (Portage County)

EXCUSED: Marty Rutz

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm by Jim Wendels.

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 R. Becker and seconded by S. Schwab to approve the August 11, 2016 Plan Commission Meeting Minutes. The motion passed with unanimous ayes.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 5

Section 5.4 C Polices

- Changes were made to the wording so all policies started with a verb.
 - #7 "Require new development to provide appropriate buffers from incompatible uses."
 - #8 Start with "Recognize that".
- #9 add Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to the list.
- Add policy #10 "Review the Town's Implementations of Husbandry (IOH) ordinance and accompanying routes periodically."

Section 5.5 Natural Resources

- Begin section by making residents possessive (residents') and add "surface" to the water types (ground and surface water), combine well & being into one word (wellbeing), and add "and conservation" to the list of land uses. *Natural resources in the Town serve as the foundation for residents' physical and economic wellbeing from ground and surface water quality to land suitability for agricultural, residential, or commercial development and conservation.*
- A. Geomorphology – Remove second sentence regarding the driftless area as its accuracy is disputable.
- On page 49 remove the word "needed" from the second sentence.
- On page 49 remove from the third sentence "due mainly to adverse affects on septic waste disposal systems", ending the sentence with the word 'development'.
- On page 49, sentence 5, "towns" should not be capitalized.
- The appearance of map 5.3 was discussed. The solid color does not clearly differentiate the soil types. It was suggested to make the numbers larger and avoid placing them on top of a highway.
- First bullet under B. Soils should refer to Plainfield as Town instead of Township. Under the third bullet, remove the extra pace after the word "Markey."

- Maps 5.4 and 5.4A were discussed. It was recommended to include drainage ditch numbers on both maps in a clearly visible color, such as red. It was recommended to border the drainage district in dark brown.
- C. Surface Water and Wetlands – Add Sevenmile Creek and Fourteenmile Creek to the list of waterways. All numbered creeks should have the number and mile as one word.
- Add “Watersheds” to the title of C.
- Add “Several of the ditches and waterbodies are Class 1 or 2 trout streams.” to the section. Other fish species could also be mentioned.
- Change the word “Most: to “Part” in sentence 3 of “C.”
- Page 54 – first paragraph: Remove “serious” from the first sentence, remove the next two sentences, and keep the final sentence.
- K. Johnson suggested adding a Map 5.4B Shoreland Zoning and additional text. Discussion took place regarding the need to include ditch corridors on the map (one hundred foot corridor on both sides of the ditches). It was suggested to include the corridors on the drainage ditch map (5.4A). It applies only to the Portage County Drainage District. It is an easement that applies to both sides of the ditch, but there is an agreement to use only one side. Information will be added to page 44, paragraph 3. J. Wendels shared a 09/27/04 document that described the district corridor.
Information about the district corridor should also be added to our Zoning Ordinance.
Text should reference Map 5.4A.
- The suggested new text regarding shoreland zoning was approved.
- Page 54 – Second bullet: remove sneezeweed. Third bullet point: change tag aster to tag alder, and change, bog birch to river birch. Fourth bullet point: change formally to formerly. The accuracy of the bullet was questioned, but no changes made.

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

Portage County is requesting to build a communication tower on property owned by Okray Farms located at 3811 County Road F and zoned Exclusive Agricultural. Matthew Fleming (Procurement Director – Portage County) distributed copies of the site plan for the proposed communications tower. The tower would be used for the simulcast radio upgrade for emergency communications (law enforcement, emergency medical, and fire). It would be a small foot print on the land owned by Okray Farms. The County would lease an 80 X 80 foot parcel. Okray Farms would place their own antennas on the tower. The loading design of the tower would allow for additional collocation. Permits will be obtained from National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and Federal Communications Commission (FCC) after the CUP is approved. Geotech work needs to be completed to determine the type of foundation for the tower. The preliminary build area is 40 x 60 feet. It would be located within the current fenced area on the property. Access to the tower would be via the current Okray Farms gate with an easement to the tower. Separation from an existing shed to the easement, fenced area, and tower was discussed. The separation was viewed as being adequate. The tower build site is fairly clear of trees (basically brush is growing).

Okray Farms has contacted McCain Foods regarding erecting a tower on the 3811 County Road F site. The site is immediately south of a McCain Foods field. McCain Management replied there are not any objections to the tower.

It was questioned if there would be a benefit to the Town of Grant from the tower. The “Expanding Responsibilities for the Communications System” policy of the Portage County Public Safety Communications Board refers to non-county emergency services dispatching as discretionary. The Town does not want our providers, who are located outside of Portage County, to be burdened by any changes (e.g. frequency, equipment requirements) to the communication system. Dale Okray (Portage County Sheriff’s Office) explained the frequencies are not changing. The only changes are in how the system

works. Currently, separate pages need to be made for different fire departments. The new, 9 tower system allows for a single page. The biggest improvement will be for law enforcement portable communications. It will not be necessary to switch between the four existing towers. All nine towers would be set off at once. M. Fleming added that the new system has already been purchased. It will be placed on the proposed tower or an existing tower, but the new system will be installed. The planned upgrade will not include any frequency changes. Landline calls made to 911 go through Portage County, but Grand Rapids Volunteer Fire Department (GRVFD) would be dispatched for this section of the town. If a cell call near the county border bounced to Wood County, they would dispatch GRVFD. Dispatching an ambulance would work the same way. No equipment changes will be required with the current upgrade, but changes in future years would be the responsibility of the department incurring them. As the county “turns the switch, everything will work as the way it does now.” S. Schwab suggested including wording in the CUP conditions stating the system change would be seamless and there would be no cost incurred to our providers. M. Fleming stated there could be no guarantees that in the future there would be no technology changes that would require equipment upgrades. The erection of the tower does not impact the need for future changes. It is only a place to hang the equipment.

T. Reitter asked questions regarding the need to switch from 4 towers to 9 towers. D. Okray explained six towers are being built, 2 of the 9 are currently used County towers, and one was donated by the City of Stevens Point. Based on a study by Motorola, the location of nine towers for the new system was determined. The proposed tower would cover Grant and Linwood. The location of the tower which currently services Grant (fire and ambulance with Village of Plainfield, Waushara Co., and Town of Grand Rapids, Wood Co.) was not known. The price to lease tower space would increase from \$300 per month to \$2500 per month if the current tower was rented. The County concluded it makes more sense to build than to rent. The cost increase is based on the load of additional equipment. Don Bohn (GRVFD Chief) stated the actual location of the tower makes no difference to his department. The fire department does not have equipment located on the tower. The theory of the simulcast, system is that all towers are looped together. D. Okray stated reception and how the GRVFD received pages will not change. If there is a large fire, multiple departments could be paged at the same time. M. Fleming stated the current system had poor coverage for portable radios. The new system will provide 95% coverage.

R. Becker reiterated the concern that Grant has emergency service providers that are not located within the County. The Communications Board policy does not address this. We need to know that our providers will receive the needed communications. S. Schwab added there is a concern that if changes are made to the system in the future, it could result in an enormous financial burden to our providers. This has reportedly occurred in the past to United Emergency Medical Services. N. Wolosek questioned the ability of the GRVFD to communicate when at the southeast corner of the Town. Based on the studies by Motorola, the entire Town would be covered. Once the page is made, GRVFD uses a different frequency to talk mobile to mobile. They use cell phone communication as it is clearer and increases privacy. M. Fleming stated the current system is 20 to 30 years old. Based on the 7 million dollars being spent on the upgrade, no additional changes are anticipated in the foreseeable future. D. Okray added permission is not being sought for the system, it is being sought to erect the tower. Once the system is up and running, County equipment will be removed from previously used towers.

J. Wendels reviewed key points from the Communications Tower Ordinance

- The proposed location does violate setback regulations, but the owners of the neighboring property have provided written agreement of the tower location. The other setback violations are related to Okray’s buildings, but because the site is being leased from Okray, the ordinance allows that to occur.
- A copy of the lease agreement needs to be on file. The lease will not be signed until all permits are obtained. The agreement will allow Okray Farms to collocate equipment and include a rent share agreement. Other farmers would be able to use the tower at the current market price.

- The design must include a minimum of 4 collocates. The type of collocates are not specified by the Town. There is a provision that would waive that requirement if the cost to build the tower in that manner would be cost prohibitive. The architect could state that structural stability could be enhanced depending on the tenant.
- Screening and landscaping shall provide a buffer that provides for the maximum amount of screening including all accessory structures, equipment, and improvements at ground level from adjacent properties.
- Satellite dish and parabolic antennas shall be situated as close to the ground as possible.
- Dual lighting or lighting as approved by FAA. The County would like to use red at night and strobe during the day.
- There must be lot enclosure to protect against unauthorized access.
- Security lighting must be down-shielded.
- The enclosure must have a placard with contact information and FCC license number.
 - Concern was expressed that access to the site would be limited by the Okray fence.
- No advertising on the tower.
- Color of the tower and support facilities should be non-reflective on the visible surfaces unless otherwise required by the FAA or FCC.
- Minimal parking is one stall for each prospective user.
- Provide all-weather gravel or paved driveway.
- Site must be served with a minimum 20 foot wide ingress/egress with a turnaround.
- There will be an additional permit fee for the zoning permit. (\$3000)
- A fully detailed site plan is required.
- A soils report (geotech) is needed with the plans.
- A copy of the FCC license is needed.
- A copy of the FAA correspondence and any permits/approvals is needed.
- A construction schedule, if available, should be submitted. It is estimated that the project will be completed by mid 2017.
- An annual information report must be filed by January 31st of each year.
- The CUP is transferable.
- M. Fleming asked if the general requirement for an escrow account could be waived. J. Wendels replied it could be waived. He is familiar with Ramaker & Associates and it would be their PE stamp on it. The final PE stamped plans will be acceptable.

Wording of the CUP will refer to the Wireless Telecommunication Tower and Antenna Ordinance and will specify any modifications.

S. Schwab and R. Becker supported including language in the conditions regarding a seamless transition for non-county emergency providers and that the system mounted on the tower will be able to communicate with Town of Grant providers located outside of Portage County. N. Wolosek suggested the wording be our providers would continue to be paged by Portage County. S. Schwab would like non-county emergency to be an official function and not a discretionary function. She does not want to see a cost incurred by our providers.

N. Wolosek asked if GRVFD has needed to update any communication equipment in the past 10 years. D. Bohn stated that an approximately \$1000 equipment investment was made when Portage County started paging them off the Wood County tower. Similar equipment would have been necessary for ambulance paging. S. Schwab stated that in 2011, United Emergency Medical Services needed to spend \$6000. It was suggested that could have been due to narrow band, but the reason for the cost to United is

not known. D. Okray stated the appropriate avenue to address those concerns would be with the Portage County Communications Board.

The benefits of the tower (and new system) are improved paging capabilities, handheld service will have better coverage, there will be better reliability, and it will be integrated with existing equipment.

Park Ridge radios did require an upgrade because of the new system. Project dollars did cover the cost of those upgrades because they are located within Portage County. Upgrades were only covered by project dollars for agencies within the County.

M. Fleming emphasized the construction of the tower and the new communication system are different issues.

It is not known whether the equipment located outside of Portage County (Grand Rapids and Plainfield) was vetted by Motorola and Northway. If a community was able to receive a signal in the past, the signal will reach them. If their equipment is too old, it may not handle the signal.

Dale from Northway would be able to answer the question if a provider's equipment will work with the new system. D. Bohn indicated he was told the new system will improve GRVFD's communication.

J. Wendels stated he believes the CUP wording needs to be limited to construction of a tower on the proposed site. The Communications Board policy should be addressed elsewhere.

The next Monthly Town Board meeting is on October 12, 2016. It will be requested that the public notices be posted for the CUP request to be heard on that date.

J. Wendels moved for approval of the Conditional Use Permit for the Telecommunications Tower on the Okray property with the condition that it follows all terms and conditions of our Town's Telecommunication Tower Ordinance except for setback to the north, four foot plant buffer waived, and escrow waived. The motion was seconded. The motioned passed with four ayes. S. Schwab recused herself.

M. Fleming will check with Northway regarding the compatibility of the new communication system and the systems of Town's fire and EMS providers located outside of Portage County. He recommended that the Town or its providers also verify compatibility with Northway.

The Town would like to hear from the Communication Board regarding non-county emergency services being categorized as discretionary.

CITIZEN INPUT

An email correspondence regarding a desire to pick up garbage with a dump truck was distributed. No discussion took place.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

The August 2016 building permits/fees report was distributed. A total of \$605 was collected including an accessory building, two new residences, a deck, two addresses, and three UAPs.

TOWN BOARD REPORT

There will be a hearing on Friday, September 23 at 2:00 pm for the Case No. 15-CV-176 (Town of Grant et. al. versus Portage County). The Town of Belmont has informed Portage County that they plan to

contract with Gold Cross Ambulance Service out of Waupaca. Both the County’s Association (in support of the County) and the Town’s Association (in support of Grant), have filed amicus briefs.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION

The Application for Farmland Preservation Zoning Ordinance Certification needs to be completed by the end of the year. It will be placed on the agenda next month.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:13 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen D. Lee

Plan Commission Secretary

Approved 10/19/2016