

**PLAN COMMISSION
TOWN OF GRANT
January 22, 2014**

Present: Jim Wendels, Darcy Held, Lori Ruess, Sharon Schwab, Ron Becker, and Cynthia Welling.

Citizens Present: Charles Gussell and Penny VanTassel

Excused Absent: Marty Rutz

Meeting called to order at 6:32 pm by Jim Wendels.

MINUTES

The December 2013 minutes were reviewed and approved. Motion made by Darcy Held, seconded by Ron Becker. Motion passed unanimously.

ZONING UPDATE

- No formal requests had been received since the last meeting.

CITIZEN INPUT

Charlie Gussell and Penny VanTassel were in attendance. Their interest was primarily in discussing the proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance regarding high capacity wells with the members of the committee.

Discussion points were as follows:

- An update of some of the proposed ordinance changes were reviewed at the last Town Board meeting.
- A point of clarification was made that center pivot irrigation would be permitted if the land was rezoned.
- The issue of niche crops was discussed. In a general ag area, if a 20 acre parcel that was currently cropped might elect to farm a niche crop such as strawberries, would that require center pivot irrigation? Why would that require rezoning of the property? All agreed that this was a valid concern.
- The committee may need to define center pivot/well in more detail; may need to get input from a well driller. The definition of high cap wells has changed over time.
- A suggestion was made to check with Altenberg's to find out how much water niche crops require.
- Ground water protection overlay districts may need to be defined.
- Some discussion around the status of DNR vs. local regulation took place. There were concerns regarding how it is currently being handled. There is no formal consideration given to residential well impact.
- Ron Becker has been working with the Krug committee in Sharon's place. He stated that in the discussions that are taking place in that forum, farmers are as upset as the residential parties.
- There was a feeling expressed that the Town should follow County regulations – not create new ones that are more stringent in the Town of Grant.
- In that regard, the Town has been proactive in other areas such as tower regulations.
- There is some concern that appeasing residential regulations to the exclusion of farmers' needs is not equitable. The committee stated that the proposed changes are being considered to protect the farmers. Perhaps gallons used per day could be considered rather than gallons used per minute.

- There is some concern that there is no representation of farmers in the committee membership.
- There is concern about quality and quantity of ground water. Perhaps notifications should go out when new wells are planned. Residents are concerned that the value of their property could be affected by a well going in.
- A concentration of wells is generally where capacity is affected, not when one or two go in.
- There are currently 108 high cap wells in the Town of Grant. The changes are needed to make a compromise and give consideration all citizen input.
- A work group including growers and land owners can be held prior to finalizing zoning ordinance changes and presenting to the Board for approval.
- Should there be a limit on number of gallons you can pull?
- Some language needs to be added to define where the well is located in comparison to where the center pivot is located.
- Liquid manure spreading through center pivot irrigation may need to be considered as well.
- The collective impact of wells needs to be considered by the DNR. The State Supreme Court has recently considered this.
- The committee would like to invite residents who were at the January Board meeting to provide input, or perhaps some language could be added to the newsletter. An open invitation could be sent and then a working group could be formed from those attendees.
- Perhaps published agendas should be more specific on what issues they plan to consider and be published in the newspaper.
- The committee agreed that a good start would be to issue an open invitation so as not to exclude anyone. Present options for input rather than chancing alienating anyone. Language should be considered regarding size of parcels and gallons used.

Action items: Altenberg's will be contacted. Jim and Sharon will work to design a post card inviting people to an open meeting. Goal is to have the card designed and sent out by February 19th and target March 19th for the open meeting.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

- In Marty's absence, he relayed information for this update to Cynthia.
- He had been in contact with Vicki Zimmerman regarding certified survey maps.
- Currently the maps come directly to the office from the Register of Deeds. Hard copies of all of the CSMs reside in the town office.
- Marty will ascertain which he does not have copies of and will be sure that he has PDFs of the maps in his office as well as the originals in the office.

TOWN BOARD REPORT

- Ron has been attending some meetings in Sharon's place. She will be absent in February.
- A new form was designed for the Zoning Administrator.
- A sex offender ordinance from Rudolph was provided for committee review.

REVIEW ZONING ORDINANCE

- There were no changes made to the ordinance at this meeting.

FUTURE PLAN COMMISSION MEETING DATES

- February 19th
- March 19th
- April 23rd

Meeting adjourned at 9:07p. Ron motioned, Lori seconded. All in favor.

Next meeting Wednesday, February 19th, 2014, at 6:30 pm

Minutes prepared by Cynthia Welling
Plan Commission Secretary

ACTION ITEMS

Check into creating a logo for the Town of Grant.

Review Quarrying Ordinance to be sure we are in compliance with NR 135.32. (Print out all of NR 135 and review with our Quarrying Ordinance within the next 6 months.)

Update Quarrying Permit Process with NR updates.

Farmland Preservation: Contact Jeff Schuler to meet with us.

NR 135: Review w/Quarrying Ordinance

Review Zoning definitions

August 8-10, 2014 – create logo prior to celebration