

PLAN COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
TOWN OF GRANT
January 18, 2017

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

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

CITIZENS: None

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm by Jim Wendels.

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 S. Schwab to approve the December 21, 2016 Plan Commission Meeting Minutes. The motion passed with unanimous ayes.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Kristen Johnson recommended listing the most recent Zoning Ordinance amendment in chapter 1, adding "A1a - Farmland Preservation Overlay Zoning District" to policy #1 in chapter 5 (page 47), and adding farmland preservation as an agricultural program (Section 5.2 F). Language from the Farm Service Agency (FSA) website will be used to describe the program, while mentioning the Town's zoning makes the program possible.

Revisions to chapter 5 continued with Section 5.5 D. Groundwater:

- In paragraph 2: Strike the word "use" and change the word "important" to "vital." Strike the word "failing" prior to septic systems. Add the word "manure" following underground storage tanks.
- We should aim to consistently use Town of Grant, Grant or Town in the language of the document.
- In paragraph 4, remove and replace reference to the County Landfill on QQ with "All known landfills, including the former Town landfill located on Griffith Avenue, have been closed."
- In paragraph 5: Strike "within Grant" from sentence about selected private wells.
- Discussion took place regarding number of active high capacity wells (117) on p. 55 and the number of pivots (128) on p. 41. The number of pivots and wells is not necessarily the same. Some wells run two pivots. K. Johnson will confirm the number of wells.
- S. Schwab questioned the currency of the Atrazine discussion. No one is certain if research is continuing, but retaining the paragraph does show that it is not a problem in T of Grant. The verb "is" will be changed to the past tense "has". The semi-colon will be changed to a comma. The words "within the community" will be struck from the last sentence.
- It was questioned if the "s" should be included following nitrate.
- "Since 2013, there have been 18 samples tested for nitrate-N concentration in the Town, and only one exceeded 10 ppm." is recommended wording by Will Stites.
- The use of "since 2013" in conjunction with a specific number was questioned by T. Reitter. K. Johnson will clarify the use of the word "since" to determine if all samples were from 2013 or if they occurred between 2013 and 2016.

- Other substances found in the water were discussed, including iron and tannins. J. Wendels recommended adding “Elevated levels of iron can occur in many town wells. Although there are no detrimental health effects associated with these amounts of iron it can be problematic for household appliances and/or clothing. Iron removal systems may be required if deemed a problem on a case-by-case basis.” S. Schwab recommended adding tannins to the discussion.
- Acidity should be included. Sharon will develop language on corrosivity and acidity.
- A discussion of bacteria in the water will not be included in the Comp Plan.

Discussion regarding Section 5.5 E. Wildlife Habitat and Forested Area:

- On page 57 – Strike the first paragraph.
- Add to the end of the first sentence of paragraph 2 “the largest grassland complex east of the Mississippi River.”
- Change first sentence of paragraph 3 to “The DNR provides management of the property and consists of developing, enhancing, and maintaining grassland habitat.”
- Add “The DNR management practices of the Buena Vista Wildlife Area need to be continuously evaluated and improved.” to objectives (Section 5.7).
- To the last sentence in the 3rd paragraph add “and woodcock” after ruffed grouse.
- Several changes were recommended for the 5th paragraph.
 - Change “hundreds” of people to “dozens” of people.
 - Change “prairie chicken” to “Greater Prairie-chicken” and following the scientific name add “a Wisconsin threatened species.”
 - Add “and short-eared owl” following “marsh hawk.”
 - Change “Two field trials” to “A field trial” and add “and Canada” to the end of the sentence.
- Several changes were recommended for the 6th paragraph
 - Remove “of Grant” from the first sentence.
 - Add gray wolf to list of non-game species.
 - Remove the word “common” from both the game and non-game species.
- Several changes were recommended for the 7th paragraph
 - Change “At least 75” to “More than 200” species of birds. In the same sentence, remove “frequent” and end with “Town.”
 - Add “whooping cranes” to the list of birds seen during the fall and spring migration.
 - Keep “Common” in this paragraph.
 - Add “killdeer” following the Eastern wood peewee.
 - Further adjustments may need to be made to the list of birds.
- Add “creek chub” to the list of fish and remove “of Grant” to the 8th paragraph.
- Add the green frog and leopard frog to the list of reptiles and amphibians in paragraph 9.
- In the 10th paragraph under Wildlife Habitat and Forested Areas, several changes were recommended
 - Remove “primarily”
 - Strike “and pollution” and add “and” between fragmentation and invasive.
 - Remove “possible” before degradation.
 - Make outcompete one word instead of two.
 - Remove “native” before “ecosystem.”
 - Remove the sentence explaining pollution.
- R. Becker asked if Map 5.6 is current. The Managed Forest Land may need to be verified. Some forest land has been changed to farmland. S. Schwab recommended adding grassland to the map. It could include Buena Vista Wildlife Area which includes those parcels owned by: DNR, Dane County Conservation League and the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology. The name of map will need to be changed.

- It was questioned if the gray wolf and the whooping crane should be on Table 5.1: Threatened and Endangered Species. K. Johnson will check the database. The scientific name for the Greater Prairie-chicken is missing *pinnatus*.

Discussion continued with F. Open-Space Residential Design Concept. It is not the same as lot averaging. It does allow for more wildlife habitat. This section should be referenced in Chapter 8 (Land Use) or this section could refer to chapter 8.

At the February 15th meeting, we will continue with “G. Air Quality”, finish chapter 5, and continue with chapter 6. Kathy will send copies of the remaining chapters and print them for the committee members.

CITIZEN INPUT: None

FARMLAND PRESERVATION

Extensive discussion took place regarding Farmland Preservation and the impact of utilizing an overlay district. The greatest concern about the new overlay district is the conditions that must be met to complete a re-zone to a different district. The Town may be losing control of rezones.

An email describing the process for annually notifying DATCP of any re-zones in the past year was distributed.

A remaining question is “are we required to participate in Farmland Preservation?”

S. Schwab and N. Wolosek plan to attend the Portage County Planning and Zoning Committee meeting on January 24th. Our request to amend T. of Grant Zoning Ordinance is on the agenda.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

A written report was submitted by M. Rutz. During the month of December 2016, \$50 was collected in building permits/fees including one accessory building and one UAP.

TOWN BOARD REPORT

- The amended Zoning Ordinance was passed by the board.
- The Wisconsin Towns Association- Portage County Unit distributed a Resolution to support private /public partnerships for ambulance service to every Town and Village of the county. Each was asked to consider this Resolution at their December or January monthly board meetings. Results are pending. The Town’s lawsuit against Portage County is moving forward to appellate court. No date has been set.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by J. Wendels to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed with unanimous ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen D Lee

Plan Commission Secretary

Approved 02-01-2017