

WRIGHT COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting of: September 8, 2016

MINUTES – (Informational)

The Wright County Planning Commission met September 8, 2016 in the County Commissioners Board Room at the Wright County Government Center, Buffalo, Minnesota. In the absent of Dan Mol, Vice-Chair, Ken Felger, called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. with the following Board members present: Felger, Dave Pederson, Jan Thompson, Charlie Borrell, Dave Thompson and Dan Bravinder. Sean Riley, Planning & Zoning Administrator, represented the Planning & Zoning office; Greg Kryzer, Assistant County Attorney, was present as legal counsel.

MINUTES

On a motion by D. Thompson, seconded by D. Pederson, all voted to approve the minutes for the August 18, 2016 meeting as printed.

1. **TROY D. BREMER** – New Item

LOCATION: 7809– County Road 8 NW –Part of N ½ of NW ¼, Section 30, Township 121, Range 26, Wright County, Minnesota. (Maple Lake Twp.) Tax #210-100-302100

Petitions for a Conditional Use Permit as regulated in Section 155.027(.029); 155.048(D) & 155.103 to operate a seasonal boat and jet ski rental business as a home extended business in an existing building.

Present: Troy Bremer

- A. Riley reviewed the property zoned and in the Land Use Plan for AG General Agricultural. The property history is of being part of a large dairy operation until the homestead and barns were split off on a parcel. The proposed building size and location was before the Board of Adjustment and variance granted to use a portion of the building (more than 2,000 sq. ft.) and also from the 500' separation from a neighbor. The home extended business is to store the applicant's boats and jet skis that he delivers for his customers to local lakes.
- B. Bremer explained his typical customer rents a home on nearby lakes such as Sylvia, Clearwater and Cedar and call to reserve a boat while out to the lake. Most rentals are weekly, sometimes it is just for a day. Felger asked if these are the applicant's own boats? Bremer stated yes. He currently owns three jet ski's, four boats and two pontoons. He pointed to the shed he stores them in during the summer and where he pulls them out to clean and go over them. A separate building in back was pointed to where he would store them during the winter months. Everything to be stored inside. The use of a large building between was questioned; Bremer explained it is a large dairy barn that has hay stored in it.
- C. J. Thompson asked if the applicant is storing other people's boats. Bremer responded, not anymore, because he does not have enough storage for his own things.
- D. Bravinder – stated he has no concerns with the business. Discussion followed about the differences between this business and a recent home extended business request.

- E. Borrell asked if the Town Board responded. Riley read the response which was favorable.
- F. Borrell moved to approve a Conditional Use Permit to operate a seasonal boat and jet ski rental business as a home extended business in an existing oversized building, which was approved by the Board of Adjustment, with the following conditions: 1) The building and office must be brought up to code and apply for the necessary permits to operate; 2) Signage must conform to County sign regulations; 3) All business related items must be stored inside of the approved building; 4) Any change or expansion to business will require a new conditional use permit; and 5) The Township will review in one year for compliance. D. Pederson seconded the motion.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

On a motion by Borrell, seconded by Bravinder, at 7:50 p.m. all voted to close the public hearing portion of the meeting to meet with Scott Anderson, attorney with Rupp, Anderson, Squires & Waldspurger, P.A. to discuss pending litigation:

- A. Maple Plain Bank vs Wright County
- B. In Re the Conditional Use Permit application of Gerardo Ruiz.

Felger reconvened the Planning Commission for a workshop discussion on proposed amendments to the Solar Ordinance at 9:45 p.m.

Proposed Amendments to the Wright County Solar Ordinance - NOT A PUBLIC HEARING

Riley informed the Commission members they have been invited to the Wright-Hennepin Electric grand opening of a solar farm on September 16.

Riley summarized the conclusion of the Solar Work Group established after the County Board placed a moratorium. The group met nine times. The discussion looked at the current Ordinance, received input from the Industry representatives, Township, Commissioners, Planning Commission and private citizens. The draft Ordinance was sent out to the Commission.

Borrell a member of the Work Group, mentioned there were not any substantial changes. Riley noted they discussed the big items such as farmland, but did not change that. He noted the Townships can be more restrictive. The solar panels cannot be closer than 100' to a residential structure and a property cannot be completely clear cut of woods. Other matters discussed were the poles, interior roads and road standards serving the solar farm. He felt the group developed a better framework and a better definition to work with. Another development was the requirement for a developer's agreement which would be project specific. The details for the agreement to be worked out by the Planning Commission for each permit. Borrell felt this will add more "teeth" to the requirements.

J. Thompson sat in on the meetings as an interested citizen and wanted to recognize the group who she felt represented all interests and was well rounded. She asked for clarification of #4 on page 2, with regards to the 3 acres and 7% allowed for tree removal and the limit of no more than 50%. She felt that condition could be clearer. Riley agreed it was somewhat confusing and explained the limits and gave an example. D. Thompson agreed the sentence along with the 50% limit is not clear. Kryzer – noted it addresses a smaller project. D. Thompson was not clear on whether it was referencing trees or a land alteration. Kryzer agreed, they could add tree removal to the 50% limit, but wanted to leave the sentences separate. The word "it" replaced with "tree removal" makes this clear. J. Thompson also would like the topsoil kept on site. Riley noted they address that with the road construction and noted any alteration would be reviewed by the Planning Commission. Bravinder did not think top soil would be removed because it would be needed to get vegetative growth. Riley referred to page 3, #12, which he read: the geo-textile fabric would be

placed to ensure the property is reclaimed back to its original state. Agreed they do not specifically say that they have to leave the topsoil. Kryzer noted they are to do as little landscaping and contouring as possible. If they do it, they will have to use some natural features and the Planning Commission has to approve that. Riley noted these are most likely going to be located on farm fields and are to do it in a way that they can be converted back to fields.

Riley informed the Commission the next step is to notify the Town Boards, Cities and newspaper of the public hearing for the Ordinance amendment. The hearing date is October 20, and the Commission would be making a recommendation to the County Board.

D. Thompson noted another spot where he noted seven acres. Kryzer stated the Solar Energy Systems need to add that. D. Thompson questioned B(2) on page 1, third line, there is a second “and” that should be stricken.

Kryzer felt the amended Ordinance is organized better. Riley noted the preamble “Purpose” which he felt means that an applicant should not come to the Planning Commission with a plan that completely alters a farm site, because it could not be restored back to a farm field. Borrell agreed the intent is that the solar farm when removed should be returned to farm field. He felt this preserves agricultural land in a way a housing development would not. Don’t want to box themselves in. Kryzer noted the industry is looking for the perfect spot. J. Thompson would like something added that prohibits removal of the top soil. Riley - read the proposed language in (7) Conditional Use that requires an excavation plan, that includes a requirement for the proposed vegetative removal, trees or other prominent natural vegetation. He noted the Commission will have an opportunity to address these through a Conditional Use Permit.

Workshop adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sean Riley
Planning & Zoning Administrator

cc: Planning Commission
County Board of Commissioners
Kryzer
Town Board
Applicant