

Florence Township Long-Range Planning Commission Minutes – 8/8/05

Members present – Ron Seymour, Rick Janka, Jan Bruce, Kristen Eide-Tollefson, Brian Schreiber. Excused absence: Bob Johnson, Vern Genzlinger. Joan Marshman, representing the Township Board of Supervisors was also in attendance.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ron at 7:05 pm with a quorum present. The agenda for the meeting was presented with no added items. The minutes of the 7/11/05 meeting were reviewed and accepted as written. Motion by Jan, seconded by Rick.

Old Business: Comprehensive Plan Implementation – The contract work with 1000 Friends of Minnesota has been delayed because of staff changes. Jean Coleman, member of their Board of Directors, met with the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to review how they would complete their commitment to the project. Carol Sersland, staff member of Community Resources Planning will work with Beth Knudsen, DNR, Lake City, to complete the Community Viz scenarios, provide a written report of analysis results for the community and a public meeting to present the information. Time line as planned would be – meet with Township CAC in September to review scenarios and finalize the written and public reports in October.

Vacant Planning Commission positions – Discussed ways on how to identify and encourage qualified residents of the Township to be part of the Commission – have two open positions. Ron, Jan, and Kristen will work up an ad for local papers to advertise the need for members.

Sign Ordinance – A draft copy of the proposed Township Sign Ordinance was presented to the Township Board at their 7/25/05 meeting. They discussed the need for more information on the permit process, enforcement and penalties. Joan had several copies of permit forms from other ordinances (township, county, city) that the Commission reviewed and made suggestions on how to develop forms that would be fitting for Florence Township. Vern and Brian will have samples available for the 8/22/05 Township Board meeting. A time line was also discussed – need more information on examples of signs, definitions of sign language, and what else needs to be done – this will be discussed with the Town Board.

Waste Water Initiative – No action for now - plan to start the project this fall.

Ahlers site in section 27 – Continued discussion (6/13/05 and 7/11/05 meetings) about ways of protecting Ag land from development decisions that are not in the best interest of our long range land-protection plan of the Township Comprehensive Plan. Need to meet with the County to make sure the Planning Commission and the Township have some input into the decision making process at the County level.

Moratorium on Bluffland – Discussed the ending date of the County moratorium and what is being planned after that date. Township needs to provide its own protection as the County does not seem to be providing any assurance that our blufflands are being protected from development. Need to have as an agenda item for our next meeting.

Septic Site Best Management Practices – One reason the Geisler development (Phase II and III of the Country Parks Estate) did not get approved was the less than adequate plan for the septic system. There was some criticism at the county level, that the Township did not have an adequate plan or did not provide sufficient information for that site to assure environmental protection and a management plan of operations and to avoid liability in the future for system failures. The Planning Commission had developed a “Best Management Practices” document, but the feeling is that the County didn’t reference it. Kristen will look at the document and get copies to Joan and Nancy at the county level.

New Business: Hanson Harbor request for a storage shed – A building permit was issued in 1979 and is still considered valid as there were no “sun-set” dates at that time. Applied for an OK to continue the project. Ron had reviewed the request and sent it to the Township for their approval as there are no reasons at the Township level for denial. They were advised, that there are issues at the County level that they will need to be approved for – one in particular will be the Shoreland Permit (flood plain level).

Joint meeting with City of Lake City, Goodhue County and Florence Township – There is a need for a joint meeting to discuss the issues of development and how the Township, County and Lake City can have a better understanding of their goals and future plans. All three have comprehensive plans, but there is no common knowledge about these plans as to how the three units of government can work together for the common good of the community. Joan mentioned that this group has met, but there is a need for continued discussion and a long-range plan needs to be drafted. No one was assigned to setup a meeting or potential dates.

With no further business items to discuss, motion to adjourn by Jan, seconded by Rick. Motion approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Schreiber
Recording Secretary