

MINUTES of PLAN COMMISSION MEETING
January 14, 2020 @ 6:30 P.M.

Members Present: Michael Calewarts, Steve Olsen, Kathy Janssen, Melissa Trepanier, Bill Krueger, Francis Rabas, Keith Brunner, Ralph Witte, Zoning Administrator, Clerk – Michelle Wallerius, Devin Yoder, Brown County Planning. Meeting called to order by Bill Krueger at 6:30 p.m.

PLAN COMMISSION AGENDA

1. Approve Minutes from December 4, 2019 Plan Commission Meeting: Motion by Steve Olsen and seconded by Melissa Trepanier to approve Minutes from December 4, 2019. MC.

2. Review/Revise Chapter 1 of Comprehensive Plan: Devin Yoder present a proposed Draft of Chapter 1 to the Comprehensive Code. Review of the last 10 years. The Town's growth has remained pretty stable. Steve Olsen feels we should hold to the Plan established within the 10 years, until the public requests significant changes. Addition of new subdivision will add 19 new homes. Kathy Janssen states she is satisfied with the proposed subdivision and location as it was designated for future growth in our current plan. Melissa Trepanier states many people would like to live in New Denmark, but unable to afford to purchase land. Questions if the Plan can be revised in 6 years if there is a significant change or is the Town held to the 10 year plan? Devin states the Plan can be amended earlier then the 10 years and reviewed. It should act as an advisory guide and vision for the Town. Melissa would like to see options for land owners to sell smaller portions of their property for family to build or as a means of income versus the all or none option. Melissa can appreciate the guidelines for growth and development, as many communities did not have a plan in place and that creates dysfunction.

Devin points out the age demographics for the Town is shifting and is on the higher end. Something the Plan Commission can consider and look at. Ralph Witte states many communities are allowing 2nd home on parcel for mom and dad, this is current trend in other communities. Mike Calewarts states people don't want to sell their land for growth. He indicates there were approximately 110 parcels that were grandfathered in as build and currently 90 or so still exist. Property owners do not want to destroy farmland and don't make more land.

Discussion of second home on parcel, what happens when parent has passed and original owners want to sell. Mike Calewarts states in Montpelier the secondary home must be removed. This could lead into Granny pod – which is self-sustaining. Keith Brunner inquires if there is a trend for tiny homes in Brown County. Devin states nothing significant. Steve Olsen states our current code requires a minimum size for new home construction.

Melissa Trepanier feels if something could be added in the ordinance to allow for so many splits per family, this could address some concerns. It would keep the existing home marketable and allow family members to divide or split and provide some future growth in the community. Ralph inquires if this is something that should be addressed with the residents for feedback. Does the community want 3 or 4 parcel splits per a 40 but would need to keep road frontage requirements and size and setbacks. Devin Yoder feels this could be addressed through the

zoning & subdivision code moving forward. Steve Olsen and Mike Calewarts question if that is fair to those wanting to move here that do not have family land and how far do you go on family tree. Children, grandchildren, step-children, etc.

Keith Brunner inquires if there are any more trends moving forward. Devin Yoder states there are fewer small farms and the farms that remain are getting bigger. Need to balance the right of home owner and the right to farm. From the Visioning Session the primary focus was on preserving the 35 acre lot size, & limit farm size. Discussion of animal unit numbers and the State can supersede the Town's ordinance.

Devin raises the concern that addressed Melissa's concern. Only larger farm operation can sometimes afford the large tracts of vacant farmland which could open the argument to sell only 5 acres and the family keeps the balance. Devin will begin working on Chapter 2 – Transportation, Housing and Economic Development for the next meeting in March. Devin Yoder excused at 7:10 p.m.

3. Rezoning Request for parcel ND-146-5-1 & ND-146-5 from Ag-R & B-1 to Industrial-1 for The construction of a mini-storage warehouse: Administrator Witte states Steve Boyea was unable to attend the meeting. Proposed drawings of mini-storage units presented. Tabled for next meeting.

4. Any other business. Discussion of issues with proposed subdivision from Big Sky Development. Steve Bieda indicated they completed some surveys and the with the ESAs, The slopes are steeper then expected and they might lose 5-6 lots which might not make the project feasible unless they change up set backs, make the road slightly narrower. The subdivision ordinance does permit this by “conservation by design” if approved by the Town. Steve Olsen questions then it was a matter of how much they paid for the land and should not fall back on the Town to adjustment parcel size or zoning requirements.

Motion by Steve Olsen and seconded by Melissa Trepanier to adjourn at 7:30 p.m. MC

Prepared:
Michelle Wallerius, Clerk