

**Princeton Township
Mille Lacs County, Minnesota**

Planning Commission Meeting

Monday, January 4, 2021

Minutes

Public Hearing

On January 4, 2021, 6:15 p.m., Planning Commission Chair Cyndi MacDonald re-opened the public hearing continued from December 7.

Due to the Governor's COVID19 restrictions the meeting was held by teleconference.

Planning Commission members present: Cyndi MacDonald, David Persing, Cheryl Schimming, Kathy Stoeckel, Carol Whitcomb, Tari Zortman.

Also joining: Township Board Liaison Dan Hiller, Township Zoning Administrator Scott Richards, Township Clerk Doug Dahl

Topic of the public hearing was zoning amendments related to cul-de-sacs, lot-width requirements at the ordinary high-water level, and the definition of the building setback line in the River Conservation District.

Zoning Administrator Scott Richards reported that he has had numerous conversations with DNR officials who have provided direction on how to proceed with the zoning amendments. DNR staff comments and suggestions include:

- No issue with eliminating the prohibition of cul-de-sacs in the River Conservation (RC) District.
- Adding language to the zoning district provisions indicating required conformance with the shoreland regulations of Mille Lacs County and the floodplain regulations of Section 300:400 of the Township Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Richards offered a draft ordinance (2021-1) incorporating the DNR recommendations for consideration during the regular agenda. [Full text is on file and available upon request.]

The DNR also suggested that the township consider adopting its own shoreland regulations instead of deferring to Mille Lacs County. Mr. Richards recommended delaying any such consideration until later in the year.

The public hearing was closed at 6:25 p.m.

Regular Meeting

At 6:30 p.m. Planning Commission Chair Cyndi MacDonald called the regular monthly meeting to order.

Commission members present: Cyndi MacDonald, David Persing, Cheryl Schimming, Kathy Stoeckel, Carol Whitcomb, Tari Zortman

Also attending: Township Board Liaison Dan Hiller, Zoning Administrator Scott Richards, Township Clerk Doug Dahl

All participants recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approve Agenda

Tari Zortman moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Cyndi MacDonald. Chair MacDonald called the roll:

Mr. Persing—Yes, Ms. Schimming—Yes, Ms. Stoeckel—Yes, Ms. Whitcomb—Yes, Ms. Zortman—Yes. Ms. MacDonald—Yes. Motion carried.

Open Forum

Chair Cyndi MacDonald began by stating that Open Forum is the time for township residents to speak to matters of concern to them. She encouraged residents to use that time, noting that the regular agenda is reserved for discussion and action by members of the Planning Commission. She also advised that comments made in the GoToMeeting chat boxes are not part of the meeting and will not be saved or recorded in the minutes.

Resident Marcia Kendall spoke against changing zoning in Sections 27/34 to accommodate the development project proposed by Scott Moller. Other residents expressed their agreement with Ms. Kendall.

Resident Dan Whitcomb spoke in favor of re-zoning, noting that part of the area under consideration is already zoned R1—Residential, and that the area is contiguous with R1-zoned parcels.

Approve Minutes of December 7, 2020 Meeting

Cyndi MacDonald moved to approve the minutes of the December 7 meeting. Seconded by Tari Zortman. Carol Whitcomb noted a spelling error on page 3. Chair MacDonald called the roll:

Ms. Schimming—Yes, Ms. Stoeckel—Yes, Ms. Whitcomb—No, Ms. Zortman—Yes. Ms. MacDonald—Yes. Mr. Persing—Abstain (due to absence from the meeting). Minutes approved with the correction.

Land-Use and Zoning Study—Sections 27 & 34—Follow-up to Discussion with Area Property Owners Residents

Scott Richards summarized previous discussions by the planning commission on the re-zoning application and sketch plan presented by Scott Moller. He also read a note from Don and Laurie Peterson, 2438 76th Avenue, opposing changing 76th Avenue from a cul-de-sac to a through road.

Most Planning Commission members remain opposed to the zoning changes requested by Scott Moller in his development plans for Sections 27 and 34. The majority consensus is that development is appropriate for the area, but ought to be carried out in accordance with existing zoning regulations. Mr. Richards spoke with Mr. Moller after the December meeting. Mr. Moller indicated he does not plan to modify his plan to conform with current zoning and Comprehensive Plan regulations.

Mr. Richards suggested putting the land use and zoning study on hold to allow the subcommittee appointed at the December, 2020 meeting to research the history of developments in the township.

Carol Whitcomb moved to table consideration of the Section 27/34 Land-Use and Zoning Study until the April meeting. Seconded by Cheryl Schimming. Chair MacDonald called the roll:

Mr. Persing—No; Ms. Schimming—Yes, Ms. Stoeckel—Yes, Ms. Whitcomb—Yes, Ms. Zortman—Yes. Ms. MacDonald—Yes. Motion carried.

Subcommittee to Research History of Residential Development to Aid in Decision Making for Future Development

Members of the subcommittee—Ms. Schimming, Ms. Whitcomb, Ms. Zortman—agreed to meet with Mr. Richards at the Township Hall at 10 a.m., Tuesday, January 19, to pursue their research.

Zoning Amendments— Cul-de-sacs, Lot Width Requirements at the Ordinary High-Water Level, and Definition of Building Setback Line

Members discussed the revised draft of Ordinance 2021-1 as presented by Mr. Richards during the Public Hearing.

Tari Zortman moved to recommend approval of the draft ordinance to the Town Board. Seconded by Cyndi MacDonald. Chair MacDonald called the roll:

Mr. Persing—Yes; Ms. Schimming—Yes, Ms. Stoeckel—Yes, Ms. Whitcomb—Yes, Ms. Zortman—Yes. Ms. MacDonald—Yes. Motion carried.

Review of Home Occupation/Interim-Use Permits

Mr. Richards noted that many jurisdictions use a two-level approval process whereby Permitted Home Occupations are allowed administratively, and Special Home Occupations are allowed through a public-hearing process, typically as a conditional-use permit or as an interim-use permit. He distributed the ordinance from Oak Park Heights as an example of a typical home-occupation section that is used by most of his clients.

Mr. Richards requested authorization to draft amendments to the township home-occupation section reflecting the suggested two-level approach.

Cyndi MacDonald moved to authorize Mr. Richards to draft amendments to the ordinance for consideration at the February meeting. Seconded by Dave Persing. Chair MacDonald called the roll: Mr. Persing—Yes; Ms. Schimming—Yes, Ms. Stoeckel—Yes, Ms. Whitcomb—Yes, Ms. Zortman—Yes. Ms. MacDonald—Yes. Motion carried.

Zoning Ordinance Items: Electronic Signs and Animal Regulations

At the December 7 Planning Commission meeting Mr. Richards agreed to provide examples of electronic-sign regulations at the January meeting. Accordingly, he distributed excerpts from Lakeville and Minnetonka codes covering changeable-copy signs and electronic-sign illumination.

Dave Persing moved to authorize Mr. Richards to draft amendments to the ordinance for consideration at the February meeting. Seconded by Tari Zortman. Chair MacDonald called the roll:

Mr. Persing—Yes; Ms. Schimming—Yes, Ms. Stoeckel—No, Ms. Whitcomb—Yes, Ms. Zortman—Yes. Ms. MacDonald—Yes. Motion carried.

The Planning Commission remains satisfied with the current ordinances regulating animals, and chose to take no action on the matter.

2021 Fee Schedule

The Town Board, at their December 15, 2020 meeting, asked the Planning Commission to review the 2020 fee schedule and determine if any changes need to be made for 2021. Mr. Richards suggests that an escrow amount be added for conditional-use permits, interim-use permits, variances, and re-zoning

requests. The public hearing notice costs, fees for the Township Zoning Administrator, Engineer and Attorney would be paid from this escrow.

Mr. Hiller cautioned that adding escrows to simple CUP/IUP applications will discourage residents from making those applications. He expressed his concern that the township process for reviewing and approving simple applications is possibly more complex and expensive than it needs to be. He recommended reviewing the process to determine if it can be simplified. Mr. Richards agreed that the processes should be streamlined if possible.

Kathy Stoeckel moved to ask the Town Board to establish a two-level escrow for CUP/IUP applications. Seconded by Cyndi MacDonald. Chair MacDonald called the roll: Mr. Persing—Yes; Ms. Schimming—Yes, Ms. Stoeckel—Yes, Ms. Whitcomb—Yes, Ms. Zortman—Abstain; Ms. MacDonald—Yes. Motion carried.

Adjournment

Kathy Stoeckel moved to adjourn. Seconded by Carol Whitcomb. Chair MacDonald called the roll: Mr. Persing—Yes; Ms. Schimming—Yes, Ms. Stoeckel—Yes, Ms. Whitcomb—Yes, Ms. Zortman—Yes. Ms. MacDonald—Yes. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Dahl
Clerk/Treasurer

Attendees: Tom Braun, Tim Braun, Bart Kendall, Marcia Kendall, Scott Moller