

Princeton Township
Mille Lacs County, Minnesota
Planning Commission Meeting **Monday, January 09, 2023**
Minutes

Commission members present: Dave Persing, Steve Pflerhaar, Cheryl Schimming, Kathy Stoeckel, Carol Whitcomb, and Dave Hagstrom

Commission member absent: None

Staff present: Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Terry Pflerhaar, Zoning Administrator Scott Richards

Public in-person attendees: Joel Minks, Bill Whitcomb, Al Bekius, Jason Betzler, Joss Jondahl, Nancy Moen, Craig Wensmann

Online attendees: None

Regular Meeting

At 6:00 p.m., Chair Dave Persing called the regular meeting to order.

All Participants recited the pledge of Allegiance.

Approve Agenda

Ms. Whitcomb moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Mr. Pflerhaar.
Motion carried.

Open Forum

Al Bekius stood to express concern about a proposed development on property near his home. Scott Richards said that item was just a preliminary application for a sketch plan and, since it was on the agenda, it would be discussed later in the meeting.

Approve Minutes of October 10, 2022 Meeting

Mr. Pflerhaar moved to approve the minutes of the October 10 meeting. Seconded by Ms. Whitcomb. Motion carried.

Sketch Plan Review of Michael Reger-Reger Acres-Section 6

Scott Richards introduced an application for a Sketch Plan within Section 6 and located on the West Branch of the Rum River. The proposed subdivision consists of five lots on a total of 69.89 acres. Ms. Whitcomb wondered if there was consideration for river conservation and any DNR laws applicable to building there. This area is not designated "Wild and Scenic", and therefore not subject to such rigorous laws, but it is guided for River Conservation in the Comprehensive Plan, since it is zoned RC-1- River Conservation 1.

Mr. Richards stated that this was merely an information, fact-finding proposal, and that no action was needed by the Planning Commission at this time.

- This information will be forwarded to the Town Board at their next meeting on January 17th, 2023.

Sketch Plan Review of Jason Betzler-Multiple Family Development-Section 6

Zoning Administrator Scott Richards introduced an application for a Sketch Plan review within Section 6 and located at Hwy 169 and 70th Street (County Road 135). The proposal entails construction of seven buildings with seven to eight rental units per building. This would be built on Parcel D of Jason Betzler's property, which is zoned C/I, Commercial/Industrial, and allows for multiple family construction as a conditional use. Mr. Betzler would maintain ownership of this property, one owner with 56 rentals.

Mr. Pflighaar expressed concern about community septic systems, citing the failure of 8 out of 9 such systems in Sherburne County. Craig Wensmann affirmed he has designed countless said systems, and if they are set up appropriately, they work fine. There have been no soil borings completed yet for this purpose.

Mr. Richards also presented a map with a possible access road south of the development out to 100th Ave. After board members questioned the impact to adjoining wetlands, Mr. Wensmann asserted they are trying to avoid wetland impacts.

Mr. Persing suggested an escrow account might be set up in case of problems, to save the township from absorbing repair work, etc. He also asked about fire suppression. There is no fire suppression plan in place yet.

Mr. Wensmann described this project as a transition area between residential and any upcoming commercial endeavors, which would help the area to retain a rural feel.

Mr. Persing asked about the cost of unit rental after Mr. Betzler pointed out the great need for affordable housing in the area. Joss Jondahl stated that rent would be about \$1,300 per month.

When asked if the Township would be required to maintain the road, Mr. Betzler explained that it will be private, but that the base will be approved by the township in anticipation of becoming public in the future.

Ms. Schimming asked if a Forestry Plan is in place. Mr. Betzler said there is not, and admitted they would have to remove several trees.

Mr. Persing summarized by asking DPJB Properties to return when they have more information on the above discussed issues.

Mr. Richards restated that this was merely an informational, fact-finding proposal, and that no action was needed by the Planning Commission at this time.

- This information will be forwarded to the Town Board at their next meeting on January 17th, 2023.

Recreational Vehicles

Mr. Richards reviewed the reason for the discussion of recreational vehicles:

At their July 11, 2022, meeting the Planning Commission discussed regulations for campers and compared ordinances from other jurisdictions. They concluded that the Sherburne County Ordinance, in Subdivision 18, provided a good basis for the Township to consider developing recreational vehicle standards.

Based on that discussion, Mr. Richards presented a draft amendment to Ordinance 200:020 covering recreational vehicles. Members discussed the draft and agreed to continue consideration of the issue at the next Planning Commission meeting.

The Planning Commission decided to table the discussion until the next meeting where Mr. Richards will implement language related to campgrounds.

Poultry

At the October 10, 2022, Planning Commission meeting, Mr. Richards brought up Princeton Township's Zoning Ordinance which does not currently allow keeping poultry such as chickens in the R-1 and R-2 Residential Districts. However, there have been numerous requests to allow chickens in these districts, including one resident who has one chicken (from a flock of twenty) as an Emotional Support Animal.

Mr. Richards asked if the Township would like to respond to poultry issues on a case-by-case basis, or do they want to pursue limited use in R1 and R2.

Ms. Whitcomb saw no problem with chickens if they are properly housed and not allowed to free range.

Discussion was made that perhaps small lots would be limited to owning one to three chickens, with larger lots (5 acres or more) allowing more. Setback requirements should be set, as well.

Mr. Richards will return with more detailed information at the next meeting.

Adjourn

Ms. Stoeckel moved to adjourn. Seconded by Ms. Whitcomb. Motion carried.
Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Pflughaar
Deputy Clerk/Treasurer