

Princeton Township
Mille Lacs County, Minnesota
Planning Commission Meeting **Monday, March 6, 2023**
Minutes

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

Commission member absent: None

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

Public in-person attendees: Joel Minks, Bill Whitcomb, Al Bekius, Jason Betzler, Joss Jondahl, Nancy Moan, Craig Wensmann, Donna DuBois, Nathan Carlson, Lisa & Jeremy Hustad, Angela Carlson, Dan Whitcomb, Shay Fossum, Brandon Fossum, Ruthann Liebersbach, Sue Liebersbach, Dawn DeValk, Dean DeValk, Zach DeValk, Reed Miller, David Patten, Mike Fitschen, Dana Ackerson, Jacinta Stearns, Liz R., Mike Bishman, Matt Ackerson, Julie A. Ray, Ken Jones, Amy Orton, Chloe Smitz, Judy Costello, Carol Lindeman, Duane Bekius, Lisa Remer, Justin Remer, Larry Costello, Kevin Bursch, Jennifer Krause, Steve & Kathy Nelson, Logan Roadstrom, Jean Stearns, Corey Stearns, Lance Dehn, Amy Dehn, Mary Kramer, Michelle Anderberg, Louis Szenay, Nancy Szem, Sara Andison, Sheryl Andison, David Elm, Jim Rutten, Ross Mead, Sheila Buranen, Kelly Lund, Danny Manthie, Sara Rutten, Becka Jacka, Aaron Jacka, Nick & Jody Meixen, Kaitlin Holcombe, Shayne Kutzler, Ken Sanford, Mark Sanford, Barb Bekius, Bonnie Razink, Jay Ingalls, Jacob Carlson, Greg Anderson, Jean Loscheider, Tanya Jones, James Huber, Brandon Moos, Dennis Leider, Kandy Henchen, Steve Kloss, Jeff Rupert, Doug Henchen, Amanda Hallberg, Robert Hallberg, Travis Leonard, Joe & Liz Gerald, Sara Moss, Christine Noggle,

Online attendees: Don Lubrecht, David Halverson, L.H., P.T., Dan & Shirley Campbell, C.H., Cody Stearns, Ron, Stephan Hafften, Amanda, Stacy Feliciano

Public Hearing

At 6:00 p.m., Chair David Persing called the Public Hearing to order.

ElevatedEducationMN IUP:

The first order of business was to consider an IUP by Jenna Slack of ElevatedEducationMN to allow a Special Home Occupation Business at 3467 75th Avenue. Zoning Administrator Scott Richards gave a brief summary of Ms. Slack's request, but stated that, because of family issues, she also requested to continue the request to the next Planning Commission Meeting.

Mr. Persing asked if there were any public comments on this request. There were none.

North Country Flats-Conditional Use Permit-Multiple Family Development:

Zoning Administrator Scott Richards gave a detailed report of a proposed Multi-Family Development in the C/I Commercial/Industrial District located at Highway 169 and 70th Street (County Road 135) east of Highway 169. The property (Parcel D) is within Section 6 and is located in the area that DPJB Properties LLC. subdivided, rezoned, and partially developed in 2022. PID number is 16-006-0200. The proposal is to construct five buildings with eight rental units in each on Parcel D. The development will remain under one ownership. The C/I Commercial/Industrial District allows for multiple family construction as a conditional use.

Mr. Richards submitted several maps on the big screen detailing roads, parking (there will be 91 spaces, more than the 80 required), septic system placement, garages, landscaping, etc.

Mr. Richards also stated that he sent notices out nearly three times farther than the required distance (500 feet) to notify as many residents as possible.

Mr. Persing showed 6 letters which had been received prior to the meeting. He then opened the floor to public comments.

Public discussion centered on the following concerns:

- Fresh water and sewer. The water table is high. Twenty to 30 feet down there is a granite ledge, and nearby wells already dry up. Would the needs of the apartment complex affect farmers' abilities to obtain water?
- Additional drainage from 169 to nearby farms.
- Keeping the rural feel of the area.
- Excessive noise, excessive lights.
- Excess traffic on the road of potentially 80 more vehicles.
- Safety of existing residents from potential increase in crime.
- Safety of apartment dwelling children that close to Hwy 169.
- Safety for farmers and their equipment if former city dwellers don't understand to slow down and give way.
- Complaints from new residents who might not understand they live where residents are hunting and farming next door.
- The integrity of the nearby wetlands as well as the capacity of nearby County Ditch 2, as well as the existing clay soil. How would the extra 2,000,000 gallons of waste per year affect these areas?
- Would potential 911 calls tax our sheriff and fire departments?
- There is no place for a park on the plan. What will potential residents and their children do "stuck" seven miles from town?

While the general consensus was opposed to the proposal, some residents spoke in favor of the proposal, stating:

- The next generation needs affordable places to live.
- There is a great lack of and need for affordable housing in the area.
- People cannot afford a new house.
- If Not In My Back Yard, then where?
- Discriminating against apartment dwellers is unwarranted.
- Multiple Family Housing is allowed in Commercial/Industrial districts in Princeton Township.
- Residents would be taxpayers who would benefit the township.

Mr. Persing called the public hearing to a close at 7:30, after everyone had been given an opportunity to speak.

Regular Meeting

At 7:40 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. Pflieger. Motion carried.

Approve Minutes of January 9, 2023 meeting.

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

ElevatedEducationMN IUP:

The first order of business was to consider an IUP by Jenna Slack of ElevatedEducationMN to allow a Special Home Occupation Business at 3467 75th Avenue. Zoning Administrator Scott Richards gave a summary of Ms. Slack's request, but stated that, because of family issues, she has requested to continue the request to the next Planning Commission Meeting. Mr. Pflieger made a motion to continue this IUP request for Tuesday, April 11th. Ms. Schimming seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

North Country Flats -Consider a Conditional Use Permit for a Multi-Family Development Project of Five Buildings on 70th Street, East of Hwy 169.

Zoning Administrator Scott Richards gave a detailed report of a proposed Multi-Family Development in the C/I Commercial/Industrial District located at Highway 169 and 70th Street (County Road 135) east of Highway 169. The property (Parcel D) is within Section 6 and is located in the area that DPJB Properties LLC. subdivided, rezoned, and partially developed in 2022. PID number is 16-006-0200. The proposal is to construct five buildings with eight rental units in each on Parcel D. The development will remain under one ownership. The C/I Commercial/Industrial District allows for multiple family construction as a conditional use.

Planning Commission members asked several questions of Mr. Betzler concerning this project, echoing many of the resident concerns from the public hearing, asking how these and other concerns would be addressed. Mr. Betzler gave detailed answers to many of the questions.

Ms. Stoeckel stated that she just found out that Mille Lacs County does not allow Multi-Family Dwellings in the Commercial/Industrial Corridor, while Princeton Township does. Mr. Richards stated he needs to check with the Township Attorneys to see if the Town is in violation.

The Planning Commission gave Mr. Betzler and Mr. Richards a list of items to be further addressed:

- Consult with Fire and police
- Consult with MNDOT
- More details on apartment units
- Consult with Soil & Water District
- Consult with County Zoning
- Plan for a playground area
- Plan for the rest of the site
- Future plans for the west and south of the site
- How noise issues will be addressed
- Potential increased parking
- Tenant-Landlord rules

Ms. Stoeckel moved to continue the discussion to the next meeting on April 11th. Ms. Whitcomb seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

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.

Based on that discussion, and those at ensuing meetings, Mr. Richards presented Sherburne County Ordinance in Subdivision 18 and the Mille Lacs County Ordinances 504.7 on Campgrounds and 504.24 on Recreational Camping. Mr. Richards suggested that Princeton Township use the same conditions as Mille Lacs County. He advised that the proposal would have to go to a public hearing prior to adoption.

Mr. Pflighaar moved to continue consideration of the issue at the next Planning Commission meeting. Ms. Whitcomb seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

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 presented the City of Princeton regulations 700:105 for "Chickens and Other Fowl", which has a list of ten (10) regulations.

Members concluded to just start with the regulation of chickens, omitting "and Other Fowl".

Using the City of Princeton's regulations as a guide, Mr. Richards will:

- add a provision against "chicken fighting".
- Make regulations 1,2,3,4 & 7 applicable to R1 and R2 zones only.
- Make regulations 5,6,8,9, & 10 applicable to all zones, including R1 and R2.

Ms. Schimming made a motion to continue the discussion to the April 11th meeting. Ms. Stoeckel seconded the motion. Motion was carried unanimously.

Adjourn

Mr. Persing moved to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Terry Pfliegaar
Deputy Clerk/Treasurer