

**MINUTES
PEQUOT LAKES PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 21, 2013**

PRESENT: Mark Hallan, J. J. Levenske, Cheri Seils, Scott Snyder and Wesley Wilson. ABSENT: Deb Brown and James Oraskovich

CITY PLANNER: Justin Burslie, Community Growth Institute

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR: Dawn Bittner

CITY COUNCIL LIAISON: Nancy Adams

PUBLIC WORKS SUPERVISOR: Mike Loven

The Gateway Discussion began at 6:00 p.m.

GATEWAY DISCUSSION:

Mr. Burslie explained the gateway discussion is a vision for CSAH 11 from the intersection of the new highway west toward town. At the February meeting the Planning Commission began a Wish List, including:

Round-a-bouts: Last month the Planning Commission discussed small diameter round-a-bouts move traffic slower, being safer for pedestrian traffic. Large truck traffic was discussed and Council Member Gardner has found there is no issue with large trucks and round-a-bouts.

Planning Commission Member Wilson stated large trucks or horse trailers cannot get around small round-a-bouts. Mr. Burslie stated there would be one lane coming into the round-a-bout, one lane going around. Mayor Adams stated Nisswa has not had any complaints with their new round-a-bout, but it is not being used much at this time.

Planning Commission Member Levenske stated the single lane can get wider at the circle to allow larger traffic. Mr. Burslie stated we will need to find the best dimension for trucks and boats and trailers, yet be safe for bikers and pedestrians.

Planning Commission Member Wilson stated pedestrian traffic needs to be addressed. Round-a-bouts discriminate against people with disabilities. Certain activities cannot be near round-a-bouts, such as schools, senior centers, etc.

Curt Johnson attended on behalf of the School District and stated he hoped the Planning Commission will take into consideration the long wheel base of school busses and the needed stacking space in a round-a-bout. The School has 130 bus

trips daily for 9 months. Mr. Johnson also requested there be no round-a-bout at the current intersection of Highway 371 when the bypass is built.

Mr. Johnson also commented that the way the parking spaces have been moved down at Government Drive and County Road 11 has removed conflicts with vehicles backing into traffic.

Mr. Burslie reminded the Planning Commission that the Council has requested a vision of what the City wants for the corridor from the new highway. Mayor Adams further stated that the County has asked what the City wants. Mr. Marohn had supplied the Memo, but the County wants it more definitive.

Mayor Adams further stated that in 20 years the traffic on current Highway 371 will be what it is today. Do we want a round-a-bout at that intersection?

It was the consensus of the Planning Commission that decisions on the round-a-bouts need to be made by an expert, at both County Road 112 and current Highway 371.

Mike Loven stated the County wants a list that defines what the City wants so they can determine the cost.

At the April Planning Commission meeting a list will be completed outlining what the City wants.

Bike and Snowmobile Trail: Last month it was determined that there needs to be a way for snowmobile traffic to get from Breezy Point into town. Mr. Loven stated maintenance for the City would be minimal. Chair Seils and Planning Commission Member Snyder stated the trail would be paved through town, a solid surface, and tied to other trails. When asked if the snowmobile trail could be rerouted, it was the consensus that we want snowmobiles to get to town. Mr. Loven asked that the snowmobiles not be diverted down City streets. Chair Seils stated they need to be on trails and not allowed on City streets.

Planning Commission Member Hallan asked how the snowmobile traffic would cross the new highway. How do we get them to the Paul Bunyan Trail? Chair Seils stated that the trail system now sends them to Nisswa.

Planning Commission Member Snyder stated snowmobile clubs can work with the County and MN/DOT to create a trail. We want a designated trail not on City streets.

Mayor Adams suggested a dedicated trail along East Sibley Street not on the pavement. Mr. Loven stated trails in residential areas don't work; snowmobiles and groomers are noisy.

Parking: Planning Commission Member Snyder suggested using the right-of-way along current Highway 371 as parking for RV's and trailers once the alternate route is built.

Chair Seils stated businesses won't like parking being removed from CSAH 11.

We need to make a list indicating we have a plan; the turnback agreement with the County is where a lot of this gets laid out. The City Council and the County can negotiate it.

Sidewalks/Crosswalks: Mr. Burslie stated the County needs to know CSAH 11 will be a City street with sidewalks and crosswalks. Mr. Loven stated stamped crosswalks are fine, but pavers don't stay flat. Salt would eat away at stamped concrete. Stamped pavement is the best. The consensus was for an asphalt trail/sidewalk instead of concrete sidewalks.

Bury Utility Lines: The utility companies will need to figure that out.

Medians: It was the consensus of the Planning Commission that there be no medians; they are too costly to maintain.

Lighting: The lighting should be pedestrian scale and decorative. This should be included on the list and could be negotiated with the utility company. Street lights are expensive and need to be maintained. Mr. Loven stated he believes there is a City cost on the County fee schedule. The consensus was to include lighting on the list.

Curb & Gutter: Mr. Loven stated the need to control water and curb and gutter should be installed at least to Bergquist Drive.

Landscaping: It was the consensus to not include grass or flowers due to maintenance; benches and pieces of artwork could be added.

Next month a draft memo to the City Council will be included for review.

The meeting was called to order at 6:57 p.m. by Chair Seils.

NORTH WASHINGTON AVENUE DISCUSSION:

Mr. Burslie explained last month's meeting. He suggested using bump-outs at CSAH 11, providing a shorter distance for pedestrians to cross the street. A tree or bench could be placed on the bump-outs.

Council Member Pederson had supplied a diagram that included sidewalks, parking, driving lanes and a pedestrian oasis in the center. Mayor Adams suggested continuing the parallel parking on the west side to the end of the block, Oriole Street. Planning Commission Member Snyder suggested the pedestrian

oasis be moved to the east side, not in the middle. The street is too dangerous to have this in the traffic area.

Planning Commission Member Levenske stated he likes the bump-outs, but not to include flowers. Art pieces could be used in place of flowers. Planning Commission Member Hallan stated that in downtown Brainerd, the business owners maintain the plants, etc. in front of their businesses.

Mr. Loven stated he does not have a problem with the bump-outs, but they cannot be into the County right-of-way.

Mr. Loven further stated that Expressions Shoes on the west side of the street needs handicapped parking. This is difficult with parallel parking.

Bump-outs can be used mid-block also. The parking could change from diagonal to parallel after the mid-block bump-outs. Street lighting can also be included on the bump-outs.

Art pieces on the bump-outs are a great idea.

Mayor Adams stated that the City needs to decide on the design of lamp post to use throughout the City and use as improvements are made.

The crosswalks should be stamped asphalt and tie in with the bump-outs.

Staff will forward comments to the City Engineer.

Mr. Loven stated that if a stop light is installed at County Road 112, it should be synchronized for the 8:00 AM traffic, etc. Planning Commission Member Hallan stated that semaphore systems are a huge cost. Planning Commission Member Wilson stated the national average is \$5,000 per year to maintain one. Planning Commission Member Snyder stated the east/west traffic will be higher volumes in the near future.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA: None

OPEN FORUM: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by Scott Snyder, seconded by J. J. Levenske, to approve the February 21, 2013 Minutes, as read. All members voted “aye”. Motion carried.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT:

Bittner pointed out the two Land Use Permits issued in February and the eight letters sent.

The following Potential Violations/Enforcement Actions were discussed:

1. Nathan Walberg – Staff verified there were approximately 18 vehicles on site, 10 in the rear and 8 in the front. He is allowed 18 total vehicles on site;
2. Virgil Dahl – Staff informed the Planning Commission that the City has received no response from Mr. Dahl. Staff will monitor exterior storage and animals.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Scott Snyder, seconded by J. J. Levenske, to adjourn the meeting. All members voted “aye”. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted;

Dawn Bittner
Zoning Administrator