

**MINUTES  
PEQUOT LAKES PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 19, 2013**

PRESENT: Deb Brown, Bill Habein, Mark Hallan, James Oraskovich, Cheri Seils and Wesley Wilson. ABSENT: None.

CITY PLANNER: Justin Burslie, Community Growth Institute

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR: None (Dawn Bittner Absent)

COUNCIL LIAISONS: Jerry Akerson

**GATEWAY DISCUSSION:**

The Planning Commission met onsite to discuss the possible future street design for existing Highway 371 between Lake Street and Grove Street. Commission members gathered at the Bobber water tower at 6:00 PM.

There was general consensus that street section between Lake Street and Grove Street should include one northbound and one southbound driving lane, parallel parking on the west side of the street and northbound and southbound biking lanes. It was noted that a parallel parking area is not necessary on the east side of the street because it is undeveloped. A future sidewalk on the east side of the street is a possibility. The existing park should remain "as is."

Commission members agreed that vacating and platting the paved area east of the bobber water tower south to Main Street along with the right-of-way west of existing Highway 371 driving surface would create development opportunities in the core downtown and also reduce maintenance liabilities for the City.

The intersection of CSAH 11 and Existing Highway 371 was discussed. There was discussion on constructing bumpouts to increase walkability. Commissioner Wilson noted it is difficult to make a right turn onto existing Highway 371 from CSAH 11 and that reducing the turn radius will make it even harder.

The existing Highway 371 street section between CSAH 11 and Lake Street should look similar to the design of the street north of CSAH 11 to Grove Street. Careful consideration should be given to the existing ROW west of the existing highway in this area as it is adjacent to current businesses.

Commissioner Wilson suggested we revisit the "Town Square" concept. The Planning Commission will study this concept next month.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Seils at 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Pequot Lakes Planning Commission  
September 19, 2013

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:** None.

**ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA:** None.

**OPEN FORUM:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**a. Buschmann Property Acquisition**

Mr. Burslie explained the Staff Report. Stated the Council has directed the Planning Commission to study the property and determine if acquiring it would be in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

Chair Seils states she would not like to see a property in the Downtown Mixed Use zone be removed from the tax rolls.

Discussion on the possibility of constructing public restrooms on the property. Chair Seils states that it is not a good location for new public restrooms. The Chamber and the library have restroom facilities for the public.

Commission Hallan states that if the City doesn't acquire the property, it may sit the way it is for another 3+ years. It could eventually be foreclosed which is a lengthy process. States that if it's foreclosed the property is not producing tax revenue. If the City were to acquire the property, the rehabilitation process for the property could be sped up.

Commissioner Habein states there is another property in close proximity to the subject property that has been for sale for years.

Commissioner Oraskovich questions what the cost to the City or an individual would be to clean up the property.

Commissioner Hallan estimated it would cost in the \$8,000 range to dismantle, clean-up, remove debris and address environmental concerns on the property.

Councilor Akerson states the property is adjacent to the City Hall property and would allow for possible expansion.

Commissioner Hallan states a portion of the property (e.g. east 150 ft) could be split and consolidated with the City Hall property.

A motion was made by Commissioner Oraskovich, seconded by Commissioner Hallan to recommend to the City Council that if the property is acquired by the City, it should be cleaned up and offered for resale. All members voted "aye". Motion carried.

## **b. Byrne Accessory Structure Height**

Mr. Burslie explained the situation. Maximum height for an accessory structure in the Shoreline Residential Zone is 13 ft. The property owner constructed a structure that is 13' 4". Was permitted to build no higher than 13 ft.

Commission Hallan provided more in depth history of the property.

Mr. Burslie explains how the height of a structure is measured according to the ordinance.

Commissioner Habein states that we should allow the property owner to apply for an after-the-fact variance.

Commissioner Brown states there is a clear difference between making an honest mistake and intentionally ignoring the ordinance. Not sure which is the case in this instance.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wilson to suggest the property owner apply for an after-the-fact variance or alter the structure to meet the height requirement, seconded by Commissioner Habein. All members voted "aye". Motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A motion was made by Commissioner Oraskovich, seconded by Commissioner Brown, to approve the August 15, 2013 Minutes, as read. All members voted "aye". Motion carried.

### **ZONING ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:**

Mr. Burslie pointed out the 7 Land Use Permits issued in August. The number of permit applications received indicates a 46% increase from 2012.

Mr. Burslie reported that he and Ms. Bittner conducted a site visit on September 3, 2013 of David Lind's property located at 30367 Pequot Boulevard as directed by the Planning Commission. The purpose of the site visit was to verify the removal of impervious surface coverage per condition of approval of variance application 10-3653. Mr. Burslie stated the improvements have been satisfied. He made a note the hard packed gravel area located northeast of the existing detached accessory structure has been replaced with large river rock. There was general consensus the surface is "more pervious" than hard packed gravel. It was noted the area should not be used for parking. It was determined

by general consensus of the Planning Commission the conditions of the variance approval have been met.

The following correspondence and Potential Violations/Enforcement Actions were discussed:

1. Commissioner Seils noted that Mr. Snyder has resigned from the Planning Commission.
2. Councilor Akerson asks about lawn maintenance. Mr. Burslie states that violations are complaint driven. Lawns need to be maintained within urban area or they will likely receive a complaint. Rural properties are less likely to receive lawn maintenance complaints. Staff does not actively seek out violations.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

A motion was made by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Hallan, to adjourn the meeting. All members voted “aye”. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Justin Burslie  
City Planner