

**MINUTES
PEQUOT LAKES PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
NOVEMBER 17, 2011**

PRESENT: Tom Adams, Deb Brown, John Derksen, Bill Habein, Mark Hallan, Scott Pederson and Cheri Seils. ABSENT: None.

CITY PLANNER: Charles L. Marohn, Jr., PE, AICP

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR: Dawn Bittner

COUNCIL LIAISONS: Jerry Akerson and Dave Sjoblad

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN AND PARK PLAN DISCUSSION:

Mr. Marohn explained the revisions of the Plan. Section VI has not been addressed in this version.

Parking should not have so much emphasis; making Washington Avenue a pedestrian mall may be a long, long-range plan. A pedestrian mall could be a discussion point, but not a decided option.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Pederson at 7:06 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA: None.

OPEN FORUM: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

a. CSAH 11 Corridor Study:

Council Member Sjoblad explained that the County plans to resurface County Road 11 next summer. The elementary school area is a problem in Breezy Point; they also wish to include a bike/snowmobile trail. The County had presented concept drawings of the portion from the new highway back into town. Council Member Sjoblad stated the City will continue to plan for improvements in the future and the County will do their overlay in Pequot Lakes. They will not put some curb cuts back in on north side and handicapped ramps will be added at some intersections.

When asked if the Planning Commission was to develop a plan, Council Member Sjoblad stated that sooner or later we will need a plan; there may be some monies available to the City for improvements after the turn back.

TH 371 may also be turned back to the City. It would first be turned back to the County and then the County may turn it back to the City. If that were to take place, the excess right-of-way could be given to the adjacent property owners.

There is no timeframe for plan development; the overlay will take place next summer. The Planning Commission has time to develop plans.

OLD BUSINESS:

a. Building Code Enforcement, Tom Nelson – Fire Chief (continuation):

Mr. Nelson did not attend as he didn't have any additional information to submit. Staff was directed to collect the information from surrounding communities as requested last month.

A motion was made by Tom Adams, seconded by John Derksen, to table this item to next month to collect the information. All members voted "aye". Motion carried.

b. Non-conforming Structures Ordinance Language (continuation):

Mr. Marohn explained the loophole in our ordinance created by the Legislature and the new statutory requirements. The suggested changes may need to be approved by the City Attorney.

Mr. Hallan asked if there could be tiered provisions, different percentages of increase based on the setbacks from the OHW. We could reward the property owner that is closer to the setback rather than closer to the lake. It would need to be easy to understand.

Staff was directed to hold a public hearing next month.

c. Community Supported Agriculture (continuation):

Mr. Marohn explained the booklet had been included in packets as an economic development tool. Local restaurants and food co-ops market the locally grown food items. This was an item to discuss to make the Planning Commission aware of it.

d. Violation Letters, Discussion (continuation):

After discussion last month regarding the tone of the violation letters Staff prepared a draft letter that had a softer tone for first time offenders. The draft letter was very generic and the Planning Commission suggested language referring to the ordinance and to include a timeframe.

e. Comprehensive Plan, Discussion:

Chairman Pederson stated the Comprehensive Plan had been tabled at the Council meeting earlier in the spring and the Planning Commission was to look at it in the fall.

The Planning Commission discussed Mr. Derksen's concerns with the emphasis on the Mom and Pop businesses rather than large employers.

When asked, Council Member Akerson did not have any specific areas of concern or input.

A motion was made by Tom Adams, seconded by Deb Brown, to forward the Comprehensive Plan to the City Council for consideration and approval. All members voted "aye". Motion carried. Mr. Marohn will include it in his Council Report.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by John Derksen, seconded by Cheri Seils, to approve the October 20, 2011 Minutes, as read. All members voted "aye". Motion carried.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Bittner pointed out the one permit issued and the seven letters sent or received. The following Potential Violations/Enforcement Actions were discussed:

1. Lloyd Wass – The exterior of the model office has been completed but the exterior of the lakehome has not. Staff will contact Mr. Wass's attorney.
2. Koblas letter – There is an error in the first sentence of the second paragraph; the application for a variance does NOT guarantee approval. Staff will notify Mr. Koblas of the error.
3. Sivanich – Mr. Derksen stated the yard has been cleaned up and that her name should be removed from the violation list as she no longer owns the property.
4. Heritage House – The original sign has been removed.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by John Derksen, seconded by Mark Hallan, to adjourn the meeting. All members voted "aye". Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Bittner
Zoning Administrator