

**MEETING OF THE PEQUOT LAKES PLANNING COMMISSION
MONDAY, APRIL 22, 2024 (DRAFT)
PEQUOT LAKES CITY HALL**

Members Present: Commission Chair, Andrew Ellering; Commission Members Jenni Gonczy, Kent Johnson, Eric Larson, Paula Lang, Nathan Norton, and Paul Luger

Members Absent: All present

Staff Present: Thomas Roloff, City Planner; Traci Pederson, Zoning Administrator; Angie Duus, City Administrator; Laura Larson, City Council Liaison, Nick Roy, Public Works Supervisor; and Chan Johnson

1. Call Meeting to Order

Commission Chair Ellering, called the meeting of the Pequot Lakes City Planning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Consider Agenda

Chair Ellering stated we have one addition to the agenda. Chan Johnson, from PLAID LLC, is present and would like to have a conversation with the Commission regarding his rezone and development.

COMMISSION MEMBER E.LARSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE ADDITION TO THE AGENDA UNDER OLD BUSINESS, COMMISSION MEMBER JOHNSON SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

3. Public Hearing(s)

Chair Ellering stated the idea is to table the PLAID LLC Rezone application until the May 20th Planning Commission Meeting, after PLAID LLC is able to provide additional information, based off the March 25th Planning Commission Meeting.

COMMISSION MEMBER E.LARSON MOVED WITH THE CONTINUATION OF THE REZONE BE TABLED FOR PLAID LLC UNTIL THE MAY 20TH PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING. COMMISSION MEMBER GONCZY SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED 7-0

4. Open Forum

Nothing tonight.

5. New Business

5.1 CLDG CUP Updates: Zoning Administrator, Traci Pederson stated she's been working with CLDG on their conditions in their CUP from the March 25th

Planning meeting. CLDG stated they'll have additional information to us by the end of the month, so the Planning Commission can go over those items at the May 20th meeting.

5.2 Ordinance Amendment discussions

A) Guest Cottage/Accessory Dwelling maximum sizes

Commission Member ELarson stated the current 600 sq ft size is too restrictive to build an adequate size cottage. Shoreline Residential is restricted to 700 sq ft, this is a number provided by the DNR which we'll not be able to adjust for the secondary dwelling unit non-duplex standards.

City Planner Roloff asked the Planning Commission to clarify which zones they'd like to have updates made for maximum sizes, is it for one, some or all zones. He stated Crow Wing County has set their maximum at 900 sq ft for guest quarters outside of the Shoreline District. Roloff stated the Commission should also specify the term or language to be used for these units: free standing cottage, guest cottage, living quarters within a structure.

Currently 'guest cottage' language is only stated in code in the SR and UR zones.

Roloff asked the Commission for direction to put together a staff report for next month, where another discussion can be had with findings of facts presented on the topic, pulling sizes from surrounding towns. Chair Ellering stated he'd like to see Pequot have the same sizes as surrounding towns for ease on contractors working through the building process. Ellering also stated he'd like the report to include all zones (except Shoreline) for ease.

Commission Gonczy brought up uniformity across the town with maximum sizes in zones. She was thinking we'd be uniform within our city code vs. county sizes. Having SR and UR at the 700 sq ft mark and then work through the other zones being another size. Commission ELarson stated he was thinking of the county size as maximum for Pequot to be uniform with them.

Roloff stated he'd put together staff reports on the discussions held today (for both ordinance amendment discussions on the agenda), and present the staff reports at the May 20th Planning Commission meeting. From there, if it's decided to move forward with an Ordinance Amendment on the topics, we'd then put together items needed for a Public Hearing at the June 24, 2024 Planning Meeting. The full Commission prefers for this route to ensure they have all the information before them before making a decision.

B) Chickens on property: This discussion is stemmed from a letter written to the City Council, in which a community member would like to have chickens on their property for their eggs. At the April 1st Council meeting, the Council asked for the Planning Commission to have a discussion on the topic to see if an ordinance amendment is possible.

City Planner Roloff stated in our code an animal unit maximum should be stated by zone to be clear vs on matrix only. ELarson stated he'd like to ensure roosters are excluded to be respectful to all neighbors.

Commission Gonczy stated she's conflicted on this topic. She loves the idea of chickens on property, but also stated they can carry many diseases – chickens in the UR zone can be done, but these are generally small lots, they need to be done appropriately and sticking within code. How is this enforced, through

complaints – and what does it look like when a complaint is made – it can take up to three months for it to be resolved with current ordinance ways. She looked at Nisswa's ordinance, which appears to be done well. She'd like us to do more research on this and work with professionals on the topic before deciding, working with the Board of Animal Health and the University of MN. There's not a chicken veterinarian in our area, if disease breaks out - a state vet would then need to come in. Our code stated chickens cannot be within 1000 feet of watershed, we'll need to ensure to abide by this. We can state minimum acreage and state a maximum number of birds as an option. Gonczy stated ducks are different than production animals (chickens) when it comes to diseases. Roloff will put together a staff report for next month for the Commission to work through, it will show what we allow now vs. not, where the watershed area is, including nearby area city/town ordinances, and possible scenarios.

6. Old Business

Chan from PLAID LLC came to the table to connect with and discuss his rezone application that's been tabled (moving it from Forest Management to Commercial). He wants to work with the town and the commission on the development of the NW area. He understands and realizes the trees are an area of concern for some, he'll preserve as many as he can and replant where he can. Chan stated splitting the lot into Commercial and Residential will not work for those he's currently working with to develop that part of the land.

Roloff went over the performance standards regarding clear cutting, which involves a permit from the city and getting a forester involved – if this is kept as a Forest Management zone. Commission Norton noted they may not require a 'like for like' tree planting if the current trees are taken down, so it's a mute point if the trees go down.

Chan stated opportunities come along throughout the years, this is a great opportunity to have a potential hotel and a high-end medical facility with urgent care and memory care.

Commission promotes growth; however, they need to keep the community and their thoughts present as well. ELarson stated this land may not be commercial today, but that's not to say it won't be tomorrow or down the road. Chan agreed and stated right now there's opportunity and the chance for the Commission and City to be involved in what this can look like. He reiterated that he wants to work with us. What can he do to help get this rezoned.

ELarson asked if Chan will attend the May meeting with a proposed site plan, an idea and visual for community and the Commission to see. Commission Lang agreed that she, too, would like to see this 'plan'. This could be helpful for many. Commission Johnson stated the unknown plays a factor in the community, seeing an idea may put their minds at ease.

Chair Ellering stated while we have HOTGL, those are large buildings going up – so if the buildings are there or a ½ mile down the road, the look of the town is changing regardless. Does it matter if the large buildings are here or there at the end of the day. Commission Gonczy stated HOTGL is planned for these businesses, the NW area was not a part of the Comprehensive Plan.

Chan will work on putting a preliminary plan together to encompass the potential structures, buffering, and landscaping. He thanked everyone for their time and input.

7. Approval of Minutes

COMMISSION MEMBER ELARSON MOVED TO ACCEPT AND APPROVE THE MARCH 25, 2024 MINUTES AS IS. COMMISSION MEMBER LANG SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

8. Planning & Zoning Administrator's Updates

Zoning Administrator, Traci Pederson, went over the monthly report provided. The office continues to be busy in the planning and zoning department.

9. Adjournment

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, COMMISSION MEMBER E.LARSON MOVED TO ADJOURN. COMMISSION MEMBER JOHNSON SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

The meeting of the Planning Commission adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Traci Pederson
Zoning Administrator