

Primrose Comprehensive Planning Committee minutes for 29 June 2009

Attending: Dein, Haack, Hayward, Garfoot, Gibson, D. Judd, J. Judd

Dein called the meeting to order at 7:40

1. Motion made by Hayward seconded by Garfoot to approve the Minutes of 22 June 2009. Motion carried 5-0.
2. Brian Standing made a presentation on a draft of the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The draft was based on the existing Primrose Land Use Plan but also includes language from other Town plans. The final draft will be the next version of the Primrose Land Use Plan.

Standing said that the existing Plan could accommodate the growth projected for 2030 which would provide for 71 new households.

He said that we might use mapping techniques to focus on what we want to preserve in the Town— e.g., agricultural land, wetland, woodland and so forth. With maps, he then illustrated how certain lands might be preserved, depending on the different things that the Town might want to preserve.

Standing identified the following issues that needed to be clarified or considered in the revision of the Plan. These included the following things:

Clarifications and details needed: \_

- Commercial development? \_

- Existing farmhouses (not separated / separated from farm)? \_ - New farmhouses? \_

- Sale to DNR, County, other public entities? \_

- Rounding? \_

\_ - Land sales of 35 acres or more? \_

- Non-contiguous lands? \_

- A-4 zoning / deed restrictions when splits are exhausted? \_

- Allocation of remaining splits among current landowners? \_

- Annexed lands? \_\_

## Agriculture Preservation District - Possible Changes

- Reduce minimum lot size from 4 to 2 acres.
- Allow limited transfers between two 1981 farms if in single ownership.
- Support future development of a comprehensive TDR program.
- Incorporate siting criteria into mapped Environmental and Resource Protection District.
- Specify appropriate zoning districts: A-1(ex), A4, CO-1 for agricultural and open space uses; RH, A-2 for rezones under 1:35; LC-1, CUPs for limited business / home occupation uses.
- Revisit policies regarding division of substandard parcels and definitions of "history of agricultural use."
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3. Standing then opened the floor for public comment. The public comments were as follows:

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- Definition of agricultural land must be consistent with Farmland Preservation Plan and Dane County Comprehensive Plan. Using one only of seven criteria (I.e., "history of agricultural use") would not satisfy consistency.
- Traffic impacts between agricultural equipment and residential car traffic should not be taken as a sign of incompatibilities between ag and residential use.
- Reduce minimum lot size from 4 to 2 acres.
- Substandard parcels getting 2 splits, while 100 acres only gets two. Should allow rounding up of fractional splits.
- Town does not have power to deny driveway or building. This should be supported in the comprehensive plan.
- If we want to be a "farming community," keep the farmers farming. Keep it rural character and allow farmers to realize value in their property.
- Stay with 1 per 35-acre density policy. Do not raise to 1 per 75.
- Public hearing: over 85% at hearing agreed to allow driveways to cross some portion of ag land, if they meet certain criteria.
- Farmhouse should not be counted if it has not been separated.
  
- Current commission should have clear understanding of what's in current plan. Communicate understanding to County.
- The township voted for the board, who laid out their policies for land use. Current town board has to work out issues and they stated their policies clearly and election results be respected.
- Clarify whether or not existing non-separated farmhouse counts against the

density policy.

- Please consider having a deed notation when splits are used, rather than deed restriction or conservation easement.
- Please include a right-to-farm statement in the body of the comprehensive plan.
- Appreciate other ways of handling where houses should go and where they should not. Be cautious about including so many restrictions that people have no opportunity to build. Don't take money out of people's pocket.
- Revisit discussions of advisory committee related to cluster development and siting criteria for new development. If the land use plan is changed, people want to know where housing would go.
- Do we as a town want to look at having a town center, with a cluster development?
- Need to acknowledge that we are living in a finite world and running out of resources. Need to discuss alternatives to oil-based agriculture. Madison may need large amounts of local farmland to feed metro area. May not matter whether it's hilltop, marsh, bottomland, it may all need to be in production.
- Any new development should be on a farmstead, filled with immediate family, friends. Septic siting may need to be rethought.
- Look at world as limited resource and we are at peak and are heading down.
- How will town compensate landowners with no building sites?
- Existing farmhouses should not be counted against density policy.
- Houses should be sited on the least productive agricultural land, whether it's on a hilltop or a valley.
- In the future, it may be necessary to terrace hillsides and use them for crops to maintain food supply.
- The 35-acre density requirement exists as part of the town's strategy to support agriculture. Also allows farmers to realize return on their investment.
- Reduce minimum lot size to 2 acres.
- See proposed amendment to plan (revised July 2008): allow a driveway to cross ag land to access building sites, limit development to no more than 7 houses per year. Expire limitation of 3 years.
- Substandard parcels: owners of 10 acres can divide, large landowners cannot.
- Existing plan does not allow transfer of splits between 1981 landholdings. Address and discuss.
- Please consider the rights and respect of all the people in the township. Respect the rights of the minorities as well.
- Need to allow for the mental health as well as nutritional needs. Food is available from other sources.
- Be careful that we don't force our children to grow up in crowded areas.
- Allow for enough growth in town to sustain the township, roads.
- Maintain houses and barns and make sure town has resources to maintain current character.
- Don't make a comprehensive land use plan that we cannot implement. Keep it simple. Make sure that a layman can understand the plan.
- Houses that are rebuilt on the same site should not count against the density policy, including ones that existed prior to plan adoption.

- Population growth is based on immigration. Core population is not growing. Food shortages are a result of distribution problems, not supply. Primrose growth is very slow growth.
- Continue to allow a farmer to have a lot for retirement, it should count against density policy, but they should be guaranteed of getting that lot. (Policy 5, Page 3 1981 plan)
- Look at what neighboring communities are doing. Make sure Primrose's plan is compatible with surrounding communities. Don't make Primrose an island.
- Support ability of small farmers to expand. Price of farmland is too high in Primrose, and too difficult to sell, because of proximity to Madison. Price doesn't reflect productivity of land and makes it difficult for farmers to afford to relocate.
- Consider restrictions on what is considered “large” farming operations.
- Consider restrictions on commercial and industrial uses that may come in the future.
- What are we going to do when farmers get old and the kids don't want to farm. What will happen to the land?
- Town should consider traffic connections of cars, farm vehicles and other forms of transportation.
- Environmental and Resource Protection: maps may not create fairness. Could use maps to decide best place where development could take place. Don't change from one unfair plan to another.
- Use 7 criteria together, not by themselves. Evaluate and consider best places that meet most of the criteria.
- Survey showed an even distribution between protecting wetlands, woodlands and farmlands. Maybe, with care, you could develop at the edge of woodlands.
- Practice hasn't been to include some of the criteria, such as soils.
- Review concept plans for landowners prior to development
- Clarify that crossing environmental and resource protection areas is different from building in them.
- We have the opportunity to use alternative energy sources. We should be looking at ways to encourage solar, wind and other renewable sources.

Public Comment Closed.

4. The next meeting was scheduled for August 17.
5. Motion to adjourn made by Gibson, seconded by Hayward. Motion carried 7-0.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Martha Gibson.