

MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF WASHINGTON MONTHLY TOWN BOARD MEETING
February 17, 2022

Members Present: Micheal Peterson, Robert Solberg, Karen Tomesh

Staff Present: Janelle Henning, Jackie Vold

Members/Staff Absent: Andrea Kott, Jane Mueller

A quorum being present, Chrm. Peterson called to order the monthly Town Board meeting of the Washington Town Board at 5:00p.m., on Thursday, February 17, 2022, at the at the Chippewa Valley Technical College, 620 W Clairemont Ave., Eau Claire in the Casper Room 103 A & B.

Minutes:

Supv. Tomesh moved TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 20, 2022 TOWN BOARD MEETING. The motion was seconded by Supv. Solberg.

Aye 3 Nye 0

Public Hearing & Board Consideration for a Rezone Request from Laverne Stewart, Owner and Craig Wurzer, Applicant to Rezone 215.2 acres +/- from A1 Exclusive Agricultural District to RH Rural Homes District at the Northwest Corner of Mischler Road and Deerfield Road, Town of Washington:

Matt Michels, Senior Planner for Eau Claire County Planning & Development introduced the application. He reviewed the process for a rezone request. The County reviews the existing zoning in the area: north and east are rural subdivisions, south and west are rural. In both the County and Town Comprehensive Plans this area is designated as rural transition. Currently over 75% of lots within existing improved residential subdivisions in the Town are developed and occupied. Rural ag lands make up about 65% of the Town; just under one-third of the Town has been planned for some form of non-farm development. The City of Eau Claire's extraterritorial jurisdiction (sewer service area) is just north of this proposed development. The density for Rural Homes in the Town is one-sixth of what would be considered low density in the City of Eau Claire. Staff recommends approval based on their findings as outlined in their Staff Report.

Paul Holzinger a member of the development group presented their plan. He indicated their team has met with neighbors and that they have made changes to their plan eliminating some of the objections of the neighboring property owners. He shared statistics regarding the need for single family housing at all price ranges in our area. The rezoning would conform to neighboring subdivisions and the Town and County Comprehensive Plans. He reviewed the Town survey results of Town residents from 2018 that are included in the Town Comprehensive Plan. They are proposing an average lot size of 2.2 acres, with some larger than 4 acres, and many around 1 acre. The proposal will reflect the rural character of the Town and similar to the developed areas currently in the Town; and less dense than the developed areas immediately to the north and northeast of this property. This property has been designated as an area for development for over 40 years by the Town and County; with an update in 2018.

Brian Binczak 1815 Susan Drive - presented for the neighbors. The opposition is mainly to the concept of the rezoning request. Over 300 people signed a petition in opposition to the development. He summarized their opposition with safety due to increased traffic, only one major collector road coming out of the development, environmental concerns with individual wells and septic systems and its impact on the aquifer, poor site distances, blind intersections, narrow roads, density of the proposal and the topography of the land. He reviewed four developments: Hillcrest Estates II and Timber Bluff in the City of Altoona and Trillium and Trilogy in the Town of Washington with little opposition which are all located near highways on mostly flat land.

Chrm. Peterson opened the public hearing.

LaVern Stewart, applicant of the proposal spoke in favor. He bought the property in 1971 and has lived there for over 50 years. Spoke of surrounding developments that he was a part of that are similar to this proposal and that has been designated for development for many years.

Scott Rogers, Vice-President of Government Affairs with the Eau Claire Area Chamber of Commerce spoke in favor. The most significant challenges to our local economy are workforce development and housing supply. Planning at the County and Town level have long identified these parcels for housing development. This is an opportunity to address the housing supply.

Grady Wold, owner of Trend Stones and a member of the development team spoke in favor. In the 43 years he has lived in the area there has been a lot of growth.

Pat Smith, current President of the Chippewa Valley Homeowners Association spoke in favor. The proposal follows the County and Town Comprehensive Plans which is a guideline that builders and engineers use when designing these developments. Demand for housing in the Chippewa Valley is at an all time high.

Mark Erickson, Real Land Surveying spoke in favor. There are many layers to this process to ensure a healthy, sustainable, and safe development to occur.

Bruce King, Government Affairs Director for the Realtors Association of Northwestern Wisconsin spoke in favor. He spoke of the critical need for housing at all price points and that this development would help with that need.

Mike O'Meara, 5115 Mischler Road spoke in opposition. He has lived in the Town for 46 years. He spoke of the increased traffic and the use of neighborhood roads north of the development and not Deerfield Road. Stated the land is an environmentally sensitive area.

Glenn Reynolds, 5335 Mischler Road spoke in opposition. The proposal has very non-rural lots with 100 ft. width. Drainage is an issue and increased traffic.

Tina Ball, 5999 Cater Road spoke in opposition. There would be significant impacts to her land with a road developed adjacent to the south end of her property. Development needs to look at safe access and what should be permitted. The roads are not capable of the traffic impact.

Cynthia Hunt, 2125 Andrew Drive spoke in opposition. Lived in the Town for 20 years. Spoke of only one incident in the past three years where the Town Board tabled a request and the need for firefighters. Indicated the impact on water, septic systems, safety, and our rural infrastructure. Stated that Chrm. Peterson indicated at the last Board meeting that he would not support a large development with individual septic systems.

Chrm. Peterson closed the public hearing.

Chrm. Peterson stated that he stands by his statement that a community septic system will need to be a part of this development. The Town needs to grow to survive, through annexations we have lost large parcels of land to the cities of Eau Claire and Altoona with more annexations being proposed. We have very limited areas where we can develop properties. Our Comprehensive Plan has planned to develop this area; it was updated in 2018 with public hearings that were not attended by area residents. The County Highway Department is looking at improvements for the intersections on Deerfield Road.

Supv. Solberg stated that he is a part of the Town Plan Commission and was a part of the update to the Comprehensive Plan in 2018. This has been designated as rural transition for decades and meets the requirements of our plan. It is near other developments and we do not want to add to rural sprawl.

Supv. Tomesh stated that when looking at rezoning matters we need to look at our Comprehensive Plan which is an ordinance that we are required to follow. There are additional hearings and permitting processes related to what the plat would look like, how many homes would be allowed, wetlands, working with the DNR, etc.

Chrm. Peterson spoke of the community septic system in Trilogy.

Supv. Solberg moved TO APPROVE THE REZONE REQUEST FROM LAVERNE STEWART, OWNER AND CRAIG WURZER, APPLICANT TO REZONE 215.2 ACRES +/- FROM A1 EXCLUSIVE AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT TO RH RURAL HOMES DISTRICT AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF MISCHLER ROAD AND DEERFIELD ROAD, TOWN OF WASHINGTON. The motion was seconded by Supv. Tomesh.

The January 2022 Financial Statement was reviewed.

Checks:

Supv. Tomesh moved TO APPROVE CHECKS 029612 THROUGH #029694 FOR \$214,752.44. The motion was seconded by Supv. Solberg.

Aye 3 Nye 0

Licenses:

Supv. Tomesh moved TO APPROVE THE BARTENDER LICENSES FOR JADA L. BARDEN, CATHERINE E. CHUDAKOFF, CONNOR J. LINSMEYER, AND KATHERINE L. TOPDAHL. The motion was seconded by Supv. Solberg.

Aye 3 Nye 0

Development Agreement for Cliff Properties West:

Admin. Henning indicated that this is the agreement for the property just south of Trilogy. It binds financial assurance to the development of the infrastructure for the development.

Supv. Solberg moved TO APPROVE THE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT FOR CLIFF PROPERTIES WEST. The motion was seconded by Supv. Tomesh.

Aye 3 Nye 0

Resolution 2022-02-17 for Broadband Expansion Grant Application Public/Private Partnership Agreement:

Admin. Henning reported that this resolution addresses serving the remainder of the Town that is unserved or underserved for broadband. The Town is working on our application for the PSC Grant. This resolution speaks to the grant application and the amount the Town would commit to the project that would be matched by the County. Charter Communication is contributing 72% of the total cost. Supv. Tomesh moved TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2022-02-17 FOR BROADBAND EXPANSION GRANT APPLICATION PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT. The motion was seconded by Supv. Solberg.

Aye 3 Nye 0

Ordinance 2022-02-17 to Establish Temporary Moratorium on Development of Wind Energy Systems:

Admin. Henning indicated the ordinance would extend the moratorium on applications of wind energy systems in the Town. It would expire on July 15, 2022 or until Eau Claire County adopts their zoning regulations that would regulate wind energy systems.

Supv. Solberg moved TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 2022-02-17 TO ESTABLISH TEMPORARY MORATORIUM ON DEVELOPMENT OF WIND ENERGY SYSTEMS. The motion was seconded by Supv. Tomesh.

Aye 3 Nye 0

Assigned Fund Transfers – 2021 Year End Transactions and 2022 Reserve Funding:

Admin. Henning reported on the typical year end transfers (see attached).

Supv. Tomesh moved TO APPROVE THE 2021 YEAR END ASSIGNED FUND TRANSFERS OF \$42,706.00. The motion was seconded by Supv. Solberg.

Aye 3 Nye 0

Supv. Solberg moved TO APPROVE THE 2022 RESERVE FUNDING OF \$80,500.00. The motion was seconded by Supv. Tomesh.

Aye 3 Nye 0

2021 Budget Amendment:

Admin. Henning stated the amendment is an in and out for what was received from the State for fire and what was paid out to reflect the revenue that came in and what we paid the Fire Department. Supv. Tomesh moved TO APPROVE THE 2021 BUDGET AMENDMENT. The motion was seconded by Supv. Solberg.

Aye 3 Nye 0

Administrator's Report:

Tuesday, February 15 we held the Spring Primary Election – 500 votes were cast of those 108 were absentee ballots. The day went well.

Working with Matt Gundry, CBS Squared on getting our 2022 engineering specs for our road projects. Anticipating them to be advertized March 3 with the bid openings on March 17.

Chairman's Report:

Received calls regarding the detour on E. Hamilton due to a water main break repair. Fire Board meeting on equipment and costs.

Supervisor's Report:

Supv. Tomesh gave update on Plan Commission meeting held on February 9; informational meeting regarding potential wind energy farm and the process. Encouraged residents to seek counsel before signing an easement for a wind farm.

Citizens Input:

Glenn Reynolds spoke about the surveys by the residents and the developers for Orchard Hills. Complimented the Board on their conduct during the public hearing. For the good of the earth lots should be small.

Future Zoning Requests:

None

Items for Next Meeting's Agenda:

None

Adjournment:

Supv. Tomesh moved TO ADJOURN. The meeting adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

THE NEXT TOWN BOARD MEETING WILL BE ON MARCH 17, 2022
AT 5:00 P.M. AT THE TOWN MUNICIPAL BUILDING,
5750 OLD TOWN HALL ROAD, EAU CLAIRE

Jackie Vold
Deputy Clerk/Administrative Assistant

Attendance: Paul Holzinger, Damian Prince, Mark Erickson, Peter Caraher, Grady Wold, Brian Binczak, Bruce King, Douglas Radke, Barbara Radke, Roland Hicks, Brad Flores, LaVern Stewart, Glenn Reynolds, Karen Havholm, Tina Ball, Lance Basting, Sean Bohan, Pat Smith, Deb Zehms, Keith Zehms, Chris Wells, Jodi Dahlgren, Douglas Reace, Scott Rogers, Leslie Duffy, Adam Duffy, Thomas Hunt, Cynthia Hunt, Todd Teske, Barb Schmitt, Tom Schmitt, Jessica Murphy, Lee Schlais, Ann Steinbrecher, Dan Steinbrecher, Judy Hayden, Leslie Foster, Dory Bergman?, Bob Boone, Brian Herbison, Matthew O'Meara, Jack Bushnell, Mike O'Meara, Ann Geary, Mariena Kent, Kathryn Ruben Bareis, Gary Hayden, Jim Embke, Adam Resnick, Jenny Shaddock, Todd Pickett, Drew Brandenburg, Kirsten Resnick, Kathryn Roberts