

APPROVED W/CORRECTIONS 05/11/22

TOWN OF CLAYTON
Town Plan Commission
Meeting Minutes
7:00 P.M. – on Wednesday, April 13, 2022
Town Office Meeting Room, 8348 County Road T, Larsen, WI 54947

I. Call to Order: Chair Knapinski called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

A. Notice Verification, Roll

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Verification of Meeting Notice
3. Roll

a. Plan Commission Commissioners

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| Chair Knapinski | PRESENT |
| Commissioner White | PRESENT |
| Commissioner Nemecek | PRESENT |
| Commissioner Linsmeier | EXCUSED |
| Commissioner Dorow | PRESENT |
| Commissioner Haskell | PRESENT |
| Town Board Representative Lettau | PRESENT |

b. Staff

| | |
|---------------------|---------|
| Administrator Straw | PRESENT |
| Clerk Faust-Kubale | PRESENT |
| Planner Jaworski | PRESENT |
| Engineer Hamblin | PRESENT |

II. Public Hearings: NONE

III. Approval of Minutes:

A. Approval of the minutes of the Wednesday, March 09, 2022 Plan Commission Meeting.

MOTION:

Motion by Commissioner Nemecek

Second by Commissioner White

Motion made to approve the March 9, 2022 Plan Commission Meeting Minutes as presented.

Motion carried

IV. Open Forum: Town-related Matters not on the Plan Commission's Agenda: NONE

V. Correspondence:

A. Distribution of the February 2022 Building Inspector's Report.

B. Distribution of an article relating to Solar Development.

C. Distribution of an email correspondence regarding a webinar Thursday, April 21, 2022.

- Chair Knapinski noted that due to the 3-hour length of the webinar, he plans to attend but not for the entire duration.

- D. Distribution of the Public Information Meeting Invite and Public Involvement Plan for the reconstruction of Oakridge Road BIL Grant Project.
- E. Distribution of a re-zone notice from Village of Fox Crossing for Parcel #121-0210-07.
 - Chair Knapinski noted that this is for an apartment complex to be constructed on the border of the Town abutting Fox Crossing.

VI. Business:

- A. Discussion/Recommendation: Plan Commission review and discussion on a presentation by Ms. Kelsey Putman Hughes, CEO/Energy Geoscientist of Sun Wolf Energy to discuss renewable energy opportunities and strategies for the Town of Clayton.

Ken Jaworski has been researching his sources and has found the Town a resource to provide valuable information and direction on solar and renewable energy possibilities.

Ms. Kelsey Putman Hughes, CEO/Energy Geoscientist of Sun Wolf Energy out of Tulsa, Oklahoma will be making a presentation to the Plan Commission via Zoom.

Ms. Putman Hughes presented for approximately 40 minutes on a general step by step process that municipalities can follow to have a successful solar project. She noted that based on her research, Agri-solar is an underutilized resource. In her research into the viability of solar projects in Wisconsin, Ms. Putman Hughes found that the Fox Valley has some of the best irradiance in the State.

Specific to her company, Sun Wolf Energy takes a “scientific and holistic approach to solar energy project planning and advising.” One of the concerns that Ms. Putman Hughes highlighted for the Commission and Town to consider with any potential solar project is avoiding costly remediations due to lack of communication between construction, developer, geologists, etc.

Speaking generally about solar projects, Ms. Putman Hughes noted that one main focus would be the wattage produced, as that affects size and scope of project, as well as possible interconnection agreements with existing power grid. Ms. Putman Hughes outlined a general 5-step process that has shown great return for municipalities, provided they are able to invest the time and resources. That plan is as follows:

- Step 1 – Develop and clarify community goals for any solar development
- Step 2 – Identify potential locations for solar development
- Step 3 – Have a detailed site evaluation done of potential / chosen location(s)
- Step 4 – Decide on a financial model and use all available incentives
- Step 5 – Request for Proposal (RFP) from developers

Ms. Putman Hughes emphasized that the majority of the time and resources would be spent on Step 1, but that would have a trickle-down effect when it comes to evaluating sites, contractors, developers, funding etc. since the Town would have a very strong foundation of what the community wants and can support.

Chair Knapinski opened the question-and-answer session wondering what developers may be looking for in terms of viability of a solar project. Ms. Putman Hughes noted in general terms that there are developers in the market to suit any and all needs. She highlighted again the importance of Step 1 in developing solid community goals and looking to speak with developers that are willing to work within those parameters.

Chair Knapinski also asked, in Ms. Putman Hughes' experience, what is the best way to communicate with residents who may have concerns or questions regarding the land use for solar projects. Ms. Putman Hughes responded that clear, effective communication to residents, as well as education being available to all, has generated the most success on projects in her experience.

Chair Knapinski inquired what the life cycle or span of an average solar farm would be. Ms. Putman Hughes responded that the lifespan for producing at 100% capacity would be about 25 years. The generating capacity in year 26 and beyond would start at approximately 80%.

Commissioner White inquired on what the maintenance requirements might be on a solar array. Ms. Putman Hughes said maintenance on solar arrays are low, but that it also depends some on location and weather patterns. To keep the 100% efficiency standard regular cleaning (approx. 2 times per year) would need to be performed and there are services that could be contracted for that. Ms. Putman Hughes noted the great advances in the technology has made the panels much more resistant to impact and cracking from weather like hail, as well as greatly fluctuating temperatures like those experienced in Wisconsin.

Town Engineer Hamblin questioned if the panels would need snow removal as a part of maintenance in the winter months. Ms. Putman Hughes noted if they are ground mounted, some have a "tracker system" to rotate and follow sunlight which would create some heat to melt, as well as the rotation may shift some snow off.

Town Engineer Hamblin also wanted to know more about any possible regulations and/or complexities working with the local utilities if a solar farm is constructed. Ms. Putman Hughes acknowledged it can be very complex working with local utility companies, especially if the existing grid is not robust enough to take on any additional power that the solar would generate. She also noted that there are some legislative work-arounds if the scale of the project is large enough, as well as possibility for a mix of types of installation that may reduce the surplus that the existing grid would take on.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

- B. Discussion/Recommendation: Plan Commission review and recommendation of the revisions to the Town's Pond Ordinance as recommended by the Town Engineer and Town Planner.

The Commission reviewed a copy of the Town's Pond Ordinance and a copy of the Attachment with the recommended amendments.

The Town Engineer and the Town Planner have asked this item be put on the agenda for recommendation to the Town Board.

Town Engineer Hamblin opened discussion noting that what prompted this review of the Pond Ordinance was a resident looking to enlarge an existing pond. Engineer Hamblin worked with Town Planner Jaworski and Code Enforcer Kussow on the revisions presented to the Commission.

Chair Knapinski questioned why Section 4.1.b was removed and Engineer Hamblin noted the consensus was that size should not dictate the setbacks, rather proximity to property line and/or Right of Way would be more appropriate. Engineer Hamblin remarked that the greater concern during the ordinance review was safety, and in that case depth of the pond would matter more than the size. Planner Jaworski concurred that safety was the main concern, but also did not want to make the ordinance overly complex so that it could not be easily adhered to.

Chair Knapinski questioned why there were cuts to Section 4.3 relating to Safety Shelf; if the points proposed removed were redundancies. Engineer Hamblin noted that Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requires a 10-foot safety shelf and the ordinance was revised to reflect that. Chair Knapinski noted the addition of Section 4.7 regarding Embankment and limiting the construction materials approved was a positive proposed addition, though it does need to be re-numbered to Section 4.8 before final approval. Planner Jaworski also highlighted the change to Section 4.6 Landscaping to have the perimeter landscaped and seeded within 30 days rather than 90 days in the current Ordinance.

Commissioner Haskell inquired if the DNR has no requirements on setbacks, if as a Commission they should, or recommend that the Town Board should, make contact to advise that it should be considered for the safety of residents moving forward. Planner Jaworski noted that the Town can always be more restrictive with requirements than the DNR may be. Engineer Hamblin also noted that this ordinance only applies to private ponds.

MOTION:

Motion by Commissioner Haskell

Second by Commissioner Nemecek

Motion made to recommend approval to the Town Board of the revisions to the Town's Pond Ordinance as recommended by the Town Engineer and Town Planner.

Motion carried.

- C. Review and Discussion: Plan Commission review and discussion on preferred components of the Public Participation Plan to complete the Comprehensive Plan Update.

Town Planner Jaworski noted since the Public Participation Plan has passed, now more specifics are needed to be able to move forward planning the public meetings and survey.

Chair Knapinski began the discussion, highlighting first that he would like to see at the first public meeting the following:

- Defining what the Comprehensive Plan is and what is the goal of this plan
- How does the Comprehensive Plan relate to the identity and future of the Town
- Broad recap of where the Town is now and what has changed since the Plan was last updated
- Begin exploring how development on the East side of Town impacts the West side of Town

Chair Knapinski noted as a part of the survey he would like to cover some basics with residents, such as:

- Do residents know the Town has a Comprehensive Plan?
- Do residents know the Town has land use regulations?

and a few open-ended questions, like where they see the Town in 2050. Chair Knapinski noted that for the second public meeting, he would like to introduce the draft Comprehensive Plan including some of the information gathered from the first meeting and survey. Chair ~~Knapinski~~ **Knapinski** also felt this would be the meeting to highlight that while this is the proposed Plan, outside forces shape a lot of the decisions and changes that end up being made over the course of time, examples being the new Neenah High School, and actions taken in neighboring communities.

Commissioner Haskell agreed that the first public meeting should highlight some history of the Comprehensive Plan and some milestones that were achieved because of it to emphasize the importance of a Comprehensive Plan for the Town's future growth.

Planner Jaworski circled back to survey component questions, wondering if the Town motto "Touch of Country" should also be evaluated as a part of the Comprehensive Plan. Chair Knapinski concurred, and proposed there be a question included to the effect of is the Town motto still reflective of how residents see the future Town of Clayton. Planner Jaworski noted that if responses are still supporting the current Town motto, there can be some design aesthetic changes that can be considered for future developments.

Eric Fowle, assisting Planner Jaworski, asked the Commissioners to also think about for the meetings and survey, items that they would like resident feedback on, such as the solar options being preliminarily explored. Chair Knapinski noted that could also include trails, roads, mass transit, etc. Planner Jaworski recommended that the survey be only 20-25 questions, so the Commissioners have time to narrow down the items they want resident feedback on most.

Chair Knapinski reminded the Commissioners they have volunteered to have extra meetings throughout this year as a part of the Comprehensive Plan process, and those are scheduled to begin April 27, 2022 and each will be 2 hours or less.

NO ACTION TAKEN

VII. Upcoming Meeting Attendance

A. Town Board Annual Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, April 19, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

VIII. Adjournment

MOTION:

Motion by Commissioner Haskell

Second by Commissioner Nemecek

Motion to Adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Motion carried

Respectfully submitted,
Kelsey Faust-Kubale, Clerk