

**CITY OF RHINELANDER
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2011 4:00 – 5:50 PM City Hall**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Dick Johns, Mark Pelletier, Joe Sturzl, Bill Freudenberg, Sandra Bergman, Russ Brown, and Jim Leschke.

MEMBERS ABSENT: NONE

OTHERS PRESENT: Fire Chief Terry Williams, Administrator Bill Bell, Joe VanDeLaarschot, Dan Kuzlik and Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc. Representatives Rocco Raymond and Scott Weyndt

CALL MEETING TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dick Johns at 4:00 P.M., noting there was a quorum present to conduct business, the media had been properly notified and the agenda duly posted.

MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 14, 2010. MOTION BY BERGMAN/FREUDENBERG TO APPROVE MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 14, 2010. 6 AYE, 0 NAY. MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: *Comprehensive Plan Review of Chapter 3, Housing*

Sandi Bergman reviewed a portion of the updated Chapter 3, Housing Plan that she and Administrator Bill Bell worked on incorporating new language and with the vision of leaning in the direction of the trends of today and the future. One of their goals was to work towards providing adequate supply of housing to include all income and age levels. They should work to improve some existing properties without the owners having to pay exorbitant fees or jump through hoops but the city would work with them to improve their property.

In reviewing the objectives they are striving for, Bergman and Bell explained to increase the flexibility within the housing code using the conditional use permit process to encourage infill within existing neighborhoods. Bill said they would go through the variance process through the Zoning Board of Appeals; this is necessary with the older neighborhoods.

Mayor Johns added his disappointment with the issue of cars and trucks parking all over the yards and becoming a real mess in the city. The members agree some properties do not have adequate space for parking and the street is the only place to go. Johns would like to find a way to deal with this and questioned what other communities do. Williams said this can be dealt with through the nuisance ordinance but it should be addressed on a case by case basis as there are parts of the city where there is no parking. Terry pointed out some communities will not allow parking except in a driveway.

Bergman inquired what the committee thought to “*partner with the real estate community to promote city residency as a first choice*” She likes the idea of including the realtors but after some discussion, Bergman suggested dropping *partner with the* to “*Promote value of city residency as first choice*”.

Chief Williams agreed with the idea of a community task force to address a city residency housing code and adding landlords in town to it. Sandi stressed the city will not chair or take a lead in this task force.

Another objective is to stay on top of the housing trends and to encourage second story residency in the commercial area. Chief Williams advised there are strict building codes of what has to be done to have residential living above a commercial business because of two different occupancies. He stated this tends to cost very expensive code upgrades. There are some very clear cut guidelines that have to be followed

and expensive enough for people to give it more thought. Williams said it is great to encourage it but the committee should be aware of the codes and expensive involved.

The chief stated, for exiting requirements, the city may have to look at balconies to allow for what is called a rescue platform and currently our ordinance does not allow for it. They will have to discuss in the future what they will allow for a balcony out onto Brown Street with a uniform in design. The mayor pointed out money wise the one thing they have going for them is Dawn Rog on the main street program and attending meetings at the state level where she can look for funding.

Bill suggested to add to partner with WHEDA using available programs.

Bell reviewed a section of Aesthetics – Appearances and Maintenance which addresses the aging housing and run down neighborhoods. How do they go about identifying neighborhoods that need to be improved without offending the people that live there? Mark Pelletier said maybe this could fall under the same category as addressing the landlord issues and the rental housing code. Bell continued to review this section advising that the city maintains an active CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Program. In the spring, Bill reported, they will apply for \$400,000 to \$500,000 to replenish the funds.

Chapter Three will be voted on at the next meeting.

ORDINANCE – *Storm Water Management.*

Administrator Bill Bell reported that he along with Fire Chief Terry Williams met with representatives of Short Elliott Hendrickson Engineering and two representatives are here to give details and explain how a storm water utility system would work for Rhinelander. Bell said it is time for them to address this issue.

Roccy Raymond explained that SEH is based in the upper Midwest and specializes in serving medium-sized communities. Raymond described how a storm water utility would work for the city, what it would do for the residents and the reason to look at enacting this system. The city needs evaluate the needs of the infrastructure with a long term planning goal and officials will need to look at the deficiencies and be aware of repair and maintenance before a replacement is necessary. With aging system, he noted, it helps to identify your issues of repair before fixing becomes more costly. Unfortunately, he said, Rhinelander experienced last summer the damages that can occur with a lot of storm water runoff.

SEH, Scott Weyandt said right now it may not be affecting the city but may in the near future as the city may become what is defined as a Phase 2 Community; this is a community of over 10,000 and then is mandated by six minimum control measures. Water quality improvements must result. Weyandt explained the control measures which included city wide evaluation of the system, taking inventory and try to complete proper maintenance in order to avoid major replacement. Public education to teach the importance of where a water outlets lead to and what happens with overflow and dumping. The importance to manage water and erosion control and what occurs if remained unchecked.

The storm water utility is only a funding mechanism and many cities have chosen this utility because it directs the collection of the funds to where it is being applied so those that use more pay more including tax-exempt properties; Mark Pelletier added one of five in the city are tax-exempt.

Scott Weyandt described what contributes to determine charges and engineering formulas for runoff.

Bill Freudenberg left at 4:30 PM.

A hook up charge could be used to start up a Storm Water Utility and monthly fee charged for the utilities budget. Tax exempt properties and commercial/industrial will likely pay more residential property. Education is a key for the mayor, council and the public to understand the utility. Weyandt said the city can inquire if a grant would be available to help with the start up and other costs related to the system.

Mayor Johns inquired as to how other cities handle the administrative costs. Weyandt reported most of the costs come out of the storm water utility budget. Bill Bell said there would not be any new administrative costs for the city because they're already doing this with the utility clerk's job of handling the water/sewer billing. Up front there will be start up costs for map work, planning and engineering.

Sandi Bergman questioned how will properties that are not hooked up to sewer and water be assessed?

The mayor pointed to the fact that the city is has a new sewage plant that is placing an extra cost on the users and that has to be considered. Timing is the essence and the timing does not look right but he agrees that something should be done. Bergman stated the water bills are extremely high already.

Bell advised it is a council directive that they research implementation of the storm water utility and this will be an ongoing agenda item until they make a recommendation to city council.

NEW BUSINESS:

CERTIFIED SURVEY MAP - *Review/Approve Certified Survey Map for 1240 Woodland Drive (RH3486) and vacant lot adjacent (RH3485-1). Adjust boundary lines of two parcels.*

The property owner Debbie Umland of 1240 Woodland Drive explained the lot in question is an L-shape. Umland requests approval to divide into two separate lots making the parcel behind her home part of her property and the other portion to be a separate lot that she can sell. There were no questions by the committee.

MOTION BY BERGMAN/FREUDENBERG TO APPROVE CERTIFIED SURVEY MAP FOR 1240 WOODLAND DRIVE (RH3486) AND VACANT LOT ADJACENT (RH3485-1) AS SUBMITTED. 6 AYE, 0 NAY, 1 ABSTAIN (BROWN), MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED.

Debbie Umland was informed to attend the February 14, 2011 council meeting for final approval.

MATTERS OF EMERGENCY/INFORMATIONAL NATURE:

FUTURE AGENDA REQUESTS AND MEETING DATE:

- Tuesday, February 15, 2011 4:00 PM
- Comprehensive Plan Review – Chapter 3, Housing
- Storm water management

ADJOURNMENT: MOTION BY PELLETIER/LESCHKE TO ADJOURN PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING FOR TUESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2011 AT 5:50 PM. 7 AYE, 0 NAY, MOTION TO ADJOURN CARRIED.

APPROVED BY: _____ RECEIVED BY: _____

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