

Town of Round Lake Planning Commission Minutes

Wednesday March 10, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Town of Round Lake Plan Commission was held virtually on March 10, 2021. The meeting was called to order at 6:03pm by Ann Berlage.

ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Ann Berlage, Sarah Gunn, Don Stover, Denise Picchetti, Jen Weltzin, Kay Wilson, Ginny Chabek

AUDIENCE: 0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to approve agenda: Don Stover

2nd: Sara Gunn

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES for FEB 10, 2021

Motion to approve meeting minutes: Don Stover

2nd: Jen Weltzin

BOARD MEETING REPORT – Ann Berlage

Ann provided update on her report to the Town of Round Lake board on Feb 11.

- CAFO Ordinance Development
 - Provided progress on ordinance development utilizing Town of Eureka and Bayfield County ordinances as baseline
 - Continued identifying and making contact with legal resources to support ordinance development and determine costs.
 - Shared legal advice that it is not necessary for town to proceed with a moratorium
 - To address environmental impact from CAFO to ground water quality, shared the plan commission team was investigating grants to support costs and identifying data gathered for lakes
 - Board shared concerns with the # of wells and cost to residents to test private wells. Ann shared plan commission team was investigating possible grants to support the cost to private well owners.

- Signage for bicycles
 - Shared that we have made contact with Wisconsin Bike Federation and WI DOT
- Broadband improvement
 - Shared the plan commission is looking into possible grants and has talked with Mike Gardner from Sawyer County and LCO Economic Development Corporation
- Future Land Use Map
 - Shared concerns from PC document and survey which do not support extensive business development.
 - Document also supports not eroding our Ag land but also not creating more, especially important with the CAFO issue and precedent set on Co. Road A.
- COVID Pressures on Town
 - Shared Ginny's concerns about increased pressures on the Town and how impacting services provided.
 - Will be looking at the Elements in PC document for areas that stand out

DISCUSSION: CAFO ORDINANCE – GROUND AND SURFACE WATER BASELINE TESTING

Don Stover contacted the DNR regarding Citizen Lake Monitoring reports to determine if this data could be used as a baseline in case there is a future contamination from a CAFO. Don shared that phosphorus and water clarity data is gathered but the report does not monitor any other pollutants. The Town could apply for a grant and if awarded we could have other pollutants tested. Initially, if awarded the grant, it could be done on a case-by-case basis and if a pollutant is found a more rigorous testing program could then be done.

Kay and Don discussed past testing of failing septic tanks polluting Tiger Cat Flowage. Sawyer County led this effort with private septic owners. Some owners were not willing to participate. Jenny also noted that testing waters provides benefits beyond baselining water quality prior to a CAFO. Kay shared that the County should have the results. Denny shared that something similar occurred with Moose Lake a few years ago and Windigo lake has had water quality issues for years.

Don took an action to contact the County to get copies of the Lake assessments.

Concerns were raised with CAFOs drilling high-capacity wells and the risk of drying up private citizen wells. It was noted that prohibiting high-capacity wells is reflected in our Plan document.

Testing of private wells was discussed. A key concern raised by the town board was cost of the tests and residents not being willing to cover this cost. Discussed testing for businesses is very rigid and some businesses are finding it difficult to pass. Kay shared that the county should have the test results from business owners and private wells.

Jen contacted Matt McKay, Sawyer County Environmental Health Tech to discuss grant opportunities to offset the cost of private well testing. Matt shared interest in supporting the testing effort but has limited resources due to COVID. He shared that ground water quality was a priority for the Evers administration and state programs were developed. However, COVID has limited progress in this area as resources are tight right now. To do a study on private wells and ground water, state programs and

grants would need to be identified along with defining the goals and objectives of the study, etc. He shared that waivers would need to be in place for governmental agencies to use private well data in the assessment. Jen will forward the information provided from Matt (resources, St Croix study, UW-Stevens Point contact) with the team. Matt will follow-up with his manager to determine if and when the county could support organizing a study possibly in conjunction with UW-Stevens Point or as part of a state program. Jen will follow-up with Matt in 2 weeks.

Ann asked if any type of mailing or information could be shared with residents about the importance of testing their well to help gain buy-in from residents to test. Kay shared there is an annual newsletter but nothing else has been done in the past to reach out to residents in this way.

Team discussed whether we should target wells close to (example within 2 miles) AG zoned land. Ann expressed concern that rezoning of land for CAFO placement could put many more areas at risk than just those around present Ag land.

DISCUSSION – PROPOSED CAFO ORDINANCE

Baseline ordinance documents were converted and combined from Eureka and Bayfield county ordinances. These documents are the starting point for the Town of Round Lake CAFO ordinance.

Ann noted that two pieces were left out of the Town of Eureka ordinance – Bonding and Prove it First. These are important pieces from the Bayfield Co. ordinance.

It has been recommended that a Licensing (Siting) Ordinance also needs to be entertained, but this brings up other difficult concerns due to its extreme limitations and the County’s inaction on this issue.

The CAFO ordinance is on the Town of Round Lake Board Agenda on Thursday March 11. Discussed if this was ready to go in front of the board since changes are still in progress. Ginny will ask Rolfe to remove CAFO from board agenda giving time for the plan commission to further work on the details of the ordinance.

Ann continues to search for a lawyer to engage to review the ordinance and to understand the related fees the Town will need to cover.

Due to the size and detail of the CAFO ordinance, Ann requested to break-up the ordinance in sections and assign a Plan Commission team member to each section to review prior to our next meeting. Kay offered to own a section. Ann asked team members to let her know if they have any questions as they review their sections of the ordinance.

CAFO Ordinance Sections and Assigned Areas

Section 1,2 Don

Section 3-7 Denny

Section 8,9 Ann

Section 10-12 Jen

Section 13-15 Sarah

DISCUSSION - FUTURE LAND USE MAP INITIATIVE

Sarah shared and discussed updated areas on the future land use map. The existing land use map was reviewed to identify where more businesses and houses could be built staying clear of AG land and Forest areas.

Kay shared there is a desire by the Town board to identify more revenue opportunities that businesses and additional homes could provide. The proposed future land use map identified new areas for Commercial Industrial and Multi-Family Units. Sarah and Kay shared that the team stayed clear of the interior of the Town and went to corridors and exterior major arterial areas for Commercial, Industrial, and Multi-Family units. It was suggested to include McClaine and Lawry road for Multi-Unit.

Ann expressed concern with adding more commercial industrial areas as this did not align with the essence of the town and what our residents want and does not align with why people choose to live here. Ann wanted to further review the future map and also requested the team study and compare the existing and future land map suggestions. We will discuss in our next meeting. Sarah shared that the final land use map needs to be completed by May.

DISCUSSION AND STATUS: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES – BIKE SIGNAGE UPDATE

Jen shared a deck of proposed countermeasures for bike and pedestrian safety for town roads. 4 options were presented for discussion along with supporting information on biking impact to Wisconsin and local businesses, risks to pedestrians and bicyclists on rural roads, general rules and laws in Wisconsin. Team discussed options. Concerns were expressed with May Use Full Lane sign and Slowing down traffic as options. Discussion and concerns that motorists would just ignore speed reduction signs. Some expressed concern with bicyclist riding in groups and the May Use Full Lane sign would encourage bad bicycle behavior. Jen felt that the plan commission needed to agree on a recommendation before presenting to the board. Ann asked the team to review and have further discussion in upcoming meeting to align on a recommendation. Jen agreed to present to the board.

DISCUSSION AND STATUS: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES – DARK SKIES/LIGHTING/UPDATE

Denny shared she spoke with Jump River, which has extensive literature about alternative lighting. She also shared that the lake associations have been getting the information out to their members. Kay shared that there was an article in the paper about someone on Round Lake that wanted to get an ordinance in place to address the lighting issues with the County. Denny will investigate.

DISCUSSION AND STATUS: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT / BROADBAND UPDATE

Jen identified a contact with CenturyLink (Jack Burge) that supports communities with development of projects for broadband upgrades. Jack shared information about Boulder Junction's fiber upgrade

project including overall costs (\$8.5M). Boulder Junction allocated \$3.8M and CenturyLink and the State of WI covered the rest. He advised that the process to define these types of projects takes at least 3 months and there would likely be another round of State funding available in Q4 of this year. He shared that the costs of the upgrades need support from local, state and/or federal government. Jack also provided additional information about federal funding awarded to LTD to upgrade areas within Sawyer County.

Jen continued discussions with Mike Gardner, Director Sawyer County LCO Economic Development Corporation. He shared that Sawyer County board shared frustrations with the lack of progress of broadband upgrades in the county. He is having additional discussions within his organization to align priorities and understand how his organization can support this area. He shared that there is a lot of federal funding available but there is more planning and resources needed at the county level to move this forward.

Jen shared that Sawyer County should lead this as resources and funding would be significant, planning would be needed to define the problem areas (what to upgrade, which service providers to engage, identify the best solution, grant writing) to address how to make actionable progress with CenturyLink. Jen will craft a letter to Sawyer County Economic Development Chair sharing that upgrading broadband is a top concern for residents of the Town of Round Lake.

DISCUSSION AND STATUS: COVID-19 IMPACT/RESPONSE

Kay shared that all areas of TORL services have been impacted by COVID. Emergency and Fire rescue calls have increased, waste and recycling, road use. Discussed that more people are coming here and staying longer. This is having an impact on our town services. Ann agreed to continue this discussion in upcoming meeting encouraging members to look at their respective parts of the Plan Document to see what stands out.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

No new future items were identified.

NEXT TOWN OF ROUND LAKE PLAN COMMISSION MEETING

April 7 at 6:00 PM

MEETING AJOURNED at 8:39 PM

MOTION: Ann Berlage

2nd: Denise Picchetti