

MINUTES  
TOWN OF VERMONT PLAN COMMISSION MEETING  
February 25, 2013 – 7:30 P.M. 4017 CTY JJ

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Todd Culliton at 7:35 p.m. The meeting was properly noticed, posted at State Bank of Cross Plains in Black Earth, Harris Bank in Mt. Horeb, on the front door of the Town Hall and on the town website, [www.townofvermont.com](http://www.townofvermont.com).

Members present: Jim Elleson, Don McKay, Scott Moe, Eric Haugen, Johanna Solms, Todd Culliton, Doug Meier. Also present: Mark Sherven, Larry Ziemer, Barbara Grenlie.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Don McKay seconded by Jim Elleson and carried 7-0 to approve the agenda as posted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Eric Haugen seconded by Scott Moe and carried 7-0 to approve the January 9, 2013, and January 28, 2013, meeting minutes as written.

CONSIDERATION OF DRIVEWAY CONSTRUCTION PERMIT APPLICATION FROM DON  
PARRELL ON BLUE MOUNDS TRAIL

Everything looks much as it did when the rezone was approved in 2005. Jim Elleson reported from the site visit on the 23<sup>rd</sup> that the slopes are 12 or 13% for most of the proposed driveway, currently a farm road. There may be a short stretch where side slopes are 30%. The average over 100 feet looks OK. The side banks on the east side are steep but that was already disturbed; the policy applies to natural slopes. It is a narrow driveway, and to get width up to specs, a fair amount of cutting will be necessary and it will disturb slopes over 20%. It was agreed that to proceed further there would need to be an engineer plan and a Land Use Intent Form applying for approval of the proposed homesite, as well as improvements to the map. Coordinates were obtained for the proposed homesite at the site visit. This item will be on the agenda again in March.

DISCUSSION OF LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR ACQUISITION, WITH THE HELP OF STATE AND COUNTY GRANTS, OF THE CURRENT 29 ACRE STIEMKE PROPERTY ALSO KNOWN AS THE PARRISH SAVANNA AT 3571 CTY RD F BY PRAIRIE ENTHUSIASTS, A NON-PROFIT TAX EXEMPT ENTITY

Ken Wade presented the Prairie Enthusiast's plan for the Steimke property. It will be a private purchase, not a conservation easement, using State Stewardship and County funds and donations obtained by the Prairie Enthusiasts (a 501C3) and from the property owner. WI law now requires that purchases using public funds must come with non-fettered public access.

Of Ken Wade's adjoining 226 acres, 209 are permanently protected, but that happened before the rules about public access. He has also bought an addition acreage owned by Johnson, and plans to leave his entire estate to conservancy.

A number of neighbors and other town residents spoke and there was spirited discussion with board members and plan commission members. The immediate neighbors have concerns and several do not want the town to support the proposal, but rather be at best neutral. Others from the town expressed favorable opinions.

Several pros were identified. The proposal meets the goals of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan to preserve open space and rural beauty. The site is valuable ecologically, one the highest value resources in the county. It will be a valuable scientific area for the state.

This transaction will permanently remove 2 PDRs, which has both pros and cons.

Cons voiced by those in attendance include the hunting and trapping activity, impact on neighbors' privacy, possible trespassing issues, loss of taxes, and possible devaluation of adjacent properties. Additional concerns were expressed regarding traffic, roadside parking, a possible parking lot, kiosks, garbage cans, and who will maintain oversight.

This is a private transaction from a private owner to a private buyer, over which the town has no oversight. The issue is whether or not to write a letter of recommendation for the grant proposal. It is very likely the DNR will approve the stewardship monies regardless, given the high ecological value of the site.

Moved by Scott Moe seconded by Doug Meier and carried 6-1 to table the item to the next meeting.

#### CONTINUING DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS PROGRAM

Moved by Jim Elleson seconded by Eric Haugen and carried 7-0 to postpone this item to the next meeting.

#### DISCUSSION OF AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON DRIVEWAY CONSTRUCTION PERMIT POLICIES

A process is proposed to use the existing form and specify a third category of "reinstatement" (NOT "renewal"), add space for an actual expiration date 3 years from the date of the town board approval, and create a section for the reinstatement process at the end of the form, which would include "currently applicable" fee received, PC recommendation and board approval signatures, and a new expiration date. If a site visit by the driveway committee concludes that there have been significant changes to the site or to ordinances, a completely new driveway application will be required, full fee included. A checkbox will be added to the form for "an expired permit exists for this site."

One remaining question is whether to grandfather permits that have been renewed or expire them. A consensus was emerging to expire all permits that have been regularly renewed three years from now, to add an extra year to permits currently in their first two year phase, and to make all permits valid for three years going forward. The other question is whether to allow reinstatement to be done only by the plan commission, similar in process to the "fast track" driveway improvement permit.

#### CONTINUATION OF WORK ON ORDINANCE REVISIONS AND PLAN COMMISSION POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

There was no discussion on this item.

SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING AND DISCUSS POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting will be March 25. Agenda will include County and possible town wind siting ordinance, TDR, driveway permits, Parell driveway and homesite, Prairie Enthusiasts, and the standard items.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Jim Elleson seconded by Scott Moe and carried 7-0 to adjourn at 10:14 p.m.

Johanna Solms  
Plan Commission Secretary