

## **PLANNING, RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Monday, August 29, 2011

Administrative Center – Room B190

1:30 p.m. – 2:59 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Don Meyer, Marilyn Pedretti, Don Bina, Tina Wehrs, Bob Keil, Beverly Mach

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Dennis Manthei

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF:** Jeff Bluske, Nathan Sampson, Charlie Handy, Chad Vandenlangenberg, Jon Kaatz, Ron Roth, Annette Kirchhoff, Bryan Meyer

**Meeting was called to order at 1:33 P.M. by Don Meyer, Committee Chair.**

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AN ORDINANCE TO REPEAL AND RECREATE CHAPTER 17 ENTITLED “ZONING CODE” OF THE GENERAL CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR LA CROSSE COUNTY, WISCONSIN.**

Brief introduction by Jeff Bluske, Director – Zoning, Planning & Land Information Department, explaining the maps on the wall, what they represent, what areas would be affected by the changes, that the Zoning Ordinance for La Crosse County has been around since 1952, that the last major rewrite of the Zoning Ordinance was in the 1980 and that now we are looking for input from the public on the latest rewrite.

Brief introduction by Charlie Handy, La Crosse County Planner, on what his part is in the rewrite process; that the goal is to write an ordinance that can be administered and to build relationships with landowners and neighbors. Zoning Rewrite will allow farmland preservation credits to continue.

The following members from the community came to speak in regards to their concerns:

Pete Jansson

N2143 Irish Ct, La Crosse, WI 54601

Spoke regarding issues with some of the definitions contained in the new ordinance vs. the old ordinance, issues with wording/clarification of the animal table unit, as well as several ideas for changes and rewording. He also brought up the fact that the way the current ordinance is written could bring up exclusionary zoning issues and we need to be careful not to discriminate against low income, minorities, etc.

Cathy Swartz

N1121 Continental Ln, La Crosse, WI 54601

Lived here for 29 years – moved there because she could have horses. She has concerns about the resale value of her property and whether her son, if he takes over the land, will be able to have horses in the future if there are none now.

Charles Bassett

W6366 County Road T, Holmen, WI 54636

Agrees with comments made by previous speaker and would like to stress that he (as well as many others) would like notification when/where meetings will take place. No letters went out to landowners in regards to the Town of Holland meeting and no signs were put up to notify.

Carl F Oelfke

N8342 County Road V, Holmen, WI 54636

Has a lot of questions at this point, but since the committee is not doing question and answer at this time, he has nothing to say.

Gerald Miller

N1166 Continental Ln, La Crosse, WI 54601

Agrees with Cathy Sexauer (Swartz?) Does not currently have critters, has in the past, and would like to keep the option.

Jodi Joachim

W5311 County Road W, Holmen, WI 54636

Agrees with everything said so far and would like to add she does not understand where the limits came from, does not understand the grandfathering – how will it be documented, who's going to record how many animals she has and as of what date, gives her a strong incentive to "load up" on animals since she is unlimited, grandfathering also bothers her in regards to resale value. Wondering about the qualifications of the person determining how many animals your property can sustain.

Debra Blostad

N397 State Road 162, Coon Valley, WI 54623

Concerned about whether her property zoning will change, she wants to stay Agriculture District "A". She used to have horses, does not now, would like to be able to sell stating that horses are able to be housed there. The statement about this being done is for the benefit of the animals, that has already been taken care of by the Humane Society. They will come if you mistreat your animals. Don't need to have more County Employees that will be taking more of our tax dollars so that we can add more and more laws. Concerns about the grandfathering as well. Crummy to draw up something without the input of the people.

Rick Staff

237 10<sup>th</sup> St S, La Crosse, WI 54601

Host the Horse Sense Program at N3460 County Road FA (address does not exist in the tax system). The old formula was ridiculous – the new formula is even dumber. Regardless of acres, neighborhood or use there is a flat limit on horses. Mostly concerned with the animal table unit and the grandfathering issues. Thinks the numbers make no sense. Gave some options for "appropriate" uses.

Maggie McDonald

2317 Diagonal Rd, La Crosse, WI 54601

Director of the Horse Sense Program. She has concerns about the fact that they have trouble replacing horses because they need "special horses" for special riders. So, the grandfather clause could potentially decrease the number of horses they could have.

George Kerckhove

N5854 Abnet Rd, Onalaska, WI 54650

Comments on the map and lack of roads – he is unable to locate his property on the map. He currently has 3 horses, a miniature and donkey. From time to time grazing pasture gets short – constantly supplementing with hay and grain. Overgrazing does not apply in many cases. Concerns are mostly based on resale options, animal tables, assessment changes and grandfather clauses.

Rinold Zielke

N5734 Abnet Rd, Onalaska, WI 54650

Bought his farm 24 years ago. Very happy with it. All kinds of buildings. He likes things the way they are.

Larry Sciborski

N5769 Hauser Rd, Onalaska, WI 54650

Led to believe that someone with Ag A now can opt to stay in general agricultural, but they lose the right to add a residential piece of property on that land. He disagrees with this as if he chooses to live here he needs to sell part of his land to live there; he should be able to do that. There are stipulations that prohibit people from staying on their property and he disagrees.

Therese Sciborski  
N5769 Hauser Rd, Onalaska, WI 54650  
People balking up on animals is happening – she has seen it.

Chris & Kathy Massa  
N610 Temp Rd, Coon Valley, WI 54623  
Thought they were buying flexibility with the Ag A designation. Proposed change restricts that flexibility. Two young boys, don't have animal units now, but were looking to have some down the road. Intention of purchasing current property and were able to purchase surrounding acres also zoned Ag A. Want their children to be able to experience "country life" and have animals. Are currently farming 100% of their land and with rural residential would only be able to farm 75% of it. Feel like their rights and dreams, or possible dreams, are being taken away.

Jeff Springer  
W5465 Horseshoe Pl, La Crosse, WI 54601  
Sent a letter to all of the committee. Some of the major points of the letter were: Changing Ag A to Rural Residential moves in the exact opposite direction compared to the recommendations in the La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan (reads what the Comprehensive Plan says) he does not think the new rule follows this rule makes it more like residential, i.e. "rural residential". Percentage of land that can be devoted to agriculture use/animal units allowed is far too restrictive. Continuous use rule, also known as the grandfathering provision, is unfair and will be difficult to enforce. Property values and salability would be reduced as the property restrictions impact the amount of land needed for a given use. The rules do little, if anything, to ensure proper land use and stewardship, prevent soil erosion or improve the quality of life in a mixed residential setting. The proposed changes are counter to sustainable local agriculture and would result in the destruction rather than the preservation of small farmland parcels. The new rules are much more restrictive than Dane County, a metropolitan area a little larger than La Crosse, and maybe the most restrictive in the state, which is not fitting for La Crosse's relatively sparse population density. New rules for mobile home parks will only be imposed on new developments, while the change from Ag A to Rural Residential would apply to all existing Ag A property owners. If they're allowed to be grandfathered in and not affected, suggestion is to maintain existing Ag A zoning classification, establish new Residential Rural classification, property owners can voluntarily opt to rezone to Rural Residential and you can have a moratorium on "new" Ag A classification so there are no further Ag A properties developed. Gives a hypothetical example. Shows pictures of his farm and pasture indicating that two horses on  $\frac{3}{4}$  acres are barely visible. Erosion of property rights. Recommendation is to leave Ag A as it is, add in new zoning classification and let people transfer voluntarily and put moratorium on existing Ag A properties.

Eileen Kirsch  
204 23<sup>rd</sup> St S, La Crosse, WI 54601  
Proposed rules go against the 2008 County Master Plan and that is very confusing.

Dale Mikshowsky  
N1486 Schwartz Rd, La Crosse, WI 54601  
A year ago he put up a wind generator on his property. Agree with what everybody else said – doesn't think we need any more rules or regulations.

Lola Mueller  
N8668 O Thompson Rd, Holmen, WI 54636  
Lived on their place for 32 years and have had horses and mules ever since they've been on there. Breeding operation in the past. Various training and breeding stables around the area. How do you regulate how many horses they can have? Does not understand. Chickens, other than a chicken building – how can you tell people they can have only 2 chickens? Geese, kept under chicken building, how can you tell people how many they can have? Tax rates – how will this affect tax rates? When we moved on taxes were \$720 now are \$2500. Does not understand that.

Angie Pittman

W7475 County Road T, Holmen, WI 54636

Moved there in March – currently feeding horses hay – does not have enough pasture so are feeding hay. Soak hay to feed horses because they have heaves. Concern is what to do “in between” horses. With the grandfather law, she is restricted to what is there when they do their “count”.

Jay Fernholz

W7267 County Road MH, Holmen, WI 54636

Express concern about potential for sand mining and be certain you guys are paying attention to that. Interesting so far, can't say he agrees with everything that has been said, but it has been interesting.

Ken Kammel

W3320 County Road M, Coon Valley, WI 54623

Enough is enough – how much control over us is expected? First with the building permits and the fees and the licensing and the inspectors, then it was the land control, then it was runoff from our cow yards in our fields and our yards, then it was tree cutting, before you know it the next thing will be we'll have to control the gas our cows release. Opposed to more regulators.

Fred Puent

N8317 F Lang Rd, Holmen, 54636

Comparison between horse and bull – horse is gauged at 2,000 lbs and that makes it 2 animal units – This is false. Department of Ag came up with all the standards for animal units that we use, La Crosse County did not come up those standards. Copy available in anybody wants one.

Florence Peters

N3889 County Road Y, Rockland, WI 54653

We have 40 acres in La Crosse County, 400+ in Monroe – the barn is in La Crosse, what do they do? Do they go by Monroe standards which is where all the pasture is or La Crosse standards, which is where the barn is?

Joni Beinborn

N1206 Continental Ln, La Crosse, WI 54601

Encourage everybody to talk to neighbors and landowners and come back to future meetings – Need nighttime meetings and they need to be publicized. If you can't farm it you shouldn't be taxed on it, correct?

Terry Brandau

2219 Prospect St, La Crosse, WI 54603

Lives in Monroe County, is here for his friends in La Crosse County and does have property on Prospect St in the City of La Crosse. Board does not realize the impact they are setting on these people. Rules are excessive. Rural Residential does raise taxes.

Rhonda Helgeson

N401 Lemke Rd, Coon Valley, WI 54623

Town Supervisor for the Town of Greenfield, they had Charlie Handy at their meeting on July 13, 2011. In the meeting he discussed the zoning changes. In the meeting notes (read from sheet) “Charlie Handy, County Planner, was present to discuss zoning changes and the work of the land use committee. Members of the town asked questions. A motion was made by Rhonda Helgeson that the committee for the county zoning wait another year until people become more informed about Ag A, Rural Residential and animal units. Thomas Jacobs second the motion, the motion was passed.” Personal note: elected person for residents, have a lot of friends and so many people are not informed about the impact these new rules will have on them. Amish are not able to be here for these meetings. Committee did not come to the townships and ask for their input.

Daryl Vanderzee

N6628 Berg Rd, West Salem, WI 54669 is the closest fire number to where they own land. Bought 3 lots so they could someday move to the country. These regulations are going to destroy their dream because they can't get their fast enough to meet the regulations. Concerned about not being notified of the new zoning. Have to notify and have to get input. Don't destroy property values.

Dennis Baumgartner

W3189 Buol Rd, West Salem, WI 54669

Ordinance doesn't affect him personally right now. Here to support friends. Tired of sharecroppers attitude that people come up with all these new regulations.

Mary Temp

N2143 Irish Ct, La Crosse, WI 54601

"We do not have to get rid of Ag A zoning to get Farmland Preservation through on this ordinance, that is not part of them getting Farmland Preservation through". Gave some statistics on number of farms in state of Wisconsin.

Public Hearing is closed at 2:59 P.M.

**Disclaimer:** The above minutes may be approved, amended or corrected at the next committee meeting. Annette Kirchhoff, Recorder