

PLANNING, RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, January 30, 2012

Administrative Center – Room 3220

2:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Don Meyer, Marlane Anderson, Don Bina, Beverly Mach, Dennis Manthei, Marilyn Pedretti, Tina Wehrs

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Bob Keil

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF & GUESTS: Bryan Meyer, Gregg Stangl, Steve O'Malley, Charlie Handy, Margaret Norden, Nate Sampson, Karl Green, Maureen Freedland, Charles Weeth, Craig Breitsprecher, Keith Carson, Nick Nichols, Mike Weibel, Dick Granchalek, Dan Ferries, Paul Rops, Anita Froegel, Karen Ringstrom, Jan Contreras, Mike Roles, Dave Bentzen, Meri Sue Erdmann, Rich Kastenschmidt, Beth Wiersma, Nancy Ellingson, Joan Waniger, Lois Meinking, Kathie Tyser, Glen Jenkins, Carmen DeYoe, Michael DeYoe, Mike Benco, Andrea Benco, James Fuchsel, Jim Warsinske, Carlene Roberts

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JANUARY 3, 2012

MOTION by Pedretti/Manthei to approve the Minutes of January 3, 2012. **Motion carried unanimously.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Nate Sampson introduced Mike Harding who is new to the Zoning, Planning & Land Information office.

SUPERVISOR CONFERENCE REPORTS

Supervisor Bina attended the state Agricultural Advisory Committee that addressed regulation of drainage ditches and cuts in staff funding.

CONSENT AGENDA (INFORMATIONAL)

MOTION by Manthei/Pedretti to receive and file the following Consent Agenda items. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- a. Sustainable La Crosse Commission minutes of December 22, 2011
- b. Board of Adjustment minutes of January 17, 2012

WACEC CONFERENCE – UW-EXTENSION

Mary Meehan-Strub reported that the WACEC conference, June 25-26, 2012, will celebrate the 100th anniversary of cooperative extension. There will be more information provided in coming months.

RE: IN SUPPORT OF ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES AND GOALS IN THE REGULATION OF OUTDOOR ADVERTISING

Instead of a resolution, Supervisor Pedretti presented a statement paper, which was adopted unanimously by the Sustainable La Crosse Commission, and will be given to the County Board. She read aloud the 10 recommended practices, as follows:

- Decreased use of energy that still allows signs to be effective advertising.
- Separation of outdoor advertising from homes and families so as to minimize light pollution and allow for enjoyment of the evening sky.
- Reduced light pollution that threatens wildlife by disrupting biological rhythms or otherwise interfering with the behavior of nocturnal animals.
- Methods to reduce the carbon footprint of digital billboards.
- Preferred usage of outdoor advertising materials that do not become easily obsolete and/or generate excess materials requiring recycling.
- Outdoor advertising materials that do not use significant amounts of energy from coal-fired plants.
- Attention to the invisible embodied energy or "grey energy" used to manufacture digital technologies and the toxic e-waste associated with electronics that are otherwise largely out of sight but have profound impacts.
- Attention to disposal methods of obsolete technology that becomes a valuable source of raw technology and which, if not treated properly, can be a source of toxins and carcinogens.
- Adoption of standards that minimize driver distraction and threat to safety including control of image hold times and frame effects on digital signs, and limits on interactive billboards.
- Policy that recognizes that our visual environment is among our area's greatest natural resource and that the community needs to balance this against outdoor advertising interests that diminish its value

though unsustainable contributions to energy consumption, material waste, visual aesthetics and light pollution.

REVIEW AND APPROVE 2012 DEPARTMENT OF LAND CONSERVATION COST SHARE RATES

Gregg Stangl reported on proposed 2012 cost share rates. The Land Conservation Department is a partner in cost share agreements with landowners who install soil and water conservation practices, and the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) that provide grant money for installing conservation measures. Stangl proposed amending the cost share policy to reflect the new La Crosse County Land and Water Resource Management Plan. With the completion of both the Gill's Coulee Creek and Burr Oak Watershed projects, Stangl recommended shifting the focus to the Farmland Preservation Program, first to approved participants who need to meet soil and water compliance requirements by 2015, and secondarily, to program applicants who need to meet program requirements to be approved. **MOTION** by Pedretti/Mach to approve the 2012 cost share rate. **Motion carried unanimously.** Keil excused.

UPDATE ON NEXT STEPS NECESSARY FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPREHENSIVE REWRITE OF COUNTY-WIDE ZONING ORDINANCE

Nate Sampson reported that the notice of adoption of the new zoning ordinance will be published. Townships will be notified by mail and email, and will then have a year to exercise options. Staff will attend a meeting with the Towns Association. Staff is currently cross-referencing other County ordinances that refer to the zoning ordinance to be sure all references are conformed.

SIGN ORDINANCE UPDATE

Chair Meyer stated that the ordinance is not in the committee's hands any longer, and that any changes will be at the County Board level. Charlie Handy stated that the sign ordinance had its first reading at the January, 2012, meeting of the County Board, and was on track to be adopted in February, 2012. He stated that amendments can still be made, and offered to collect comments to take to the County Board. Handy stated that amendments may also be requested in the future as the need appears. Public comment was taken from the following:

- Craig Breitsprecher, La Crosse Sign, thanked the committee for its time and effort;
- Anita Froegel, citizen, commented on the duration of sign messages;
- Karen Ringstrom, citizen, read a statement about her concerns and making adjustments to the ordinance in the future, and encouraged passing the ordinance;
- Mike Roles, citizen, stated he appreciated the work of the committee, and spoke about his concerns about sign brightness and enforcement of the ordinance;
- Mary Sue Erdman, citizen, spoke about safety issues and placement of signs;
- Mike Benco, citizen, stated he believed the ordinance was a good compromise and urged the County Board to pass it;
- Jim Warsinske, Sign Pro, asked for future consideration of an amendment to the general provision that addresses a distance of 32 square feet;
- Carlene Roberts, citizen, encouraged comparison of the local environment and sign density to other places;
- Paul Rops, citizen, stated he has a background in LED technology, and volunteered to find better ways of dealing with digital sign brightness;
- Rich Kastenschmidt, citizen, stated that digital signs were more of a distraction when changing messages;
- Keith Carson, Olympus Media, stated he would be happy to work with the Zoning, Planning & Land Information Department regarding any questions about sign brightness;
- Supervisor Maureen Freedland reminded the committee about the RPA district buffer zone, and the sliding scale regarding size and distance, and stated there can be adjustments after seeing the ordinance in practice.

Supervisor Freedland stated she did not object to a request for an amendment to raise the height limit in rural areas. **MOTION** by Pedretti/Wehrs to recommend to the full County Board to amend 33.07(2)(b) to read as follows: "Projecting signs fastened to, suspended from or supported by structures shall not exceed 100 square feet in area for any 1 parcel, shall not exceed a height of 20 feet above the centerline street grade, shall not be more than 20 feet and not less than 15 feet above a driveway. If sign is only above a sidewalk, it shall not be more than 15 feet and not less than 10 feet above the sidewalk. Projecting signs shall not extend above the roof line." **Motion carried unanimously.** Keil excused.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Charlie Handy reported that the Farmland Preservation Plan was submitted to the Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection. DATCP has asked for some amendments, and staff is working on map revisions. Certification is expected within two weeks. The next step is to amend the Comprehensive Plan. There will also be an effect on the zoning ordinance. Handy stated that staff is willing to work with any Township on their plans to ensure landowners receive tax credits. He expects there will be an update to the Comprehensive Plan every two to five years.

PLANNING & ZONING DIRECTOR

Steve O'Malley gave an update on the vacancy for director of the Zoning, Planning & Land Information department. He stated that his statewide review showed that there is no uniform method of department organization. He stated the Personnel Department is going ahead with advertising the position. He explained the interview procedure and timeline, and stated he hoped to have a recommendation by late March, 2012.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

In-depth department reports – after April, 2012, elections
Update on frac sand – March, 2012

RECESS

MOTION by Pedretti/Meyer to recess until the 6:00 p.m. public hearing. **Motion carried unanimously.**
The meeting recessed at 4:22 p.m.

Disclaimer: The above minutes may be approved, amended or corrected at the next committee meeting. Margaret Norden, Recorder