



Minutes

Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting

Location: Zoom Dial: 1-312-626-6799 US (Chicago) Meeting ID: 853 5119 6630 Passcode: 666032

Lent Town Hall: 33155 Hemingway Ave., Stacy, MN 55079

April 13, 2022 7:00 pm

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

M. Olson called the meeting to order at 7:11pm

Members Present: Chair M. Olson, Vice Chair P. Carlson, J. Johnson, D. Ardolf, M. Willcoxon, S. Brooks

Members Absent: J. McGill

Others Present: Planner J. Hartmann, Engineer J. Pelawa, Clerk K. Wood, Deputy Clerk T. Smolke, 9 members of the public (signed in)

PUBLIC COMMENTS *(ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA)*

D. Stiers said he attended the North Branch City Council meeting and said that everyone should know there was a sizable chunk of land that Lent residents are wanting to get annexed into North Branch. M. Olson said we have dealt with this in the past with Shirley Anderson being annexed into Stacy, and there is no need to discuss it again. D. Stiers wanted to be sure people are aware.

ADOPT THE AGENDA

P. Carlson made a motion to adopt the agenda. Second by M. Willcoxon. Votes via roll call, Ayes 5, Nays 0. Motion carried.

APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 9, 2022 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

P. Carlson made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 9, 2022 Planning Commission meeting. Second by P. Carlson. Votes via roll call, Ayes 5, Nays 0. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

35902 Grand Avenue Complaint

K. Wood and P. Carlson said that the Township has received complaints on this property before. K. Wood and P. Carlson took photos. P. Carlson said that they had an auction there before and had done some cleanup in the past. After discussion, the only thing the Township can enforce is the property cleanup. A re-roof permit has not been applied for. **P. Carlson made a motion to send them a courtesy letter. Second by M. Willcoxon. Votes via roll call, Ayes 5, Nays 0. Motion carried.**

31890 Frontier Avenue Kennel Permit IUP Amendment

J. Hartmann said in July of 2021 they applied for a residential kennel license for three dogs under an IUP kennel license. After conversation with staff, the applicant returned to add a fourth dog



under the permit. A chain-link fence was previously discussed, but at the time an electric fence was said to suffice for the three dogs. Planning can add or remove conditions to the permit.

Public Hearing

M. Olson opened public hearing at 7:23 pm

Public comments: Bonnie Knutson stated she lives next door and when the applicant applied for a kennel license for three dogs, they actually had eleven dogs. She said that she has lived next door for three and a half years and the applicant has never had less than four or five dogs. She said the applicant hides the dogs inside and only lets them out at night. *Note: the dogs have been outside on the complaint photo tours during the day. She went to twenty-six houses and twenty-one of them signed the petition. She said the applicants are constantly calling for the dogs but they do not come, and she feels they are not trained at all. She stated that the applicant babysits dogs and has to go on a riding lawn mower to call the dogs. She said she does not believe the electric fence works and has police reports. She said a dog had the wrong collar on once. She put up a hog wire fence so the dogs know they cannot get through to her yard. She said she has cats, a grandkid, and also feeds the squirrels and birds. She said the dogs charge at them by barking at them. She said the dogs eat rabbits so they are worried about their cats being torn up. She said she started her fence between the trees in the area that the dogs could come through. She said the renters had black labs and a husky. All three dogs charged at them while they were feeding the squirrels last summer. She said the fourth dog is one of the six puppies that the red female dog had. B. Knutson said because the dogs were still coming over after the fence was put up, they extended it to the easement and were not sure if that is okay to do. She clarified that by 'charging', she meant that three dogs barked at her. R. Knutson stated that he could have been attacked and that the dogs came around their hog wire fence by the roadside and charged him. P. Carlson said that the Planning Commission wanted them to have a fence. A. Hernandez stated that she is that resident and the electric fence works. She stated that when she was dog sitting, a dog was not hooked up to the fence because she grabbed the wrong remote. She stated one time the dogs were wrestling and got shocked back into the yard by the fence, so it works fine. She said she only had one dog when they moved in, which was a golden retriever who has since passed. She stated they got a chocolate Lab then a Coonhound. She said once she learned of the ordinance, she went to apply for IUP, but learned it is not necessary until the dog is a certain age. The two dogs had six puppies and they kept one. That puppy is not even a year old yet. She said her Coonhound has the most energy but the dog went to training and passed. Her brother with the two Labs moved out. She stated that her dogs do not go to the fence line and only has four dogs unless she is dog sitting which is permitted. She stated she has videos of the neighbors taunting the dogs, which she has showed the Sheriff. She has never received a ticket or citation. The Sheriff also saw the electric fencing and they showed him the mounted box for it. The Sheriff said they chose a good brand that was familiar to him. She said lately there has been a lot of fresh snow and there are no dog tracks, confirmed month after month by the Township. The dogs are afraid of the neighbors and go on the deck to bark. She said there was an invitation to the Township to go see the system, go in the home, and see fencing. They hire out cleanup for their yard, so that there is no waste. The Deputy confirmed they have a clean yard. A. Hernandez said the neighbors have no evidence, but she does. She questioned why a chain link fence would be needed when her electric fence is working. Her dogs yelp when they approach the fence. She

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stated this additional dog is for emotional support and they have done everything asked of them, including providing documents to the Township. B. Knutson stated that they are representing twenty-one others that were going to be present. They have filed complaints and have called the police. M. Willcoxon asked for documentation or physical evidence. He said they could approve a conditional IUP and allow them to provide evidence within six months and if it is demonstrated that the dogs leave the yard, revoke the IUP. T. Coenen, another neighbor stated the dogs are always on the walking path and she cannot walk on it. She said it has been an ongoing issue with the neighborhood and asked that this permit not be granted. M. Willcoxon asked if there is any documentation. B. Knutson said no. M. Willcoxon told her to take photos of the dogs running free, outside of their property. T. Coenen said the dogs are always on the walking path, not being watched or tied up. She said pictures are hard for her to obtain because she is too scared. J. Delaney said their dogs have not been on the walking path. She asked what the complainant thinks their dogs look like. No comment from the neighbors. M. Willcoxon said they have to submit photos of the applicant's dogs as proof. J. Delaney stated she believes this is not about the dogs. B. Knutson has filed complaints and J. Delaney believes B. Knutson is now coming after her character. P. Carlson stated that he has driven by several times and there were no dog tracks in the snow showing they near the property line. T. Coenen said she has no problem with dogs, unless people cannot contain them. **M. Willcoxon made a motion to close the public hearing at 8:04 pm. Second by P. Carlson. Votes via roll call, Ayes 5, Nays 0. Motion carried.**

J. Johnson said there are restrictions on the permit. Without proof of the dogs leaving the yard, everything is just hearsay right now. The Town Board should get a survey from the 21 people who signed the petition to restrict the permit if the neighbors are feeling uncomfortable or unsafe. The Planning Commission discussed having the Clerk contact the 21 people on the petition that B. Knutson said she collected for the permit. As a vote was being taken to table the permit until the people on the petition were contacted, K. Wood asked who had a copy of the petition. B. Knutson, now on Zoom, said that a new petition of 21 names did not actually exist. M. Willcoxon said that with this new information, he is voting in favor of the permit. This was an old petition being referenced to as new submitted for the already approved permit. Until there is proof, the permit cannot be denied because someone does not like dogs, per M. Olson. J. Hartman read the stipulations in the resolution. If they are not followed, the permit can be revoked at any time. **M. Willcoxon made a motion to recommend the approval of the Kennel Permit IUP for the approval of a 4th dog to the Town Board. Second by P. Carlson. Votes via roll call, Ayes 5, Nays 0. Motion carried.**

OLD BUSINESS

Buildable Area Requirements

J. Hartmann said the DNR has regulations for properties that are on a lake or body of water. There is an 18 percent slope requirement and J. Pelawa is suggesting to relax it to 25 percent because it may open up more areas for development. M. Willcoxon asked about including the easements in the buildable area. J. Pelawa said that there needs to be enough room for the septic and asked if the Township would want to lower the buildable area like the County did. There will be a public hearing on this in May.



Forest Lake Contracting

J. Hartmann explained recertification process to B. Vollhaber was skeptical about the need for inspection but, was on board with certification and documents required. J. Hartmann is going to follow up with Forest Lake Contracting on this.

34585 Kale Lane ADU

J. Hartmann said that the Township has not heard from the resident. Another fine and letter will be sent.

32050 Elk Lane Complaint

P. Carlson and K. Wood noticed a little improvement, but it is not in compliance. It has not been assigned a realtor. Another fine and letter will be sent to the bank and property.

5265 318th Street Complaint

P. Carlson noted that there was no improvement. Another fine and letter will be sent.

M. Olson announced that he was resigning from the Planning Commission. **M. Olson made a motion for M. Willcoxon to be Chair and P. Carlson to be Vice Chair. Second by P. Carlson. Votes via roll call, Ayes 5, Nays 0. Motion carried.**

COMMISSIONER/TOWN BOARD REPORT

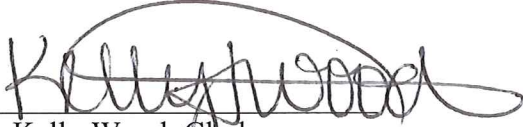
C. Cagle said that the Board has been discussing the potential merger with Stacy, but there is still a long way to go. She said that the City of North Branch discussed some properties in Lent that were interested in annexing to North Branch. She said that they need to be compassionate with complaints and gave the example of someone building a home next to a 100 year old farm. The SLFD needs a new furnace which will be covered by ARPA funds. She said that the Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting is coming up and found that the County process was missing a step. It states that a resident must contact the County, but does not say that they need to set up an appointment with them after they talk to them if they wish to have them out to look at their property. She posted the upcoming meeting on the Facebook page. P. Carlson said the valuations went up quite a bit.

NEXT REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING IS WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 2022 AT 7:00 PM.

ADJOURN

P. Carlson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:21 pm. Second by J. Johnson. Votes via roll call, Ayes 5, Nays 0. Motion carried.


Mike Willcoxon, Planning Chair


Kelly Wood, Clerk

