

TOWN OF GRAND CHUTE  
1900 W. Grand Chute Blvd.  
**REGULAR MEETING OF PLAN COMMISSION**  
MINUTES

Tuesday, November 15, 2011

**Although a quorum of the Town Board of Supervisors may have been present, no Town Board action was taken.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Dave Schowalter, Commissioners Bruce Sherman, Julie Hidde, Joe Malenofski, Bob Stadel, Pamela Crosby

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Commissioner Vivian Huth

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mark Heling, Road Superintendent; Mary Baxter, Executive Secretary; Kevin Vonck, Special Project Coordinator/Grants Administrator; Tom Marquardt, Public Works Director; Robert Buckingham, Community Development Director; other interested parties, (audience attendance = approx. 6, Supervisors Nooyen, Pleuss, Thyssen

1. ROLL CALL.

Chairman Schowalter called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

**Motion (Sherman/Hidde) to approve the agenda with a change to the wording of item #9, from 2012-2015 Capital Improvement Plan to 2012-2016 Capital Improvement Plan.** Motion carried, all voting aye.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING OF NOVEMBER 1, 2011.

**Motion (Malenofski/Stadel) to approve the minutes as distributed at the meeting.** Motion carried, all voting aye.

5. PUBLIC INPUT.

Jim Pleuss, 1400 W. Woodstone Drive, stated his concern for the amount of real estate that the Town has in multi-family zoning and use. He said that because Grand Chute has so many multi-family units, he would like the Commission to reconsider the rezoning action on this meeting's agenda.

Todd Platt, 7004 N. Purdy Parkway, Appleton, stated he was representing the owners of the property, at 1600 Tri-Park Way, the site of the proposed rezoning action, and was available to answer any questions the Commission may have.

Karen Dewald, 1623 N. Lilas Drive, stated she is very concerned with all of the multi-family being built along Highway 41. She said that as an educator, we are bulging at the seams and wondered what impact this would have on the community and on the classrooms.

Steve Classon, 801 Heritage Road, De Pere, stated that he is the applicant asking for the rezoning and would like to address the issue about the numbers of children living in apartments. He stated that for the housing product he builds and manages, there typically are about 2 children school-age for every 100 housing units. Due to the economy and what is happening with the single-family housing market, the demand for multi-family housing is huge and increasing dramatically. He is seeking the rezoning of the Tri-Park Way property in order to build high-end apartment housing, which is in demand.

Karen Dewald said she spoke to an individual who is looking for an apartment. This person was told by various apartment owners that many of the buildings are full right now because of the economy. Dewald said her concern was that if in 5 or 10 years those who are now losing their homes go back to home ownership, she believes the Town of Grand Chute will have a glut of apartments.

Nancy Jungen, 1507 N. Lilas Drive, noted that in the condo complex she resides at there have been two condos for sale for more than two years. She stated although the multi-family apartments being proposed are a little different than the condos, we do not need any more apartments in her neighborhood. Jungen said that she did not know if the Town has taken into consideration the possible traffic impacts due to Hine Street being cut off at Wisconsin Avenue.

6. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORT.

Community Development Director Buckingham's report available upon request.

7. UPDATE ON LONG-RANGE PLANNING FOR MULTI-FAMILY DEVELOPMENT.

Director Buckingham noted that at the last Commission meeting a request was made for staff to report on the Town's progress in meeting the goals and objectives from the long range multi-family housing plan that was developed in the late 1990's. He noted that in 1999, the Plan Commission, Town Board, and an Ad Hoc Committee undertook a comprehensive review of plans, policies, and codes with regard to the rapid growth of multi-family housing over the previous two decades. From 1980 - 1990, a total of 1283 multi-family units were built (excluding duplexes and condos). During that same period, multi-family housing as a percentage of the Town's total housing stock increased from 25% to 35%. From 1990 - 2000, a total of 1766 multi-family units were built, increasing multi-family as a percentage of the total housing stock to 43%. During this 20-year time period, the Zoning Code only provided one multi-family district classification, RMF Multi-Family Residential District, which allowed apartment projects to develop at a maximum density of 20 dwelling units per acre. After reviewing these trends and weighing its options, the Town established a goal for the amount, location, and density of multi-family units that would be achieved between 2000 and 2020. It was determined that the Town would put in place the tools to manage the addition of 1900 new multi-family units over that 20-year period. To better control density of development, the Town established a new Zoning class—R-4 Residential Multi-family District—that set a new maximum density of 10 dwelling units per acre. It was resolved that the predominance of future multi-family development would be held to the R-4 standards. With this new, lower density standard in place, the Town established an acreage goal for 190 acres to be developed in multi-family use from 2000 - 2020. Finally, the plan delineated areas within the Town where it was believed that multi-family housing should be placed, within mixed-use neighborhood settings. These areas were shown to radiate outward from a point at Wisconsin Avenue and USH 41, and were to be located within close proximity to major employment centers, arterial and collector streets, and large institutional uses such as FVTC. Director Buckingham noted that the proposed rezoning on Tri-Park Way is within one such defined mixed-use neighborhood.

In 2009 the Town added another planning strategy with the adoption of a new Comprehensive Plan. That document set the objective that “single-family and condo development will make up more than 50% of the total housing units in the Town”. The Comprehensive Plan also endorsed establishment of mixed-use urban development areas where multi-family housing would be planned.

Director Buckingham stated that with more than one-half of the 2000 – 2020 planning timeline having passed, the efforts put into the long-range multi-family plan have produced the desired result. Over the past 11 years from 2000 to the present, a total of 1013 multi-family units were built, compared to prior 10-year periods when 1300 – 1800 units were built. Also, multi-family housing as a percentage of the total housing stock has leveled off at 42%. The Town has rezoned 140 acres of land to R-4, and the multi-family housing developed has produced an average density for new multi-family projects at 7.2 dwelling units per acre. At the same time, the Town also eliminated some RMF and R-4 zoned acreage by rezoning land for lower density residential or commercial uses. These “down-zoning” actions resulted in a net addition of 100 acres of multi-family zoned land over the past 11 years. Additionally, all of the neighborhood areas that were identified for multi-family development are tracking at fewer units and lower densities than goal amounts established in 1999.

Director Buckingham cautioned that assertions being made about too much multi-family housing going up everywhere are not informed opinions. In reality, the development of multi-family housing is tracking exactly at the pace the Town said it wanted to see happen, meaning it is being effectively managed and controlled. If the Town still believes in this plan, it should be receptive to the development of quality multi-family projects, in favorable locations, that meet market demand. His recommendation is for the Town to focus on quality projects in good locations that are sponsored by developers/managers with successful track records.

One approach the Town could take going forward would be to analyze the inventory of vacant land zoned for multi-family and then take “down-zoning” or “up-zoning” actions, depending on the characteristics of individual parcels. Concurrently, the Town could use the “rubber band” approach on an interim basis when considering new requests to rezone additional acreage for multi-family use. As an example, if a request to rezone 5 acres was under consideration, the Town could approve that addition and then also drop 5 acres out of multi-family zoning elsewhere in favor of a more appropriate classification. Once work has been achieved in adjusting vacant land zoning classifications the “rubber band” approach could be dropped in favor of viewing each rezoning request on its own merits as compared to the Town’s planning goals.

Director Buckingham concluded by stating that he was very impressed by the effort the community made in creating the 1999 plan. Not only were the goals and objectives well-conceived, but also the plan has been well-managed over the years. He again recommended that the Town be receptive to quality multi-family projects. This type of housing will continue to be in demand, and because we have the tools in place to manage development, we should continue to support quality projects in good locations,

Chairman Schowalter thanked Director Buckingham for the very detailed report.

8. REZONING APPROVAL (Z-20-11) REQUESTED BY STEVE AND KAREN CLASSON, DBA SKB MANAGEMENT, INC., TO REZONE THE PROPERTY AT 1600 TRI-PARK WAY FROM CP PLANNED COMMERCIAL DISTRICT TO R-4 MULTI-FAMILY DISTRICT. (DEFERRED FROM NOVEMBER 1, 2011 PLAN COMMISSION MEETING) **ISSUE:** SHALL THE PLAN COMMISSION RECOMMEND APPROVAL/DENIAL OF Z-20-11. (TOWN BOARD ACTION 12/6/2011)

Director Buckingham referred to the findings of his research on the 1999 multi-family housing plan and 2009 Comprehensive Plan, and noted that this property is located in one of the preferred urban neighborhoods for mixed-use residential development. This will be a small-scale project of 24 units

distributed in 2 or 3 buildings, and the developer has a proven and successful track-record. He noted that the property is bordered on two sides by R-4 zoning, with commercial zoning to the north and west. He said that on a future site plan for the project, the Commission could require the placement of a landscaped bufferyard along portions of the east and south property lines to provide added screening from the nearby condo development. He also advised that the Commission could choose to apply the rubber-band approach in this case (adding R-4 zoning at this property and eliminating comparable RMF zoned acreage elsewhere). Director Buckingham concluded by recommending approval of the rezoning request.

Commissioner Sherman asked how Grand Chute's housing mix, with 42% of units in multi-family use, compared to adjoining municipalities.

Director Buckingham advised that current data in this regard had not been studied.

**Motion (Stadel/Hidde) to recommend approval of the rezoning request (Z-20-11) by Steve and Karen Classon to amend the Comprehensive Plan to reflect residential development for property at 1600 Tri-Park Way, and to rezone the property from CP Planned Commercial District to R-4 Multi-Family District.**

Commissioner Malenofski asked Steve Classon to describe the proposed multi-family development and the target market for the units.

Classon advised that the units would feature 2 bedrooms and 2 baths with an average size of 1,300 square feet. All units would have an attached garage, and 40% of the units would have 2-car garages. Rents would range from \$800 to \$1,000 per month. The target market is baby boomers who no longer wish to own a home. This housing product is not common among the more recent apartment projects built in the Town, but the market demand for it is high. He stressed that this will be a high-quality, well-managed development and the Town will not be disappointed in the results.

**Motion to approve carried on a vote of 5 – 1, with Commissioner Sherman voting nay.**

9. REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED TOWN OF GRAND CHUTE 2012-2016 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN. **ISSUE:** SHALL THE PLAN COMMISSION RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED TOWN OF GRAND CHUTE 2012-2016 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN. (TOWN BOARD ACTION 11/15/2011)

**Motion (Sherman/Malenofski) to recommend approval of the proposed Town of Grand Chute 2012-2016 Capital Improvement Plan.** Motion carried, all voting aye.

10. ADJOURNMENT.

**Motion (Sherman/Hidde) to adjourn the meeting at 6:26 p.m.**

Motion carried, all voting aye.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tracy Olejniczak  
Community Development Secretary