

# **Empire Township Planning Commission, Meeting Minutes**

**May 18, 2021**

The Empire Township Planning Commission was called to order by Tom Kaldunski at 8:00 PM.

Present were: Tom Kaldunski, Trent Larson, Jared Sachs, Bob Bjerke, Jane Kansier, Brad Fisher, Charles Seipel-Teng, and liaison Jamie Elvestad. Commission Member Doug Clark was absent.

Jane Kansier presented information on a Sketch Plan Review Application that was submitted by Hugh Fischer for proposed boundary changes for some of the properties he owns along Highway 3. The proposed boundary changes would extend parcels 12-03000-01-015 and 12-03000-01-014 further west to an area near the creek behind the parcels. This is being proposed so that when the larger parcel, located behind the houses and shed along Highway 3, is sold there is not an inaccessible area between the house and shed parcels and the creek. The Planning Commission reviewed the proposed parcel changes. Mr. Fischer explained that he would like to keep the two parcels that contain the shed and house as separate parcels. There is a perpetual easement on the south portion of the southernmost parcel along Highway 3 that is used by the railroad, gas line and is also used for his access. The easement currently runs across the railroad tracks.

Mr. Fischer will work on getting an official survey of the proposed boundary changes. Mr. Fischer would need to formally submit a Metes and Bounds Subdivision Application along with the official survey. The survey should show the perpetual easement.

It was the consensus of the Planning Commission that this proposal be brought to the next Town Board Meeting and that the Board be notified that the Planning Commission supports the proposed boundary changes.

Daren Betzold reported that he is seeking to transfer a building right to the AG property that he owns in the west half of Section 33. Currently, the Zoning Ordinance does not permit the transfer of building rights to the west half of Section 33. Mr. Betzold believes this section was excluded because at the time that the Zoning Ordinance was being developed, the Farmington School District was looking to construct a school on the property. Mr. Betzold would need to file an application for an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance so that all of Section 33 is permitted to receive building rights, and the amendment would need to be adopted before an agreement for the transfer of building rights is considered. It was the consensus of the Planning Commission to inform the Town Board at their next meeting, that the Commission recommends the proposed zoning ordinance amendment.

The Planning Commission reviewed a Metes and Bounds Subdivision Application that was submitted by Rick Kirchner for the subdivision of the land that he owns, south of 210th Street. The application included a survey that shows how the property would be subdivided into four

parcels. Three of the parcels (A, B and C) will have building rights as soon as the building rights transfer agreement between the Hagen's and Mr. Kirchner comes back from the Dakota County Recorder. Parcel D will remain farmland. Jared Sachs made a motion to recommend approval of the Metes and Bounds Subdivision of the Rick Kirchner property, contingent on the receipt of the building rights transfer and conservation agreement from the Dakota County Recorder. Trent Larson seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

The Planning Commission reviewed a proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment from the City of Lakeville for the rezoning of land use classifications of residential parcels west of Interstate 35. The Planning Commission recommended no comment.

Discussion was held on potential increases in coverage in Empire Township by the Dakota County Sheriff's Department. Trent Larson commented that he likes the Community Service Officer (CSO) idea as it would provide someone to meet with residents and keep an eye on trails etc. He wondered if the CSO would also help with ordinance enforcement and if they can be scheduled for school bus pickup and drop off times. It was discussed that a Deputy Officer would be able to assist the Township in more ways than a CSO. Comments were made that the rural parts of the Township would likely see less coverage than the MXR areas. There were questions as to how much time Deputies currently serve in the Township and what would change if an additional deputy or CSO was hired or contracted for with the Dakota County Sheriff. It was reported that the Sheriff's Deputies are currently quite visible throughout the Township. It would be nice to have more focus on problem traffic spots such as the stop signs near parks.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.