

Empire Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

February 21, 2023

The Empire Township Planning Commission meeting was called to order by Jared Sachs at 8:00 PM.

Present were: Trent Larson, Jared Sachs, Doug Clark, Marla Vagts, Jenni Faulkner, and Town Board Supervisor Eric Hanson. Tom Kaldunski was absent.

The meeting was opened to public hearing #1, to consider Ordinance 470, An Ordinance Relating to Shorelands and Regulating the Use and Orderly Development of Shorelands within Empire. Jenni Faulkner presented a memo on the proposed ordinance. This is an ordinance that the Empire City Council will need to adopt in place of the Dakota County Shoreland Ordinance. The proposed ordinance follows the DNR's model ordinance. It also requires a minimum lot area of 80,000 sq. ft. within shoreland areas and allows for commercial PUD's. Rental structures at Whitetail Woods would not be considered "guest cottages" in the ordinance. The adoption of the ordinance would not negate Empire's participation in the Vermillion River Watershed District JPA.

With no public comment, Trent Larson made a motion to close the public hearing. Doug Clark seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Trent Larson made a motion to recommend the approval of Ordinance No. 470 to the Empire City Council. Marla Vagts seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

The meeting was opened to public hearing #2, to Consider an Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance Relating to Incorporation of Reference to the Shoreland Ordinance. Jenni Faulkner reported that this is a housekeeping item to update Ordinance No. 400 with the pending adoption of the Shoreland Ordinance.

With no public comment, Trent Larson made a motion to close the public hearing. Marla Vagts seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Marla Vagts made a motion to recommend the approval of Ordinance No. 400-Q to the Empire City Council. Doug Clark seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

The property owner at 17565 Biscayne Ave. asked about the possibility of adding a rental unit to his rural residential property. The unit would be a studio in the basement of the home. It was noted that a separate residential dwelling on the property would not be permitted, however, if the property owner would like to rent the first floor of the dwelling to a renter, with a shared entry, shared common space, and address, this would be considered having a

roommate in the dwelling and would be permitted. The property owner will need to contact the building inspector for code compliance for having the additional studio unit.

Robert Hawkins requested information on potential future uses for the Fischer Trust property on Chippendale Ave. He has a client that would be interested in installing a tree farm on one half of the property and storage units on the other half. It was noted that the property is zoned AG. A tree farm would be permitted, and storage units would not be permitted as it is currently zoned. It was recommended that the proposed buyer meet with the Planning Commission and the owner of Independent Black Dirt to talk about the possibility of future land uses in this section of Empire.

The Planning Commission reviewed the Township's ordinance on overnight parking. Deputy Martin has concerns about deputies being able to ticket after 6:00 AM as that is the limit to overnight parking. The Planning Commission discussed the possibility of adding language to the seasonal parking ordinance that has no parking until 6:00 AM, or until road are plowed curb to curb. The Commission may want to add parameters of what type of snowfall constitutes a plowable snow. Rosemount, for example, notes anything greater than 2 inches. Some cities incorporate the possibility of towing vehicles in addition to citations. The City Council will review a draft ordinance amendment and the amended ordinance should come back to the Planning Commission for a public hearing.

The Planning Commission reviewed an update from Dakota County Transportation on future county road projects.

Doug Clark made a motion to recommend the appointment of Jared Sachs as the new Planning Commission Chair. Trent Larson seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

A property owner asked about the possibility of constructing an AG related shed on a farmed parcel near Highway 3 and 170th Street. The parcel does not have a dwelling on it. It was noted that the parcel would need to have a farming related dwelling to construct an AG related accessory structure.

Trent Larson made a motion to adjourn. Marla Vagts seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.