

Empire Township Planning Commission Minutes

May 17, 2022

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

Present were: Tom Kaldunski, Trent Larson, Jared Sachs, Doug Clark, Marla Vagts, Jane Kansier, Brad Fisher, Charles Seipel-Teng, and liaison Jamie Elvestad.

Eric Ruud with Top Notch Properties and Hugh Fischer requested an amendment to the letter that was adopted by Empire Township on April 26th, approving the parcel split for the Fischer property at the railroad tracks. The letter required that the newly split parcel west of the tracks be combined with the Harris parcel to the south and west so that it would be connected to a parcel that has road access. Mr. Ruud indicated that the property owners of the two parcels west of the tracks are different parties and would not be able to combine them. Mr. Fischer noted that the existing Harris parcel does not have adequate frontage as required by the ordinance. The Planning Commission discussed the authority of approving the parcel split if this parcel is in the OAA with the City of Farmington. It may be up to the City of Farmington to determine if the parcel split should proceed as requested by the property owner.

Jane Kansier will check with the City of Farmington to determine if the City will consider the parcel split. In the meantime, the Township, if it has the authority to approve the request, could do so through the variance application process. It was recommended that the property owner submit a variance application in the meantime.

John Mertens and Kurt Chatfield, planners with Dakota County, presented information on the Dakota County Trail system, including the Vermillion Highlands Greenway. In Empire Township, the plan is to connect Whitetail Woods Park with the Vermillion River via the proposed completion of the Greenway. There is an issue with obtaining right of way to complete the connection, specifically around the Met Council WWTP site. The Met Council indicated that they do not want to work with the County in placing the trail on the west side of the WWTP property. This would be the ideal spot for the trail as it would provide a more direct connection and not be directly along Biscayne Ave. There is the option of going along Biscayne Ave. The trail would need to accommodate future plans to expand Biscayne Ave. into a County Road. There is the option of constructing the trail east of the WWTP, along Annette Ave. This is less ideal as it would create a longer connection. The County will try to touch base with the Met Council again to see if there is something that they can work out. The Planning Commission discussed the possible options and are supportive of the completion of the Greenway.

The Planning Commission reviewed a proposed comprehensive plan amendment from the City of Rosemount for the rezoning of an area near Highway 3 and CR 46 from Community Commercial to Business Park. The Planning Commission had no comment on the amendment.

The Planning Commission reviewed the notes from the May 4th meeting with Dakota County Highway Department Staff regarding the future alignment of the Highway 66 and Biscayne Ave. intersection. The County indicated that when properties to the south of Highway 66 are developed, they will need to be platted in a way that dedicates a right-of-way for the future realignment of Highway 66. The County plans to realign Highway 66 at Biscayne Ave. to create a 90-degree angle at that intersection. County Staff will be meeting with Empire Township annually to review the CIP for County roads and highways.

The Planning Commission reviewed the official notice for the hearing for the incorporation of Empire Township that has been set for Thursday, June 2nd.

It was noted that the zoning ordinance violations on Blain Ave. continue to exist. The matter will be brought to the Town Board for consideration.

Meeting adjourned at 9:35 PM.