



COUNTY FARM PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES Thursday, September 18, 2014

The County Farm Planning Committee meeting was called to order by Vic Chairman Eric Evenstad, at 1:03 p.m. on Thursday, September 18, 2014, in the lower level conference room of the Erlandson Office Building.

Members Present: JoAnn Nickelatti, Eric Evenstad, Karen Dahl, Bonnie Rath, and Shawn Redington.

Motion to excuse citizen member Bernadine Hornby and Chairman Dennis Brault by Shawn Redington. Second by Karen Dahl. All in favor. Motion carried.

Others in attendance were Greg Lunde, Tena Fredrickson, Phil Hewitt, and Ole Yttri.

Affirmed proper public notice of meeting.

Review/Approve Minutes: A review of the minutes included a single typographical error. **Motion by Nickelatti/second by Rath to approve the August 19, 2014 minutes as corrected. All in favor. Motion carried.**

Audience to Visitors: Phil Hewitt acted as tour guide to the committee, pointing out property lines and lays of the land. Ole Yttri joined the committee after the tour of county lands.

The Committee debated whether to wait for Chairman Brault to join as he was delayed by Finance/Personnel Committee, or to proceed in his absence. It was decided the committee would recess and begin the tour.

Hewitt pointed out the current salt sheds/storage facilities and stated the sink holes there are more prevalent now than they were previously. He also pointed out the old laundry facilities and stated that Land & Water, Ag Agent and Emergency Services have items stored there, and that the West barn/silos have been converted to storage. He said the county has 235 acres on one side and 167 acres on the other. Nickelatti asked how many acres of corn the County had and Hewitt stated over 200 acres. Dahl inquired of the cost of machinery to determine potential sinkholes/caves of the county lands, stating it would be well worth it. Hewitt stated he was unaware of those costs, but thought money would be better spent using the same technology to scan just the predetermined location of a future county complex than all of the acreage. Nickelatti agreed. Hewitt stated his opinion was to put the possible Highway Department or Erlandson Complex or County Complex down, a little ways away from the megaplex, which still leaves room for expansion of the city.

Rath questioned Hewitt on the run off from the landfill and the properties below the landfill. Hewitt stated that the Seas Branch Dam is below the landfill and it actually doesn't have any water in it anymore. Dahl asked if there were channels in those cells where the leachate runs down through, got collected, and then processed at the waste water treatment facility, and Hewitt stated there was a company that came in and laid down a liner, glued together in strips, so that when it rains, all the water goes down through the landfill and into a pump where it is stored in a tank until such time as it is hauled to the plant.

Lunde questioned Yttri upon his arrival of the length of time yet to operate the current landfill and Yttri stated 8 or 9 years unless another cell is opened. He also stated that within 5 years of closing, the County Board will have to make the decision to open another cell, contract out, or close it up altogether.

The committee opted to reconvene the committee meeting in the Erlandson building conference room.

Upon return to the Erlandson building, Rath read notes she'd received from Hornby regarding her thoughts on the future complex location (attached). Evenstad stated that if we are planning for 100 years from now, there is definitely potential for a bypass to come in before then. Rath stated that the county has plenty of space to build on other than on the bypass route. Evenstad questioned the importance of the county buildings being centrally located within the city as they are now and Lunde stated that for most employees who run out for lunch, it's easier to get to the convenience stores from the Erlandson Building than it is from the courthouse location. Evenstad stated that maintenance has become so much more technical than in the past, that specialized individuals who are Hvac knowledgeable for example, vs. simple custodial staff, can number less and be more efficient as well if they can service a central location such as in a county complex, vs buildings and offices located in several different locations.

Rath stated she felt lands not of use to the county should be parceled off with a pre-determined price earmarked available for purchase, should a business or industry such as Organic Valley for example, be looking to purchase acreage in the area as County Board only meets 6 times per year and in the timeframe it takes to get land approved for sale by the Board, an enterprising business could move on and the Viroqua area could potentially lose a great family household sustaining industry.

The committee agreed to invite a representative from the City of Viroqua to the meeting to get their thoughts on any future plans or purchases by the City.

Next meeting Date: Tuesday October 21, 2014 at 1:00 p.m.

**Motion by Redington/second by Nickelatti to adjourn the meeting at 2:34 p.m. All in favor.
Motion carried.**

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Tena M. Fredrickson, Corporation Counsel Administrative Assistant



*Touring county properties with
"Tour guide Phil" and "hard
hat Bonnie"*

Notes by Bernadine Hornby as provided and read by Bonnie Rath:

Notes for Farm Planning Committee - September 18, 2014

-Looked at the county farm land after last meeting. Was hard to see the lay of land with corn still on.

-Since the by-pass is a dead issue, we shouldn't spend time discussing what might be, when that could be many years away if even then.

-With the salt shed already built, it seems the new highway dept. should be built near it. Phil Hewitt said the trucks load 4 times a day each during bad weather in the winter. Since they need to drive there now, there already is the road use and there already is a stop light in place to get onto the highway.

-The campus for all offices could possibly be East and South of the County Farm barn.

-The land north on Highway 14, should be left for new businesses to come into town. It's more important for businesses to have the highway exposure. The county buildings wouldn't end up in the business district and again in the center of town.

-20-40 acres of land for new business to come to the area needs to be addressed soon. Opportunities have been lost in the past as a result of the County owning the land, because of the time it takes to decide if, when, where and how much land to sell. The process of how this will be accomplished needs to be addressed so opportunities aren't lost. The County Board as a whole shouldn't be realtors, so how would this process proceed to be successful?

- Just as an example, the fairgrounds property is 40 acres. Visually you can see how much space that is, and somewhat get an idea of how much area would be needed for new building projects, parking, etc. If Organic Valley had come to town, how much space would they have needed and how much would then be left for other new businesses? Is 40 acres enough?