



COUNTY FARM PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES Thursday, December 4, 2014

The County Farm Planning Committee meeting was called to order by Chairman Dennis Brault, at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, December 4, 2014, in the County Board room of the Courthouse Annex.

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

Others in attendance were Greg Lunde, Tena Fredrickson, Herb Cornell, Steve Clark – Director of Public Works for the City of Viroqua, LaVon Felton – President of the Viroqua Development Association, Jeff Gohlke – Viroqua Development Association Coordinator, John Severson - City Administrator, Sara Grainger – City Engineer, Jerry Cade, Jim Servais, Phil Hewitt, Ole Yttri, Gail Mueller, Doug Avoles.

Affirmed proper public notice of meeting.

Review/Approve Minutes: Motion by Evenstad/second by Nickelatti to approve the November 5, 2014 minutes as written. All in favor. Motion carried.

Audience to Visitors: None.

Brault reviewed prior discussions concerning entertaining the idea of selling two parcels of land to the city of Viroqua; Land from the West farm (13 to 20 acres) and also from the East farm (roughly 20 acres near Railroad Avenue). Evenstad asked if the City had thoughts or any discussion on this and Felton stated they have a meeting planned and that he has previously spoken with Tom Weston, loan officer at Citizens 1st Bank, who also is on the Board of Viroqua Development, regarding the financial aspects of it. Felton also stated the City would love the piece of property along highway 14, but that would need quite a bit of work, as there are drainage issues and a lot of grade to contend with, so the 19.67 acres on the East Farm might make more sense for the city at this time.

Grainger showed a map of the properties indicating existing water and sewer lines on the overhead projector for everyone to see. Servais questioned if the County was to sell, how soon improvements would be put into place so that the property may attract a potential buyer, and Cade noted that water and sewer would have to be installed before selling, and Felton agreed. Severson noted the annexation process with the township and stated that he believed bidding must be complete before September 2015, including annexation and everything. Felton asked if this could be developed on an existing TID and Severson stated it would be on a new TID. Gohlke stated that annexation is an important first step in unifying the parcel with the rest of the City, but it won't change anything as far as the County is concerned. Felton stated that if a TID happened there, that is what would bring business in; that's what brings the money in and it's been very successful so far.

Lunde stated that there was no use in leaving anything out, if a portion was going to be annexed, they may as well just annex the whole 40 acres at one time, which would include the salt sheds. Cade agreed stating that Vernon Manor could be annexed in at that time as well as it the only building out there not annexed in currently. When some of the members questioned why that was, no one could explain, but all agreed it should be annexed in as the sheriff's office and Erlandson building already have been.

When asked how soon all this could take place, Lunde stated a petition would have to be approved at the County Board meeting in February. Gohlke stated that would start the process with the City. Severson said, "So March or April maybe." Cade stated that he took the liberty of checking into the financials and determined that there was money available for an appraisal, so that is something that should be done before the February County Board meeting as well to help get this thing rolling and approved. Cade then asked if a survey was required and Lunde stated no, unless Vernon Manor is included. Avoles stated that

he thought Vernon Manor had already been surveyed. Everyone agreed to appraise the whole forty as well as the salt sheds area.

Yttri and Cornell suggested that if it did not require taking bids, the county grant writer was in possession of a list of outside appraiser names from which they could choose an appraiser and Lunde stated that an appraisal is a service so it does not have to be bid out, plus, to go through advertising and all that would entail, would make it impossible to all be done prior to the February County Board meeting, so luckily, that is not necessary. Felton stated the sooner the better for all this so that the September cut-off could be met regarding the TID so that all concerned wouldn't have to wait another whole year.

Servais stated that whoever approaches appraisers needs to do so right away, and if it is an unbiased, outside appraiser, then only one appraisal should be necessary. Dahl requested a formal timeline. Brault stated the first thing would be for Buildings & Facilities to approve the costs of an appraisal at their next formal meeting, and Cade stated he would like to see this done by the February County Board meeting, so believed they could hold a special meeting to get started with an appraisal. Brault stated that then the Board could approve the sale at the February meeting and the City could then get started on the annexation process. Felton stated that he wanted to let the committees know that he appreciates what the County is doing and will get the TID arrangements going and follow through with the City's end of it.

Cade asked if the property along highway 14 should also be appraised as long as someone was here appraising this parcel, and everyone agreed it wouldn't hurt to know that property's worth also.

Hewitt stated he spoke with the DOT regarding access to the Highway 14 parcel, and they insinuated an access road from Springville Road would be the only allowable access, so basically, the City would have to build a frontage road down to Springville Road for access. Felton then stated they county might want to appraise the west ½ of the 40 higher up Highway 14 too, that being parcel # 036-00579-0000, because if access from Springville is possible, the City would be open to entertaining ideas for that parcel as well.

Evenstad inquired just how much control the County would insert into the sale/agreement without a lot of strings attached, as that would be good as there has to be some trust involved. Cade stated that working together is the only way to go. Felton stated that the City wants this and wants it to work because when industry comes, jobs come. He stated they will do the TID and people will come just like they did in the early 90's.

Cornell suggested everyone involved work on letting the County Board members know the benefits of this because they could vote it down. Nickelatti stated they have to know what this is all about before the meeting in February or they will want to table it in order to learn more or will simply vote it down; everyone agreed. Lunde stated Viroqua Development should also include something in the February packet that the Board members could review prior to the meeting. Hornby stated members should be encouraged to contact Cornell, Brault, or Cade as the Committee Chairs, and Brault agreed.

Brault and Cade agreed to write a letter to County Board members and delegated Lunde to draw up a resolution. Felton stated someone would send a letter to the City requesting to annex into the City, and Lunde stated that is something the County Board would need to do, so that can't happen until February at least.

Next meeting Date: A joint meeting with the Buildings & Facilities Committee on Thursday, January 8, 2014 at 9:30 a.m. immediately following the Building & Grounds Committee meeting was decided upon.

Motion by Evenstad/Second by Hornby to adjourn the meeting at 10:14 a.m. All in favor. Motion carried.

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