

Plan Commission Meeting

Tuesday, July 2, 2024

Minutes - Draft 7/8/24

Chairman Erba called the meeting to order at 5:00.

Attendance

All commissioners were present.

Chairman's Comments

- The Chairman noted that tonight's Revised Agenda will be adjusted. The business item addressing a short-term rental application will be deleted because of an incomplete submission. The original posted agenda will be used for this meeting's proceedings.
- The Chairman reached out to Ben Popp, Executive Director of the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation, for an update on efforts to develop a biathlon target area. Mr. Popp had a conflict and will make a presentation directly to the Town Board later this month.
- The Chairman had been contacted by Brady DeVore, a Twin Cities businessman wanting to explore opportunities for developing a campground. The Chairman directed him to the Comprehensive Plan to determine areas where such a use would be appropriate. Commissioner Wilson noted that a campground is being planned for Mount Telemark Village.

Minutes

The Chair presented the Minutes from the last meeting of June 4, 2024 and asked for corrections or additions. Hearing none, the Chair asked for a motion to approve.

- Commissioner Popelka moved approval of the minutes as presented
- The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wilson.
- The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Updates/Discussion

Town Board

Commissioner Popelka updated the Commission on various actions of the Town Board and a summary of the recent Four-Towns Meeting. Items pertaining to the Plan Commission include:

- The Town Board approved use of Rollover Funds by the Cable Forward subcommittee for the streetscape project's fundraising and approved a separate checking account (as recommended by the Plan Commission at its June 4th meeting).
- Introduction at the Four-Towns Meeting to the County's new Short-Term Rental Coordinator. The County's intent is to streamline the short-term rental process, but Commissioner Popelka indicated that the process has not been streamlined as yet and has a conflicted timeline with the Town's license approval.

- The Four-Towns Board will investigate removing the four towns from the County Zoning Ordinance administration because of lack of response and communication from the County zoning office. The Four Towns would need to establish a separate zoning ordinance for their own.

In response to the above described County's Short-Term Rental Process, public comment was received from Cindi Kastrowski from North County Vacation Rentals. She recommended a meeting with Town representatives to address simultaneous permit approval by the Town and County. Chairman Erba will follow up with her for such a discussion.

Commission Subcommittee: Discussion of membership and meeting procedures for subcommittees, such as Cable Today and Cable Forward.

The Chairman presented Commission members with the email communication from the Town Attorney regarding the Streetscape Project. The attorney raised concerns about the committee's creation and impact of Wisconsin Open Meeting Law. Wisconsin has no statute regarding committees, but relies on local governments to govern. Questions to be addressed include:

- How Cable Forward is viewed: advisory or independent?
- Is it a branch of local government?
- For projects, does the Town Board ask for projects or do citizens or committees propose projects on their own?

The Chairman asked for a conversion at this point, rather than a specific motion. However, based on this conversation, the Commission will need to make clear to the Town Board the roles of various subcommittees. NOTE: Linda Podvin from Cable Forward was invited to the table to participate in the conversation.

Background and questions raised by commissioners.

- Commission Thurn, liaison to the Cable Today Committee, indicated that Cable Forward arose out of Cable Today as a different committee to start the streetscape improvements.
- Commissioner Popelka stated that the Town Board gave the Plan Commission the power to appoint subcommittees. Subcommittees and outside groups can bring forward ideas for approval that the Town Board does not have time to develop on its own. Such subcommittees/groups can raise funds for a Town project subject to Town Board approval (an example cited is the recent approval of library construction on Town property).
- The Chairman was not aware of the Plan Commission appointing any subcommittee. Regardless, a written framework of expectations for any subcommittee was also missing. If formal subcommittee appointments are made, the appointed subcommittees will be held to State government standards, such as complying with Wisconsin Open Meeting Law (e.g., posting meeting notices and providing minutes of meetings).
- Commission Lendved expressed concern with accountability. Town residents want to know about meetings and actions.

Linda Podvin, representative of Cable Forward, stated that the group has kept the Town Board and Plan Commission informed of their actions. She said that her group has no problem with posting meeting notices.

The Chairman raised questions about subcommittee hierarchy under the Plan Commission. Commissioners raised issues about:

- The subcommittee structure and how it might impact the Connect Communities program;
- How members are appointed and meeting notices posted;
- How the group is organized (i.e., non-profit status) may affect its ability to raise funds;
- Need to establish an appropriate number of members to identify quorum threshold.

The Chairman concluded the discussion by indicating that at the August Plan Commission meeting, he will consult with the subcommittees and will present a recommendation that will lay out the subcommittee structures, appointments, and expectations. He will then go to the Town Board to present the recommendations at their August meeting.

Business Items

1. Review and Update of “Welcome to Cable” Sign Project by Cable Today

Chairman Erba provided a handout with background on the sign project. In response to Commissioner Merrill’s concerns, the Chairman wants to explore how to keep this project from drifting. The project was approved by the Town Board, but no funds were allocated to execute the project. The Chair viewed this discussion as an opportunity to identify someone to pick up the project and take it to completion. Questions to consider include

- What are the expectations of Cable Today?
- Who is the Project Manager?
- Is fundraising possible?
- What is the schedule?

Commissioner Merrill inquired whether people are still interested in the project. So much has changed since the project was approved.

Commissioner Thurn, the Commission’s liaison to Cable Today, relayed recent activities regarding outreach to the sign locations’ adjacent land owners, discussions about fundraising and possible partnership with Bayfield County Tourism. Cable Today does not have someone at this time to take on the project, but could facilitate the process.

Linda Podvin, Cable Forward representative, stated that Cable Today is still involved and has the specifications for the sign. They had put a budget together. The sign project could possibly be wrapped in with the Streetscape Project.

Motion for Business Item 1

- Commissioner Lendved moved that Cable Today be approached to identify a project manager to handle the sign project.
- Commissioner Merrill moved to table the motion so that Commission Thurn could communicate with Cable Today to formalize a response.
- Commission Lendved withdrew the motion.

- Commission Popelka moved to postpone the matter to the August meeting and ask the Chairman to ask Cable Today to identify a project manager and finalize a schedule.
- The motion was seconded by Commissioner Merrill.
- The motion was approved by six “Ayes” and no “Nays.”

Commissioner Remarks

Commissioner Thurn wants to conduct a public forum regarding updates to the Recreation Plan. She will present a plan for public engagement at the August meeting.

Next Meeting Date

Tuesday, August 6, 2024 at 5:00 PM.

Agenda deadline: Wednesday, July 31, 2024 at 5:00 PM

(Submittals shall be written and include all required documentation for Commission deliberation)

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 6:51 PM