

**Barry County Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
January 24, 2022**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Clyde Morgan in the Community Room of the Tyden Center located at 121 South Church Street in Hastings. The Planning Commission members in attendance included: Morgan, Vivian Conner, John LaForge, Jack Nadwornik, Joyce Snow, and Robert Vanderboegh. Jack Miner was absent. Those also in attendance included: Rebecca Harvey, Woodrow Thompson, Jr., Barry County Planning Director James McManus, and many other interested people.

Motion by LaForge to approve the agenda as printed. Support by Vanderboegh. All ayes - motion carried.

Motion by LaForge to approve the minutes of November 22, 2021 as written. Support by Snow. All ayes - motion carried.

BUSINESS

Master Land Use Plan Kickoff

Rebecca Harvey from McKenna and Associates distributed a memo that included a tentative work schedule to the Planning Commission. She went over the proposed work plan. She noted the team had already started looking at the existing conditions.

Harvey noted the Planning Commission had several options to consider. She noted the housing study is already in progress, so it can be taken off the list. She asked if the retail/industrial analysis would be valuable to do. She also asked how the Planning Commission would like to engage the public.

Harvey noted they would start the public outreach after the existing condition analysis is complete. She noted they will be conducting open houses across the county, and she distributed a map illustrating township combinations for three or four open houses. She noted they could do a visual preference survey at the open houses. She suggested a formal survey could be conducted after the outreach sessions.

Harvey continued by noting the planning process would be completed from the county framework, but they would mesh the local plans into it. She noted the final task would be to create the goals, objectives, and implementation strategies. Harvey noted they would prepare and send out all of the notices for the project.

LaForge suggested that the Planning Commission discuss the options.

McManus asked that the Planning Commission decide on the full Planning Commission review or use a steering committee. He noted there were a lot of citizens at the meeting who want to help with the plan. He also noted doing all of the work as a full Planning Commission will make for long meetings. He noted two or three Planning Commissioners could serve on the steering committee.

Snow noted several members of the Planning Commission have historical knowledge and should be part of the process.

Motion by LaForge to agree to the use of a Steering Committee and that no more than three Planning Commissioners serve on the Steering Committee. Support by Nadwornik.

Roll call vote taken: 6 ayes - 0 nays - motion carried.

McManus recommended that a survey be considered. He noted that when the current plan was completed, the survey results were verified by a millage denial. He said it would help obtain public participation in the process.

McManus noted the Economic Development Alliance and the Barry Community Foundation have partnered to complete the housing study, and they are hiring Jim Grobe to do the work.

Harvey asked about the retail/industrial analysis.

LaForge thought that would be useful. He noted there will be upgrades to the electrical grid and broadband which could help in business locations.

Nadwornik noted road quality is also an issue.

LaForge noted there is going to be a huge influx of stimulus money in 2023.

Motion by Nadwornik to approve that a formal survey be completed as part of the Master Plan process. Support by Snow. All ayes - motion carried.

Conner asked that the Planning Commission wait until next month to decide on the retail/industrial study.

McManus said he would put the question on the agenda.

Harvey asked the Planning Commission what would make the project a success.

Vanderboegh suggested a new zoning ordinance.

Nadwornik said 60% or greater of public approval of the plan.

Snow said public involvement and support.

Harvey agreed that resident support is the key.

LaForge noted varying interests need to be integrated in the plan.

Snow noted the Blue Zones group's ideas about housing and Accessory Dwelling Units was helpful.

Vanderboegh noted the Farmland Preservation Group would like Ag districts.

Morgan noted small farmers are having trouble finding land.

Harvey said she would update the schedule based on the Steering Committee format.

Vanderboegh asked that Solar and Wind Energy be included as well as Tiny Houses.

McManus noted there are at least two large farms that would like to construct solar farms on their properties, so alternative energy has to be part of the plan.

LaForge asked if McKenna and Associates had experts in that field. Harvey said McKenna has written several ordinances.

Site Plan Review

PR-1-2022

**Jeff Pangle (Applicant)
Woodrow Thompson, Jr. (Property Owner)**

Morgan recessed the Planning Commission, opened the public hearing, and asked Thompson, Jr. to present his request.

Thompson said he bought the camp and noticed it had not been updated in 30-40 years. He noted the camp is 100 acres in size, and it has two log cabins for youth quarters. He said the main dining hall had a commercial kitchen.

He said he would like to repurpose it for a wedding and event facility. He said he would like to build a chapel eventually. He said the facility will be symbiotic with nature.

Morgan asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of the request. There was no response.

Morgan asked if anyone was opposed. There was no response.

Morgan closed the public hearing and reconvened the Planning Commission.

LaForge asked if the sanitary system was up to code. Thompson noted it may not be up to code, and he is planning to replace it.

LaForge asked about the electrical system. Pangle said it was sufficient, and they will be lessening the load by using LED lights and not fully using the kitchen. Pangle noted the events will be catered, and the kitchen will be a warming and staging area.

LaForge asked how long the remodel timeframe was. Thompson said 14 months, and that he hoped to be able to schedule weddings in the Spring of 2023.

Vanderboegh asked about new construction. Pangle said the 60x96 addition is new.

Vanderboegh asked about the Nature's Open Door building. Thompson said it was used for classrooms, and there were many display cases in there.

Vanderboegh asked about the Tamarack Hotel. Thompson said it will be converted into a changing room.

Vanderboegh asked about the chapel. Thompson said it would be a 40x50 gazebo.

Conner asked about the house in front of the facility. Thompson said the former camp owner lives there.

Pangle said they plan on planting a natural barrier between the house and the event center.

Conner asked if there would be any overnight lodging. Thompson said no.
Conner asked if there would be any wetland impact. Thompson said no.

Snow asked if public utilities were required. McManus noted the use was pre-existing, and the site plan review was for the addition to the wedding venue.

Snow asked if there were any runoff issues. Thompson said no and noted the soils were sandy.

Nadwornik verified that the kitchen would only be used for holding and finishing product. Thompson agreed and noted that he has no cooking ability.

McManus noted a well and septic permit will be needed before permits can be issued.

Motion by LaForge to approve Case No. PR-1-2022 as presented. Support by Snow.

Roll call vote taken: 6 ayes - 0 nays - motion carried. Site Plan Approved.

Rezoning Dates

A-1-2022

McManus asked to change the public hearing date for the Village of Woodland Map Change to March 28, 2022.

Motion by LaForge to set March 28, 2022 for the public hearing for A-1-2022. Support by Vanderboegh. All ayes - motion carried.

Conner asked if the regular time for the meeting would be okay. McManus said yes.

A-2-2022

McManus asked to set February 28, 2022 as the date for a proposed rezoning in Barry Township.

Motion by LaForge to set February 28, 2022 as the public hearing date for A-2-2022.
Support by Nadwornik. All ayes - motion carried.

McManus asked the Planning Commission if they were available for a potential special meeting on March 14, 2022. Five members of the Planning Commission said they were.

Motion by LaForge to set March 14, 2022 as a date for a special meeting. Support by Snow.
All ayes - motion carried.

2021 Year-End Report

McManus distributed the 2021 Year-End Report and summarized the content. He highlighted the number of land divisions and new houses as they exceeded expectations. McManus also noted there was a summation of enforcement in the packet that illustrated the past five years of activity. He also cited PCI's year-end documentation and noted they had a great year.

McManus noted that a new representative to the Parks & Recreation Commission needed to be selected as Snow has conflicts with other meetings. He said he would put it on February's agenda.

Motion by Snow to adjourn. Support by LaForge. All ayes - motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jack Nadwornik,
Secretary