

Albany Township Planning Commission
January 12, 2016

The January 12, 2016 meeting of the Albany Planning Commission was called to order at 7:30 P.M. by Chair Michael Noll at Albany City Hall Council Chambers. Members present, Mike Noll, Gary Bloch, and Ryan Pratt. Also present, Supervisors Mary Rosen, and Loren Pelzer; Clerk Diane Noll; Zoning Administrator Jerry Forster present on SKYPE.

Also present Jennifer Buckentine, Stearns County Environmental Services.

APPROVAL AGENDA

A motion to accept the agenda as presented was made by Commissioner Pratt , seconded by Commissioner Bloch, motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES-December 8, 2015

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Bloch, seconded by Commissioner Pratt, motion carried

OPEN FORUM-NONE

PUBLIC HEARINGS-NONE

NEW BUSINESS

a. Sharon Seiler-Review of Plat

Ms Seiler was not present

b. Mark Rodenwald representing Taylor and Ashley Carbert

01.00330.0008, Section 35, Township 125, Range 031

Owned by Taylor and Ashley Carbert, 32329 Fifth Lake Road, Avon MN 56310

The total parcel is 54.58 acres. This acreage has one building credit.

Carbert's are proposing to split off Tract A 11.2(+/-), this area has the existing buildings including a residence. This Tract will include an easement for the driveway to the new Tract.

Tract B will be the remaining 42.9 (+/-) Acres and will be a non build-able parcel.

A motion to recommend to the Township Board approval of the Certificate of Compliance for this proposed property split was made by Commissioner Bloch, seconded by Commissioner Pratt, motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Review of TDR amended 9.7.3B

A copy of Draft 1 and Draft 2 were presented

Jennifer Buckentine, Environmental Services was in attendance to answer questions we may have about changing the ordinance.

Q-Why does ag land have building credits? If there were not credits, there would be no building.

A-The nature of zoning is to limit building in agriculture areas. The county has never entertained the idea of not having credits on ag land. Albany is one credit per 40 acres. In the western part of the county some townships are A-80.

Q-What determines "prime" ag land?

A-This is difficult to determine, there are many variables when making this decision. The county uses a LESA score as one of the qualifiers for prime ag land. Sometimes it is difficult to determine if it is prime.

Chris Kotzer-if a farmer has a large parcel – over 400 acres- and only 5 acres are appraised as prime ag land, he should have the right to do what they want with their land.

Loren Pelzer-we do not want to see a house on every 40 acre plot. This will inhibit the ability to farm.

Chris Kotzer-When 40 acres are sold as a building lot, the house many times is placed in the center of the 40, not in a corner or near a road.

Jennifer-The county's goal is to have houses near the road/to avoid using up prime farm land.

Mark Rodenwald- can they put it in the middle of a 40?

Jennifer-building requests are presented to the County Planning Commission for approval. The County does not usually allow for houses being built in the middle of the lot, but property owners can ask for a CUP to have it placed anywhere. The Township can deny the request, but, the township would need to take over the permitting for us to deny the permit. At this time the Township does have the opportunity to attend county meetings to give input on all CUP's.

Joe Christen-we prefer to have the houses where they will have a minimal effect on farm land.

Mark Rodenwald-Cluster development is the way to go, all houses can then be in one area.

Joe Christen-Smells and sounds of farm life becomes a problem when there are many houses in one section. The farmer has only one voice which could make it difficult for when there are many residents in a small area.

We have discussed adding the "right to farm" to any parcel sold in farm land. This would allow the farmer to do his work without pressure from neighbors.

Just because 40 acres has a building credit, does not mean an owner has to sell it to have someone build on it. It can be sold as farm land and not be a residential lot.

A40, farm land is restricted; the land that is restricted stays at a farm land price, and is sale-able for farm land at a farm price.

We have to come up with something that will work.

Gary Bloch-we need to find a solution that will be a comprise for farmers and builders. At this time we are not in favor of cluster developments. And we are not in favor of one house on every forty acres.

Jennifer – County allows transferring building credits from acreage if the property is contiguous and is in the same owner. If building entitlements are removed from acreage, the farmer pays less taxes. The lots with the building credits will have a higher tax rate.

Mike Noll-if we allow more than two houses in an area, should we consider requesting a community well and septic?

Jennifer-Townships that have this in their ordinance are usually the care takers of the well and septic. We have seen in other townships that this is a huge burden to townships.

Jerry Forster-There are areas where we have numerous houses in a small area and so far there have been no problems with well/septic.

Gary Bloch-ask Jerry to create a Finding of Fact that would address, transfer of credits, prime farm land, etc. A sight visit will need to be done by board members.

Jennifer will forward the County's Finding of Fact to Jerry for a sample.

Gary Bloch-we still can consider the opportunity for land owners to transfer one building credit per year to have areas that are more dense with housing.

Discussion will be continued at the February meeting.

REPORTS

- a. Building permits-none
- b. Commissioner Reports

COMMUNICATIONS

Filing for office closed today at 5. Only one person on ballot.
Election March 8, 2016

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Bloch, second by Commissioner Pratt, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane E Noll
Clerk/Treasurer

Planning Commission Chair: _____ Date: __02/09/2016__