

Minutes of the Plan Commission (Special)

November 10th 2014

A special meeting of the City of Prairie du Chien Plan Commission was held on Monday November 10th 2014 at 6:00 PM in City Hall. Mayor Dave Hemmer called the meeting to order.

GENERAL ITEMS TO BE ACTED UPON:

- 1. Call to order/Roll Call** - PRESENT – Mayor Dave Hemmer (Chairman), Ross Ritchie, Dan Key, Tom Nelson, Linda Munson, Ron Leys, Roger Grunow CITY STAFF ALSO PRESENT – Zoning Administrator Julie Jackson, Plan Commission Attorney Mark Peterson, City Administrator Aaron Kramer, City Planner Garth Frable
- 2. Certification of the open meeting law agenda requirements and approval of the agenda** – MOTION: Munson SECOND: Nelson VOTE: 7-0
- 3. APPROVAL – Minutes of the October 20th 2014 meeting** – MOTION: Hemmer SECOND: Munson VOTE: 7-0

ACTION ITEMS

4. REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION - Request from Wisconsin & Southern Railroad, LLC, 700-900 block of S. Main Street, to rezone from R-2 "Medium Density Residential" to I-2 "Industrial/Manufacturing" Zoning District

A Public Hearing will be held on this request at the December 2nd Council Meeting. Jackson provided an overview of the request. Tim Karp (Wisconsin & Southern) and Ryan Sauter (Environmental Consultant for Wisconsin & Southern) reviewed the proposal, which shifts the site of their new proposed building about 100 yards to the south. They said the new proposal would be more environmentally-friendly by reducing the wetland impact from 1.4 acres to 0.4 acres. The proposed new site would still hold a projected 127 rail cars. Questions were asked about the R-2, I-2 and Riverfront Zoning Districts. Leys expressed concern about the aesthetics of the proposal. Speaking from the audience with questions:

* Forrest Jahnke (Crawford County Stewardship) – He asked when a decision would be made, and was told the Plan Commission would make a recommendation tonight to the Council who will take the final vote on December 2nd. He also asked if the railroad would abide by the Council's decision and not use federal pre-emption if they did not get the re-zoning. Karp said they would take the Council's action under advisement at that time.

* Louis Lochner (Prairie du Chien) – He asked if a railroad unloading site at the proposed location was part of the City's Comprehensive Plan and was told it was not. He also asked if the railroad had looked at alternate sites. Sauter said an Alternative Analysis had looked at fifteen (15) other sites, and none of them worked due to trackage rights and failure to reach an agreement with the property owners.

* Maura Garrity (Prairie du Chien) – She questioned Karp on the ownership of the property in relation to the railroad and the State. She also asked what could be unloaded at the site. Karp said the plans currently call for frac sand, but stated that other items could be unloaded from the site in the future.

* Todd Crotty (WQPC-WPRE) – He asked who currently owned the land. Kramer said the two parcels were owned by Blair Dillman, who was in the process of negotiating a sale to Wisconsin & Southern, and that he had signed authorization forms permitting the railroad to request the rezoning while the land transaction was being negotiated.

Commission members also asked about the need for the unloading site, with the potential for more truck traffic as the Bridgeport Sand Mine grows in production. Kyle Pattison (Pattison Sand) said the site was a key component of his company's growth and employment plans. Prior to the vote, Kramer reminded the audience that the Plan Commission's recommendation was advisory, and the Council would make the final decision on December 2nd following a public hearing. ACTION: To approve the request from Wisconsin & Southern Railroad, LLC, 700-900 block of S. Main Street, to rezone from R-2 "Medium Density Residential" to I-2 "Industrial/Manufacturing" Zoning District MOTION: Nelson SECOND: Key VOTE: 3-4 (Hemmer, Munson, Leys and Ritchie opposed). The request will go to the December 2nd Council meeting with a recommendation to deny.

5. ADJOURNMENT (7:01 PM)

MOTION: Grunow SECOND: Ritchie VOTE: 7-0

Submitted by City Administrator Aaron Kramer