



## MINUTES

Eau Claire County

- PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE •

**Date:** Tuesday, February 25, 2025

**Time:** 6:00 p.m.

**Location:** Eau Claire County Courthouse, 721 Oxford Ave, Room 1277, Eau Claire, Wisconsin 54703

Members Present: Dane Zook, James Dunning, Robin Leary, Michele Skinner (joined remotely at 6:24), Caleb Aichele (joined remotely at 6:21)

Members Absent:

Ex officio Present:

Staff Present: Rod Eslinger, Ben Bublitz, Matt Michels

### Call to Order and confirmation of meeting notice

Chair Zook called the meeting to order at 6 pm and confirmed the meeting notice with Director Eslinger.

### Roll Call:

Director Eslinger called the roll. The members that were present are noted above.

### Public Comment:

None

### Review/Approval of January 14, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Motion by Robin Leary to approve the January 14, 2025, committee meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried on a voice vote: 3-0-0.

### Public Hearings

A conditional use permit request for a two-family dwelling unit. Owner: John Arnette. Legal: Lot 4 Block 7 Beverly Hills Subdivision, Town of Washington, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin. **CUP-0013-24**

Ben Bublitz, Eau Claire County Land Use Manager, presented his staff report to the committee. He indicated the applicant is requesting the CUP to construct a two-family dwelling in the Town of Washington. Ben reviewed with the committee the location and site maps, and the applicant's building plans. The Town of Washington Town Board met on January 16th and recommended approval of the CUP. Mr. Bublitz concluded by recommending approval of the applicant's request subject to his conditions in the staff report.

No one spoke in favor or against the request.

Motion by Robin Leary to approve the conditional use permit request for a two-family dwelling unit as outlined by staff with conditions. Motion carried on a roll call vote: 3-0-0.

A conditional use permit request for cumulative area of all accessory structures to exceed over 1,800 square feet on a lot with an area between 1 and 2.99 acres. **CUP-0001-25**

Ben Bublitz presented the request for the cumulative square footage of all accessory structures to exceed 1,800 square feet in the R-H District. Ben indicated that the applicant previously received CUP approval for a 36 by 50-foot accessory structure on his property and now would like to add a 16 by 20-foot garage to store other personal belongings. He reviewed the location of the site within the Town of Brunswick, site plan, and existing site conditions. The new structure will meet the setback requirements of the district, comply with the height requirements, and the structure's exterior will match the other structures onsite.

On February 11, 2025, the Town of Brunswick met and recommended approval of the conditional use permit of the request.

Staff concluded their presentation and recommended approval as subject to the conditions in the staff report.

Jeremy Hollister, the applicant/owner, spoke in favor of the request. He indicated he's requesting the CUP to store his lawnmower, bikes, patio furniture, leaf blower, snowblower and other related items.

The committee reviewed a correspondence from Greg Slowik, a neighbor, opposing the CUP request.

No one else spoke in favor of or against the request.

Motion by James Dunning to approve the conditional use permit request for cumulative area of all accessory structures to exceed over 1,800 square feet, on a lot with an area between 1 and 2.99 acres as supported by the town and the conditions outlined in the staff report. Motion carried on a roll call vote: 3-0-0.

A conditional use permit request for a cottage industry contractor business (marine and small engine repair). Owner: Michael Turk. Legal: The NW ¼ of the SW ¼ in Section 5, T27N, R8W, Town of Seymour, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin.  
**CUP-0002-25**

Ben Bublitz presented his staff report to the committee. He indicated the applicant is requesting a conditional use permit to operate a cottage industry to repair marine and small engines on his property in the Town of Seymour. Ben reviewed the location and site plan with the committee. The applicant will conduct the cottage industry out of an existing pole building onsite and park associated equipment in an outside storage area until they can be repaired. Ben indicated that the Town of Seymour met on February 11<sup>th</sup> and recommended approval of the CUP amendment. Mr. Bublitz concluded by recommending approval of the applicant's request subject to staff's conditions.

*Supervisor's Aichele and Skinner joined the meeting during staff's presentation.*

No one else spoke in favor of the request.

Jeanie Backstrom, representing her father who owns land south and adjacent to the applicant's property, expressed concern about where the outside storage will be maintained.

Motion by Caleb Aichele to approve the conditional use permit request for a cottage industry contractor business (marine and small engine repair) subject to staff's recommended conditions. Motion carried on a roll call vote: 5-0-0.

**Proposed Ordinance: File No.24-25/103** to rezone 98.41 acres +/- from the AP-Agricultural Preservation District to the A2-Agriculture-Residential District. **RZN-0001-25**

Matt Michels, Senior Planner for Eau Claire County, presented background information regarding the applicant's petition to rezone 40.39 acres from the A-P, Agricultural Preservation District to the A-3, Agricultural District to allow for the sale of 20 acres. Mr. Michels explained that the original request for rezoning was modified by the town from A-2 to A-3, as it was speculative in nature. The Town of Pleasant Valley Town Board met on February 10, 2025, and voted to support the rezoning petition. Mr. Michels recommended approval of the petition subject to the findings/conditions outlined in his report.

Eric Knauf, owner of American Land Surveying, represented the owner and clarified the purpose of the rezoning for the committee.

No one else spoke in favor or in opposition.

Motion by Robin Leary to approve the Proposed Ordinance: File No. 24-25/103 subject to staff's findings. Motion carried on a roll call vote: 5-0-0.

Findings:

1. The request is generally consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Eau Claire County Comprehensive Plan, as required by Section 19.01.020.B of the Eau Claire County Code; and Wisconsin Statutes §66.1001(1)(am) and §66.1001(3)(j), including the intent, description, and policies of the Rural Lands Future Land Use classification in Section 3.3 of the Eau Claire County Comprehensive Plan and Map 9 (Future Land Use) of the Eau Claire County Comprehensive Plan.
2. The modified recommendation to rezone only the northern 40.39-acre parcel from A-P to A-3 allows for the sale of the northern 20 acres, a stated objective on the rezoning petition, and addresses the neighboring property owners concerns regarding A-2 zoning on the entire 98.4 acres that the applicant owns.
3. There are other A-2 zoned lots near the subject property, and the rezoning will not remove active farmland from production.
4. The property has required road frontage on County Rd. HH and W.

**Proposed Ordinance: File No.24-25/106** to rezone 5.7 acres +/- from the A-3 Agricultural District to the A-2 Agriculture-Residential District. **RZN-0002-25**

Matt Michels presented background information regarding the applicant's petition to rezone 5.7 acres from the A-3 Agricultural District to the A-2 Agriculture District for the purpose of creating a lot to sell. He indicated that the Town of Washington Town Board met on February 20, 2025, and voted to recommend approval of the petition. Mr. Michels concluded his presentation by recommending approval of the petition subject to the findings in support.

Terrance Nuesse, property owner, spoke in favor of the request and clarified for the committee where the 5 acres that he wanted to rezone was located. He noted that the acreage is separated by a wetland, which makes it difficult to use it. Terrance indicated that Jill Proud with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation issued an access permit from Hwy 12 for the 5 acres on January 25, 2025.

Motion by James Dunning to approve the Proposed Ordinance: File No. 24-25/106 subject to staff's findings. Motion carried on a roll call vote: 5-0-0.

Findings:

1. The proposed rezoning is substantially consistent with the intent and purpose of the Eau Claire County Future Land Use plan.
2. The property has frontage on US Highway 12.
3. Other similarly zoned lots are found in the vicinity of the subject property.

**Proposed Ordinance: File No.24-25/107** to rezone 73.92 acres +/- from the A-1 Exclusive Agricultural District to the A-2 Agriculture-Residential District. **RZN-0003-25**

Matt Michels presented background information regarding the applicant's petition to rezone 73.92 acres. He reviewed the aerial, location and site maps, future and zoning maps with the committee. Matt indicated the intention of the petition was to allow a single-family subdivision development on large lots. He indicated that the Town of Washington Town Board met on February 20, 2025, and voted to recommend approval of the petition. Mr. Michels concluded his presentation by recommending approval of the petition subject to the findings in support.

Jeremy Skaw, a professional land surveyor with Real Land, presented the request to rezone the property. Mr. Skaw indicated that having the land A2 will help them maintain the town's agricultural identity.

Motion by Dane Zook to approve the Proposed Ordinance: File No. 24-25/107 subject to staff's findings. Motion carried on a roll call vote: 5-0-0.

Findings:

1. The request is substantially consistent with the intent, description, and policies of the Eau Claire County and Town of Washington Rural Transition Future Land Use classifications.
2. The larger lot size (5 acres +) and lower density than nearby residential subdivisions will likely have less impacts than a higher density development.
3. The Eau Claire County Zoning Ordinance requires conservation of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs), including steep slopes, mapped wetlands, and adjacent areas.
4. Although the rezoning impacts farmland, it is not prime farmland; it is planned for non-farm development; and is not included in the farmland preservation plan.

**Preliminary Plat for Firenze Estates**

Mr. Bublitz reviewed the staff report for the preliminary plat of Firenze Estates with the committee. The development is in the Town of Washington and fronts on Balsam Road. The plat contains 128 lots, 10 out lots, and is situated at the headwaters of Taylor Creek. The lots range in size from .7 acres to 19.77 acres and are zoned RL. The applicant's engineers have developed a stormwater management plan as required by county code that addresses the stormwater requirements. The development will be served by three community sanitary systems that each will serve 42 lots and two lots will have separate POWTS. The road network will contain an internal loop road along with two terminuses to the north for future road connectivity. Ben reviewed with the committee the applicant's request for three waivers from the subdivision standards to create two flag lots, several lots that exceed the depth to width requirements, and to vary the lot lines from right angles with the street lines. Staff concluded by recommending approval of the plat subject to the conditions listed in the staff report.

Adam Ashely, co-owner of the development, spoke in favor of the plat. He specifically requested the county not to refer to their development with the Orchard Hills development that is in the City of Eau Claire.

Sean Bohan, owner of AEC and the senior engineer working on the stormwater plan for the plat, spoke in favor of the development. Sean reiterated the development's highlights for the committee and clarified that there'll be about 11,000 feet of new roadway that will be built to serve the lots. Mr. Bohan indicated that the stormwater design will protect the Taylor Creek and the wetlands that are onsite by using responsible stormwater design and grading practices.

No one else spoke in favor or against the preliminary plat of Firenze Estates.

Motion by Robin Leary to approve the Preliminary Plat for Firenze Estates as recommended by staff. Motion carried on a roll call vote: 5-0-0.

**Final Plat for Wild Turkey Ridge**

Mr. Bublitz presented the staff report and concluded by recommending the committee postpone its action on the final plat of Wild Turkey until its meeting on March 25<sup>th</sup> to allow the applicant's engineer to revise the stormwater plan that can be reviewed and approved by the county's consultant, GRAEF Engineering.

Motion by James Dunning to approve recommend postponing action on the Final Plat for Wild Turkey Ridge to its March 25, 2025, meeting as recommended by staff. Motion carried on a voice vote: 5-0-0.

**2024 Planning & Development Dept. 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Review**

Eslinger reviewed the 4th quarter report with the committee.

**Review of January bills**

The committee reviewed the January bills.

**Proposed Future Agenda Items**

Next scheduled meeting March 25, 2025

Discussion with Regan Watts on plastic recycling

**Director's Update**

Director Eslinger updated the committee on the recruitment of the GIS Administrative position. He also noted that the current Assistant County Surveyor was resigning from the position effective in March. Funding for the Assistant County Surveyor position was available through the end of the year, but filling the position could be challenging given the time required to onboard a person before the end of the year.

**Announcements**

None

**Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rodney Eslinger

Clerk, Committee on Planning & Development