

**Minutes of the Dodge County
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
January 7, 2009**

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order by Galen Johnson at 1:10 PM on Wednesday, January 7, 2009. Present were Planning Commission members Galen Johnson, Jon Balzum, John Allen, Harlan Buck and Richard Wolf. Also present were County Commissioner Dave Erickson, Dave Hanson, Klaus Alberts, County Administrator David McKnight and Compliance Officer Melissa DeVetter.

Elections

Melissa DeVetter asked for nominations for Chair. A nomination was made by Jon Balzum and seconded by Galen Johnson to nominate John Allen. Melissa DeVetter asked for nominations two more times. Motion by Harlan Buck, seconded by Galen Johnson, to call for a vote. The vote was unanimous to elect John Allen as Chair of the Planning Commission for 2009.

Melissa DeVetter asked for nominations for Vice Chair. A nomination was made by Galen Johnson and seconded by John Allen to nominate Richard Wolf. Melissa DeVetter asked for nominations two more times. Motion by Jon Balzum, seconded by Galen Johnson, to call for a vote. The vote was unanimous to elect Richard Wolf as Vice Chair of the Planning Commission for 2009.

Melissa DeVetter turned the meeting over to John Allen.

Motion by Harlan Buck, seconded by Galen Johnson, to approve the agenda and the December 2008 minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

Rodney French – CUP #06-32 (amend)

The public hearing is to consider a request to amend a Home Occupation Conditional Use Permit #06-32 to allow an addition to an existing building in the Agricultural District. The property is 3.69 acres located in the NW 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of Section 20, Ashland Township. Rodney French is the applicant and Rodney and Elaine French are the property owners.

Rodney French was present to explain his proposal. He plans to add onto an existing build for a total of 3200 square feet. This addition is intended for cold storage use with a possibility that the business could expand in the future.

Motion by Jon Balzum, seconded by Harlan Buck, to close the public hearing. Motion passed unanimously.

Galen Johnson inquired what his primary work was.

Rodney French stated his primarily work is for McNeilus Truck doing chassis preparations, wiring, and mounting control inside and outside. He does some work for Welsh Equipment refurbishing their used trucks and also does some repair work for local farmers.

Galen Johnson inquired if this addition is on the building that was approved in 2006.

Rodney French indicated yes.

John Allen inquired how many employees worked for him now.

Rodney French stated he has 9 employees currently, but will probably be losing a couple in a few weeks due to McNeilus business is slowing down.

Harlan Buck inquired if the township had any comments.

Rodney French stated he did talk to the township and they had no concerns about his proposal. Mr. French stated he also has talked to his neighbors and they had no concerns with his proposal.

Galen Johnson inquired about the septic system.

Rodney French stated he has a holding tank with an alarm on it that is pumped by Leth Septic Service twice a year. There is also a port-a-potty on site for the employees.

Galen Johnson inquired if the conditions needed to be reviewed.

Rodney French had a concern if getting a zoning permit for the storage lockers was going to be an issue.

Melissa DeVetter addressed this concern on the permitting of the storage lockers. They will require zoning permits and have to meet the set backs and follow the standards by keeping the business looking like a home occupation. The concern that the county had was the number of employees not meeting the standards in the ordinance for parking.

Jon Balzum inquired how big the storage units are.

Rodney French stated the storage lockers will take up 32 x 40 area.

John Allen inquired if Mr. French has read the conditions that are being proposed.

Rodney French indicated he has looked at them but not that closely.

Galen Johnson had a concern about the recommendation for denial for additional employees.

Melissa DeVetter inquired how many of the employees are family members living on site.

Rodney French indicated 4 of them are family.

Melissa DeVetter stated that family members living on site are exempt for parking; any more than 6 employees then he must meet the parking standards. The number of employees he has now is fine, but if he exceeds 6 that are not family member living on site then he would have to meet the parking standards. That requires one parking space for every two employees.

Rodney French inquired if there was a seasonal clause; that if he would have to hire someone for a month or two that he would be okay.

Melissa DeVetter stated there is nothing in the ordinance addresses that. It would be up to the planning commission.

John Allen inquired about the stormwater permit; won't this be handled by the MPCA.

Melissa DeVetter addressed this concern it based on what activities are performed on site. MPCA has a small business association and they work with the small business owner getting all the permits that are needed. Mr. French has been working with the SBA to determine and obtain all necessary permits.

Galen Johnson requested to make an amendment to the motion; to allow a maximum of 11 employees. The reason being if he has a big job to do and needed a couple more people to work to get the job done; it would be allowed.

Motion by Jon Balzum, seconded by Harlan Buck, to recommend approval of the Findings of Facts and Recommendations of the agenda report with the following conditions and an amendment to condition number 8 language; exceeding a maximum of 11 employees:

1. A Zoning Permit shall be obtained prior to construction of the addition.
2. Zoning permits shall be obtained for the on-site storage lockers.
3. The "storage lockers" shall be fully screened in accordance with Section 1609 (Fences and Screening) as viewed from adjacent properties and the road.
4. The revised Home Occupation Agreement shall be signed and recorded with the CUP. However, the operation shall conform to the conditions of the CUP where the terms may deviate from what was proposed in the Home Occupation Agreement.

5. The Holding Tank installed by the permittee is considered an “other” system. The permittee shall maintain a contract with a licensed pumper or maintenance/service provider and shall submit annual pumping records to the Dodge County Environmental Quality Department by March 1st of each year.
6. The sign permitted with this home occupation shall be limited to 9 square feet.
7. The applicant shall obtain the required state and federal permits, licenses and approvals required for the business, activities, and waste generated on site as determined by the MPCA’s Small Business Association. Dodge County shall be notified of the required state and federal permits, licenses and approval and copies of such permits, licenses and approvals shall be submitted to the Planning Department when they are obtained by the applicant.
8. Any further expansion, exceeding a maximum of 11 employees, outside storage or parts or outside work (other than loading/unloading parts trucks) shall be prohibited.
9. Trucks shall not be parked or stored in the area adjacent to the road. Trucks shall meet the Exterior Storage Regulations (Section 1608) and shall be adequately screened from view utilizing existing buildings or fences and vegetation conformation with Section 1609 of the Dodge County Zoning Ordinance.
10. The site shall conform to Section 1610 (Home Occupations) and the conditions of this permit.
11. Nuisance complaints shall result in review of the permit by the Planning Commission.

The motion was passed unanimously.

Other Business

Galen Johnson inquired on the out come for the Wind Ordinance at the last County Board meeting.

Melissa DeVetter stated nothing at this time; there was no time frame on when it had to be done.

Adjourn

Motion by Galen Johnson, seconded by Jon Balzum, to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 P.M.