

Concord Comprehensive Plan Meeting (Sept 4, 2007)

Minutes for Town of Concord Comprehensive Planning Meeting

Tuesday, September 4, 2007

The meeting opened at 7pm with 10 citizens present. Vanessa Kuehner gave a presentation on topics integral to preparing the Land Use Element of the Town of Concord Comprehensive Plan. She began with an overview of the Jefferson County Zoning currently in place for the Town of Concord. The vast majority (~90%) of the town is zoned A-1 Agricultural, with the remaining being A-2 Ag Business, A-3 Ag Residential, Natural Resource, R-2 Residential non-sewer, and Commercial and Business in the Hamlet Area. Vanessa pointed out that requests for rezoning would need to be approved by both the Town and the County and that these requests would be more likely to be approved if a property was located in the designated Hamlet area and the request was to rezone to Commercial or Business.

Vanessa related the following information regarding the Jefferson County Land Use designations for the town of Concord which are defined in the Jefferson County Land Use Plan. There are four Land Use designations for Concord: Agricultural Preservation Area, Urban Service Area (a small Urban Service Area north of the village of Sullivan exists in the town), Environmental Corridor, and Rural Hamlet. About 90% of the town is either Ag Preservation or Environmental Corridor. These designations overlay the zoning and a zoning inconsistent with the given designated land use of a property would not be permitted. The Environmental Corridors are areas which the County has determined should be protected from non-agricultural development. These areas include: wetlands, floodplains, slopes, certain woodlands, etc.. Additional restrictions to development apply to these areas. Vanessa pointed out that the town could add their own criteria to these areas and be even more restrictive than the county.

Some discussion followed in which it was pointed out that in order for our Town Plan to be accepted by Jefferson County, it would have to be in line with the County Plan. It can likely be more restrictive to development than the County Plan, but is unlikely to be accepted if it attempts to be less restrictive than the county. While the Town Plan does not need to be accepted by the County, it would be more effective if this were the case. Bill Ingersoll suggested that the County Land Use Plan seems to be pretty much in line with what the residents of Concord would like and he suggested the town could largely adopt the Jefferson County Land Use Plan for the Town of Concord to fulfill the Land Use Element of the Town Plan. Marian Speerless felt this was not wise as she felt that the County Plan was a "one size fits all plan and it does not adequately address the issues unique to Concord. The remaining citizens present felt adoption of the Jefferson County Land Use Plan would be appropriate after reviewing it and making any changes which the town residents would feel necessary. Also, the Town Plan should stipulate that any future changes to the Jefferson County Land Use Plan by the county would not result in a change in the Town Land Use Plan, but that the Town would be adopting the County Land Use Plan as it is now.

Cindy Arbiture stated that she would like the Town to be informed as to water problems which the Town is facing now and in the future. She explained that the town is in the Rock River Basin and that a

number of problems are threatening the water supply in the basin. These include: arsenic contamination, high nitrate levels, and low water levels as increased development to the east draws on our water supply. She would like the town to support a project aimed at developing a ground water flow model for the Rock River Basin. Cindy also suggested having a speaker talk to the town citizens about the present and potential future water problems in the township and about the proposed ground water flow model. She will check to see if the speaker can come for the next Comprehensive Planning Meeting on October 2nd.

Bill Ingersoll asked Cindy what impact, if any, that water problem issues would have on the Town Land Use Plan. It was suggested that the presence of these concerns and the confirmation of a real potential for future problems based on a ground water flow study may help to reinforce or justify a Town Land Use Plan which is very restrictive regarding future development.

Randy Callison asked that the town consider designating a "residential hamlet" in the southeast portion of the town where a gravel pit has been proposed. This area already has considerable residential development and small business development. Randy's hope would be that this would result in residential development instead of creation of a gravel pit in the area. This idea was well received by those present although there was concern that designation of the area as a hamlet may allow some zoning, such as commercial, which would not be desired in the area. Therefore, an alternative designation may be preferred.