

Minutes for Town of Concord Comprehensive Planning meeting Tuesday, June 5, 2007

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The meeting opened at 7pm with about 10 residents and Vanessa Kuehner present. Cindy Arbiture presented the material she had gathered on the Cultural/Historical resources of the town. This presentation will be posted on the Town of Concord website.

Cindy opened the meeting by introducing herself as the president of the Concord Historical Society(CHS), a group which was started 15 years ago by herself and Marian Speerless. The organization was established to preserve the history of the Town of Concord. One of the projects which the group undertook in 2003 was to restore and donate to the town an authentic 1850's log cabin which is currently located in Dahnert Park.

Cindy gave a brief history of the town outlining some of the various cultures which existed in this area since 7000 B.C.. The town was originally part of the Town of Watertown. In 1841 a section of that township was separated and became the Town of Union and in 1846 the Town of Union was split into the towns of Concord and Ixonia. Cindy also pointed out that the Town of Concord has significant Quniner/ Ingalls history as Laura Ingalls Wilders parents both lived in the town for a time.

After the brief history, Cindy presented a series of photographs of historic buildings currently still standing in the town. These included old homes, barns, commercial buildings, and old school buildings.

Cindy suggested an objective for the town would be to encourage preservation of historic buildings. None of the citizens present objected to this. There are currently no programs in place in the town to accomplish this. She suggested we could work in conjunction with the Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS) and could start with a "historic survey of the town which would include photographs and locations of historic buildings. Also, the Barn Again! Program can help people with old barns to get in touch with restoration specialists. She did acknowledge that barn restoration can be difficult and very expensive. Because of the expense it would be helpful to create incentive programs to help owners with the cost of restoration. Maybe the WHS could work with banks to secure low interest loans for restoration of historic buildings.

Pat Emery agreed that restoration is expensive and stated that she has an old barn that she is having torn down because of liability concerns. The material in the barn will be recycled by the company doing the work. Pat suggested prioritizing historical structures within the town to determine which ones the town would like to pursue first in encouraging preservation. Cindy asked how we could help to encourage owners to preserve their historic buildings and the need to develop some sort of incentives. Some ideas were as follows:

Rick Leene: Beginning the process with a historic survey may result in generating more enthusiasm for

preservation.

Larry Oliverson: Provide people with ideas for practical use of their restored buildings which may otherwise have no use. i.e.: storage, boat storage

Cindy: There may be state or federal tax credits available for historic preservation. A speaker from the WHS may be able to tell us what incentives are currently available.

Larry O.: Look into working with the Drumlin Area Land Trust to get aid in preservation.

Cindy: Historic signage throughout the town to pinpoint historic buildings may help to build enthusiasm and give owners a sense of pride in their historic property.

Jim Gilbert: Jim stated that the main problem with old barns is the roof. He recently had an old barn restored for a reasonable cost. He suggested providing a "resource list" to historic property owners detailing individuals or businesses they could contact for reasonable barn restoration services.

Cindy said that Barn Again! has this type of information.

A suggestion was made to check out sources of public or private grant money to help with historic preservation.

Dale Konle questioned whether or not Cultural Resources can be considered as a separate element in the comprehensive plan. Vanessa said that while the state legislation puts Agricultural, Cultural, and Natural Resources together in one element, the town can address them as separate elements. Vanessa also said that as each element is completed and goals are set, it is important to include in the plan the implementation steps necessary to accomplish the determined goals and objectives. This means outlining the actions that the town will take to accomplish its goals, etc. even if we do not know exactly how these steps will be carried out (maybe by volunteers)

Cindy suggested that a speaker from the Rock River Coalition address the town regarding water concerns.