LAND INFORMATION / ZONING COMMITTEE MINUTES

September 6, 2016

Chairman Willingham called the meeting of the Rusk County Zoning/Land Information Committee to order at 10:00 A.M. in the Rusk County Zoning Office. Members present were David Willingham, Robert Stout, Mark Schmitt and Arian Knops. Staff present: CeCe Tesky.

Chairman Willingham recessed the meeting at 10:00 A.M. to drive to the onsite inspection.

Chairman Willingham reconvened the meeting at 10:30 A.M. at Jason Rafko property at the corner of Lakeshore Drive and CTH I, Tony. Members present were David Willingham, Robert Stout, Phil Schneider, Arian Knops and Mark Schmitt. Staff present: CeCe Tesky.

Jason described the location of burger bar and parking lot. He is working with the DNR on dock placement. Attendees walked up the hill to the proposed campground location. Jason described site locations. There is a total of 6.95 acres. Jason is proposing 48 seasonal sites. The lot is currently wooded. Tree removal will be limited to provide shade and privacy for camper sites. There are two existing driveways to the site. One is off Lakeshore Drive and one is off CTH I. Sewer, water, and electricity will be provided to each site. The east access road in the campground is under the overhead powerline. The east 13 sites will be 75’ deep and the remainder will be 50’ deep.

Chairman Willingham recessed the meeting at 11:00 A.M.

Chairman Willingham reconvened the meeting at 1:30 P.M. in the Law Enforcement Center in the Rusk County Government Center. Members present were David Willingham, Robert Stout, Arian Knops, Mark Schmitt and Phil Schneider. Staff present: CeCe Tesky, John Fitzl, Yvonne Johnson, Carol Johnson and Verna Nielsen.

Motion by Stout/Knops to approve the minutes from August 9, 2016. Motion carried.

Land Records: Fitzl reported they are correcting errors on the parcel map and the road layer. They are linking corner points with the parcel map. Addresses are down this month, about 8 issued this month.

Treasurer: Nielsen reports they are done with the tax deeds. Four were taken through tax deed and 2 were taken In-REM. The office is working on the plat book and editing ownership. They have completed 5 townships.

Register of Deeds: Johnson reported electronic recording is going well.

Zoning Department: Tesky stated permits are up about 10%. The office will need to prepare new handouts for the public regarding impervious surface limitations. The deadline for getting RV/camper permits to exceed the one camper standard will be October 1. Tesky presented the recent changes to the Bass Lake Association over Labor Day weekend. It went well. There have
been many phone calls regarding the proposed ordinance changes, the public hearing today, and general development issues.

LCDD Department: Tesky turned in the line items budgets last month and has been working on the outputs/outcomes for the program budget.

Out of County travel: WLIA Fall Regional Meeting October 20-21 in Trego for Borton and Fitzl and PWA GIS training in Wisconsin Dells Sept 21 for Fitzl and Borton. Motion by Schneider/Knops to approve the requested travel. Motion carried.

2017 budgets: Reviewed line items that changed from the previous year. Motion by Schmitt/Schneider to submit the budgets as prepared. Motion carried.

Reviewed the Shoreland mitigation guidebook. Motion by Schneider/Knops to adopt the shoreland mitigation guidebook. Motion carried.

Chairman Willingham recessed the zoning meeting at 2:00 P.M. to open a public hearing for Jason Rafko in the Town of Dewey. The request was for a campground and bar. Willingham closed the public hearing at 3:57 P.M. to reopen the zoning meeting. Tesky read the staff recommendations. Willingham asked about site sizing and extra parking for trailers. Rafko will have his own set of rules. Impervious surfaces are limited to 30% and mitigation will be required. There is 283 feet of frontage on the property. Rafko explained that he will have to hire some help to monitor the campground and enforce the rules. The DNR will review and approve the commercial docking. Dairyland Power will also require permits for the docks. Schneider asked when the project would start. Rafko replied that he would start this fall and try to put in the first 25 sites. The building would go up next year. The existing vegetation would meet the screening requirements. Motion by Schmitt/Stout to issue the permit with the staff recommendations as the conditions. Motion carried.

Reviewed the output/outcome budget proposal. Motion by Schmitt/Stout to approve. Motion carried.

Next meeting will be October 4, 2016.

Motion by Schmitt/Stout to adjourn at 4:26 P.M. Motion carried.

Yvonne Johnson
Assistant Zoning Administrator
NOT COMMITTEE APPROVED

ZONING COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING
JASON RAFKO
SEPTEMBER 6, 2016
BAR/RESTAURANT AND RV PARK

Members Present: David Willingham, Robert Stout, Phil Schneider, Mark Schmitt and Arian Knops. Staff Present: CeCe Tesky and Yvonne Johnson.

Chairman Willingham called the public hearing to order at 2:00 P.M. The purpose of the public hearing was a conditional use request to allow a bar/restaurant and RV park on the following described real estate:

Lot 1, CSM 638 in Gov’t lot 1, Section 9, T34N, R5W.

Property owner: Jason Rafko
W7861 Shady Lane
Ladysmith, WI 54819

Tesky read the notice of public hearing which was posted per the requirements of a Class (2) notice. The town clerk and owner were notified by Certified Mail and neighboring property owners within 500’ were notified by First Class Mail. The DNR was notified via email, which is their preferred method. Tesky explained that the township has approved the application. Reviewed the application. Chairman Willingham explained the conditional use and public hearing processes.

Chairman Willingham asked for anyone in favor of the request. Rick Nash stated he is a campground owner and is in support. Nash said many people are concerned about the increase in boat traffic. He owns a campground with 100 campsites on two small lakes. Nash said only ½ of the campsites are occupied at one time and of those, maybe 10% are on the lake at any given time. Nash stated the campsites will be needed to support the bar/restaurant. It would be nice to have somewhere to go on the lake. Nash said 25 years ago he was told he should build a bar on this site. He feels his current campground generates $400,000 per year and this money is good for the county. Nash feels the impact would not be nearly as bad as people may think.

Chairman Willingham asked for anyone to speak in opposition to the request. Julie Cornelissen stated she lives 1 mile west of the proposed site. She is concerned about the visibility at the intersection of Lakeshore Drive and CTH I. There have been close calls at this location. There would be an increase in foot traffic which would cause traffic safety issues. Cornelissen said the 48 sites would be like 48 homes. She questioned the septic disposal for each site. Cornelissen stated the lake is shallow near this property and there are areas for fish and turtles. She also expressed concern regarding taxes and decrease in neighboring property values. There are two existing campgrounds on the lake currently.
Bob Wiltrout stated he lives on Eagle Road. He was not speaking in favor or against the proposal. He stated the location is located along a county highway. Wiltrout stated that the vegetation would need to be maintained to provide a visual and sound barrier. Other areas he brought up for the committee to consider were the density of the camper sites to allow for bump outs and pull through sites and for possible decks and storages buildings. Allowing additional buildings could make the campground look bad. Wiltrout would like to see a buffer all around the campground.

Tracy Smith stated he owns a campground on the other side of the lake. Smith is opposed to having a tavern on the lake. He said this lake would start to look like Lake Holcombe. The Flambeau Lodge is located on the lake and has changed hands 6 times. Smith said this would require a very large holding tank and he feels this proposal would be too crowded.

Stan Kromrey spoke in favor and stated he was on the zoning committee when Tracy’s campground was approved. People argued against Tracy too. Kromrey felt the lake is not overdeveloped. Kromrey suggested the committee approve the campground and it will bring in sales tax.

Karen Wiltrout said she live on Eagle Road. Wiltrout was concerned about the notice for the public hearing. The notice which was posted at the Tony Depot was placed on a low location and hard to see. Wiltrout asked if this will be publicly or privately owned. Privately owned. She felt the noise barrier needs to be three levels. She lives ¾ of a mile from where Rafko currently has campers on several lots. They can hear the people now. Other issues raised by Wiltrout included the dump station, additional structures, and requesting that everything be removed from the campground each fall and not allowing any permanent structures. Wiltrout also expressed concern about the meeting being held on a weekday in the afternoon. Wiltrout asked if Rafko will be hosting the Lion’s winter event here or at the existing location. Existing location. Wiltrout asked the committee to place conditions that make it beneficial to all of the area.

Carol Heath said he lives in the Village of Tony. The county spends money on brochures for tourism each year to bring people into the area. There would be an economic lift to the county and it would allow people on the lake somewhere to go spend money on the lake. Heath pointed out that people were very opposed to the hog farm, and there aren’t any complaints now that they are in operation.

Joe Willger who lives on Lakeshore Drive spoke in opposition. He expressed concern regarding the wildlife being scared away by all the people. There are other ways to promote the lake besides a campground. He encouraged the committee to be creative in making the lake beautiful and using education and culture. Willger stated there is a safety issue at the intersection of CTH I and Lakeshore. The increase in bikes, ATVs and motorhomes will increase the problem. Other issues he raised included the depth of water by this lot, locating the ordinary high water mark, and wake problems for swimmers.
Dick Moore said he has owned property on the lake for 12 years. He doesn’t think there will be 48 additional boats on the lake. Many lake owners would like a place to go on the lake. Moore said this would provide economic development in our depressed area. He said this would be good for the area and he is in favor.

Don Bartig addressed the committee and requested the committee place strict restrictions be put on the impervious surfaces. Bartig asked if the 48 sites would all be building decks. The water will all be running towards the lake and it is very shallow and weedy. Bartig said this is an important part of the lake.

Nic Graham stated he lives in Ladysmith and is here to speak on behalf of the younger generation. Many young people leave because there is nothing to do. He said he hasn’t gone to Lake Flambeau because there is no place to buy food or drinks on the lake.

Richard Peterson said he lives across the road from this property. Peterson said CTH I is dangerous from this intersection. He said the driveway close to the bridge could be a location for a bad accident in the winter. He said the appearance of the trailers would be important and a buffer will be important. Peterson stated less sites and are larger would allow for more trees to remain.

Jim Edming spoke in favor. He said we need something in Rusk County to bring people in and we need property tax. This will increase the sales tax revenue. Edming said that Rafko is putting his own money into this and if someone goes broke, it will be him.

Bill Avery asked if there will be two driveways into the parcel. Yes. He asked for the number of seats in the bar. There are 35 seats proposed.

Ron Moore said he lives in the City of Ladysmith and has owned property on Lakeshore Drive for 5 years. He has not had any problems with the intersections. Moore said they have had a camper on Potato Lake for years and not all campers will have boats.

Rick Henderson said the lives ½ mile from the proposed site. He said Lakeshore is a curvy road and the intersection with CTH I is dangerous. He said the Flambeau Lodge is not open regularly. He feels the campground will not be good for the county and will lower his property values and damage fish habitat. He also expressed concern regarding police and fire coverage issues.

Blake Dowd said he lives in Ladysmith. He said that Rafko won’t allow the campground to be dumpy. The area needs economic growth and the campers will have an interest in the lake and may become lakeshore owners in the future.

Tom Harter said he lives on Lakeshore Drive and he is in opposition to the campground. As a property owner, he feels fortunate to support the county with property taxes. He wants to pass along the beauty of the area. He stated if you want a restaurant, talk to the owners of Flambeau Lodge. The River’s Edge restaurant has been vacant and for sale for two years. He questioned the protection for the county if this venture fails. He stated as an elected official, he understands the committee’s position. Harter is concerned about the protection for the lake front due to the docks and possible marina. He asked if the
NOT COMMITTEE APPROVED
campers would be removed in the fall and if the campground would have monitoring to
enforce the rules and conditions. He stated you can buy bait at the Tony Depot. He
would like to see some financial assurance to the county. He questioned the boat launch
area and number of docks. Rafko responded that he is working with the DNR on the
number of docks that will be allowed.

Greg Davis who lives in Ladysmith spoke in favor of the request. He stated he is one of
the people who refuses to leave this area. There are many people from Ladysmith who
may wish to camp here. We need people coming into the area. Davis said he has owned
property on the Dairyland for 25 years.

Bob Grunseth said he lives ½ mile south of where Rafko and his friends currently have
campers. This area is kept clean. He did have a concern regarding fireworks. Grunseth
said there can be rules on the campground and it would be good for the county to have it.

Alan Christianson from Ladysmith Main Street spoke regarding the impact of tourism.
There will be jobs creating to develop the site and to work at the restaurant. This will add
to the quality of life for the area. It is a private investment.

Gary Seibert who owns property on Lakeshore Drive spoke regarding the natural beauty
of the lake and asked the committee to look at what we have. The lake has not been
exploited and there is undeveloped shoreline on the lake.

Carol Heath brought up the number of homes for sale on that lake. He also stated that
many local people may wish to stay at this campground.

Karen Peterson who lives across the street asked why Rafko didn’t develop a campground
on his current property off Leonhard Lane.

Jason Rafko spoke about the beauty of the lot and that is abuts a county road. Boats
would be able to come and use the restaurant and bar.

A letter written from the Economic Development office was added to the record
supporting the request.

Ron Moore said the demand on the Sheriff’s office would not increase as in all his years
camping at Potato Lake, he has never seen the Sheriff’s department called.

Ron Galvin lives 1 mile from the site on Lakeshore. He has concerns about more boats,
4-wheelers, UTVs using Lakeshore Drive. He questioned the parking for the units and
the impervious surfaces that would be created. Other concerns raised included people
using the road as a playground, noise, music and a visual buffer.

Karen Wiltrout spoke about the myth that people on the lake have their spot and don’t
want anyone else to come in, this is not true. She wants to preserve the lake and urged
Rafko to consider a nice restaurant.
NOT COMMITTEE APPROVED
Tracy Smith said he camped on Potato Lake 20 years ago and the lake turned green. He doesn’t want to see this lake be that way. He is against a tavern and speed boats and jet skis.

Jim Edming stated he owns lakefront property and would love to pick up his neighbor in the boat and go have a burger. He knows Rafko’s background and trusts him to do a good job.

Tom Harter disagrees that a campground would bring economic development to Rusk County. He said it is sad to see the population drop and suggests the county invest in Rusk County and not use it. Start with schools and encourage kids to take ownership in the area. He also suggested broadband availability.

Rick Nash said many of the worries brought up at this meeting won’t happen. His campground has 100 sites and maybe 25 have boats. He has 16 boat slips and only 4-6 are on the water at one time. Nash said that more problems occur with the overnight sites and that is why he changed 18 of his to seasonal sites.

Bob Grunseth said he grew up on Lake Flambeau and when he was 7 years old, the water turned green. This is a problem that happened years ago.

Tracy Smith said 15 years ago the lake wasn’t green. Smith has seen many new homes be built and hasn’t seen a reduction in his property taxes due to the new tax base.

Tom Harter suggested the county purchase the property and lease it to Rafko so they can keep control on what happens at the site.

There being no further testimony, Chairman Willingham closed the public hearing at 3:57 P.M.

ZONING MEETING
Tesky read the staff recommendations. Willingham asked about site sizing and extra parking for trailers. Rafko will have his own set of rules. Impervious surfaces are limited to 30% and mitigation will be required. There is 283 feet of frontage on the property. Rafko explained that he will have to hire some help to monitor the campground and enforce the rules. The DNR will review and approve the commercial docking. Dairyland Power will also require permits for the docks. Schneider asked when the project would start. Rafko replied that he would start this fall and try to put in the first 25 sites. The building would go up next year. The existing vegetation would meet the screening requirements. Motion by Schmitt/Stout to issue the permit with the staff recommendations as the conditions. Motion carried.

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