

**9 January 2007 - Minutes from the Town of Spring Green Plan Commission's Meeting  
Spring Green Town Hall, E4411 Kennedy Road, Spring Green, WI**

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- 1) The Chair, Mary Merlie, called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.
- 2) All Commissioners – Graves, Iausly, Merlie, Schmidt, and Snyder – were present.
- 3) Merlie attested to having provided proof of public notice and said that although the posting date was written as *Posted 01.05.06*, it had been duly posted on 01.05.07.
- 4) Commissioners read the newly received draft Minutes and Merlie read them aloud.

**Motion adopting the Minutes for the December 2006 meeting, as prepared by Graves / Schmidt / Snyder / Motion passed unanimously.**

- 5) **Motion adopting the Agenda, as noticed by Merlie / Snyder / Iausly / Motion passed unanimously.**

**6) Updates & Communications:**

- a. Wisconsin Dept of Administration Submittal – Letter from DOA's Peter Herreid [attached or filed] stating that the recent actions by the Plan Commission have satisfied the final requirements for the Town's Comprehensive Plan. He apologized for the DOA's delay in providing this closure.
- b. Subscription information from the American Planning Association, provided by Graves, for their journal for planning commissions – Merlie asked whether the Commission would like to subscribe.

**Motion approving the expenses of one subscription to the American Planning Association's journal for planning commissions, to be sent to the Chair / Snyder / Iausly / Motion passed unanimously.**

- c. The County's inconsistencies with map and information had been discussed at the last meeting and Merlie recounted a recent incident: a resident had called the County to ask about constructing a building and, after providing location / address information, was told by staff that the property was in the Ag Zoning and no restrictions applied. Merlie said she had written to Planning Director Lance Gurney and told him she refers people to the County, but it appears they are getting inconsistent or erroneous direction by staff. Her letter also detailed a mapping error on the County's maps and asked that this be corrected. On 12-27-2006 Gurney emailed to acknowledge receipt of Merlie's email. Commissioners looked at pictures of another Pinelands property issue, which were added to the Town's file documenting unresolved complaints.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

- 7) **Motion approving draft letter requesting legal interpretation of text in the County's Agricultural District Ordinance 7.05(2 and issues regarding inconsistency of enforcement, as discussed at the 12.12.06 Plan Commission meeting / Schmidt / Graves / Motion passed unanimously.**
- 8) Discussion of the property commonly referred to as "the county forest" located in Sections 06,07,08, T08N, R3E, Town of Spring Green, and differentiating between the status of lands legally designated as County Forests, per Wis. Stat 28.10. Commissioners reviewed the statute, which defines a "community forest" – the term that has been used to differentiate the property located in the Town from a bona-fide "county forest." As defined in the statute, the term "community forest" applies to a property owned by a city, village, town, or school district.

Brad Hutnik, DNR Forester, provided background on its history and application. There is no minimum acreage required and half of the County Forester's salary, if managing a qualifying "County Forest," has been eligible to be paid by the state. He used Vernon County as an example and said they have recognized the value of the designation, including eligibility for zero-interest loans related to maintenance and acquisition of new lands, and the benefit of having a 15-year plan for use of the Forest. The property in the Town is 690 acres and all or part of it could be enrolled, as could other properties in the County, at the same time or at a later time. He said there had been some skepticism in Vernon County about "working with the DNR" but it has been regarded as a success.

The property in the Town of Spring Green would be the smallest in the state system, but there is no minimum size requirement. Other properties, and the experience of other counties, were discussed. It was suggested that since the County is considering options for the property, perhaps there should be a broader discussion of this option. The case could be made that it would be in the County's best interests to be part of such a program, with its oversight, to ensure

that its resource was best-utilized. Merlie asked if Plan Commissioners had recommendations and input was sought from the 15-plus residents who were present. Several residents spoke to the many advantages of being part of the program. Michelle Thomas, President of the Pinelands Association, said there was a lot of interest by residents in this designation. Snyder suggested getting input from other Towns who may also be interested and Graves suggested it could be a topic of discussion at the next Sauk County' Towns Association meeting in February.

**Motion authorizing Snyder to pursue possibility of a presentation on requirements and benefits of a formal "county forest" program on the Agenda of the February 2007 quarterly meeting of the Sauk County' Towns Association / Merlie / Graves / Motion passed unanimously.**

- 9) Discussion and updates on Sauk County Parks & Transportation Department's proposed mineral extraction for formation of "Lake Park" on S06, T08N, R3E, Town of Spring Green.

Schmidt said there was confusion at the meeting and some committee members had not known that there was unzoned land in the County. The agenda item had been tabled and a committee member had strongly recommended that there should be input from residents. Merlie had addressed the committee and told them there were many surprises with several proposed uses for the property this year, but the committee had not asked for input from the Town. Following the update, residents gave the Plan Commission a round of applause and thanked Merlie and others for their work on this issue.

- 10) Discussion of options for organized community involvement and representation at the Sauk County Parks & Transportation Committee's meetings related to proposed mineral extraction for "Lake Park" on S06, T08N, R3E, Town of Spring Green.

**Motion appointing an ad-hoc committee to get community input and monitor issues related to proposed uses for the County's property in the Town, with Iausly as Chair, Schmidt representing the Town Board, and Thomas representing the Pinelands Association; Meeting Notices will be posted and Minutes will be provided to the Plan Commission / Snyder / Graves / Iausly recused himself from voting / Motion passed unanimously.**

- 11) The possibility of rescheduling the next meeting were discussed, with the final date to be determined and posted.

- 12) Motion adjourning the meeting at 8:30 p.m. / Snyder / Schmidt / Motion passed by consensus.**

Signature of the Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_

**Joni Graves**

Signature of the Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mary Merlie**