

Comprehensive Planning Commission (CPC) Meeting  
March 22, 2018  
Ridgeville Town Hall

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Inese Epstein (Chairperson), Rob Larson, Andi Radke Rynes, Jim Neumann & Jo Marie Thompson (alternate)

**NON-MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mike Wiedl

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Ramona Kufalk, Marcy Clark

Chairperson Inese Epstein called the meeting to order. Since Ramona Kufalk is absent, Jo Marie Thompson will take minutes

**Public Comments:** None

**Minutes of January & February:** The minutes from the previous two meetings are not available for approval. The Chairperson will address the issue with the town clerk. She should be receiving the minutes for printing prior to each meeting.

**Discussion of community concerns re: increasing threat to water quality from industrial agriculture and CAFOS:**

**Background –**

- last fall saw increasing local impacts from manure spills including a manure spill into a creek in Norwalk and a manure spill into a river in Vernon County.
- Since that time the media has reported on the increasing contamination of private wells (30%) and surface water in Kewaunee county due to mismanagement of manure at CAFOS. Lawmakers are taking some modest, but probably inadequate, action to prevent further degradation of ground and surface water in that area. The Kewaunee region has similar geology to Monroe County, making our water also particularly susceptible to contamination from the large manure generating agricultural operations.
- A slaughter house was recently purchased in Vernon County for the purpose of high volume hog slaughtering. The business plan for the slaughter house is vertically integrated, meaning they will process hogs only from their own hog CAFOS. The implication is that dozens of CAFO hog operations will be developed within a 50 mile radius of the planned slaughter house, including in Monroe county.
- Chippewa County is experiencing a similar proliferation of hog CAFOS with subsequent measured impacts to air and water quality.
- In the interest of being proactive in the protection of water and air quality for the residents of the Town of Ridgeville, the planning commission should develop a plan and recommendations for the Town Board to mitigate the foreseeable threats.

## Discussion –

- There is confusion regarding the results of the October planning commission discussion regarding recommendations for a letter from the Town Board to lawmakers about CAFO concerns. As follow up to the October town board meeting agenda item re: support for a CAFO moratorium, recommendations from the PC for a letter to lawmakers were to be presented at the November Town Board meeting. That item was not followed up on. As well, the Planning Commission update has been omitted from the agenda of the Town Meetings for several months, in spite of an agreement by the Town Board to include Planning Commission updates as a standing agenda item. Inese will follow up with the Town Clerk to correct this issue. Jo Marie will follow up by reviewing the minutes and compiling the necessary recommendations. Rob will review his notes as well.
- Jo Marie suggests focusing the citizen survey for the upcoming update to the Comprehensive Plan on CAFO concerns.
- Jo Marie suggests conducting local water quality protection educational workshops to raise awareness of the threats, such as those conducted by the Monroe County Garden Club and by organizers in the city of Viroqua.
- Inese is participating at the county level with the Land Conservation advisory committee for a 10 year water quality protection plan. She reports that a rule has been in place since 2008 requiring manure management plans from farms of all sizes. The rule is rarely observed at this time. She will keep the planning commission advised of important updates.
- Inese will inquire with the committee for local experts and consultants who might provide education to the town board and citizenry about water quality and CAFO issues we will be facing.
- Andi recommends enlisting environmental and/or geologic engineers from the DNR who assist farmers in creating manure management strategies.
- Jo Marie requests the committee now make an action plan to move forward on initial strategies to address the CAFO concerns. Inese suggests taking that agenda up at the next meeting.

## Next Meeting: April 18 at 1:30 The agenda will include:

- Decision on comprehensive plan survey questions. Inese requests that all bring ideas.
- Potential water quality educational opportunities at the county level and/or from county experts.
- A presentation of CAFO letter recommendations for the town board to law makers.
- Trouble shooting and decisions regarding processes between the Planning Commission and the Town Board which are not functioning as expected:
  - lack of timely and consistent access to the meeting space
  - lack of consistent printing of all items necessary for meetings including minutes from the previous meeting for approval.
  - non observation of the standing town board agenda item of planning commission update as agreed in the fall of 2017.

- lack of presence of any town board member at planning commission meetings.
- failure of the town board to observe town ordinances.
- failure of the town board to review recommendations or ordinances prepared by the planning commission.
- failure of the town board to accept education on important threats to the health and well-being of the residents of the Town of Ridgeville.
- lack of participation of all planning commission members at meetings and in work assignments.

Motion to adjourn by Andi Radke Rynes; second by Jo Marie Thompson, motion carried.

Minutes submitted by Jo Marie Thompson