Planning Commission Meeting Sunrise Township
Royal Wilcox Community Center, Sunrise
Tuesday, November 7, 2023

The Sunrise Township Planning Commission meeting was called to order by Chairperson Tom Chaklos 7:01 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Planning Commission Members Present:

Tom Chaklos, Chair
Charlotte Wilcox, Vice Chair
Ted Krause
Tyler Richter
Deah Szymanski

Clerk: Wendy Kowalke
Ex-Officio: Greg Strom

Others Present:

Jeske Noordergraaf	Eric Leivian	Carl Peter "Pete" Johnson
Peggy Pearson	James McCarthy	Lynn Wolleat
Mike Jackson	Kate Campbell	

Adopt Meeting Agenda: Motion by Ted Krause, second by Deah Szymanski to adopt the November, 2023 agenda. Motion carried.

Meeting Minutes approval of October 2023: Motion by to Ted Krause, second by Deah Szymanski to accept the October 2023 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Rural Village Center (RVC) Zoning District Boundaries and Uses: James McCarthy, Chisago County Planning Commission Member, Representing North Branch appointed by Jim Swenson said this is the opportunity for Sunrise to submit suggestions to expand uses to Chisago County Zoning.

Greg Strom – Chisago County is creating a comprehensive plan for the county for the future.

Ted Krause mentioned affordable housing, duplexes, shared septic would more than likely be in an association. Ted Krause suggested the possibility of mapping out how many lots are available in the platted area.

Charlotte Wilcox brought a map which shows setbacks, regarding the Sunrise Overlay and DNR restrictions. About 10 years ago Chisago County had worked with Sunrise. The current zoning ordinance has a 75-foot setback in the platted area of Sunrise. Sunrise does not have many buildable lots because of setbacks from the river and the grade restrictions down to the river. Once you get out of the platted area there is still a 200-foot setback to the river. Sunrise Township's new town hall is in an agriculture zone, the only change Sunrise could make is extend the RR1 and RVC out where the new town hall will be. *The proposed change* from the current Chisago County Zoning Ordinance is for RVC to have 100-foot lot widths and RR have 150-foot lot widths. The existing Chisago County Ordinance requires a 200-foot lot width and one acre lots in both RVC and RR. . People can have a half-acre in RVC. Charlotte Wilcox is concerned about getting rid of the RR2.

Deah Szymanski shared her understanding from an inquiry to the county assessor about what zoning changes would mean when the definition of "biggest and best use" effects valuation. She understood that tax increases or implications will not affect current land owners unless they sell or add buildings/value to their site. She also understood that the county is looking for things to stream line like a single plot having two different zoning classifications which we do have at the north end of our current RVC zone.

Tyler Richter mentioned that the zone lines do not necessarily follow the lot lines in the platted area of Sunrise.

James McCarthy said minimum width is being changed to 100-foot lot width in the RVC. RR – housing with CUP type, RVC without permits which could include 1 house per lot, 2 family dwelling, bed breakfast, local

gov, offices, restaurant, retail stores, service repair, vet clinic, short term rentals, temp storage containers for some examples. James McCarthy said it was rare for a township to have both RR1 and RR2. (We are not the only township to have both RR1 & RR2.

Eric Leivian – what does Sunrise Township want to do to target the growth. Does the Township want to focus and target growth in a particular area or allow to go wherever. RR1 and RVC is smaller use / multi-use. Retail stores, commercial.

James McCarthy said that when you cut land up into 5 and 10 acres – you are not farming it anymore. In the last 30 years, we have used 25% of the available land for housing. At that pace in another 60 years that would use up all the land.

Deah Szymanski said that we need to consider that post pandemic work life is changing. Increasingly many people are working from home and have come here for a rural lifestyle. This changes existing norms of land use and travel. Also, many residents are incorporating varying scales of agricultural production of to all sizes of lots. For example five acre lots can accommodate vegetable, honey, maple syrup, egg, and small scale dairy production. Ten acre lots are often leased for hay production. People want the ability to be more self-sustaining after living through a pandemic and seeing the weaknesses in our current system

Deah Szymanski, Charlotte Wilcox and Thom Chaklos discussed how RR2 specifically states horse keeping is allowed and if RR1 and RR2 are combined that will affect a property that is set up for animal use. If Chisago County Zoning takes away that use it could cause much confusion and decrease the value of the property.

Charlotte Wilcox said Sunrise Planning Commission now has a better picture of what Chisago County Zoning is asking and there is concerned about getting rid of the RR2 if horse keeping would no longer be allowed for lots with large enough acreage. James McCarthy said he would raise the issue with the Chisago County Planning Commission with the intent that large animals would be allowed at the current rate of one animal per every two acres. Maybe need to have a work session to see what lots are vacant in Sunrise and go over with a fine tooth comb parcel by parcel. Chisago County has parcel maps.

Tyler Richter would like to preserve minimum density and the rural way of life in the ag zone. When it comes down to affordable housing or multi-family housing – that is something Sunrise does not have or need. If you are someone that would benefit from affordable housing, you more than likely would also need to be closer to services and amenities in cities. He said the Rural Village of Sunrise has underdeveloped lots and abandoned lots and would like to see small business development there. He said reasonable development is a good thing. Tyler Richter also discussed what commercial activity might look like today, and if the old town hall could be a part of it.

Greg Strom mentioned that Sunrise should look at all the available properties.

Motion by Tyler Richter to A) Maintain current density and lot size standards in Ag and RR zones, B) Expand RVC zone to areas between the Sunrise River and the current RVC zone, and C) Market government-owned parcels within the RVC zone. Motion failed due to lack of second.

Motion by Tyler Richter, second by Charlotte Wilcox to submit no changes to the RVC to the Sunrise Town Board for action to be forwarded to Chisago County Zoning. Motion carried.

Charlotte Wilcox said that expanding RVC west of Stepp Manufacturing as far as expanding Commercial Light Industrial (CLI) and it is not practical and the ballpark is out of bounds at this point. All Sunrise Township would be looking at is the row of houses – there is really no opportunity.

Eric Leivian said that Sunrise Township falls under Chisago County Zoning authority – the township is at the mercy of the Chisago County of what the objective is for the township.

Peggy Pearson asked how many parcels does Sunrise Township own.
Kate Campbell – what happens to zoning restrictions. James McCarthy said you can rebuild a home in a RVC which will be an allowed use.

Deah Szymanski stated that the current RVC does not allow for single family residential use. James McCarthy said that would change in the purposed revision of the RVC.

Mike Jackson – can you go by PID to be specific for any changes.

Charlotte Wilcox said you can't change any slope or a grade of 12% to adhere to DNR restrictions. We have to look at the lot width and slope. What is the point of expanding RVC if there is nothing practical to expand on.

James McCarthy said - the overlay and the shoreland are not the same thing. James McCarthy will check with the DNR. The committee would like to know more specifically how the overlay and DNR setbacks effects the township.

Tom Chaklos said if Sunrise is going to suggest changes we should notify the owners that are going to be affected.

James McCarthy said Sunrise Township can still suggest changes, but it will need to go through the County process once the new Chisago County ordinance is adopted.

James McCarthy said he would raise the issue with the Chisago County Planning Commission with the intent that large animals would be allowed at the current rate of one animal per every two acres.

Deah Szymanski mentioned CSAH CR 17 moving forward– it will bring more traffic into our area and a brightly lit roundabout. Jim McCarthy said Chisago County wanted the intersection. Deah Szymanski said it actually serves Isanti better than Chisago.

Motion by Tom Chaklos, second by Ted Krause to adjourn at 8:46 p.m. Motion carried.

_____ _____

Attest: Wendy Kowalke, Clerk Chair, Tom Chaklos