

MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF OMRO PLANNING COMMISSION

Omro Town Hall, 4205 Rivermoor Road, Omro, WI

October 13, 2022

6:30 P.M.

Notice of this meeting was posted on the Town of Omro Web Page and the posting board at the Omro Town Hall. It was mailed to the Omro Herald and the Oshkosh Northwestern.

Present: Commissioners Bruce Roskom, Brian Noe, Barbara Meyers, Joy Schwarz, Larry Remer, Phil Ertmer, and Allen Silverthorn.

Chairman Bruce Roskom called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

Approve Minutes:

MOTION: Barbara Meyers moved to approve the minutes of September 8, 2022. Joy Schwarz seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Announcements and Reports:

Mark Krings sprayed the weeds around the benches and signs in Schnyder/Wendt Park.

Discussion/Informational Items

1. Hwy 21 Corridor Study

Chairman Bruce Roskom began the discussion by reviewing the State Highway 21 Corridor map which is overlaid with the ½ mile and 1 mile buffer zones extending from either side of the highway. He pointed out areas of interest, which include intersecting roads, wetlands, parks, current residential neighborhoods, and the current sanitary service area. He reminded the commissioners that planning now will let the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) know that we are prepared for future growth and therefore make them more willing to work with the Town.

Vice Chairman Brian Noe reminded the commissioners that the goal of the DOT is to minimize additional access roads to Highway 21, and that some current roads may be closed in the future, thereby reducing total access points. Furthermore, he stated that roundabouts are scheduled for 2026 at the intersections of Highway 21 and Reighmoor and Sand Pit roads, the goals of which are to reduce speed and increase safety.

Chairman Roskom and Vice Chairman Noe explained that the Survey of Town residents and this planning step (for Town growth and direction) are necessary in order to "facilitate approval and funding and implementation for our Town projects". Vice Chairman Noe suggested further that the Commission implement an "Overlay District", which would control the development in the Highway 21 corridor. He stated that this encourages developers and gives them "certainty" when they know that our Town has a plan which also reflects what the residents desire.

Chairman Roskom explained that a Site Plan Ordinance for the Town would benefit us and show developers and the DOT what we must have for new development. It would address items such as lighting, landscaping, storage, drainage, signs, driveways, parking, and outside storage.

Commissioner Silverthorn expressed his concern that pedestrians and bicycles are not able to safely cross Highway 21. Chairman Roskom agreed that the highway essentially cuts our town in half.

[Tony Daley, the reporter for the Berlin Journal, was in the audience and shared with the Commission that Green Lake Greenways (a non-profit group) is currently trying to coordinate a walkway over Highway 23, connecting a trail to the city of Green Lake.

He proposed that their current effort to work with the DOT and the Bureau of Transportation Safety (BOT) might be instructive to us.]

Chairman Roskom gave the example of another local pedestrian tunnel under County CE east of Appleton. These are concerns and ideas that can be presented to the DOT as part of the planning process.

Near the close of the meeting, Vice Chairman Noe explained that the next step in the planning process starts with the Town presenting to the DOT the Town plans and Corridor Survey results which attempted to codify residents' wishes and concerns. Past successes using this approach include the Town parks and stormwater management projects which were mapped and planned, ahead of receiving funding. The Town's planning to increase safety, use tax dollars efficiently, and reduce costs (for services and the sanitation district) encourages the DOT's willingness to fund projects.

There was a general consensus by the Planning Commission in support of the planning process laid out by the Town Chairman and the Planning Commission Chairman, and that they should proceed accordingly.

Finally, Chairman Roskom said that he and Vice Chairman Noe will finish compiling the results of the Highway 21 Corridor Study, then meet with the DOT to present the results.

Adjournment:

MOTION: Larry Remer moved to adjourn. Phil Ertmer seconded the motion. Motion carried.

This meeting adjourned at 7:35 P.M.

Minutes by

Cheryl Gardner/Recording Secretary