

**THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD HELD ON
FEBRUARY 22, 2011, AT 7:00 P.M., AT THE CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M., by Dave Thompson. Members present were Ben Hanson, Jack Edmonds, Dick Dobson, Mitzi Mellott, Tom Rush (Baldwin Township Rep.), and Jim Kusler (Princeton Township Rep.) Staff present were Jay Blake and Mary Lou DeWitt.

OATH OF OFFICE: Mitzi Mellott took the Oath of Office.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING ON JANUARY 18, 2011

DOBSON MOVED, SECOND BY HANSON TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 18, 2011. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC HEARING: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Draft Regional Trail and Open Space Corridor Plan

The idea to form the Rum River Recreation and Resources Board came from the Princeton Area Visionary Committee. One of the PAVC's main goals is to bring together the community through a network of existing and proposed parks and trail systems while providing safe recreation for a healthier community. The City of Princeton received grant funds from the 1000 Friends of Minnesota through its Community Growth Options Program. The funds from this grant were used to hire a neutral facilitator from Bonestroo, Inc., to work with the PAVC to determine the appropriate civic engagement strategy to bring the creation of a regional planning entity. Participants from the Townships of Greenbush, Baldwin, and Princeton, along with PAVC Members, have formed a working group to create the regional planning entity.

The Planning Commission Board is asked to review the Rum River Recreation and Resources Board Draft Regional Trail and Open Space Corridor Plan.

Blake noted that there is a western area on the map that needs to be included by 21st Avenue. The sidewalks in the community need to be completed where they connect. The Princeton Utilities Water Treatment Plant on the south end of town has included bathrooms and exterior water fountains that should be shown for public use. Sherburne County is suppose to bring the trail up to the City of Princeton, but not into the City. Sherburne County is paying for the trail that is in Elk River and Zimmerman, but not Princeton's.

Hanson commented that trails should be off the roadway and he sees on the map that it looks like trails are on roads. He does bikes in these areas often and it is just a larger shoulder on the road, but not a trail. He does not believe that is a safe trail.

Blake said he is aware of this. He thinks this group is asking for wider shoulders. The State has standards for bike trails. He is not sure if the group has gone that far in getting this into the map.

Hanson said that there should be a bike path put in instead of wider shoulders on each side of the road. Why use the extra expense for the two wider shoulders with the class five etc. He would like them to put in a bike path instead of the wider shoulders.

Edmonds said that in Sherburne County when they rebuild a road they include anticipated bike trails in the plans. They might not have the finish work until they have the trail okayed. He sees that Mille Lacs County is beginning to do the same.

Hanson said that he has experienced wide shoulders as being dangerous for bike riders.

Blake said if the trail is separated from the highway then it would have to come from a separate fund. For a trail to be paid by the highway department it would have to be along the highway. It would be nice to identify trails from the roads for safety reasons.

Hanson asked if the bike paths would be gravel or paved right away.

Blake said that depends on the finance plan of what the funding would be.

Hanson said the marking for bikes that is along Rum River Drive through town should be marked on the map also.

Blake will tell Ciara Schlichting, Bonestroo of that.

Edmonds said the School District has the safe route to school. They should talk to them about this and see if the District and this program could work together.

Blake said there is no action on this item. He just wanted comments from the Planning Commission Board to forward to Schlichting.

Dobson said the time frame to adopt this is for April of 2011. It will be presented to the township boards also.

COMMUNICATION AND REPORTS:

A. Verbal Report

Blake said that Fast Cash that was in the old Ben Franklin building is gone. Woodlands Bank in Onamia now owns the building and has ended their lease. They have also changed the locks on the building. Woodlands is handling all inquires about leasing that building. The old Arcadian

Homes site will be built on by Central MN Housing. They have been given the approval by the EDA Board to build their housing development which they plan to name East Birch Estates. North Elementary School is proposing an addition to their building so the portables can be removed from the property. They still need their plans for this addition reviewed by the City. If the City is okay with the plans, it will then be coming to the Planning Commission for approval of a Site Plan and Conditional Use Permit. Greg Anderson wants to detach a piece of property from the City. He had four issues of why he wants to detach. Blake believes the City has addressed all four concerns. March 10, 2011 is a preliminary hearing regarding this. Mediation will be held March 11, 2011. A packet has been sent to Anderson to reconsider his request. The EDA Board will be reviewing two requests from the Revolving Loan Fund. Madre Loca Restaurant is asking for a loan to purchase equipment and Hy-Tech Automotive would like to put in a detail shop at the closed gas station across from his site. The City of Princeton along with the City of Milaca are on the short list for the Small Cities Development Program grant of \$600,000 each. We should know the first week in April if we will receive it.

Dobson said Family Pathways is having a fund raiser in March to have a Youth Center in their building.

Blake said that Representative Erickson has a bill to opt out of the building code in areas where the county uses the uniform building code.

Edmonds said once a building code is adopted it is hard to change it. The county would have a choice to have it or not.

B. City Council Minutes for January, 2011

The Planning Commission Board had no comments.

HANSON MOVED, SECOND BY DOBSON TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED. THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:46 P.M.

ATTEST:

Dave Thompson, Chairperson

Mary Lou DeWitt, Comm. Dev. Assistant