

**THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD HELD ON MARCH 16, 2015,
AT 7:00 P.M., AT THE CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M., by Jack Edmonds. Members present were Jeff Reynolds, and Eldon Johnson. Staff present were Jolene Foss (Comm. Dev. Director), and Mary Lou DeWitt (Comm. Dev. Assistant).

Absent was Chad Heitschmidt.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING ON FEBRUARY 23, 2015

JOHNSON MOVED, SECOND BY REYNOLDS, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 23, 2015. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 3 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS:

JOHNSON MOVED, SECOND BY REYNOLDS, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 3 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC HEARING:

A. #15-05 Conditional Use Permit amendment for Princeton Speedway

Comm. Dev. Director Memo:

BACKGROUND

Princeton Speedway, Inc. is requesting an amendment to PC Resolution #02-13 for an extension of the 11:00 P.M. curfew to midnight on approximately eight race nights and an additional of five nights to the racing schedule at Princeton Speedway in an A-2 Agricultural District at 1400 3rd Street North (Mille Lacs County Fairgrounds).

ANALYSIS

Princeton Speedway, Inc. is seeking an extension of the 11:00 P.M. curfew on approximately 8 of the scheduled race nights. The Sprint Car Races are scheduled on these specific nights. Due to the increased possibility of unforeseen complications involving the Sprint Cars, Princeton Speedway, Inc. is proactively requesting the extension. They have stated that they “intend to do everything in our physical power to meet the intended 11 PM curfew not only on the regular race nights but also for the 8 nights in question”. This is a precautionary effort, in that they are not planning on racing until midnight, but are aware they may not be completely finished by 11 PM.

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

A resolution authorizing a Conditional Use Permit for a change in the schedule and an extended curfew until midnight on approximately 8 nights.

GENERAL CUP REVIEW STANDARDS

Subsection 3.B of Chapter IV outlines the standards for review of a Conditional Use Permit:

1. The proposed use does not violate the health, safety, or general welfare of Princeton residents.

Comment: No characteristics of the proposed use appear that they may violate the health, safety or general welfare of the Princeton residents.

2. The proposed use has been reviewed and approved by the City Engineer in regards to erosion, runoff, water pollution and sedimentation.

Comment: The proposed use will have no significant effect in regards to erosion, runoff, water pollution and sedimentation.

3. Adequate parking and loading is provided in compliance with the Ordinance.

Comment: Adequate parking and loading design is in compliance with the ordinance.

4. Possible traffic generation and access problems have been addressed.

Comment: The proposed use appears to have no negative impact on traffic generation or accessibility.

5. The proposed use can be accommodated with existing public services and will not overburden the city's service capacity.

Comment: The proposed use can be accommodated with existing public services and will not overburden the city's service capacity.

6. The proposed use conforms to the City's Comprehensive Plan and is comparable with present and future land uses of the area.

Comment: The proposed use conforms to the City's Comprehensive Plan and is with present and future land uses of the area.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Upon review of the conditional use permit request, staff recommends that this permit be granted with the following conditions:

1. Friday night races shall end by 11:00 P.M.
2. No more than two races per season may be regularly scheduled for non-Friday dates.
3. Wednesday Night rain date races shall bend by 10:00 P.M.
4. No Wednesday night rain date races allowed during the regular school year.
5. No more than two Wednesday night rain dates allowed per month in June, July and August (6 per summer).
6. No more than one non-Wednesday rain date may occur per season.
7. The Planning Commission shall review the race schedule after the 2015 racing season.

And the addition of:

8. Extension of the 11:00 P.M. curfew until 12:00 A.M. on 8 specific scheduled race nights.

*****End of Staff Memo*****

Mary Beth Cripe, Princeton Speedway General Manager is present to answer questions.

Edmonds asked Cripe if there will be an additional five racing nights.

Mary Beth Cripe said they are asking for one practice date before the season starts. The September 26th date is the other addition to the schedule. This is the full schedule and they may not run the Sunday rain date. She is okay with the recommended conditions.

Johnson said that going to midnight is going to bother a lot of people. Could they start the race times earlier.

M.B. Cripe said most of the racers live outside of Princeton and with their work schedule it would make it hard for them to make an earlier race time. The races have started at 7:00 P.M. since 1956. They would love to start earlier. It would be a gamble that no races would run past 11:00 P.M. They want to be done if possible at 10:30 P.M. She was told by the previous owner to just hand in the dates to City Hall on the races that would run past 11:00 P.M. and the City would be okay with it. When she came to City Hall the staff told her the current Conditional Use Permit would need an amendment to extend the hours. She just wants to be covered if the races were to run past 11:00 P.M. They are saying midnight would be the latest on those nights.

Johnson asked if they would not try as hard to get done by 11:00 P.M. if the hours are extended to midnight.

M.B. Cripe said no.

Johnson said he is not trying to be smart, but is just asking if they would try to have the races done as soon as possible. He has enjoyed racing in town. He is concerned for the disruption from the races and they get louder and louder and faster and faster. If they keep pushing the envelope the residents will say enough. There is a lot of people in town talking about this.

M.B. Cripe has managed two Speedways in 15 years, in Sauk Center and Fergus Falls. They have a decibel reading and they have never exceeded 90 decibel at those tracks. They do require mufflers on vehicles. This helps control the sound. The Speedway announcer will plug in throughout the night that when leaving the Speedway to observe this is a residential neighborhood and to leave quietly.

Edmonds asked if the sprint cars could move up on the schedule.

M.B. Cripe said yes they could. They will move them up further in the schedule. They will run the sport compacts that are the quietest last. Sprints will be first. For the dollar amount for track service the sprint cars bring the crowds and revenue.

Johnson commented that could help having the sprint cars first.

M.B. Cripe said asking for this time extension is their precaution if the race were to go past 11:00 P.M. because of some unforeseen mishap.

Johnson said if it happens without an obvious reason it will cause a recall problem for next year. He would like them to keep it at 11:00 P.M., but not jeopardize safety.

M.B. Cripe commented that she would like the drivers not to know if it gets moved to midnight.

Edmonds said it would be reviewed at the end of season. Princeton Police Chief Fredrick was in the audience and he asked him what they do when the races are over.

Police Chief Fredrick spoke that outside of the race track site in the residential neighborhood they tend to focus at that area to slow people down. They have not seen the race rigs flying out of town, but do have issues with the spectators. He does not know of any other measures that they could do when races are over. Fredrick said Mille Lacs County Deputies do come and help most Friday nights.

Edmonds opened the public hearing.

Dale Dunham, 105 13th Avenue North, said he does have a letter that he had sent to the City and it is in the Planning Commission packet. He stands by his letter. He asked Foss if it is staff's recommendation that they adopt this Conditional Use Permit amendment.

Foss said she does recommend for it to be granted. The economic driver for her recommendation to approve is that there is a benefit to the City.

Dunham said he could live with the recommendations as long as they are in force. He does not like what staff wrote in her memo that there are no characteristics of the proposed use appear that they may violate the health, safety or general welfare of the Princeton residents. He does not agree with staff. The health and general welfare there is noise from the races that is intolerable. He hopes they can live up to what they are saying. If they are saying they can end on Wednesday at 10:00 P.M. then they should be able to end Friday at 11:00 P.M. He wants the vehicles muffled.

Edmonds said the comments from staff on item one with the review standards, he understands it could be worded better. If there is wind they cannot leave the windows open. The current 11:00 P.M. ending time has been breached in the past, and if they are given the latitude till midnight they will stay till midnight.

Joseph Hancuch, 402 13th Avenue North lives across from the fairground. He is opposed to have the races going to midnight. The issue to him is that the ending time has been breached in the past. It gets longer and longer with their ending time. He has supervised employees for 35 years and if they extended their start time, they would begin to come in later and later. So he does not agree with extending the race ending time. He said the first time ever they have not had a race on Friday fair night. Years ago there was a band there and that was challenging to play with the race going on. On September 25th and 26th if there are no rain outs, there would not be a race on those dates.

M.B. Cripe said no. They would not make the race makeup dates that late in the season.

Hancuch said that in regards to the racers having to work around their working schedule, he knows a very successful gentleman who was a racer and he took time off for race days. Most of the drivers take time off from work on the race days.

M.B. Cripe said they would like to start at 6:30 P.M., but they said it would be hard for the drivers to get here by then.

Hancuch said they traditionally started and ended the races at 10:00 P.M. and now it is at 11:00 P.M.

M.B. Cripe said they have a new flag man and he is the head official. He does not tolerate delay. She is not asking for every race night for the extended curfew, just special nights. She is trying to be proactive.

Buzz Cripe said he is the flag man and has done it for 16 years. The race starts at 7:00 P.M., on time. You cannot go over a three hour show. Spectators do not want a show longer than that. At 10:00 P.M. they will be done. We will not promote the beer selling.

Reynolds asked if the sprint cars come from a distance.

M.B. Cripe said yes, they are usually here the day before. The sanctuary body governs tough rules to comply by. Their sprint cars will be running here. The 360's are loud, their sprint cars are 205, but not as loud. They look the same, but are quieter.

Duane Streff, 1007 9th Avenue North said he has lived here for 38 years. It has been a thorn in his side every Friday night. He does not like the 11:00 P.M. ending time for races. He used to live on 3rd Street North before moving to the current house, and he had to clean up beer bottles every morning after the races. Even at their house now they have to close the windows on race night. He is not opposed to racing, but does not like how it infringes on them. It is the noise he does not like. If they could muffle it. His windows vibrate. He is not opposed to racing.

Amanda Milbrandt said she is from Otsego and is a racer. She grew up wanting to race. The muffler on the car helps her have a friendly response from Princeton. Sprint cars are not her favorite night since she does not race that type of car. She is a stock car driver.

Jon Brooks, 1004 9th Avenue North, does not like the noise. They live on the north side of town and have to have their windows closed. Mixing in more nights will be more nights they cannot use their back yards. He does not want any extra nights and no extended hours. They give up their backyard one night a week now.

Bill Wright, 1001 9th Avenue North asked if the City has a noise Ordinance curfew.

DeWitt said 11:00 P.M.

M.B. Cripe said the Legion approached them to have the fireworks at the race track. That is a race night where they want to have them go off. Is it okay if the fireworks begin at 11:00 P.M.

Foss will look into it.

Johnson asked M.B. Cripe if on the fireworks night, if they could be done by 10:15 P.M. with the races where they could fire them off after.

M.B. Cripe said she would drop a class if need be to not run the fireworks late. They would open the gates on the fireworks night for the last two races where people can get in free and see the events and then see the fireworks. She needs to know when the fireworks would have to end. The gates for the public would be open at 9:30 P.M. for the last two races and the fireworks could start at 10:00 -10:15 P.M. She will have the faster class first and the quieter race cars last. They understand they need to do this.

Dannie Burkholder from Big Lake, said he is a racer said no one has said what the acceptable noise level for the track should be. They are running mufflers with the hornets. What is an acceptable noise level. The races have been cut down to ten laps because of the curfew.

Edmonds said what the MPCA allows is the acceptable level.

Hancuch said he is ignorant to the decibel level. If any of the racers or those running the race track are willing to skip the races and come to his house for the best barbecue, he is serious, where they could listen to the noise from the races, and determine what the reasonable amount should be. They give up 23 summer nights and are just suppose to accept it.

Edmonds said the City Council or Planning Commission does not have a decibel amount rate.

M.B. Cripe said in Sauk Center it is loud with the wind. They did not run with the mufflers and showed them the decameter reading and it was below what was permitted. She would do that here if anyone would be interested in that. They met what they are suppose to meet with the MPCA. They monitor decibels.

Carol Streff, 1007 9th Avenue North said she has lived here since 1975 and they lived on 3rd Street and moved to 10 Avenue North. It is the noise and the real issue is extending the noise later at night. She is opposed to extending the hours till midnight.

Michele McPherson, President of Mille Lacs County Ag Society said she volunteers to the Fair Board. We want to be good partners to the residents. Cliff Saker and Mary Beth Cripe are making significant strides and they want to rebuild some of the bridges to the residents of Princeton. Since 1919 there has been some racing at the fairgrounds. How they are trying to build strengths with the residents is with the 4H Club will be running the food sales, and they

also offer opportunity groups to earn funds for grounds cleanup. Garbage was a concern. Residents should call on trash that is close by the fencing and they will clean it up. They are not asking for additional events, 21 races scheduled and are asking for 22 race nights. They are not having a race during the fair this year. They might in the future, but not this year. She would like to note that the schedule is specific to the nights of the sprint cars running past 11:00 P.M. Mary Beth Cripe and the Police Chief will look at those leaving the fairgrounds to make sure it is under control. With the Conditional Use Permit, what is the criteria that will be reviewed at the end of the season. She said in her past years, they provide the schedule and they would make a good effort to mail the schedule to each resident in the area by the race tracks. She understands the noise issues and having a business next to a residential is difficult to address. It is difficult to measure noise. She is here to support this and the Fair Board gains to leasing to a promoter so they do have a financial stake in it. She thinks the community does gain, they go to local places and such to eat and shop. There is sales tax on the tickets. She hopes they grant the extension for eight nights.

Hancuch said he wants to be clear that it is not about noise, it is extending the time.

Richard Reckinger, 205 13th Avenue North said the noise is the issue. The MPLS airport spent money to control the noise from planes over a residential area and the Highway Department has put up sound barriers. They might have to put in sound barriers or something.

Carol Streff said that if the races go past midnight what was the consequences. In the past when they had to be done by 10:00 P.M. what was the consequences if they ran past that time.

Edmonds said that it would be with the Police. He is not sure.

Carol Streff request that they take that into consideration.

Edmonds said that they could come to the Council and address the consequences.

Michele McPherson said if the curfew would be violated past 11:00 P.M. and it is documented, it would go to the Fair Board as their responsibility and they would receive a written notice. They would have an opportunity to correct the violation. The Conditional Use Permit could be revoked if they did not correct it and could not explain the circumstances that would give reason for going past the time period.

Johnson asked M.B. Cripes how many races did they have going back five years and how many classes.

M.B. Cripe said they have six classes now. In the last five years was about 5 or 6.

Johnson asked if they could get done by 10:30 P.M. on regular nights and later on sprint night.

M.B. Cripe would love to say they could do that. She does not know how many cars they would

have. She cannot guarantee that with switching of sanctions. She believes they could, but cannot guarantee it. She does not know how many cars will enter.

Johnson said they need to limit the class, but not have 100 cars. He believes that to satisfy needs there needs to be a balance. If they got done at 10:30 P.M. or 10:45 P.M. and there were the same amount of hours per year then they could go over a little over maybe on a sprint nights.

M.B. Cripes said their goal is 10:30 P.M., but they cannot guarantee it. The drivers want to go home also. She knows she has to be done by 11:00 P.M. now.

Reynolds said to evaluate this at the end of the season. If five or six of these nights go past 11:00 P.M. that would be on the bad side. If two or three races are till 11:30 P.M. it would not be so bad. They would have to limit it to two or three times.

M.B. Cripes would like to compromise if they could be done on four of the nights early.

Bill Wright, 1001 9th Avenue North asked if they have asked the racers if they would start at 6:00 P.M. He thinks that would be better.

M.B. Cripe said in Sauk Center they tried the start time at 6:00 P.M. and they had to move it back to 7:00 P.M. She will propose it to drivers.

Ryan Kostreba, said he is from Elk River and is a driver. He said some of the drivers can get off early, but it is hard to get there at 6:00 P.M. He likes that the Planning Commission Board says half the time to go past 11:00 P.M.

Michele McPherson suggested going to midnight for eight nights with a review at the end of the year. Three race nights the first of May and July maybe a mid-season report to the Planning Commission Board could be addressed to see how that went. The ending time could be adjusted from midnight to 11:30 P.M. This would give three of the races extra time to see how it works.

Edmonds said once you get into the new situating class you could make adjustments.

Carol Streff would like a mid-cycle review and also an end of the year review.

M.B. Cripe commented after the last race ends the residents may hear noise. There is no racing after the flag is dropped. The noise could be that it is the individual cars going across scaling or loading.

Carol Streff said they are opposed to extending it to midnight. The noise would just be pushed past midnight.

Duane Streff is opposed to it also. The time at night with the extra hour is too long.

M.B. Cripe is concerned for not having it end at a later time. The economic impact on the race track they need sprint cars to bring people in. This track is struggling. It will impact the community immensely. She is open to do the half year where it will be reviewed.

Johnson said they are not against sprint cars. Can they start early on those nights.

Duane Streff said no one is totally against the race. What is the differentiate of mufflers.

Buzz Cripe said they have mufflers that are required by the MPCA. They have where it is required by the decibels.

Duane Streff said they should be street legal.

Buzz Cripe said that race tracks are in turmoil right now. Have to keep the ones going. To drop classes when bringing in sprint cars it does not work. If we turn the two classes of drivers away on Friday nights they will go to St. Cloud and never come back.

Dannie Burkholder said the room is divided in two parties, racers and residents. We are talking about 15 minutes. Will things get shorter with the new flag guy. That little bit of 15 minutes for running over time is making it too difficult.

M.B. Cripe agrees. She was asked to give a time when she told City staff that she would like to extend the hours. She mentioned midnight, but it could be done as early as 11:15 P.M. They needed a time frame.

Johnson said racing is so unpredictable. There could be an accident and it is prolonged. We have to take the community into account.

Edmonds said if the race is running late could they adjust it.

Johnson asked to still make the points could they shorten the features from 20 laps to 15.

M.B. Cripe said to shorten the computer takes time so that is the reason for not extending it.

Johnson said for the nights with a couple wrecks right off the bat, could they shorten the time frame to make the end time right.

M.B. Cripe said they do not have intermissions on those nights. If 11:15 or 11:30 would be the end time, they would be fine with that.

Carol Streff propose the recommendation to have the end time at 11:15 P.M. with the mid-year review. She heard the past was bad management of the Princeton Speedway and now they

have a new flag man, so let's see if 11:15 P.M. would be fine and to review at half of the season schedule.

Foss read the letters sent to the City from Rod & Vicky Anderson, Gerald Hinchcliff, George Bergstrom, Pat & Dale Dunham, and Joseph & Kris Hancuch. The letters were included in the Planning Commission packets and also for the public to review.

Joel Stottrup, Princeton Union Eagle Newspaper Reporter asked M.B. Cripe if there are extra nights added to the schedule.

M.B. Cripe said no.

EDMONDS MOVED, SECOND BY REYNOLDS, TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 3 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

Edmonds said it is admirable that they came to us and are trying to be accommodating. We need to give them a chance. How about an 11:30 P.M. compromise.

Reynolds said 11:30 P.M. for specific events with a mid-season review.

Edmonds asked the President of the Ag Society if she would be involved.

Michele McPherson said yes.

Johnson would like to see the total of times with early ending instead of the later. It needs to be done before 11:00 P.M. A few at 10:30 P.M. and then a few 11:30 P.M. should make everyone happier.

M.B. Cripe asked if they are suppose to start earlier.

Foss said no.

JOHNSON MOVED, SECOND BY REYNOLDS, TO APPROVE ITEM #15-05 PRINCETON SPEEDWAY CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AMENDMENT TO PC RESOLUTION #02-13 FOR AN EXTENSION OF THE 11:00 P.M. CURFEW TO ALLOW THE EIGHT RACE NIGHTS THE APPLICANT STIPULATED TO END AT 11:30 P.M. WITH A MID-SEASON REVIEW WITH THE PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD ON JULY 20, 2015. THE APPLICANT WILL BRING IN DOCUMENTATION SHOWING THE RACE ENDING TIME UP TO JULY 3RD, 2015 RACING SCHEDULE. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 3 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

Staff said this will be on the March 26, 2015 City Council agenda.

M.B. Cripe said she will get the mailing list from City staff that they used for the public hearing and send out letters as a reminder for the Planning Commission review on July 20th, 2015.

DeWitt said she will give her the mailing list.

The Planning Commission reviewed the Findings of Fact:

1. Does the proposed use violate the health, safety or general welfare of the Princeton residents? No.
 2. Has the proposed use been reviewed and approved by the City Engineer in regards to erosion, runoff, water pollution, and sedimentation (if applicable)? Yes.
 3. Is adequate parking and loading provided in compliance with the Ordinance? Yes.
 4. Have possible traffic generation and access problems been addressed? Yes.
 5. Can the proposed use be accommodated with existing public services and not overburden the City's service capacity? Yes.
 6. Does the proposed use conform to the City's Comprehensive Plan and is compatible with present and future land uses of the area? Yes.
- Are there conditions that could be attached to the granting of a permit that would mitigate any potential the adverse impact? Yes.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

COMMUNICATION AND REPORTS:

A. Verbal Report

Staff had nothing to report.

B. City Council Minutes for February, 2015

The Planning Commission Board had no comments.

JOHNSON MOVED, SECOND BY REYNOLDS, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 3 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED. THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:50 P.M.

ATTEST:

Jack Edmonds, Chairperson

Mary Lou DeWitt, Comm. Dev. Assistant