

Approved:

**TOWN OF GIBRALTAR
PLAN COMMISSION
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2019
GIBRALTAR TOWN CENTER
7:00 P.M.**

Call to order: The regular meeting of the Gibraltar Plan Commission was called to order at 6:59 p.m. by Linda Merline, chairperson.

Roll Call/quorum: Merline stated that a quorum of the Commission was present.

Members present: Linda Merline, Brian Hackbarth, and Don Freix

Absent: Tom Blackwood and Doug Lindeman (Doug Lindeman has stepped down from the Commission)

Proper notice: *Motion: (Hackbarth, Freix) to adopt the agenda as posted. Carried*

Approve minutes of previous meetings:

Motion: (Hackbarth, Freix) to approve the minutes of the November 27, 2018 meeting, as written. Carried

Public comment: None

Fish Passage RFP Pre-Proposal Opportunity for Engineers to ask Questions:

Two engineering firms were present for the RFP Pre-Proposal Q & A: GEI Consultants, Inc. from Green Bay and Cardno from Appleton.

Tom Prestby of GEI Consultants, Inc. asked if there is existing topography or such information for one or both of the sites, or will a site survey be necessary for the proposal? Hackbarth said there is some information available, but whether it is to the level they need is uncertain. The office would be able to provide records of any studies/information on file.

Prestby (GEI) also asked if there is bathymetric data (hydrographic/water depth data) for the area near the pond or the dam, specifically for the upstream face of the dam or any of the water depths near the dam by the pond. Merline said it is unknown because the dam is on private land. Merline mentioned some information/data related to hydrology was gathered and used by UW-Stevens Point in the Fish Creek Plan (available on the Town website). Merline added the creek is a seasonal stream and dependent on snowfall and rainfall. She guessed the average depth is probably somewhere around 2-1/2 to 2 feet or less.

Eric Englund of Cardno asked if the DNR River Management Grant for this project is for the design and planning portion only, or if the grant would also be used for the project construction. Merline stated the grant is for the design of the fish passage at the culvert and the dam, and also the restoration of the meander between the culvert and the dam. Hackbarth added the Plan Commission is looking into additional grants for the construction portion of the project as that part needs to be funded separately.

Hackbarth asked both engineering firms in attendance if they have seen the actual site. Both said they are familiar with it, but the high snow cover is preventing a good look.

Englund (Cardno) asked whether there would be an opportunity to view the second fish passage issue/area by the dam located on private property prior to the proposal deadline. Merline stated the Town Board Chairman will be getting permission from the property owners so that those interested in submitting a proposal can have access to view that area.

Merline told the engineering firms they are free to call the Town office or her directly for additional information.

Approved:

Freix asked how the integrity of the box culvert might be affected by modifying it in any way. Merline stated there are other options besides altering the culvert itself.

2019 Goals – Review and Adopt:

Goal #1- Annual Joint Meeting with Town Board/Set Plan Commission Goals for 2019:

Merline stated the Plan Commission and Town Board discussed goals for 2019 at the recent joint meeting on January 22, 2019. The goals before the Plan Commission at tonight's meeting are the Town Board's recommendations. Some goals from 2018 were discontinued and not carried over to 2019. Merline explained that the numbers previously assigned to any discontinued goals were given to the new goals, and the goals continuing from 2018 into 2019 kept their same numbers so citizens can continue to follow the progress of those goals.

Goal #2 – Annual Joint Meeting with Parks & Lands Committee/Discuss and Plan Shared Goals:

Merline stated the Parks and Lands Committee thought it would work to have the annual joint meeting preceding the next Plan Commission meeting on March 26, 2019, at 6 p.m., with the regular monthly Plan Commission meeting to follow at 7 p.m. Merline mentioned only three Plan Commission members would be present (Merline, Hackbarth, and Freix) as commissioner Tom Blackwood will be out of town and Doug Lindeman is stepping down from the Commission.

Goal #3 – Implement the Fish Creek Watershed Plan/Grant Work for Fish Passage Designs & Meander Restoration:

Hackbarth asked if Bob Bultman would be hired for the implementation of the subsequent grant work that needs to be done after an engineering plan is in place. He suggested Bultman be invited to the next meeting with a price quote ready so that, if hired, he could begin writing grants to implement the construction portion of the project. Suggested it be put on the next meeting's agenda.

Merline mentioned the Town has been in contact with Gary Van Vreede of U.S. Fish and Wildlife, who has agreed to work with the Town on addressing the meander. Next step is determining which permit needs to be filed with the DNR. One permit was started for working on the stream alignment, but the DNR contact recently sent another permit option related to stream projects working with other governmental entities. Merline stated as soon as they identify which permit is the appropriate permit the next step will be identifying whether they need to hire someone to help fulfill the permit's requirements.

Hackbarth added that Parks & Lands recently worked with the Town maintenance crew to clear out a large area of the invasive species barberry from Fish Creek Park. Deputy Clerk Kelly Murre said it was mentioned at that morning's Parks & Lands meeting.

Goal #4 – Recommend/Plan an Earth Day/Arbor Day Activity in Cooperation with Parks & Lands:

Merline said the Parks & Lands committee agreed to team up with the school and involve 5th grade students with an Earth Day/Arbor Day activity. Last year's activity involved the kids participating in different stations. It was suggested by Merline that students could assist with the reforestation of the creek corridor, and one of this year's hands-on learning/activity stations could be the students putting some kind of protection (to be purchased by Parks & Lands) on the young trees after they've been identified. Deputy Clerk Murre mentioned Parks & Lands members Tom Thurman, Bonnie Ansley and Laurie Buske volunteered to work with the students that day. Merline said she hopes bringing the 5th grade class to the creek will become an annual event, and added that Vinnie Chomeau, Friends of Gibraltar, Activity Coordinator, at the school is very excited about being involved.

Goal #5 – Request an Update from County Sanitation Department on Oversight of Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS):

Merline stated this goal is an on-going, perennial goal. No real change.

Approved:

Goal #6 – Research/Prepare for 2024 Comprehensive Plan:

Merline suggested the Plan Commission first research the current regulations for smart growth plans according to the state statutes. She added Tom Blackwood might be the member to take the lead on this task since it is something that can be done from the computer remotely.

Goal #7 – Pursue/Show Improvement in County Zoning Services & Goal # 8 – Rewrite/Make

Recommendations for Adjusting County Zoning to Match the Comp. Plan's Vision:

The Plan Commission's zoning recommendations were presented to the Town Board in a joint meeting on February 11, 2019. Hackbarth said he felt the Plan Commission and Town Board did not have the conversation they needed to have because of the presence of and conversation/discussion from county representatives and community members. Therefore, Hackbarth suggested a follow-up round table discussion between the Town Board and the Plan Commission only about the future of Gibraltar zoning, at which the public and members of the community could watch/attend the meeting but not participate in the conversation. He said he believes this round table conversation between the Plan Commission and Town Board would be a good idea before the Plan Commission does any additional work on this goal. Merline said she would run the idea past Town Chair Skare. No decisions regarding the zoning recommendations have been made by the Town Board at this point with the exception of a decision on the sign code ordinance, which was discussed and acted upon at a Special Town Board Meeting on February 21, 2019. All other discussion/action regarding other recommendations will continue at future Town Board meetings.

Goal #9 – Research/Make Recommendation on Community Housing – both Attainable Year-Round/Seasonal Employee Housing:

Merline said goals 9 and 11 would be great conversations to have if the Town were to hire someone like Bay Lake Regional Planning to start the discussion in a round table-like setting, as was done when putting together the comprehensive plan. Hackbarth mentioned there was talk by the Town Board about forming another committee/subcommittee to address this goal, but it would require finding five members of the community that would want to form a committee and spearhead this initiative. He recommended not hiring someone like Bay Lake Regional Planning to work with the subcommittee, but instead the Plan Commission hire Bay Lake or someone similar to work with on the 2024 Comprehensive Plan. Then, Bay Lake (or the hired firm) could be offered as an additional tool/resource to the subcommittee. Merline questioned whether there would be enough interest from the community to form a subcommittee. Hackbarth said he thought it would be possible if the scope of the work was kept very narrow and flexible. Merline asked Hackbarth to come to the next meeting with names of people who might be willing to work on this subcommittee.

Goal #10 – Research/Make a Recommendation on Becoming a Green Tier Legacy Community:

Merline said Ephraim is currently working on becoming a Green Tier Legacy Community. Egg Harbor did and is very enthusiastic about it. Merline suggested bringing in the DNR rep (perhaps in the spring) in to talk about the Green Tier Legacy Community program so the Town Board, community members, and anyone else who may be interested in learning more could hear about it at the same time. Freix suggested later in the Spring might work best once people return from their winter residences. Merline to follow up with Chair Skare about this.

Goal #11 – Research/Recommend Action on Economic Needs & Problems Facing the Town:

Freix stated he has some questions for the Door County Economic Development Center about the lack of bringing in any laborers – teachers unions, shipyard worker unions, service employees – as stakeholders in this conversation. He is concerned about top-down decisions are being made. He stated he is also concerned about the availability of attainable/affordable family housing in the area.

Hackbarth added he believes the problem behind the housing issue in Northern Door County is the “not in my backyard” mentality and current zoning issues. Hackbarth stated that Northern Door communities like Gibraltar need to identify zones and write zoning codes conducive to the desirable developments that will address this issue. He said the further north you get the harder it is to accomplish such goals, unlike in the communities south of Gibraltar such as Sturgeon Bay or Southern Door. He reiterated that benefit of identifying and zoning these areas for such purposes so an over the counter permit could be a solution.

Approved:

Freix added one of the things to be avoided is large developers coming in and building dense units and monopolizing the rent. He advised the Town do something to control the rent. Freix also mentioned positive examples of employee housing mentioned included the Birch Creek School dormitory for teachers and students.

Merline said the housing issue is difficult and suggested talking about it in a month when the commission has a new plan commission member and perhaps Tom Blackwood on the phone. In regard to the new Plan Commission member, Hackbarth suggested one of the Town Board Members fill the seat, as he used to fill that role when he was on the Town Board and this might be an opportunity for a current Town Board member to fill the vacancy. Merline to follow up on this with Town Chair Skare.

2019 Goals – Discussion Goals and Planning: Discussion was had (see above), and Merline stated the Commission now needs to adopt the 2019 goals.

Motion: (Freix, Hackbarth) to adopt the 2019 Goals as set at the Town Board/Plan Commission Annual Joint Meeting on January 22, 2019. Carried

Goal #2 – Annual Meeting w/ Parks and Lands Committee: Discuss/Set Date: As previously stated during the discussion of the 2019 Goals (Goal #2) the annual joint meeting of Plan Commission and Parks & Lands Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, March 26, 2019 at 6 p.m., with the regular monthly Plan Commission meeting to follow at 7 p.m.

Reports:

Chair- None

Ground and Surface Water- None

Town Board/Parks and Lands- None

Set the next meeting date: *Tuesday, March 26, 2019 at 7 p.m.*

Adjourn: *Motion: (Hackbarth, Freix) to adjourn at 7:39p.m. Carried*

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Rae Lancaster
Administrative Assistant