

**Town of Bayfield
Planning Commission Meeting
October 9, 2007**

Planning Commissioners Present: Robert Piccoli (Chairman), Pamela Smith, Bill Miller, Bob McGraw

Planning Commissioners Not Present: Mayor James Harrmann

Town Staff Present: Joe Crain (Town Planner) & Marianne Jones (Deputy Town Clerk)

Media Present: None Present

The meeting was called to order @ 7:08 p.m.

Minutes: Bob McGraw noted that Niel Hieb was present at the meeting but is not listed on the attendance. Pamela made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 14th, 2007 Planning Commission meeting as amended. Bill seconded the motion. 4 voted in favor. Tom & Robert abstained from the voting. The motion carried.

Public Input: No public input was offered so it was immediately closed.

Action Agenda Item #1: Presentation & Discussion Regarding Perma-Culture
Michael Freeman

Joe Crain reminded the Planning Commission that they are also the Town Weed Board. The Planning Commission is responsible for the maintenance & removal of noxious weeds throughout the Town. The Commission also has an obligation to enforce all State Laws regarding noxious weeds. Each year the Town tries to bring in someone to discuss weed control. Joan Hanna heard Michael Freeman speak regarding perma-culture and she requested that he give a presentation to the Planning Commission. Joe explained that Michael has incorporated weed control into a perma-culture philosophy.

The floor was then given to Michael Freeman.

Michael explained that there is a lot of interest in the topic of perma-culture and a vast interest in creating healthier communities.

Michael then showed a Power Point presentation documenting ways to make this possible.

Weed Abatement/Beautification Issues & Tools

- **A Spray Free Community** - there are numerous spray free communities throughout the United States & Canada. These communities have adopted plans to use practices other than harsh chemicals to control weeds.
- **Integrated Vegetation Management** - This practice involves restoration & reseeding of disturbed areas. When weeds are destroyed, the area needs to be restored & reseeded in order to help the soil.
- **Principles in Perma-Culture** - Some of the principles in perma-culture are ecological harvesting and prescribed burnings which both help with weed control. Inter-planting also helps to crowd out weeds and reduces the need to mow and use chemicals. This is put into practice by planting lots of grasses, trees and shrubs to help crowd out the weeds. Dead heading (cutting the heads off the weeds before they go to seed) also helps with control because it stops the weeds from growing back. Livestock such as chicken, sheep & goats are also good resources for weed control.
- **Preservation** - This is the practice of preserving the ecological surroundings whenever possible.

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- **Managing Natural Resources** - This could be achieved by developing a Stewardship Management Plan (SMP). This plan would serve to guide the Town to actively manage their natural resources. The purpose of a SMP is to document, in a manner understandable to the Town and subsequent consultants, the current health & productivity, the desired future conditions, and the perma-culture practices recommended achieving the future condition of the land. This plan gives consideration to environment, social & economic management principals.
- **Being the Change** - This is putting all of these practices into place. This includes coming up with recommendations for the Town Board for adopting these types of weed control practices and coming up with funding options through grants & other resources to help fund them and keep them in place.

Weed Control helps with the preservation of the following wild areas:

- Pine River Valley
- Wetlands
- Greenbelts
- Connection Habitat
- Eco-Tourism

Michael showed a DVD called Natural Control For Noxious Weeds regarding perma-culture.

Michael informed the Planning Commission that he met with Ron Saba, Director of Bayfield Public Works and Michael feels that the Public Works department is going to be overwhelmed with weeds within the next few years. He thinks that this would be the perfect time to come up with a reduction plan before the problem gets out of hand.

Pamela asked if the Planning Commission should address weed control during the planning process of new developments.

Joe agreed that it should be addressed during the planning & approval process in order to eliminate weeds taking over and going to seed throughout the Town.

Michael said that there is a State Law mandating that any development over an acre in size has to be reseeded to reduce weed spreading issues.

Pamela asked if the spraying of mosquitoes also kills other beneficial insects.

Michael answered yes. There is no way to kill mosquitoes without killing other insects as well.

Joan stated that Town is in a place right now where it can inexpensively adopt this type of policy before things get out of hand. She asked what it will cost and what kind of package is needed.

Michael answered that there are two routes that can be taken. The Town can hire a consultant or create a temporary full-time position. (There are resources available to fund this type of position). The Town would need to come up with a plan, meet with the residents, and make a decision about how to make it work. The Town would have to decide what is economically feasible for putting the plan into place and funding it.

Joe stated that the Town has an obligation to maintain all Rights-of-Way (ROW), public properties such as parks & community service areas, education to the residents for maintaining their own lots, and putting a weed plan into place for all new subdivision developments.

Joan asked how this should be presented to the Board for approval.

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Joe recommended that the Planning Commission identify areas of concern and decide the Town's obligation. This matter will be placed on a future Planning Commission agenda to come up with a full recommendation to give to the Town Board

Pamela stated that she would like to see the Town adopt a plan that is low chemical use.

Joe asked Michael to come up with a potential management practice plan that could be presented to the Board. He requested that this plan includes the cost and possible funding options.

Action Agenda Item #2: New/Unfinished Business

Joe stated that there are two items in front of the Planning Commission regarding the development of Mill Street & the Business Park. There have been numerous people that have been interested in developing on Mill Street but the current restrictions in the Land Use Code are restricting development and the revitalization of Mill Street. This is also a problem in the Bayfield Business Park.

Joe is concerned that these harsh restrictions are hurting the development of these areas and he thinks that it might be a good idea to review the code. Joe asked the Planning Commission to review the information and he will schedule a work session to discuss the possibility of changing the restrictions.

Bob McGraw asked about weeds in the new ball field.

Joe answered that a turf specialist recommended cutting the heads off the weeds and leaving them throughout the winter. The field will be planted & seeded next spring and the specialist feels that the weeds will help the grass to come in healthier & thicker next year. The new Parks & Recreation Director, Scott Key has a full plan in place to get rid of them one the grass is planted.

The meeting was adjourned @ 8:40 p.m.

APPROVED:

Robert Piccoli
Planning Commission Chair

Marianne Jones
Planning Commission Secretary