

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Sauk County West Square Building, Room B30

Baraboo, Wisconsin

Monday, October 03, 2011

Members present: Marty Krueger, Peter Murray, Dave Riek, Don Stevens, Joel Gaalswyk, Gerald Lehman,

Members absent: none

Others present: Kathy Schauf, Dennis Polivka, Susan Tatar, Bill Mertens, John McKenna, Dave Radel, Rick Livingston, Steve Koenig, Brad Hutnik, Donna Stehling, Bill Stehling, Jeff Barkley, Rebecca Gass, Brentt Michalek, Fred Iasly, Gene Dalhoff

The meeting was called to order and certification of Open Meeting compliance was given at 6:30 p.m. **The agenda was approved on a motion by Stevens, second by Murray. Motion carried.**

The minutes from prior meetings were approved on a motion by Gaalswyk, second by Lehman. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Bill Mertens: Distributed documents on the history of Acquisition, Reforestation and Improvement.

John McKenna: Referenced work of Dr. William Cronon. October 03, 2011, Dr. Cronon quotations on land conservation.

Susan Tartar: Scenic beauty of Sauk County.

Dave Radel: Spoke in favor of maintaining contiguous forest. 300 platted lots available for sale in the Town of Spring Green.

Communications

September 13, 2011, Recommended Action Regarding the Sauk County Community Forest.

Business Items

Update by the Trails Subcommittee:

Line through Badger is in the planning stages at the state level. Committee is awaiting processes at the state level to develop. Items to be developed are the development of a trail support group and fundraising.

Department of Natural Resources Presentation

R. Livingston, J. Barkley, and B. Hutnik presented information on forest lands, the county forest program, and forested land. The County owns approximately 4,000 acres of land, of which 1,170 are forested.

J. Barkley presented information on the Wisconsin County Forest Certification. There are 29 county forests in the program. Vernon County joined in 1999. 2.4 million acres of publicly owned forest lands. Partnership between the state and counties. State statutes define purpose of county forests - 28.11 (1). Long range plan details the management of the forest. A County Board resolution is required for entry into the program. It is difficult to reverse this decision as it requires state approval based on the public interest ensuring that the proposed action for the property constitutes a better and higher use. County is responsible for the development of the 15 year long range plan within guidelines provided by the state.

State acquires land when it is in jeopardy of being developed. Eligibility for purchase is also dependent upon having land that is incorporated into existing acquisition blocks.

Pros and Cons of the transition to the "County Forest Program"

| Pros | Cons |
|---|--|
| Consistent with Comprehensive Plan, County Outdoor Recreation Plan, and the Town Comprehensive Plan | Loss of control / flexibility: requires a higher use criteria be met prior to withdrawal from the County Forest Program. |
| Rules out potential of residential development | Cost |

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| Pros | Cons |
|---|---|
| Would provide resources for the preparation of a management plan | Funding – what happens to participation if the funding is reduced? (notes: segregated fund that has been in place for 85 years. |
| Ability to contract with a qualified forester for the services, “cooperating forester”. | |
| Strong community support. | |
| Potential for the creation of a position that allows for a shared position to deal with forest management and county owned easements. | |
| Stabilizes the future of the property | |
| Enhances the area by providing an engine for economic development | |
| Provides a stable revenue stream | |

Next regular meeting: October 19 or 26, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. in Valton. 1. Update by Hilbert Communications. 2. Presentations from foresters and board members in Vernon and Monroe counties.

Motion by Murray, second by Stevens, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald Stevens

Economic Development Committee Secretary