

Planning Commission Meeting Jan. 6th, 2011 7:00 pm

Attendees: Ray Kiewit, Susan Keachie, Joni Brooks and Fred Schlicting

Members of the Public: Bill Sloan – Bell Town Chairman, Dennis Edwards and Mike Coughlin.

Minutes from the meeting of 12-9-2010 were read. Fred made a motion to approve and Susan 2nd. All were in favor of approval.

Updates:

Ray reported that there is no update on the Title Search in process for the marina property currently leased by the Tillmans.

Ray presented the Addendum 1 and the Annual Review to the Town Board at the December Town Board meeting. Some editorial changes were made by the Board. Ray incorporated the changes and the documents will be added to the Comprehensive Plan.

Discussion then went to the process of setting goals for an Economic Development committee that is to be appointed by the Town Board as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. After reviewing the Economic Development Element in the Plan at our last meeting, the following statement was approved for the intent of the Economic Development Committee:

The Economic Development Committee shall use Chapter 7.0 of the 2009 Town of Bell Comprehensive Plan as a guide to research and identify economic growth opportunities. Special attention should be paid to the items in Section 7.6.

Bill, Dennis and Mike joined in the group discussion of how to proceed.

Susan brought the group up to date with what is happening with Bayfield County Economic Development Corp. and its goals for 2011. One of those goals is to identify and encourage telecommunication services in the County. Another is to develop a plan for recruiting jobs to the area.

Susan has also participated in a couple of discussions that Bruce Lindgren from Herbster and Mike Wright from Cornucopia have been having and reported on topics talked about in their meetings. Mike has presented an idea of trying to encourage 20 families to relocate to the South Shore by the year of 2020. Another topic of discussion was the question of whether the South Shore should form a group that would be working together towards building the economy or if Bell Town should continue to do research as a single entity.

There was some discussion on the impact of growth on the South Shore School District.

Bill suggested that perhaps Economic Development for the area is not the correct term. Instead of trying to bring businesses here that might create jobs, maybe we should be creating an atmosphere that encourages and supports people who may want to live and work here, either by starting a business or by bringing a job with them from another location and working it from home. A couple of issues were identified:

- How can we help people who ask us for help in starting a business here?
- What can we do to develop our community to make it a good place to live and work?
- Perhaps instead of looking for an employer we should concentrate on bringing in one job/business/family at a time.

- Most people who move to the area and start businesses bring some assets with them and have a strong desire to live here. They also work extremely hard to overcome the obstacles that arise from doing business here.
- How do we encourage people to start thinking about the possibility of living and working here? One idea was to have a flyer that could be left in lodging establishments asking visitors to consider living and working here.
- Agricultural endeavors should be encouraged as they suit the Town's goals for protecting the local resources and environment.

The group decided to continue the conversation next month at the Plan Commission meeting. Susan will extend an invitation to Bruce and Mike to attend and Bill will contact Greg Weiss to see if he could also attend. Greg is proposing to start a kayak based business in Cornucopia. There are some land use issues that will have to be discussed in relation to the business but Bill's thought was that if he could come and explain his plan that perhaps the Town could put together a more complete idea of how to support new small businesses by working with him from the ground up.

Fred made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Joni 2nd the motion and all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.

The next meeting will be on Thursday February 3rd at 7 pm at the Community Center.