

MEMO

Date: January 15, 2013

To: Alexandria Town Board

From: Ben Oleson, Hometown Planning
Zoning Administrator, Alexandria Township

Re: Zoning Administrator's Report

The Planning Commission held its regular meeting on Monday December 19, 2012. There were no public hearings. However, the Planning Commission is passing on a recommendation to amend the Township Zoning Ordinance in regards to Section V.G (Sanitation). This report also includes an update on the concerns related to Jack's Family Recycling Center.

Ordinance Update - Septic System Regulations

The amendment is proposed in order to comply with the requirements of Minnesota State Law, which requires that cities and townships update their septic system-related ordinances to be consistent with that of their County within one year of the date the County has updated their ordinance. The changes at the County and Township level have to do with recent revisions to State Rules made by the State Legislature and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). Douglas County updated its ordinance in April 2012 - meaning that the Township needs to update its ordinances by April 2013.

A public hearing was held by the Planning Commission on October 22, 2012. No public comments were received.

In large part, the ordinance recommended by the Planning Commission matches exactly with that of Douglas County's April 2012 revisions. The changes are mostly related to changing references to Douglas County or the Land & Resource Office so that they refer to Alexandria Township.

There were two areas where the Township Planning Commission recommended changes that would be considered more restrictive than Douglas County. These are as follows:

1. Section G.5.b.iv.2 (p. 66): The Planning Commission is recommending that the Township only allow the use of holding tanks to replace a failing sewer system "only when no other reasonable alternative exists." Douglas County would allow their use whenever the homeowner chose - even if there was room for a drainfield.
2. Section G.5.b.iv.12 (p. 68): The Planning Commission is recommending that large-scale centralized storage of septage (up to 50,000 gallons) by septic pumping businesses not be

allowed anywhere in the Township¹. This is more a clarification than being more restrictive, as Douglas County does not allow such storage except in their Agriculture Zoning District. Since the Township had not had any land zoned as Agriculture prior to taking over zoning in 2007, the Commission felt it would be less restrictive than the County to allow for it in the Township.

A copy of a proposed resolution adopting the ordinance, a resolution adopting a summary of the ordinance for publication in the newspaper, and the proposed ordinance itself are enclosed for your review and reference.

Jack's Family Recycling

The Council had established a subcommittee of two Planning Commissioners and two Board members, along with myself, to discuss the concerns related to violation of conditions on the 2007 Conditional Use Permit at Jack's Family Recycling Center. That subcommittee met on January 8, 2013 and I will be presenting their thoughts at the Board meeting.

If you have questions or concerns on the items in this report or any other issues, please do not hesitate to contact us. You can reach me by email at oleson@hometownplanning.com or by phone at 888-439-9793.

¹ The intent of centralized storing of septage is to allow for septage pumped out of septic tanks to be stored until it can be properly land applied – especially over winter months or times when fields are saturated.