

## WARSAW PLAN COMMISSION

March 10, 2014

**Present:** Tom Allen, Rick Keeven, Jeff Grose, Jim Gast, Michael Klondaris, David Baumgartner, Mike Valentine (City Attorney), Jeremy Skinner (City Planner), Tim Dombrosky (Assistant City Planner), Kim Arnold (Recording Secretary)

**Absent:** None

**Comprehensive Plan Discussion** – The members of the Plan Commission, City Planner Skinner, Assistant Planner Dombrosky, and Brad Johnson of Ground Rules conducted a work session to continue the process of drafting a new Comprehensive Plan for the City. The work session, which was open to the public, began at 4:30 pm and concluded at 6:45 pm, in order to begin the regularly scheduled Plan Commission meeting.

### **Call to Order**

Allen called the meeting to order.

The February 10, 2014 meeting minutes were reviewed and presented for approval. Keeven made a motion to approve the February 10, 2014 meeting minutes as presented; Grose seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The February 26, 2014 Special Session minutes were reviewed and presented for approval. Keeven made a motion to approve the February 26, 2014 Special Session minutes as presented; Baumgartner seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Oral and Written Reports**

None

### **Unfinished Business**

None

### **New Business**

**Residential Domestic Chickens Discussion-** Dombrosky gave an overview of the proposal for domestic chicken keeping and a brief summary from the meeting last month as well as the changes that were made within the proposal since the February meeting. Dombrosky has discussed the proposal with other communities who allow domestic chickens. The effects of raising chickens on neighboring properties and unforeseen issues have been discussed and considered. Dombrosky stated that many communities are allowing domestic chicken raising successfully. Keeven asked Dombrosky for clarification on several questions he had.

Allen opened the meeting to any person in the audience opposed to the proposal:

Mike Ragan- Resident of Kosciusko County but residing adjacent to the Paths of Deerfield and Patterson Place which are in the City Limits requested a requirement for fencing. He looks at twenty one back-yards from his property and with no buffers he already has to look at dog houses, kiddie- pools, grills, sheds, etc. He also expressed concern about the smell of chicken manure and the issue of butchering chickens in a residential area. He asks the City to re-think the proposal.

Larry Ladd-Resident of Warsaw is against the proposal. He feels chickens will de-value properties and the coops will be unattractive. He measured the distance between his house and the neighboring house. The distance is twenty feet. He is worried about disposal of the chickens and that the outside food source could attract unwanted pests including rodents and dogs. The smell also concerns him but the issue has been addressed. He feels individuals may wish to raise chickens because of the novelty of it but may end up becoming irresponsible when the novelty wears off. He asked who would enforce the new proposal and would Mike Cox be able to handle chickens and how.

Dan Smith-Resident of Warsaw is against the proposal. He has raised chickens when he had children in 4-H. He is concerned about Chicken Hawks being attracted to the coops. Dombrosky clarified that the coops will be completely enclosed per the proposal.

Allen closed the meeting to those against the proposal and opened it to individuals in favor of domestic chicken keeping.

James Bausch-Resident of Warsaw is in favor of the proposal. He feels the issues of concern have been addressed. He also reminded the Commission and audience that in order to have chickens a class will be required as well as plans provided to the Building and Planning Department. A permit will be required. He feels those interested in chicken keeping wish to be fair and responsible neighbors as hobbyist chicken keepers, not individuals just wanting cheap eggs.

Ellen Schwendeman-Resident of Warsaw is in favor of the proposal. She actually had chickens at one time, acquiring them without knowing it was not allowed. She gave them away in order to be compliant with the City Ordinance. She would like the chance to own chickens again. She feels they are nothing but beneficial in many ways. She feels the waste created by a chicken is actually less than a dog. Her neighbors enjoyed her chickens and benefited from the interaction.

James Bausch spoke in reference to unwanted chickens and the slaughter of chickens within City Limits. He has spoken to an individual who lives in Kosciusko County and is willing to take any unwanted chickens.

Allen closed the meeting to any individual speaking in favor of the proposal.

Allen recommended adding language to the proposal and bringing it to the meeting next month.

Dombrosky and City Attorney Valentine suggested the proposal be voted on at this meeting. Discussion among Commission members followed. Commission Member Grose requests a type of balance for all citizens. Klondaris asked if there would be penalties for noise, the aesthetics of the coop, etc. and he would like some type of recourse included in the proposal. Attorney Valentine explained that issues of non-compliance are handled legally. Keeven asked about size requirements of the coop. Gast made a motion to recommend the proposal to the Common Council. Baumgartner seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Keeven made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Gast seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **OTHER MATTERS THAT MAY COME BEFORE THE BOARD**

- The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Monday, April 14, 2014 @ 7:00 p.m.

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Tom Allen, President

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Kim Arnold, Recording Secretary