

**Minutes of the Nelson Township Planning Commission
July 20, 2005**

I. The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Kevin Grifhorst.

II. The minutes of May 18, 2005 were approved with corrections.

III. Public discussion for issues not on the agenda.

Shannon Rowland, co-owner of Rowland Excavating, Cedar Springs, stated that they had a special use permit denied several years ago. Their request was to wash, park, and perform repairs on their business vehicles. They have operated the business from their home for 9 years and also provide parking for several employee vehicles. They were advised, at the time, by the former township enforcement officer that this might be allowed if they were to purchase and move to 20 A. down the road. They purchased the land and are planning to build a residence on the 20 A. Shannon asked how to proceed with moving the business to comply with zoning. This was added to the agenda as New Business for further discussion.

IV. Public Hearing for Outdoor Automobile Sales

The public hearing was opened at 7:10 p.m. regarding the application by Rick Howland and site plan of the property leased from owner Georgia Bowen. Ms. Bowen expressed support of the application and concern for expediting the approval so her tenant may do business. She does not want to lose her tenant. She also stated that she is unable to meet the cost of paving improvements. The public hearing was closed at 7:13 p.m.

V. NEW BUSINESS

a. Out door Automobile Sales - Discussion opened with review of the application by Rick Howland and site plan of the property leased from owner Georgia Bowen. The property previously held annual license as a salvage and junkyard operation. In requesting the change of usage to car sales, pavement is required to meet code. The submitted drawing does not indicate the type number of existing lighting and signage. If the property owner is unable to provide paving of the proposed parking and display areas, a revised site plan might indicate partial paving for present use and detail future areas of paving for expanded future use. The PC recommends that applicant and owner work with Jerry Gross, enforcement officer, regarding the regulations and code to change the proposed site plan. The PC encourages the property upgrade and establishment of business, but must assure compliance for approval of the application. The following were requested in a revised site plan:

- Clarify the relationship with adjacent properties and how this proposed site fits into the overall property.
- Minimize driveway cuts.
- Clarify present and future areas of parking and paving.
- Include storm water management plan.
- Identify type and location of all lighting.
- Identify signage type and dimensions.

The applicant expressed concern that he needs to start this business so he can make a living. His primary objective is to sell cars, but this cannot be licensed until the zoning is approved. The applicant has secondary business of detailing cars at this time, but promotion of sales is not allowed. It was recommended that he consider the model of neighboring business, Patriot. This application was tabled until the next meeting.

Move item b. to final item of agenda.

Added item c. Excavating Business of Shannon Rowland - includes future site of 20 A., employs 4 full-time and 2 part-time employees. Five park on the site, not including her husband co-owner. Hours of operation are 7 a.m. - 6 p.m., with no Saturdays or Sunday. There is no storage or transfer of materials, but only parking, washing and repairs of a

dump truck and trailers. They wish to construct a building and the residence. Question raised if this meets definition of a home occupation? Dose this business fit under Ag RE District?

Township Counsel, Ross Leisman, recommends that Shannon submit request for variance, which the PC has option to grant with conditions. If, as Type II or Special Use, he suggests that PC consider ordinance amendment regarding Special Land Use. Perhaps revise under new Master Plan. Following the further discussion of options, Shannon was advised to submit a proposal, including number of employees and plans for future growth. The PC has nothing to move on and cannot make recommendation to the township board.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. Special Land Use for Private Road - Smith's do not have all requested approvals and did not attend.

- VII. Comments of the audience - Charles King, Tisdell Rd., adjacent property owner to the Smith's Private Rd., inquired how the public is involved in the revision of Master Plan. He was advised that the public may view the current Master Plan at any time and attend any meetings regarding the revision.

V.b. (new business) - Analysis of Master Plan

Robert Toland introduced himself to members of the PC. Overall, he states that the current MP looks good on paper but does not do the job in application. He notes that to revise the MP, the PC will need to "deprogram" and put all parts of current zoning on the table. The Zoning Ordinance is only the tool with which to implement the Master Plan.

The purpose of the MP is to:

- 1. Provide guidelines to protect private property**
- 2. Be used as a guide for decision-making**

There will be a need to coordinate review of the ordinances after the MP is in place. He noted that the Land Division Ordinance includes amendments rather than is updated according to the amendments. He includes a training component as the PC proceeds with the MP revision.

Robert summarized the highlights of the analysis:

- Need documentation of land use re existing physical characteristics and features, including surface water, wetlands, and related drainage of surface water.
- Need documentation of extent of agriculture, including identification of parcels and condition of soils and special crops.
- Need to utilize public participation techniques
- Need to review adjacent plans and seek alignment that makes sense along a 1-mile perimeter of the township.

Banner statement, i.e. - Improving the quality of life for those who live here.

Methodology - Robert explained that prior to work sessions, he will prepare and submit a packet of information for PC member review and consideration. This will add no demands on Laura, as clerk.

The project timeframes and involvement, including work sessions, will be based on two key variables: feedback (keeping focused on task) and extent of public participation.