

Eureka Township
Dakota County
State of Minnesota

Round Table Meeting of the Eureka Town Board and Planning Commission

September 16, 2009

Town Board members present were Jeff Otto, Carrie Jennings, Nancy Sauber and Dan Rogers.

Planning Commission Members present were Vince Mako, Kenny Miller, Pete Storlie, Cheryl Groves and Ken Olstad.

Also present was Clerk/ Treasurer Nanett Sandstrom to record minutes.

Call to Order

Chair Jeff Otto called the Special Meeting to order at 7:09 pm.
The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda

Improving internal communication and organization
If time allows, discussion of the Commercial/ Industrial taskforce

Timetable- The goal was that the Meeting would end by 9:00 p.m.

A motion by Supervisor Carrie Jennings: To approve the agenda. Motion seconded by Supervisor Dan Rogers. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Town Board Chair Jeff Otto made introductory comments to set the stage for constructive dialog. Jeff asked that those present move forward constructively and build on the good things done so far.

Chair Jeff Otto then offered the role as discussion moderator Planning Commission Chair Jeff commented that the subject breaks down into two steps. What have we done as individuals or as an organization that has not been constructive or helpful? How do we improve things going forward and build on the things that we have been doing right?

Chair Jeff Otto then offered the role as discussion moderator to Planning Commission Chair Vince Mako and he accepted.

Members felt that holding a roundtable on a yearly basis would be beneficial, once the new Planning Commission members are situated. Past members could be used as mentors.

Chair Otto turned the meeting over to Planning Commission Chair Vince Mako.

Vince Mako commented that it is his responsibility as Chair to communicate with the Town Board on behalf of the Planning Commission. He felt it is also his responsibility to communicate with the new Commission members. Vince stated that he was becoming more familiar with the position.

Jeff Otto commented that it has been asked in recent months why, having done the due diligence the Planning Commission does, the Town Board is taking so much time reviewing some things. The Town Board has the ultimate responsibility, Jeff stated. The Planning Commission can function as staff for the Town Board. The Town Board needs the Commission's input, but that does not relieve the Board from the responsibility to make sure it understands and agrees with the action being taken. It is a benefit that the review is taking place. It is an opportunity to know that it is being done right.

The length of Town Board meetings was discussed. The opinion was offered that they go too long for people that need to work the next day. The Town Board and Planning Commission discussed how the permitting process could be improved. Using a consent agenda was a suggestion. Applicants being placed on the consent agenda would not necessarily need to be present at Town Board meetings, but would need to be reachable by phone should a question need to be asked.

Work groups were discussed. The opinion was offered that it is important to have representation from all sides of an issue. Conflict of interest in work groups was discussed.

Informal meetings, possibly before or after a regularly-scheduled meeting, where open communication between members and/or citizens could take place, were discussed. Procedures under the Open Meeting Law would need to be followed. Round Table meetings are such a tool and are public meetings open to all.

Decisions need to be for the benefit of the citizens. The Town Board and Planning Commission have this as a common goal. It is important to keep an open mind.

Educating the citizens on the Ordinances is important.

Planning Commission Chair Vince Mako put together the following list of items:

1. Consent agenda used by the Town Board
2. Town Board representation at Planning Commission Meetings
3. Yearly Round Table Meetings, with outgoing members welcome to attend
4. Running tab of projects and their status
5. Adding an informal part of the meeting at Planning Commission Meetings
6. Add cell phone contact information on all applications for contact between 7 and 8:00 pm on the following Monday if applicants choose not to attend the Town Board Meeting.
7. Publish among Planning Commission members action items for the month.
8. In addition to the yearly Round Table, have some preparation for new members and leaders.
9. Active projects published in the newsletter.

Planning Commission Chair Vince Mako turned the meeting back over to Town Board Chair Jeff Otto.

A continuing project would be to review the Ordinances.

A motion by Vince Mako: To adjourn. Motion seconded by Supervisor Carrie Jennings.

Meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.