

**To PUBLIC HEARING AND CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION OF
TOWN OF PRIMROSE 2024 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
TOWN OF PRIMROSE, DANE COUNTY, WISCONSIN**

Tuesday, July 16th, 2024, 7:30 pm

8468 County Road A, Verona, Wisconsin

Dane County

AGENDA

1. Call to Order: Dale Judd called the meeting to order at 7:33pm. Martha Gibson, Alex Elkins, Vic Wahl, Brian Standing and Dellaneira Dewiarti were present.
2. Affirmation of Hearing notices: The Clerk affirmed that legal notices were published in the Mount Horeb Mail on June 27th and July 11th.
3. Public Comments

John Judd: He stated that he feels that this proposed Comprehensive Plan will likely pass. He expressed concern that the population is getting older. Many of the residents are on fixed incomes. He asks for new ideas in the Comp Plan to help with this. There are density units that are not accessible, and the Town could explore methods to allow residents to sell their density units. He would favor transfer of development rights within the township. He asks for new ideas.

Brad Clerkin: Supports keeping the Comprehensive Plan the same. Primrose is beautifully preserved farmland. Development capture is a concern.

Dawn Haag. Pointed out chapter 2, page 4, the projected need for housing. She feels that increasing the number of homes would lead to an increased tax base. Chapter 8 page 11; she is opposed to the 100' set-back from property lines. She would rather see a 50' set-back. Dawn feels that "historically cropped" is vague; She can't find definition of cropped land in the Plan. She asks for a better description of agricultural land.

Chapter 9 indicates that every year is supposed to have a Comprehensive Plan review; every 5 years with a minor revision, and every 10 years a major revision.

Wayne DeForest: Stated that this Plan does not feel like a plan but a history book.

Things need to evolve, and change with the times. We should be developing ways to coordinate to improve and solve issues.

Damion Babler: He likes that Primrose is unchanged, basically, and has little development. He values the farm feel to raise his family and is committed to agriculture. Policies seem positive for the community.

Jim Coons: Explained that he has recently purchased of 140 acres. He has one extra density. Already has 2 lots, and another lot that could be developed as it has never in crops. But he is frustrated that he can't cross ag land to get to that area, even with an existing historic field road. Asks for reasonable rules that are less restrictive.

David Garfoot: He appreciates that in the new Plan, Option B, regarding crossing agricultural land and using 2 density units, is more clear. He feels that that was what was intended in 2010. However he feels that the original farmhouse should not count as a density until it is split off of the original farm. Brian Standing explained that some towns count them, some do not. Many town policies will allow a new home to be rebuilt in, or near, the same location. Dave asks to keep the farmhouse exemption.

4. Discussion and possible action regarding adoption of the 2024 Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan.

Dale: Pointed out that the 100' set-back is to be applied "whenever possible". It is intended that there be flexibility in that criteria.

Alex: An example was cited that the house was located only 10' from the property line, as that was the only way to build on the site. His concern is that driveways, buildings, or workshops built right next to property lines could be hard to live next to. The 100' set-back used whenever possible means that the town will not reject an idea if they have a good spot for a house or drive. But it will encourage people to keep it away from the neighbors if possible. Has not talked to anyone opposed to it.

Martha: Agreed that the Town hopes to enforce rules of the Comprehensive Plan with a realistic assessment of each situation.

Brian Standing: A set-back of 10' is a County minimum. Many towns request a larger set-back.

Martha: The number of houses increased 25 % between 2000 and 2020. The rate of increase in Dane County is the same. We are seeing about more 3 houses per year. Primrose could easily have 63 more houses by 2040.

Dale: There are approved lots (approved since 2005) that are still not built on.

Regarding transfer of development rights, Springdale would like to buy the development rights, but that would mean that they get a house and we don't. We don't benefit from the tax dollars. Within-town transfer seems to make more sense.

Brian Standing: 10 or 12 towns in Dane County do have transfer of development rights. There is one town sending and receiving development units internally.

Martha: Transfer of development rights within the township only works if you have or allow a dense population area.

Brian Standing: Cross Plains has had a program for several years. Their program has specific language that allow people to get "bonus rights" for giving up something contentious like mining rights, etc. This can work to the overall benefit of a town.

Alex: While he is not closing down discussion of transfer of development rights (TDR), he feels that it is of no viable use for Primrose at this time. It would be useful for the individual, but not for the Town. Some people want more houses but most do not. We live out here because it is rural and has a low population density. More houses, taxes go up because of the school taxes. He feels that TDR would have negative impact for property taxes and would result in a population increase.

Martha: American Farmland Trust has a program to purchase development rights. The resident still owns the land, but it is locked out of development.

Brian and Niera gave a slide presentation. Dane County Planning and Development has updated the background and statistical data, and some policy. They have highlighted new data. Brian feels that the new Plan allows for the predicated population growth. Household and family income for Primrose is higher than Dane County as a whole. Unemployment is at 1.8%, which is about as low as possible. There are a few policy changes; Retirement homes have been more closely specified. Exemptions of existing farmhouse has been removed. Means the 2024 Plan those houses would count. Regarding solar fields, there is an increasing market for energy. The new Plan has language allows for mixed agricultural and solar. Decommissioning of solar fields is stated as being required.

Dale is opposed to large scale solar projects, whereas he feels that small scale seems to be acceptable.

Dale then opened the floor for more comments.

Al Colvin: Farmhouses should not count as density units. Could be used as a TDR gain for the landowner. He stated that he is in support of the rest of the proposed Plan.

Martha: Perhaps the policy needs to be clarified. Who is a farmer? Which was the primary farmhouse? What if there is a family split? She stated that this policy is negotiable. Could resolve some of the policy questions in order for it to be more rational.

Alex: Explained that the farmhouse policy took the most time. Asks that people share their opinions.

Jerry Judd: The original farmhouse shouldn't count if it is still on the original farm and hasn't been sold off.

Dawn Haag: In the Comprehensive Plan of 1981 all houses counted. After that it was just farmhouses. She pointed out that the policy has gone back and forth. 2010 counted, but was approved by only one vote.

Dankin Coons: Asked the definition of “historical cropland”. Are there thoughts of updating this? Alex explained that farmland can change, over time, by building on it. This results in a loss of farmland. Then becomes development. The Comprehensive Plan has policy designed to inhibit development.

James Coons: Questioned that a steep or rocky area is not really agricultural. Could not the Town look at each piece of land for its own value? Asks that use more flexible perspective be applied.

Dale referred to Chapter 8, page 7. That portion of the Plan requires that development be avoided based on soils, cropping history, commitment from the owner for continuous farm use, and so forth. All these criteria are taken into account. CRP land generates income even if it is highly erodible, or sensitive soils. Alex pointed out that the land needs to have been in crops 5 out of 7 years to qualify for CRP.

Martha suggested putting the farmhouse exemption back in, as there is public support for that. In 2004 there were 89 farmhouses. Dale pointed out that we are not seeing 89 people coming to ask for splits, but was satisfied to leave the farmhouse density exemption in.

Matha moved to put the farmhouse exemption back in. The density would only count if the farmhouse is surveyed off the original farm. Dale seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Brian Standing: Primrose can amend the Comprehensive Plan at any time. Definitions can be added using a 30-day notice prior to the hearing.

Martha: Asked that a typo correction be done on page 8 of chapter 8 to eliminate “2 below”, as that language was removed.

Sarah Llong: Asked regarding transient housing, Air-b-and-bs. Martha stated that the Town is not zoned for that. Brian Standing explained that tourist and transient lodging require a conditional use permit when the guests stay in the existing home. A separate building on a property would require use of another density. If you don’t meet the criteria you have to use general commercial zoning. Primrose does not want general commercial zoning. He further explained that if the Town wanted to allow general commercial zoning only for hotels or motels, language could be written. Each property would need to be deed restricted for that particular zoning use. Alternately the Town could petition the County to use a different zoning district for that use.

Martha moved to accept the plan as amended.

Alex seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment: Martha moved to adjourn at 9:00pm. Alex seconded. Motion passed 3-0. Minutes submitted by Ruth Hansen.