

September 17, 2015

The Scandia Planning Commission held a Special Meeting on the above date. The purpose of the meeting was to view “The Dollars and Sense of Preserving Community Character”. The following were in attendance: Chair Christine Maefsky, Commissioners Walt Anderson and Dan Squyres. Commissioner Travis Loeffler arrived later. Absent: Commissioner Jan Hogle. Staff present: Deputy Clerk Brenda Eklund. Council/EDA member Bob Hegland and community guest Carol Schwinghammer were also in attendance. Chair Maefsky called the meeting to order at 4:17 p.m.

Chair Maefsky introduced the video “The Dollars and Sense of Preserving Community Character” and explained that it was viewed during the Comprehensive Plan update a few years ago and it has relevant information to issues the Planning Commission is now discussing, such as the revisions to the sign ordinance.

Following the viewing, Chair Maefsky led the group in a discussion of the positive points and concerns that each came away with.

Commissioner Loeffler stated that “it’s never too late to start” struck him as a positive message and that the first question when considering development should be what’s right, and not based on economic reasons. His concern is how to balance community needs, ideas and interests with growth.

Commissioner Squyres noted that communities need a sense of place; growth is inevitable and planning for it does not fall into “one size fits all”. He stated that a starting point should be an inventory of cultural and architectural resources which define a community. Chair Maefsky advised him to refer to the current Comprehensive Plan as a source for this information.

Commissioner Anderson liked the idea that power lines can be buried. He stated that farms are good but these properties are not bringing in tax base money; communities need places for people to live and jobs to support them.

Chair Maefsky said a key point is to establish the unique character of a community and to capitalize on the economic value of this. Keeping this vision in front of everyone (a sense of place and purpose) can be difficult when other concerns come in and can get lost in the myriad of issues that a community is dealing with.

Council/EDA member Hegland agreed that a community should retain its sense of place through its development and could benefit from a local theme such as Scandia is a Scandinavian community. Hegland noted that Scandia is really in need of assisted living facilities. He stated that the Council should also view this informational video.

Carol Schwinghammer explained that she came away with the message that everything is connected through a sense of place with community development. The message “what are we building today that we want to preserve” was important. She recommended that Scandia’s vision statement should be promoted through a poster or placard.

The group agreed that the video was valuable to watch and a viewing should be scheduled every few years.

Anderson, seconded by Squyres, moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 4-0.

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Eklund
Deputy Clerk