

**STILLWATER COUNTY ZONING COMMISSION AND
PLANNING BOARD JOINT MEETING
MINUTES OF MEETING**

Wednesday, November 1, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.
West Annex Conference Room
431 Quarry Rd
Columbus, Mt 59019

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Carolyn Hutson (Chair), Rob Harper, Bob Van Oosten, Gary Enstrom, Norman Moss, Gerald Edwards

STAFF: Forrest Mandeville

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: None

I. CALL TO ORDER

Carolyn called the Planning Board meeting to order at 7:00; Rob Harper called the Zoning Commission meeting to order at 7:00.

II. ROLL CALL

A quorum of both the Zoning Commission and Planning Board was present.

a. Public Comment

No public comment

b. Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest and EX Parte Communications

None.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. **Approval of August County Planning Board Meeting Minutes.** It was noted that Greg and Norma Stene's last name was misspelled in the list of members of the public who were present. Bob made a motion to approve the minutes of the August County Planning Board with corrections; Gary seconded. With all in favor, motion passed.
- b. **Approval of October Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes.** Gary motioned to approve the minutes of the October Zoning Commission, Bob seconded. With all in favor, motion passed.

IV. FROKJER CONSERVATION EASEMENT

The Frokjer Conservation Easement, submitted for review by the Montana Land Reliance, was discussed. Forrest explained that conservation easements are required to be submitted for comment, but that comments are not binding. The consensus of the Board was that no comments were necessary.

V. TRI-CREEK 1 CONSERVATION EASEMENT

The Tri-Creek 1 Conservation Easement, also submitted by the Montana Land Reliance, was discussed. The consensus of the Board was that no comments were necessary.

VI. TRI-CREEK 2 CONSERVATION EASEMENT

The Tri-Creek 2 Conservation Easement, also from the Montana Land Reliance, was discussed.

Like the previous easements, the Board, by consensus, did not feel comments were necessary.

VII. DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS DISCUSSION

Forrest reviewed possible amendments to the Development Regulations.

Generally, the Board was favorable to the idea of combining boards to gain efficiencies.

Commercial agriculture and potential conflicts with other uses was discussed. The Board noted that while the concern was valid, they were concerned about a slippery slope towards legislating agricultural activities. It was noted that other options to limit animals on property exist, such as private covenants, or incorporation of unincorporated areas. It was also noted that many unincorporated communities have areas where pastures are next to residential uses and even within platted areas, so it is not an isolated issue and solutions would need to work county-wide.

Regarding the proposed changes to the Traffic Impact Analysis, the Board was generally agreeable with the changes, but there was some concern whether memos for smaller-impact development would be a workable change, or if consultants would still error on having a full analysis done.

Forrest discussed the possibility of creating specific rural community zoning for unincorporated communities to potentially address some of the complaints and impact the Planning Office has received. The Board was generally resistant to the idea, but expressed interest in learning more about the concept. Forrest said he would try to have examples at a future meeting.

There was general discussion about existing restrictions on property (such as water and sewer availability) and possibilities to protect prime agricultural land and existing uses while respecting private property rights.

VIII. ADJOURN

With no more business to discuss, Gary moved to adjourn the meeting, Rob seconded. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.