

Mission Township Planning Committee - Planning and Zoning Recommendations to Board
November 5, 2007

Charter

- Form Subcommittee to explore assumption of the Planning and Zoning (P&Z) process by Township

Problem Statement

- Perception that Mission Township wants more control over local land use
- Perception that Crow Wing County P&Z doesn't listen to the Township concerning local land use
- Perception that Crow Wing County doesn't enforce Ordinance violations

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Considerations

- Will need to develop and adopt a set of ordinances and set fees
 - Who will write ordinances and who is qualified to write them?
- Will probably need to copy all property records now held by County
 - Who will do it, how much will it cost?
 - Where will they be stored?
- Will need to form local planning commission and board of adjustment
 - Where do you find knowledgeable, qualified, unbiased people?
 - What will you pay them?
 - What will it cost to insure them?
- Will need to hire a P&Z Administrator
 - Who will write job description, interview and hire?
 - Who will supervise?
 - What will you pay them?

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November 5, 2007

Considerations (continued)

- What will it cost to insure them?
- How would we inform Mission Township property owners if we adopted P&Z - mailings, meeting, time, who would convey, cost?
- Problems will need resolution
 - What if a bad/indefensible decision is made?
 - How will the irate property owner be handled?
 - Lawsuits, or the threat of lawsuit is inevitable – attorney charges?
 - How will enforcement be handled?
- Other Municipalities have had problems with adopting P&Z
 - Bay Lake and Ideal Townships considered and rejected the idea
 - Irondale and Sibley got out of it
 - Manhattan Beach is getting out of it

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Alternative Courses of Action

- Option 1: Establish a Mission Township P&Z function
 - Discussion: This option is not cost effective for the Township based on a discussion of the items listed under the “Considerations” section of this document
- Option 2: Outsource the Mission Township P&Z function utilizing a service provided by a company such as Community Growth
 - Discussion: The cost for this option would rely on the permit fees to cover the services provided by the outsourced company. A document on the subject from Community Growth states in part: “Depending on the objectives of the township, nearly all of the costs of day-to-day administration can be paid by permit fees. Costs for enforcement actions, legal defense and other planning functions are more difficult to recover, although not impossible.” The implication is that this function is not a zero sum cost to the Township. Additional costs will be required by the township for coordination with the outsourced company. It also presents liability risks and other cost risks to the Township
- Option 3: Work with Crow Wing County Administration and P&Z to improve communication and effectiveness
 - Discussion: The County P&Z function already exists; we would be duplicating it by establishing our own function. There are problems with the performance of Crow Wing P&Z. Crow Wing Administration and P&Z have new personnel. There is an opportunity to improve communication with them. In two recent incidents, Crow Wing

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P&Z took the recommendation of our board which denied the variance requests. Also, our Town Board is established as a Planning Commission

Recommendations

- Adopt “Option 3” – work with Crow Wing Administration to improve the process and improve communication
- Establish a special committee or subcommittee of the Planning Committee of three or four individuals who are committed to meet regularly and who will make the effort to become knowledgeable on Crow Wing County ordinances, zoning issues, comprehensive plans and County procedures for permits and variance requests
 - Town Board should interview those who volunteer to be candidates for the special committee
- After the special committee has been established, meetings should be held with Crow Wing Administration to improve communication and effectiveness. For example, variance requests could be communicated in a more timely fashion by email