

PLATTE COUNTY

PLANNING AND ZONING

FEBRUARY 28, 2001

The Platte County Planning & Zoning Board met on the above date at 7:00 P.M. in the Platte County Courtroom. The following board members were present, Chairman Jay Collins, Bill Klein, Tina Willis, Stan Rieb and Clerk of the Board, Glenda Gray. Board member, Marty Shepard and Interim Director, Kenneth Kennedy were absent. Special guest speaker was Doug DeRouche.

Mr. DeRouche was invited to attend the meeting to aid the board members in their quest to get information to possibly change the interim zoning regulations in respect to high density confinement animal feeding operations. Questions were fielded from the board members.

Mr. DeRouche informed the board that Wyoming Premium Farms has four (4) facilities and they do not have plans to include any growth since the completion of the feed mill in Guernsey. WPF has 58 employees, three (3) part time and 55 full time. Only three of the full time employees are not from Platte County, the remainder were Platte County residents when they were hired. WPF had an estimated 1.7 million dollar payroll for the year 2000. WPF is the largest taxpayer in the County which is completely county assessed. Companies such as Basin Electric are state assessed. WPF paid \$95,739 in property taxes last year, which the County gets a 12 mill share or \$17,280. This will increase next year with the addition of the new feed mill on the tax rolls. WPF utilizes local merchants whenever possible, noting that some things can't be obtained locally.

Bill Klein posed the question, "Would increasing set backs to five (5) miles eliminate the possibility of new swine feeding operations from coming into the area?"

Mr. DeRouche replied, "There are some areas that he could not comment on because of present litigation."

Stan Rieb asked, "Realistically is there anyplace in the U.S. where people do not object to swine feeding facilities?"

Mr. De Rouchey replied, "Off the top of his head, he did not know of any."

Tina Willis asked, "What do you think WPF has done above and beyond the good neighbor policy?"

Mr. De Rouchey's response was:

1. We have tried biological additives which did stimulate anaerobic activity, however, it could have done more harm than good.
2. We have tried wind powered aerators, they did some good in keeping

the temperature more consistent on the top and bottom.

3. We have used electric generated aerators, which moved more air and we felt there was a distinct improvement in the air quality.

4. We have tried growing algae in stock tanks and transferring it into the lagoons. This was designed to work in 30 days, however, after as many as 90 days there was no difference.

5. The dillution solution is working the best to keep the ammonia levels down.

6. A solid separator is in the engineering design stages and will have to be approved by the DEQ before it can be implemented. This system would separate the solids and only the liquid would go into the lagoon.

7. There is a system where the liquid solution would run through "zealite" to filter out the ammonia. This system is being studied by an engineer in South Dakota.

8. A process called "barrier" which forms a cover on top of the lagoon made out of soy beans. This seals in nasty gases and eats the anarobic gases. Barley has been used, but is not very effective.

9. We are increasing the land acreage to apply the diluted solution. This has been permitted on three of the four sites. Each site has different rules and regulations for application.

Mr. Rieb asked, "Has the DEQ requested testing by monitoring wells?"

Mr. DeRouchey said that he is not a big advocate of monitoring wells, because it takes too long to detect if there is a problem. WPF does weekly checks on the wells as a requirement of the DEQ. Other than an added cost, it would not be a problem to have an independent person do random checks on the wells.

Mr. Rieb asked, "Are there DEQ standards for applying the solution to the land?"

Mr. DeRouchey replied:

1. Soil samples have to be taken on the land before application.
2. Lagoon water is tested for nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium. Nutrients must be used in agronomic amounts.
3. Agriculture amounts are different as to the type of crops.
4. It behooves one to apply agronomically so that you don't over apply.
5. Soil samples are taken regularly on the irrigated circles.

Mr. Collins asked, "Is the shanking of the effluent a viable procedure to reduce odor?"

Mr. DeRouchey replied that shanking is harder to do and costly because of the transportation costs. It is, however, a by-product that is asked for by some farmers.

Mr. Collins asked if the wording in the rules and regulations should be more specific on the design for lagoons or should it say "the best available technology should be used"?

Mr. DeRouchev said that most of the states are going away from the open lagoon system and using such methods as a digester type of system, which is a large concrete tank with a bladder on top. The gases are captured and used for heating to keep the digester working or for producing electricity. He did not think that Wyoming was leaning toward the elimination of the lagoon system at this time. There is a lagoon system virtually in every city in the state of Wyoming.

Mr. DeRouchev commented that the disposing of dead animals should not be done by the burying of carcasses. He said it is not a good method. He recommends the hauling off of the dead animals by a rendering plant or burning in an incinerator. They do both at WPF. Animals are collected every day except on week ends when, if needed, they are permitted to burn. At the nursery site they are permitted by DEQ to burn.

Mr. Collins asked about the additional travel on county roads and if there had been any hardships at the County level. Mr. DeRouchev said that the one road that had to be upgraded was paid for with grant money and WPF paid the balance, which was around \$50,000. The grant money was from the Industrial Road Fund, which awards money to road projects that contribute to economic development. The rest of the roads that go to the sites are in good condition and did not need any work. Some companies may not have the wear-with-all to make this kind of monetary contribution.

Mr. Rieb asked about the DEQ permits for applying of effluent. Mr. DeRouchev said that each site has different restrictions. Some of the restrictions were placed on the permits because of public input. There are no time limits on the permits as far as he knew. If NPDES permitting is put into place, their rules would supercede the state's rules. There would be no grandfathering of presently permitted sites and there would be time limits on a five year renewal basis.

Presently there is no closure bonding required on the sites, if there were to be new sites closure bonding is required through Chapter 20 and the County could incorporate its own requirements such as a letter of credit or insurance.

Mr. Dan Brecht offered written comments and questions to the board for follow-up with Mr. DeRouchev. He asked if the monitoring of the wells also covered the depth of the wells.

Mr. DeRouchev said that it does and they also have to meter the amount of gallons used.

Mr. Brecht asked how a leakage would be handled in the event of a spill while effluent is being transported.

Mr. DeRouchev said it would be their responsibility to clean up the spill, first by containing it, then pumping it up into tanks. Then the soil would have to be tested to see if the dirt would have to be removed. This would be done much the same way as oil spills are handled.

Mr. Brecht asked if the effluent application is based solely on nitrogen or is phosphorus, etc. included.

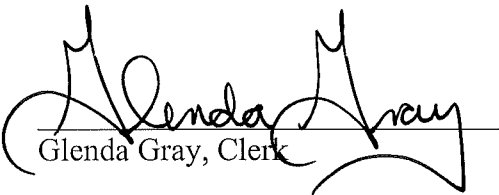
Mr. DeRouchev replied that all nutrients are tested.

Mr. Brecht asked how is the leakage at a WPF double liner lagoon being handled?

Mr. DeRouchev replied that when there was a leakage, they had to bring the water level down to where the leak was and then it was repaired . The leaks are generally caused by a defect in the boot, where something in the process did not work. It is not an easy process to find and determine the cause or the location of any leaks, but it is something that they check continually.

The next meeting will be held on March 27, 2001, at 7:00 P.M. Mr. Mike Humphrey, a real estate developer, will be invited to attend and review the sub-division regulations and offer some recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,


Glenda Gray, Clerk