

T H E T O W N O F  
**MERRIMAC**

S6911 State Highway 113 - P.O. Box 115  
Merrimac, WI 53561

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION**  
**April 19, 2012; 7:00pm**

Present were Richard Grant, Chair; John Gaedke, Tim Healy, Dan Purcell, Eva Spear, Frank Olah, Doug Hill, and Dawn Peetz. Also present was Tim McCumber, Town Administrator.

Grant called the commission meeting to order; McCumber certified compliance with the open meetings law. The commission considered the minutes of the March 21, 2012 with corrections, motion Healy, second Gaedke for approval. Motion passed. There was no **OLD BUSINESS**. Under **NEW BUSINESS**, the commission discussed a request from Jody Scott to amend the Town of Merrimac Zoning Ordinance to allow for chickens and other poultry or small livestock in the Single Family Residential District. McCumber reported that the Scotts have chickens, turkeys, and goats on a 1 acre parcel in the Ag District, however, because the property is not an operation farm, the parcel is to comply with Residential District standards which prohibits animals and fowl that are not classified as household pets unless they have at least 5 acres. He noted the property owner could apply for a variance, however, a conditional use would be a better application, but the ordinance does not allow for a conditional use. McCumber's noted several concerns about a zoning amendment, particularly the town's lack of law enforcement as well as lack of a storm or sewer system. He provided the board with a packet from the Scott's noting the benefits of raising chickens and McCumber provided documentation of issues in cities that have made such allowances. Jody Scott said that she thought it was difficult to find a comparison to Merrimac, but everything that was provided is for larger communities. She did present some papers showing that household pets are also disease carriers as McCumber's packet noted the concern for agriculture related diseases. The board discussed several aspects of this discussion. A motion was then made by Grant to deny the request and to amend the zoning ordinance with a recommendation to review the ordinance for conditional uses. Second by Healy to open the discussion. Motion passed. Peetz abstained.

Under **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**, McCumber reported that the Siedenbug property, which burned in August 2011 was finally cleaned up and removed. The town filed notice the property owner was in violation of the town's nuisance ordinance after failing to remove the home and several attempts to have the site cleared. It was finally removed and the town will receive a forfeiture of over \$1,000. The town has only issued 10 building permits to date totaling \$185,640. This is a little behind 2010, but the value is considerably lower as there have been no new home starts year-to-date.

Motion to adjourn by Spear, second by Purcell. Motion passed.