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TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 1994

County to examine sewage proposal

Herald Staff Report

An informational meeting is scheduled tonight to discuss the proposed new Mower County individual sewage treatment ordinance.

It begins at 8 p.m. following the regular meeting of the Mower County Planning Commission in the commissioners' conference room at the courthouse in Austin.

Already, the proposed new ordinance has attracted attention and some controversy.

The Mower County Board of Commissioners refused to act on it when the ordinance was presented to them, saying it required more study and that the public should have another opportunity to express opinions.

That is why the planning commission was asked to hold an informational meeting tonight in an attempt to answer questions about the proposal.

Some opponents suggest it will cost "thousands of dollars" to make the necessary changes being requested by the proposed new ordinance.

County officials hope to implement minimum standards and requirements this summer with the design and site evaluation requirements to come next year.

Permit application requirements would also become effective this summer if the proposed ordinance is approved.

Licensing and certification requirements would be implemented in 1994 and 1995, respectively.

Bill Buckley and the Mower County Environmental Health Department will have the responsibility of enforcing the new law.



Bill Buckley

Among the major changes being proposed are:

- Two sites: This will apply to new lots and to lots that can be combined to create one lot large enough for two sites. Existing lots will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and may be exempted from this requirement.

- Failing systems: Besides on complaint, any failing system must be repaired or replaced at the time of a property sale. An evaluation will be required by a certified site evaluator.

- System maintenance: The tank and other system components must be inspected or pumped at least once every three years.

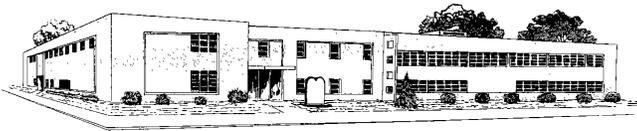
Also, new first-time-ever standards for septage treatment and disposal will be required, permits will be required for permanent sites and notification must be given of temporary sites and all systems would have to be designed by a certified designer.

Also, enforcement of the ordinance would be done by complaint through the Mower County District Court system. There would not be hearings as conducted now by the planning commission.

According to county officials, the purpose of the ordinance is to provide minimum standards for the design, construction, installation, location, use, capacities and maintenance of individual sewage treatment systems.

Also, it would regulate the treatment and disposal of septage to protect the surface and ground waters in Mower County from contamination.

Opponents argue that the ordinance goes beyond what is required by the state.



MOWER COUNTY

AUSTIN, MINNESOTA

55912

Minutes Mower County Planning Commission

Members Present: Duane Hanson, Greta Kraushaar, Meri Jo Lonergan, Don Olson, Keith Voorhees.

Members Absent: Gary Braaten, Oliver Hillier.

Others Present: Herb Hanson, Bill Buckley, Daryl Franklin.

Chair Duane Hanson called the informational meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, May 16, 1994, at the Mill Inn in Dexter, Minnesota. Chair Hanson welcomed the citizens attending the meeting.

Daryl Franklin presented background on the Mower County Water Plan.

Bill Buckley presented the Proposed Individual Sewage Treatment Ordinance. A question and answer period followed. The attached sheet contains some of the questions asked at the meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m. on motion by Meri Jo Lonergan, seconded by Don Olson. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Daryl W. Franklin
Planning Director

DWF:lka
minutes\plan.

Questions from May 16, 1994, Sewage Ordinance Meeting - Dexter, MN

Bill Bids from Sargeant:

- 1.) How long will new septic systems last before they are outdated by new State rules, etc.?

Ralph Boelke:

- 2.) What if the water table is so high and systems don't work?

Ms. Reed from Lyle area who is a Facility Engineer for a major firm:

- 3.) Trouble with 2 sites for treatment systems per lot.
Why do you have this requirement, technology may change?

Charles Hensch from Sargeant:

- 4.) The pumping of the septage.
Can it be taken to your waste water treatment plants and disposed of there?

Dennis Steinberg:

- 5.) Dumping of septage on the land.
Are you going to be checking for ph and other state items?
Also the bonding requirements, bonding companies are against open ended bonding.

Don Mann from the Rose Creek area:

- 6.) Explain the requirement for no discharges to the surface.
What is really included, and if there is no open discharge, is the system ok?

Unknown author:

- 7.) Have you checked the effluent coming out of a drain tile that is connected to a sewer system for water quality? Also is it impacted by the length of the field drain tile?

Don Dibbit of Austin:

- 8.) What are the criteria for testing septic tank effluent? Can we have a separate lab check our effluent?

Gene Tapp:

- 9.) Will all systems that discharge to the surface have to be corrected by 1997?

Mr. Tapp also wants the County Board to back up or back off on surface discharge as discussed in the blue sheets.

Sewage Ordinance Questions
May 16, 1994
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Artison from Rose Creek:

- 10.) We should be more concerned about hog pits and these operations than septic tanks. Also wanted to know if you can build a lagoon for individual septic systems similar to feedlot lagoons.

Duane Skov:

- 11.) How do we do inspection of a septic system as discussed in the ordinance?

Roger Curtin:

- 12.) How about seeking cost sharing for the rural areas to update septic systems?

Dennis Steinberg:

- 13.) Stated that we should read the new book called, "The Demise of Rural Minnesota."

Unknown female:

- 13.) In a tile line many homes may be connected to a tile line. How do we verify which home is actually connected to the tile line?

Brittsburg:

- 14.) Stated that he was concerned about Richard Hamilton dumping milk products on a small parcel which may contaminate water and we should be more concerned about this than sewer systems?

Citizen:

- 15.) Will the County have to add personnel to administer the new ordinance?

Terry Plathe:

- 16.) Where will the schools be held for septic tank installers/evaluators, etc. What is the cost?

Citizen:

- 17.) Are we starting a whole new business for evaluators and designers?

Sewer Ordinance Meeting

05/16/94

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Citizen:

- 18.) Are we more strict than Olmsted County?
- 19.) What is happening in Bellman Addition? What assistance are they receiving?
- 20.) What is the average price for a regular septic tank and drainfield? What is the price for a average mound septic tank and drainfield?
- 21.) Can you use an existing septic tank if it is in good condition and just add a new drainfield?
- 22.) How is the standard requirements for septic tank and drainfield size determined?
- 23.) What if you tear down an old house, does a new system have to be updated?
- 24.) Regular drainfield and mound. Where does the effluent go from a mound system?
- 25.) Who determines if the septic tank meets standards?

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