

# DRAFT

## **COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF SPRING BROOK DUNN COUNTY, WISCONSIN**

### **Acknowledgements**

The Plan Commission would like to thank all the citizens and public officials who assisted in developing this plan over the last three years. Without all their valuable input and help it could not have been accomplished.

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# PART I

## INTRODUCTION

### History of the Town of Spring Brook

The first evidence of human habitation in Wisconsin dates to 11,000 years ago. Natives shaped the eco-system by using fire to maintain prairie and savanna. Native people hunted deer, black bear, and more than 25 other species of mammals. They also consumed mussels, birds, fish, and nuts and fruits. They appear to have planted orchards, which European explorers described as "planted tree groves," to provide supplies of food. Chestnuts, locusts, oaks, ash, basswood, beech, cottonwood, maple, pecans, medlars, mulberries, and plums grew in profusion.

Indians also dispersed several plants. The Menomonie spread wild rice wherever they passed. Many of today's highways were originally roads between native habitations. By the time of European settlement, the region now known as Dunn County was inhabited by the Santee Dakota who feuded with the Ojibwa.

The French *coureurs de bois* (woods rovers) hunted along the Red Cedar and the Chippewa. Pierre Le Sueur offers the first mention of the Red Cedar, "another river of great length." Jean Baptiste Perreault established trading posts on the Red Cedar. In 1822 Perkins built the first sawmill there, and by 1829 lumbering was underway. Knapp, Stout, and Company, which began in 1846, became one of the largest lumbering operations in the world. Knapp, Stout owned over one-half million acres of pine land, most of it in the Red Cedar Valley. The company cut over two billion board feet of pine and conducted retail and wholesale merchandising operations, banking, farming, a steam mill, a shingle mill, a water mill, steamboats, and a stage line. Knapp, Stout strongly influenced construction, the railroads, and public opinion. Residents of Dunn County were dependent upon the company for goods, loans, and wages.

The Dunn County Pinery Rifles, later Company K, contributed significantly to the Union victory in the Civil War. Company K fought in the Peninsular Campaign, Second Bull Run, Antietam, Chancellorsville, the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor, and Petersburg. The military unit was organized in May and June, 1861 and disbanded on July 11, 1865.

In the twentieth century nearly 200 men and women from Dunn County served in World War II. Eleven Dunn County residents gave their lives in the Korean conflict, and eleven more died in Vietnam.

### Government

Spain, France, England, and the United States have held jurisdiction over what is now Dunn County.

On July 13, 1787 the Northwest Territory, including what is now Wisconsin, was established. On April 29, 1836 the Territory of Wisconsin was created.

Dunn County was originally part of St. Croix County, then a part of Chippewa County. On February 19, 1854 Dunn County was set off from Chippewa County.

On August 11, 1856 the Dunn County Board of Supervisors created seven townships: Menomonie, Spring Brook, Eau Galle, Dunn, Rock Creek, Bear Creek, and Pepin. Elk Mound was set off from Spring Brook on December 30, 1865.

The first town law was enacted to stop hogs from running loose. The fine was \$5. On April 7, 1857 a town tax of \$300 was raised: \$100 for bridges, \$50 for school, and \$150 for incidental expenses. In 1883 the Spring Brook Grange raised \$450 to build a town hall.

## Settlements

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆ The early settlers found the land to be "well-timbered," filled with animals, including wolves.◆ One early account describes the region as "heavily overgrown with oak and populated by bear, wolves, prairie chickens, and a tribe of Ojibwas at nearby Elk Lake."◆◆◆ A large number of the settlers came from Scotland, England, Norway, and Germany.◆ The settlers raised cattle, sheep, hogs, wheat, corn, barley, and alfalfa.◆ Dairying was important.

A post office was located in the Amy settlement and a Baptist church was organized in the locality.

Fall City was settled by members of the Wiggins family in May, 1855.◆ By 1856 H.B. Wiggins had erected a sawmill and was sawing lumber.◆ In the mid-1860s Fall City featured a sawmill, a grist mill, a store, two blacksmith shops, a photograph gallery, a carpenter shop, two hotels, and some dwelling houses.

Rumsey's Landing was a steamboat landing on the north bank of the Chippewa.◆ Besides a ferry, there was an elevator and a grain warehouse.

Waneka settlement was located on Muddy Creek, in the northern part of the town.◆ In 1852 B. Fowler built a hostelry and a stage station.◆ The stage lost importance after the railroads arrived.◆ Waneka and Waneka Cemetery were named after a young Indian girl.

## Schools

In 1856 the Waneka School District became the first school outside Menomonie.◆ By 1877 the town of Spring Brook had eight school districts.◆ Shadylawn became the ninth.◆◆◆ In 1962 a new elementary school in Spring Brook was built as part of the Elk Mound District.◆ Kindergarten and First Grade were taught there for 30 years.◆ It was closed down after the 1992-1993 school year when a new elementary school was built in Elk Mound. Today almost all of the Spring Brook primary and secondary students are in either the Menomonie or Elk Mound school districts.

## Churches

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆ The Salem United Methodist Church of Iron Creek began in 1860.◆ It merged with United Methodist in 1868.

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆ The Salem Evangelical Church was created in 1861.

The German Methodist Episcopal Church was established in 1864.◆ The First Quarterly Conference was held in the home of John Quirling (now spelled Quilling) of Spring Brook.

In 1871 the Reverend Amund Johnson organized Spring Brook Evangelical Lutheran Congregation at old Meridean.◆ In 1875 the first church was built at Meridean.◆ A new and larger church was constructed in 1889.

In 1902 the Evangelical Lutheran St. John's Society (German) was established.

The First Nazarene Church in Wisconsin, the Forest Center Church of the Nazarene was organized on December 14, 1913.◆

The Spring Brook Norwegian Lutheran Congregation was established in March, 1917 and a church was built two miles northwest of Caryville.

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆ Amy Chapel, now non-denominational, was built by the Free Will Baptists.

## Spring Brook Geography and Topography

The central area of the Town of Spring Brook contains broad, mostly flat farm fields.◆ Slightly rolling wooded hills can be found on the eastern and western edges of the township.◆ Old Elk Lake is a large, shallow prairie pothole lake located in the north central part of the township.◆◆◆ Muddy Creek Wildlife Area, a portion of which lies on the north central edge of the township, is state owned land used for hunting, recreation and habitat preservation.◆ There are three major streams in the township.◆ Iron Creek flows through the northwestern corner and drains into Muddy Creek.◆ Muddy Creek flows north to south through the center of the township and drains into the Chippewa River.◆ Elk Creek flows north to south along the eastern edge of the township into Elk Creek Lake and from

there into the Chippewa River. Elk Creek Lake is a manmade lake that was created to generate electric power for the local residents. ♦ The township also has marshes, woodlots, and planted prairie grass that support pheasants, rabbits, squirrels, ducks, deer, muskrats, ruffed grouse, and turkey. ♦ A more detailed description of the geology and topography of the township can be found in Appendix D.

### Sources:

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O'Brien, P.M. *Spring Brook Saga: ♦ The Settlement and Growth of Eastern Dunn County*. Bradenton, FL: ♦ Printing Professionals and publishers, 1994.

### Background and Authority

Wisconsin Act 9, commonly recognized as Wisconsin's "Smart Growth" legislation, was approved in the 1999-2001 state biennial budgets. Under the new law, any program or action of a town, village, city, county, or regional planning commission after January 1, 2010 that affects land use must be guided by, and be consistent with, an adopted Comprehensive Plan and meet the standards of Chapter 66.1001 of the Wisconsin Statutes. The town utilized the following State Statutes to comply with the planning mandate. Chapter 60.61 authorizes and outlines the relationship of planning and zoning for town government.

Chapter 62.23 enables the town to exercise village powers. On April 10, 2001 the town adopted village powers allowing the formation of a Plan Commission, to develop a Comprehensive Plan and to do other planning activities. ♦ On April 13, 2004 a majority of citizens present at the annual town meeting presented and voted for a resolution that removed village powers from the town board. ♦ ♦ On April 12, 2005 a majority of citizens present at the annual town meeting presented and voted for a resolution that reinstated village powers for the town board.

State law requires a Plan Commission to draft and recommend adoption of a comprehensive plan. On August 29, 2005 the Plan Commission adopted a resolution sending the completed draft of the plan to the Town Board for review.

As per a state mandate all units of government must comply with the Wisconsin Uniform Dwelling Code (UDC). On August 9, 2004 the town adopted ordinance number 22 authorizing a local control to inspect and enforce the UDC. ♦ Some other ordinances adopted by the Town of Spring Brook are:

- 7 Jul 1960 ♦ a setback ordinance
- 6 Jan 1975 ♦ joint action emergency government ordinance
- 17 Jan 1977 ♦ ordinance on naming of town roads
- 13 Feb 1978 ♦ a speed zone ordinance
- 7 Jun 1979 ♦ ordinance on closing hours of Elk Creek Lake beach
- 10 May 1983 ♦ ordinance regarding collection of taxes
- 14 Jun 1983 ♦ mobile home ordinance

- 13 Dec 1983 ❖ snowmobile ordinance
- 16 Apr 1991 ❖ driveway ordinance
- 8 Dec 1998 ❖ alternative claim procedure, refunds of tax payments
- 5 Dec 2001 ❖ subdivision access requirement
- 5 Mar 2002 ❖ driveway ordinance
- 7 Oct 2002 ❖ Plan Commission ordinance



### Land Use Planning Process

It was the responsibility of the Plan Commission to learn about past community changes, changes likely to occur in the future, and community likes and dislikes and to define what residents want the community to become. The Plan Commission studied supporting information and evaluated Township needs. Community participation in this process included surveys, visioning sessions, newsletters and open houses. The Plan Commission is charged with the responsibility for making recommendations to the Town Board to ensure that implementation of the plan is consistent with its goals and objectives. Based on its findings, this plan makes recommendations to the Town Board regarding appropriate actions necessary to address protecting/preserving valuable Township characteristics for a twenty year planning period.

Recommendations in the comprehensive plan are long range and it is important to understand that some of them may not be implemented for a number of years. It is possible that some recommendations may never be implemented. Consequently, recommendations to create local ordinances need not be drafted and implemented immediately. The same holds true with respect to county zoning. Currently the Town is not pursuing becoming a zoned Township. ❖ However, if at some point in the future the Town would want to become zoned, the Implementation Element outlines this process. If the Town were ever to become zoned, existing county-zoning districts may not need to be immediately changed to reflect the town❖s comprehensive plan. However, if the town were to become locally zoned, the town would need to draft its basic zones and could make changes to zoning districts to reflect the town❖s comprehensive plan as needed. All recommendations, goals, objectives, and changes should be made incrementally.

### Comprehensive Plan Objectives

Development has existed in the town since its inception, but it has only been in the last 10-20 years that these pressures have become an issue within the Township. Development pressures have reached the point where residents believe that the town will risk losing its rural character without planning in place.

The purpose of the plan is to provide information about the Town, its resources, its residents, and its existing character. The plan also addresses community concerns about what the community wants to be in the future and describes how it intends to get there. The Town Board and Plan Commission will use the plan to make decisions about future growth and development.

The plan is organized around nine planning elements: Issues and Opportunities; Housing; Transportation; Agriculture, Natural and Cultural Resources; Utilities and Community Facilities; Economic Development; Land Use; Intergovernmental Cooperation; and Implementation. The elements can be found in Part II of this document. ❖ Following are general overviews and an analysis framework addressing the nine planning elements and general overviews.

#### ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Provides demographic information and identifies development trends by identifying key issues and opportunities, researches selected trends in the local economy and demographics, and generates population projections.

#### HOUSING

❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖ Provides basic information on housing stock in the community, analyzes trends, projects the number of households to be added over the next twenty years, identifies potential problems and opportunities associated with accommodating varied housing needs, and reviews State

and Federal housing programs.

### TRANSPORTATION

Provides basic information about existing transportation networks in and around the township. It assesses existing transportation facilities, reviews statewide planning efforts, develops a long-term transportation plan, and develops goals and objectives.

### AGRICULTURE, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Collects agricultural information on the variety of agricultural resources and programs in the area. It develops maps of important agricultural resources such as productive soils, topography, land cover, and water features. It identifies areas of significant agriculture and areas of non-agricultural importance.

Provides basic information on a variety of natural and cultural resources in the area, and develops maps of significant and/or environmentally sensitive areas such as productive soils, topography, land cover, and water features.

### UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Provides information on facilities and services such as solid waste management, sewer and water, recreational areas and schools. It also identifies public facilities and services that need to be expanded. This baseline information can then be used to provide direction for utility, facility, and service growth as the population increases in the future.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Provides basic economic information about the Township by analyzing the economic base of the community and statewide trends affecting the community and region. It identifies desirable businesses and economic development programs at the local and state level and assesses the community's strengths and weaknesses relative to attracting and retaining economic growth.

### LAND USE

Reveals the importance and relationships of land uses by preparing an existing land use map, identifying contaminated sites, assessing real estate forces, identifying conflicts, developing 20-year projections, and preparing a future land use map.

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Assesses the Township's role and function in joint planning and decisions with surrounding jurisdictions. It analyzes the relationship with local, regional and state jurisdictions, compiles existing cooperative agreements, identifies potential conflicts, and develops a process to resolve conflicts within its bounds and between itself and other communities.

## **Implementation**

Describes specific actions and sequences to implement the integration of the above elements. It develops a process to measure progress and develops a format for updating the plan.

## **Community Involvement and Input**

The development and implementation of a successful land use and development plan, and the creation of policies and management tools are based largely on community involvement. Planners involve the community by gathering public input, educating the public, and fostering a sense of ownership of the plan.

The purpose of this section is to review the community involvement activities and summarize input obtained during the planning process.

- At the April 2002 annual meeting Village Powers were adopted.
- In March, 2003 the 1<sup>st</sup> landowner survey was mailed.
- On March 22 and again on April 2 of 2003, two visioning sessions were hosted by the town and facilitated by UW Extension educator.

- On September 11, 2003 the Plan Commission hosted an open house to discuss and present results of the Visioning Sessions as well as the results from the citizen opinion survey.
- In August, 2004 a 2<sup>nd</sup> landowner survey was mailed.
- On October 25, 2004 the Plan Commission held an open house to present progress in the planning process including Goals and Objectives.
- In April of 2005, a newsletter was sent out to township landowners informing them of plan progress.

## Survey Results

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆ Visioning and survey results can be found in Appendix B.

## Summary of Citizen Opinion Survey◆

The Plan Commission used the survey information to guide the formation of the Comprehensive Plan.◆ The following paragraphs represent the feeling of the township residents with regards to residential need and land use.◆

The responses to the survey questions and comments made at the visioning sessions indicate that people of the Town are concerned that the Town may lose its rural character. They support the idea of preserving farms and farmland, particularly prime farmland. Most citizens do not find the noise, dust, and odors of farming difficult to live with, and they enjoy the open space, woodlands, and wildlife habitat. The vast majority are willing to support land use policies and regulations designed to preserve the rural and agricultural nature of the Town, within reason.

## Goals

A goal is a long-term end toward which programs or activities are ultimately directed, but might never be attained. The goal represents a general statement that outlines the most preferable situation that could possibly be achieved if all the objectives and policies were implemented. According to survey results, the following list of goals are the Town◆s desired destination:

- Preserve productive farmland
- Preserve the rural character of the town
- Balance property/development rights and regulations
- Develop an enforceable road construction ordinance
- Develop a good neighbor/right to farm code of rural living document◆ (objective to preserve rural character)
- Encourage economic development that parallels town goals
- Protect ground water