

Thomas County Planning Commission
Regular Meeting
January 5, 2022

The Thomas County Planning Commission convened in open and public session at 2:02 p.m., January 5, 2022 in the Commissioners meeting room of the Thomas County Courthouse, Thedford, NE. Members present were Royce Jennings, Shane Pettit, Miles Maseberg and Jay Jones. Absent – Bobbi Scott, Carolyn Warren, and Linda Cowdin. Also present were Thomas County Zoning Administrator Lorissa Hartman, Richard Jameson, Tanya Oseinger and Jeff Essman.

Chairman Jones stated open meeting guidelines are posted as required by law and copies are available, if requested.

Notice of meeting was given by publication in the Thomas County Herald on December 23, 2021 and mailed to landowners of record.

Motion made by Jennings and second by Pettit to adopt the January 5, 2022 agenda. Ayes – Maseberg, Jennings, Jones and Pettit. Nays – none. Absent – Scott, Cowdin, and Warren. Motion carried.

Motion made by Pettit and second by Jennings to approve the November 4, 2021 meeting minutes as published in the Thomas County Herald on November 11, 2021. Ayes – Pettit, Maseberg, Jones, and Jennings. Nays – none. Absent – Warren, Scott and Cowdin. Motion carried.

Chairman Jones recessed the regular meeting at 2:04 p.m. to open the public hearing.

Public hearing was held on Special Use Permit filed by Richard & Tammi Jameson for a barndominium
In PT. SE1/4 Section 9 – Township 23- Range 28 West, Sixth P.M., Thomas County Nebraska.

Richard advised the board that this will be a 30x60 building with the living quarters being 30x30 and the remainder being a garage. The original plan will be to utilize the building for family living quarters and afterwards it will be used as an Air B & B. He stated that both the septic and well will be registered.

Richard stated that he believed it was best to keep this property zoned as commercial since it will eventually be used as the Air B & B.

No other questions or concerns about the permit were voiced.

Chairman Jones closed the public hearing at 2:08 p.m.

Motion made by Maseberg and second by Jennings to recommend approval of the Special Use Permit filed by Richard Jameson to the Thomas County Board of Commissioners. Ayes – Jones, Jennings, Pettit and Maseberg. Nays – none. Absent – Cowdin, Warren and Scott. Motion carried.

Motion made by Maseberg and second by Pettit to keep all officers the same as last year and to cease nominations and cast a unanimous ballot. Ayes – Pettit, Jones, Maseberg and Jennings. Nays – none. Absent – Warren, Scott, and Cowdin.

Chairman – Jay Jones

Vice Chair – Carolyn Warren

Secretary – Bobbi Scott

Discussion was held on revisions to the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Regulations. Discussion was held on the concerns of conservation easements. Some Counties have been denying conservation easements and the planning board would like to obtain more information on this subject. Concerns were voiced on the 30x30 plan and conservation easements. The board decided to have another meeting on February 24th at 4:30 p.m., so that more information can be obtained on this subject.

No public comment.

Chairman Jones adjourned the meeting at 2:26 pm.

Thomas County Zoning Administrator

Lorissa Hartman

Thomas County Planning Commission
Regular Meeting
February 24, 2022

The Thomas County Planning Commission convened in open and public session at 4:30 p.m., February 24, 2022 in the Commissioners meeting room of the Thomas County Courthouse, Thedford NE. Members present were Royce Jennings, Carolyn Warren, Shane Pettit, Jay Jones. Absent – Miles Maseberg, Bobbi Scott, Linda Cowdin. Also present were Thomas County Zoning Administrator Lorissa Hartman, Keith Hartman, Tom Witt, Twyla Witt and Melanie Coffman.

Chairman Jones stated open meeting guidelines are posted as required by law and copies are available, if requested.

Notice of meeting was given by publication in the Thomas County Herald on February 10, 2022.

Motion made by Warren and second by Jennings to adopt the February 24, 2022 agenda. Roll call vote: Ayes – Jones, Pettit, Warren, Jennings. Nays – none. Absent – Maseberg, Scott, Cowdin. Motion carried.

Motion made by Pettit and second by Warren to approve the January 5, 2022 meeting minutes as published in the Thomas County Herald on January 13, 2022. Roll call vote: Ayes – Warren, Jennings, Jones, Pettit. Nays – none. Absent – Scott, Cowdin, Maseberg. Motion carried.

Planning Board member Maseberg arrived at 4:32 p.m.

Chairman Jones opened the discussion of Conservation Easements and the lack of language in the current Thomas County Comprehensive Plan to address these easements. Chairman Jones recounted the conversations that he has held with the Thomas County Attorney and Dave Sands of The Nebraska Land Trust. He presented information that he had found from the proposed language in the Cherry County Comprehensive Plan and the current state statutes about conservation easements.

The board and public reviewed and discussed the information provided to them.

Motion made by Jones and second by Maseberg to draft an amendment for the Thomas County Comprehensive Plan that would incorporate the language and state statutes for conservation easements. Roll call vote: Ayes- Jennings, Pettit, Warren, Jones, Maseberg. Nays – none. Absent – Scott, Cowdin. Motion carried.

Discussion was held on the inquiry from CPPD of permit needed to install EV chargers at an existing convenience store/service station. After review of the Commercial District and conversations with the Thomas County Attorney and the Lincoln County Planning Administrator, it was determined that no permit would be required to add this to an existing commercial business in the Commercial District. The installation would still need to comply with the setbacks set forth in the Commercial District.

Discussion was held on whether a permit would be required for a cell phone company to update equipment on an existing tower but not change the foot print, height or structural integrity. The current regulations do not state how this type of scenario should be handled. The board agreed that language needed to be added to the tower regulations that would state the following.

No permit shall be required for infrastructure changes, such as updating/changing out equipment on existing towers as long as there are no changes to height, structural integrity or footprint.

Chairman Jones and Zoning Administrator Hartman will work on the drafted information and once complete will have the Thomas County Attorney review the documents. Public hearings will then be held before changes can be recommended to the Thomas County Board of Commissioners.

No other public comment at this time.

Chairman Jones adjourned the meeting at 5:24 p.m.

Thomas County Zoning Administrator
Lorissa Hartman

Thomas County Planning Commission
Regular Meeting
April 6, 2022

The Thomas County Planning Commission convened in open and public session at 4:00 p.m., April 6, 2022 in the Commissioners meeting room of the Thomas County Courthouse, Thedford, NE. Members present were Royce Jennings, Bobbi Scott, Linda Cowdin, Miles Maseberg and Jay Jones. Absent were Carolyn Warren and Shane Pettit. Also present were Thomas County Zoning Administrator Lorissa Hartman and present by Zoom were Jeff Noseworthy-Industrial Tower and County Attorney Kurt Arganbright.

Chairman Jones stated open meeting guidelines are posted as required by law and copies are available, if requested.

Notice of meeting was given by publication in the Thomas County Herald on March 24, 2022.

Motion made by Maseberg and second by Scott to adopt the April 6, 2022 agenda. Roll call vote: Ayes - Jones, Maseberg, Cowdin, Scott and Jennings. Nays – none. Absent – Warren, Pettit. Motion carried.

Motion made by Cowdin and second by Scott to approve the February 24, 2022 meeting minutes as published in the Thomas County Herald on March 3, 2022. Roll call vote: Ayes – Maseberg, Jennings, Scott, Cowdin, Jones. Nays – none. Absent – Warren, Pettit. Motion carried.

Chairman Jones recessed the regular meeting at 4:01 p.m. to enter into the public hearing.

Jeff Noseworthy of Industrial Tower reviewed with the Planning Commission what the plans were to add T-Mobile equipment onto their existing towers located South of Thedford and North of Halsey. He also explained that Industrial Tower owns the tower and Mountain Tower & Land owns the land under the towers. No other questions were had by the board or the public.

Chairman Jones closed the public hearing at 4:03 p.m. and opened the regular meeting.

Motion made by Maseberg and second by Cowdin to recommend approval of the Special Use Permit applications #2022-2 and #2022-3 for Industrial Tower West, LLC/T-Mobile to the Thomas County Board of Commissioners. Roll call vote: Ayes – Cowdin, Maseberg, Jones, Scott, Jennings. Nays – none. Absent- Pettit, Warren. Motion carried.

Discussion was held on adding language into the Thomas County Comprehensive Plan on conservation easements. The County Attorney reviewed the suggested language and discussed what should be added or taken out. Chairman Jones said that he would make the suggested changes and provide the information to the Zoning Administrator. Public hearings will be held to make these changes at a later date.

Discussion was also held on adding additional language to 5.14, 5.3 and 5.44 to say that “No permit shall be required for infrastructure changes, such as updating/changing out equipment on existing towers as long as there are no changes to height, structural integrity or footprint.”

These changes will also require a public hearing to change.

No public comment.

Chairman Jones adjourned the meeting at 4:44 p.m.

Thomas County Zoning Administrator
Lorissa Hartman

Thomas County Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
September 14, 2022

The Thomas County Planning Commission convened in open and public session at 2:00 p.m., September 14, 2022 in the Commissioners meeting room of the Thomas County Courthouse, Thedford, NE. Members present were Royce Jennings, Bobbi Scott, Carolyn Warren and Jay Jones. Absent were Shane Pettit, Linda Cowdin and Miles Maseberg. Also present were Thomas County Zoning Administrator Lorissa Hartman, Dave Sands-Nebraska Land Trust, Brent Steffens and present by Zoom were Thomas County Attorney Kurt Arganbright and Rich Kotite-Agent for T-Mobile.

Chairman Jones stated open meeting guidelines are posted as required by law and copies are available, if requested.

Notice of meeting was given by publication in the Thomas County Herald on September 1, 2022.

Motion made by Warren and second by Scott to adopt the September 14, 2022 agenda. Roll call vote: Ayes – Jones, Warren, Scott, Jennings. Nays – none. Absent – Maseberg, Cowdin, Pettit. Motion carried.

Motion made by Scott and second by Jennings to approve the April 6, 2022 meeting minutes as published in the Thomas County Herald on April 14, 2022. Roll call vote: Ayes – Warren, Jennings, Scott, Jones. Nays – none. Absent – Maseberg, Cowdin, Pettit. Motion carried.

Discussion began on the application for Conservation Easement with Brent Steffens and Nebraska Land Trust. Questions on the right of way easement for the county road and bridge were discussed. The Thomas County Highway Superintendent will be consulted to see if an existing easement exists for Daly Lane. Concerns about future road/bridge projects were discussed and questioned. The question was asked if any land that Nebraska Land Trust has on an existing conservation easement, if the road became an issue and needed moved or widened. Dave Sands reported that they did have this issue on a Conservation Easement in Washington County and the road project was approved and allowed to happen.

The main reason of the Conservation Easement is to keep this land as AG purposes and not be developed for Commercial purposes.

Brent Steffens addressed this as a property rights concern as long as it doesn't affect neighboring landowners. The main concern is to keep this land as agricultural purpose and not divide to develop into commercial use. Money earned from the conservation easement will be used to purchase bigger tree cutting equipment to help control the cedar trees.

Motion made by Warren and second by Scott to recommend approval of the Conservation Easement to the Thomas County Board of Commissioners. Roll call vote: Ayes – Warren, Jones, Scott, Jennings. Nays – none. Absent – Cowdin, Pettit, Maseberg. Motion carried.

The Thomas County Board of Commissioners will review the Conservation Easement application at their October 18th meeting.

Chairman Jones recessed the regular meeting at 2:29 p.m. to enter into the Public Hearing for the T-Mobile Special Use permit application.

Chairman Jones opened the hearing at 2:30 p.m.

Rich Kotite, representative from T-Mobile presented the application to add equipment onto the existing tower located in pt. of SE1/4 Section 33, Township 24 North, Range 28 West. The site lease agreement with Consolidated Long Distance and Custer Public Power District has been completed.

No public questions or concerns were received on this project.

Chairman Jones closed the public hearing at 2:35 p.m.

Motion made by Jennings and second by Scott to recommend approval of the special use permit by T-Mobile to the Thomas County Board of Commissioners. Roll call vote: Ayes – Jennings, Scott, Warren, Jones. Nays – none. Absent – Pettit, Cowdin, Maseberg. Motion carried.

Chairman Jones adjourned the meeting at 2:35 p.m.

Thomas County Zoning Administrator

Lorissa Hartman

Thomas County Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
October 11, 2022

The Thomas County Planning Commission convened in open and public session at 2:00 p.m., October 11, 2022 in the Commissioners meeting room of the Thomas County Courthouse, Thedford, NE. Chairman Jones led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. Members present were Bobbi Scott, Carolyn Warren, Linda Cowdin and Jay Jones. Member Miles Maseberg arrived at 2:01 p.m. Absent were Royce Jennings and Shane Pettit. Also present was Thomas County Zoning Administrator Lorissa Hartman.

Chairman Jones moved to excuse those members not present.

Chairman Jones stated open meeting guidelines are posted as required by law and copies are available, if requested.

Notice of meeting and public hearing was given by publication in the Thomas County Herald on September 29, 2022.

Motion made by Maseberg and second by Scott to adopt the October 11, 2022 agenda. Roll call vote: Ayes – Jones, Maseberg, Cowdin, Warren, Scott. Nays – none. Absent – Pettit, Jennings. Motion carried.

Motion made by Warren and second by Scott to approve the September 14, 2022 meeting minutes as published in the Thomas County Herald on September 22, 2022. Roll call vote: Ayes – Maseberg, Warren, Scott, Cowdin, Jones. Nays – none. Absent – Jennings, Pettit. Motion carried.

Chairman Jones recessed the regular meeting at 2:02 p.m. to enter into the public hearing.

No public present for the public hearing. The board reviewed the suggested changes and placement of pages to the Thomas County Zoning Regulations.

Chairman Jones closed the public hearing at 2:17 p.m. and reconvened the regular meeting.

No changes made to the Thomas County Comprehensive Plan.

Motion made by Cowdin and second by Warren to recommend to the Thomas County Board of Commissioners the suggested changes to the Thomas County Zoning Regulations. Roll call vote: Ayes – Scott, Cowdin, Warren, Jones, Maseberg. Nays – none. Absent – Jennings, Pettit. Motion carried.

Discussion was held on the letter from Xavier & Connie Garza. A public hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, October 19th at 2:00 p.m., to discuss their request to add small meat processing facility as an allowable special use in the AGR district.

Chairman Jones adjourned the meeting at 2:43 p.m.

Thomas County Zoning Administrator
Lorissa Hartman

Thomas County Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
October 19, 2022

The Thomas County Planning Commission convened in open and public session at 2:00 p.m., October 19, 2022 in the Commissioners meeting room of the Thomas County Courthouse, Thedford, NE. The meeting was also available by zoom for anyone wanting to attend. Members present were Carolyn Warren, Linda Cowdin, Miles Maseberg, and Jay Jones. Member Shane Pettit arrived at 2:09 p.m. Absent were Bobbi Scott and Royce Jennings. Also present were Thomas County Zoning Administrator Lorissa Hartman and Xavier Garza.

Chairman Jones stated open meeting guidelines are posted as required by law and copies are available, if requested.

Notice of meeting was given by publication in the Thomas County Herald on October 6, 2022.

Motion made by Cowdin and second by Warren to adopt the October 19, 2022 agenda. Roll call vote: Ayes – Jones, Maseberg, Cowdin, Warren. Nays – none. Absent – Pettit, Scott, Jennings. Motion carried.

Motion made by Warren and second by Maseberg to approve the October 11, 2022 meeting minutes as published in the Thomas County Herald on October 20, 2022. Roll call vote: Ayes – Maseberg, Warren, Cowdin, Jones. Nays – none. Absent – Jennings, Scott, Pettit. Motion carried.

Chairman Jones recessed the regular meeting at 2:02 p.m. to open the public hearing for the petition to change the AGR District to allow meat processing facility as a permitted special use.

Xavier Garza went over the plans that they have to build a custom meat processing facility in Seneca. He stated that they had problems trying to lease a location in Mullen so finally decided to try and build the facility on property they purchased in Seneca. The Garza's have been approved for a grant to help build this facility. He has talked with several neighbors about his plans to build the facility and most have only expressed concerns about noise and smell. The current plan will be to process 5-6 beef per week. He has spoken with the DEQ and Department of Ag and discussed the plans to build underground holding tanks. The board questioned about expansion plans and he has figured this into his building plans. He would only look to process up to approximately 12 animals per week. He would have holding pens outside to hold the current 5-6 head per week. These corrals would be kept clean and rendering vehicles would come weekly to dispose of the offal. There would be cold storage to store the offal until the rendering vehicles arrived for cleanup. This facility would be only custom pack and not a USDA facility. He would also process wild game products, during season. Plans to landscape the lot and to put in trees on the south side of the property by the road to the cemetery.

No public comment. Xavier did have a letter from John & Theresa Thomas that he will provide to the Zoning Administrator.

Chairman Jones closed the public hearing at 2:31 p.m. and reconvened the regular meeting.

Motion made by Maseberg and second by Cowdin to accept the petition of Mr. Garza to amend the AGR District to allow for custom meat processing facility by a special use permit. Roll call vote: Ayes – Pettit, Cowdin, Warren, Jones, Maseberg. Nays – none. Absent – Scott, Jennings. Motion carried.

No public comment.

Chairman Jones adjourned the meeting at 2:43 p.m.

Thomas County Zoning Administrator
Lorissa Hartman