



THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

In recent issues, we noted how the development process has expanded greatly from a simple site plan or preliminary plat, to a process that includes feasibility analysis that involves physical and regulatory factors. In this issue we will look at regulatory feasibility factors.

We research the property tax status of a site to determine if it is assessed as agricultural use. If it is, we determine the penalty that will need to be paid to convert the property to a non-agricultural use. We review the community's comprehensive plan and other applicable ordinances to estimate the preliminary project approval timeline during which the necessary zoning and site plan approvals and permits will be obtained. We identify and review Sewer Service Area issues; sewer system capacity (sanitary and storm), sewer and water impact fees; water system availability, capacity, pressure, and looping requirements; and telecommunications facilities including phone, cable, and fiber optics. We also estimate the land area needed for storm water retention and infiltration based on a review of a conceptual site plan and on the applicable stormwater management ordinances and requirements.

In summary, the development process continues to become more complicated. Call or email us with your next project, so we can help you navigate through the process.

ENGINEERING

NR 151...Wisconsin's Runoff Management Rules

In October 2004 the State of Wisconsin's Runoff Management Rules were updated to include an infiltration performance standard to help protect groundwater. Infiltration is the entry and movement of precipitation or runoff, like rain or melting snow, into or through soil.

The NR 151 Non-Agricultural Performance Standards requires the infiltration of runoff to the maximum extent possible. The objective is to have the runoff enter the soil on-site versus flowing off the site to other properties or to other surface water resources like streams, rivers, and lakes. The standards identify the amount to be infiltrated, which is different for residential and non-residential (commercial, industrial, institutional) land uses. The standards also identify areas where infiltration is prohibited and where infiltration is not required.

For more information on the standards and how they will affect your development project, contact Tim Verhagen, Project Engineer, at timv@martenson-eisele.com or by visiting the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' website at www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/nps/admrules.htm.

ENVIRONMENTAL

What is a Wetland and Why Do I Care?

Why is there a need for delineating wetlands and protecting them? Protecting the wetlands is not only the law, but it makes sense from an environmental and financial perspective. Wetlands help improve water quality by absorbing and filtering out pollutants and sediment in runoff. They reduce flood damage by soaking up and slowing down the force of floodwaters. Wetlands provide crucial habitat for a variety of wildlife. Wetlands can aesthetically improve and add value to lots by increasing privacy, attracting wildlife, and providing a scenic view for the homeowners. With the laws governing wetlands and waterways becoming increasingly restrictive, the need for exact wetland boundary identification becomes crucial.

If you are in need of wetland determination and delineation services, please contact Paul Groell, in our Environmental Department, at paulg@martenson-eisele.com for all of your environmental concerns. Visit our website at www.martenson-eisele.com for more information on wetlands by clicking on "Services" and "Environmental".



To some people this may look like a typical upland field, but in fact this is a floodplain wetland.

WHERE YOU'LL FIND US...

- WASDA Annual Educational Conference - May 4 in La Crosse
- Wisconsin Chapter of the American Planning Association (WAPA) Conference - May 18-19 in Sheboygan

PLANNING

Managing Growth in the Town of Freedom

During the preparation of the Town of Freedom's Comprehensive Plan, it was discovered that almost two-thirds of the residential building permits each year are issued for lots outside of the Town's sanitary district. This fact, combined with the Town's desire to protect its agricultural and natural resources and its rural character, led to the development of a Growth Management Plan. We worked with the Town's Plan Commission on the plan, which was submitted to the Town Board in December 2004. The tools in the plan include Urban Development Standards, Managed Roadway Access, Agricultural Buffers, amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, and a Rural Residential Checklist. For more information on this plan, contact Jonathan Bartz at jonb@martenson-eisele.com.

Planning Process Ends, Planning Begins in City of Omro

The planning process for the City's 2005-2025 Comprehensive Plan drew near to its end with a public hearing on February 15. The final steps in the process include revising the plan to reflect the comments received by the City on the draft of the plan, adopting the Comprehensive Plan by ordinance, and printing and distributing the plan. Action is already being taken on the implementation of the plan. The City of Omro will be meeting with the Town of Omro in the near future to discuss forming an extra-territorial zoning committee.

EMPLOYEE NEWS

Todd Muehrer recently joined us as a Planner in our Menasha office. Todd has a Bachelor's of Science degree from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh in Geography and Urban Studies. Todd has experience in a broad range of planning activities relating to community and economic development in both the public and private sector. Todd's responsibilities will include grant writing and administration, relocation services, and comprehensive planning activities. Todd is a member of the American Planning Association.



Curt Solberg won 3rd place for his promotional map of the Apple Hill Farms Development at the Wisconsin Society of Land Surveyors annual Map/Plat Contest. Apple Hill Farms is a nearly 1,200-acre tract of land on the north side of Appleton that will be developed in at least five phases over the next twelve to fifteen years.



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