

Devils Lake campground CUP denied

Burnett committee votes 5-1 against; 15 nearby residents speak against it Page 3

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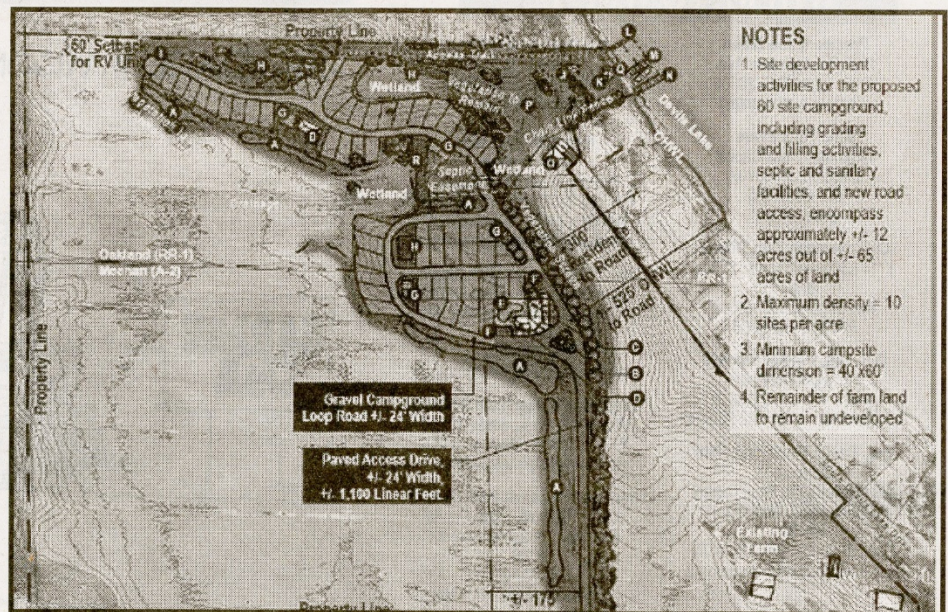
BURNETT COUNTY – The Burnett County Land Use and Information Committee denied a conditional use permit for a 60-unit campground on Devils Lake in the towns of Oakland and Meenon on Tuesday, May 4, after hearing information from Daniel Chelmo, the CUP applicant, and numerous public comments on the CUP.

The CUP is to allow the development of a 60-site campground that would include a picnic area with playground, a visitor building, waterfront access on Devils Lake including a gazebo and docks for fishing and boating, security lighting and a chain-link fence to separate and screen the property from neighbors.

The property for the proposed campground is on three separate parcels totaling over 65 acres that are zoned RR-1 and A-2.

During the public hearing Chelmo, the property owner and CUP applicant, addressed several concerns with the CUP. In doing so Chelmo provided several documents to support his application.

On the concern of increased traffic on CTH A due to the campground, Chelmo stated he believes that the speed of the vehicles on the road is more of a concern,



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This map of the proposed campground with access on Devils Lake was shared by Daniel Chelmo, conditional use permit applicant, during the Burnett County Land Use Committee meeting where the hearing on the CUP took place. – Special graphic

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not the number of them, referencing data provided to him by the county highway department.

Regarding the concern of the campground negatively impacting water quality, Chelmo shared a document showing water quality equivalency for buildings according to state code. Chelmo shared that, according to this information, a 60-site campground has the water quality equivalency to six residential homes.

In addressing the stormwater concerns, Chelmo shared maps that indicate drainage patterns on the property, stating that stormwater drains away from the lake and that there are existing stormwater infiltration ponds on the property.

Chelmo stated that the chain-link fence is necessary due to eyesores like a privy, metal screens and a parking lot on adjacent properties, and to provide protection for adjacent properties. He stated that currently the property is a "wildlife desert" because there are not substantial trees or vegetation on it as it was cleared for farming. He contended that the campground project would make the property "more North Woods when completed" than the area along the lake now.

Chelmo addressed the opposition to the project from the towns of Meenon and Oakland, and the village of Webster by stating that since Meenon and Oakland don't have zoning ordinances there is nothing for the CUP to be consistent with, except county ordinances.

He contended that the municipalities' comprehensive plans are "visions" and "dreams," but "life goes on," stating that he believes his plan addresses all environmental concerns. However, he acknowledged that he did not provide the county with an environmental impact assessment as requested.

Chelmo supported this decision to not provide the county with an environmental impact assessment by providing a written letter from an engineer that opined an environmental impact survey was not necessary for his development. This was recognized during committee discussion, where it was pointed out the county asked for an environmental impact assessment, not a survey, as these are different types of informational reports.

The committee then heard 40 minutes of public comments where 15 people who live adjacent to the property or near it spoke in opposition to the CUP and asked the committee to deny it.

Reasons given in comments for their opposition include concerns the campground would increase existing issues with stormwater runoff on adjacent properties; that it is incompatible with the county's ag zoning, town comprehensive plans and county farmland preservation plan; the development will

negatively impact the natural area by increasing noise and light pollution; more people will increase stress on local emergency services, the lake and natural area; it could negatively impact adjacent property values and decrease local tax collections; and that it would negatively impact the health and welfare of neighbors.

At the end of public comments, letters of opposition to the CUP received by the county from the towns of Meenon and Oakland and the village of Webster were acknowledged.

When the committee took up discussion on the CUP, Supervisor Jim Paden, District 2, made a motion to deny it based on the "overwhelming opposition" to it, acknowledging the opposition by the local municipalities and local property owners.

After the motion was seconded, Supervisor Craig Conroy, District 19, amended the motion to include that substantial evidence shows the campground waterfront access is the same as a single-family home considering the intensity, density and use of the zoning district and the health, safety and general welfare and economic prosperity of adjoining property owners.

In discussion of the motion, Conroy questioned how access to the lake would be enforced on the campground and that he believes placing chain-link fences on the property line would be harmful to adjacent landowners.

Supervisor Chuck Awe, District 8, commented that he believes the campground is a good use of the property and that after touring it he observed that the campers would be hidden from adjacent property owners.

In discussion, it was noted that the highway access is not a safety issue for the property, but it does present lake access and taxing issues as it doesn't bring in much in the way of economic benefits to the local communities. The safety, welfare and potential damage concerns were also acknowledged in committee discussion.

Supervisor James Pearson, District 15, pointed out that the only person who wants the CUP approved is the person who applied for it, while three municipalities and all residents are opposed to it, and he has "no qualms" denying it because of this.

Then the committee took up the vote on the motion. The committee first voted on the amendment, which was approved on a majority 5-yes, 1-no vote, with Awe voting no.

Then the committee voted on the motion to deny the CUP, which was approved on a majority 5-yes, 1-no vote, with Awe voting no.