

Wording for dairy permit gets backing of commission

Written by Mark Jaeger

Wednesday, 11 August 2010 15:26

Town Board to have final say before hearing on Paulus farm proposal

Mike and Lori Paulus got another step closer to securing the conditional-use permit they need to run a large-scale dairy on their Meadowlark Road farm in the Town of Fredonia.

The town Plan Commission approved the wording of the conditional-use permit last week, following some last-minute tweaking.

The permit was expected to get one more review from the Town Board on Wednesday before heading to a public hearing on Wednesday, Sept. 8.

The Pauluses intend to gradually increase the size of their dairy operation, adding three new buildings over the next five to seven years. Eventually, they hope to have as many as 1,200 cows.

The first barn would be 62,000 square feet, large enough for 500 cows. Eventually, a second barn would be built, along with a 30,000-square-foot “special needs” barn.

Once the freestall barns are in place, the existing barns will be used for young stock, Paulus said.

A roughly 15,000-square-foot milking parlor is also planned.

The conditional-use permit outlines specific restrictions on the proposed dairy expansion to ensure the operation is not “harmful, offensive or otherwise adverse to the environment.”

The permit addresses noise, odors, water runoff, manure storage, lighting, fencing and various building restrictions.

Mike Paulus said he had no problem with most of the conditions the town is proposing, but questioned how broadly the requirement for asphalt tracking pads at driveways on the property would be interpreted.

He said it makes sense to require the pads — which knock mud from truck and tractor tires before entering the public roadway — for the drive to the proposed milking parlor.

Paulus said there is little need to require similar pads to little-used drives to access the farm fields.

Town Chairman Richard Mueller said he was most concerned about the heavily used driveways.

“Most of the heavy truck traffic will be where the milking complex is going to be,” Mueller said.

Commission members agreed with that logic, but they said the wording should be changed to reflect that view.

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“We have to remember that in the future, if it can be misunderstood it will be misunderstood,” commission member Tom Armstrong said.

The reworked wording will go to the Town Board.