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Plan Commission approvals clear way for $500,000 hike in tax base

The agendas of the Town of Saukville's Plan Commission meetings have been sparse in recent years, typically restricted to garage expansions and the construction of accessory structures.

Bucking that recessionary trend, the commission approved projects from two property owners that are expected to add more than $500,000 to the town's tax base.

The biggest bump to the tax base came when the commission unanimously backed expansion plans at Donald Hamm's 80-acre dairy farm at 4576 Blueberry Rd.

Site plans were approved for the construction of a 2,538-square-foot milking parlor at the front of the property and a 3,264-square-foot freestall addition to an existing barn on the east side of the property.

The estimated cost of the two projects is $300,000.

Hamm said the work on the freestall barn will start as soon as possible.

"I've been looking at this for several years. Most people would just gut the old milking barn, but then we couldn't milk," he said.

"There will be some transition involved, but the plan is to always have a place to milk. It may be hectic for a day during the switch over."

Hamm said he is hopeful all the construction will be completed by spring of next year, when his Sandy Loam Farms will be the site of the Ozaukee County Dairy Promotion Committee's 29th annual Breakfast on the Farm.

"At least the exteriors of the buildings will be clean and shiny," said Bill Hamm, Donald Hamm's brother and the sales representative with Walters Buildings which is erecting the additions.

Commission members had few concerns about the building projects, but raised questions about where the structures will sit in relation to the setback for Blueberry Road.

Town Building Inspector Walter Grotelueschen told officials he is satisfied the additions will not come anywhere near the road setback.

"The way the road jogs in and out over the years, it is probably impossible to determine exactly

where the setback is," noted Town Chairman Barb Jobs.

That problem is minimized, however, because Hamm owns land on the east and west side of Blueberry Road.

Plans for a pair of construction projects at Tesker Manufacturing, 4343 Hwy. I, also won easy approval from the commission.

The plans call for the construction of a 1,000-square-foot office addition and a 6,000-square-foot steel warehouse building. The combined value of the projects is estimated at $250,000.

The business, which is owned by Donald and Marlene Tesker, is the only property in the township with manufacturing zoning.

The original building was erected in 1973.

That date was before the town's zoning code was enacted, but Jobs said the business doesn't need the conditional-use permit required of a new enterprise because it has been grandfathered.

"We talked about it, but came to the conclusion this is really just the continuation of an existing business," she said.

Town officials were told the expansions are being done to meet growing activity at the business, but that no new employees are anticipated that would tax the existing septic system.

Located on a five-acre parcel, commissioners said the business has grown to the point where any further building would encroach on the town's 40% green-space requirement.

The company makes thread rolling machines and custom dies for customers around the world.

Image Information: BIG IMPROVEMENTS ARE planned at Sandy Loam Farms on Blueberry Road in the Town of Saukville. The farm is owned by Donald and Diane Hamm. Photo by Mark Jaeger