

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

DOOR COUNTY

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

2009

A. Mission Statement.

The Door County Planning Department does not have a formal mission statement. We do, however, have various policies and procedures in place as well as an overall departmental work ethic that guides our activities: We strive to effectively and efficiently administer the programs under our jurisdiction; to be efficient, accurate, courteous, helpful, knowledgeable, and timely in our work with our customers; and to ensure our activities are coordinated with the work of the many other local and state agencies and organizations with which we interact.

B. Summary of Responsibilities.

The primary responsibilities of Door County Planning Department staff members are to administer the county-level planning program, as mandated by state statute; to administer and enforce the county-level zoning, land division, and floodplain zoning ordinances, as mandated by state statute; to administer and enforce the telecommunication tower, wind energy facility, and airport height limitation ordinances, as mandated by the county board; and to administer and enforce the county addressing ordinance and program, as mandated by the county board. Staff members are:

Mariah K. Goode	Planning Department Director
David W. Sautebin	Senior Zoning Administrator
Richard D. Brauer	Zoning Administrator II
Kay E. Miller	Zoning Administrator II
Susan Vanden Langenberg	Zoning Administrator II
Rebecca Kerwin	Planner II
Jeanne M. Kasten	Administrative Assistant III
Wendy Birmingham	Clerk Typist II
Audrey A. Forslund	Mapping Technician (.9 FTE)
Kenneth J. Pollock	GIS Addressing/Zoning Specialist
Ruth A. Neinas	Clerk Typist I (.4 FTE)

The county zoning ordinance is in effect in the entirety of nine towns, per their voluntary enrollment in comprehensive county zoning, and, per state statute, in the shoreland areas of the other five. All other ordinances administered by the department are in effect in all fourteen towns.

The department’s oversight committee is the Resource Planning Committee, comprised of five county board members. Per state statute, the county board-appointed Board of Adjustment (all laypersons) also participates in administration of the zoning ordinance. Both bodies typically hold public hearings and regular business meetings twice monthly.

C. Program Summary.

Door County Zoning Ordinance Administration.

Administered and enforced by Door County Planning Department staff, the Door County Board of Supervisors’ Resource Planning Committee, and the Board of Adjustment, the Door County Zoning Ordinance is in effect in all areas of the Towns of Baileys Harbor, Clay Banks, Forestville, Gibraltar, Jacksonport, Liberty Grove, Sevastopol, Sturgeon Bay, and Washington, and, per state statute, in the shoreland areas of the Towns of Brussels, Egg Harbor, Gardner, Nasewaupsee, and Union. Zoning applications processed in the shoreland areas of the county's fourteen towns, as mandated by the state, constitute about 55% of the department's processed zoning applications.

Door County Land Division Ordinance Administration.

Administered and enforced by Planning Department staff and the Resource Planning Committee, the Door County Land Division Ordinance is in effect in all fourteen towns, regardless of whether or not the town is under county zoning.

Other Ordinance Administration.

Planning Department zoning administration staff members and, in certain cases, the Resource Planning Committee, also administer and enforce several other county ordinances: 1) the Door

County Floodplain Zoning Ordinance, in effect per state statute in all 14 towns; 2) the Door County Telecommunications Tower Ordinance, also in effect in all 14 towns; 3) the Door County Wind Energy Facility Ordinance, in effect in all 14 towns; and 4) the Door County Height Limitation Zoning Ordinance, in effect in areas surrounding the Cherryland Airport.

Planning Programs.

Door County Planning Department planning program staff members are responsible for developing and implementing comprehensive and other land use-related plans. Planning staff also organize or participate in a variety of educational and information-sharing programs, primarily with local municipalities, government agencies, and non-profits.

Addressing and Mapping Programs.

The Planning Department GIS Addressing/Zoning Specialist and Mapping Technician administer and enforce the rural road naming and numbering (addressing) program, the primary purpose of which is to better identify properties in order to enhance emergency response capability. The full-time GIS Addressing Specialist position was created in 2000 to administer the county Addressing Ordinance, replacing responsibilities previously undertaken by employees from the 14 towns. The Mapping Technician is also responsible for creating a variety of maps for zoning and planning purposes for county staff as well as local municipalities and residents and property owners.

D. Goals / Objectives Achieved in 2009.

Planning Department goals and objectives for 2009, as stated in the 2008 Annual Report, were:

1. Continue to effectively and efficiently administer the ordinances and programs under our jurisdiction.
2. Continue identifying and drafting needed ordinance amendments for Resource Planning Committee sponsorship, primarily with the aim of ensuring consistency between ordinances and the new county comprehensive plan.
3. Complete the county comprehensive plan, including: develop final drafts of the Resource Report (volume two) and the Goals section (volume one), conduct public “open house” meetings regarding the plan, hold RPC hearing regarding adoption of the plan, and schedule county board approval and adoption of plan.

These goals are discussed below, in conjunction with the appropriate program area.

Zoning Ordinance Administration

The Planning Department’s four zoning administrators – Senior Zoning Administrator Sautebin and Zoning Administrators II Brauer, Miller, and VandenLangenberg – and administrative staff members – Administrative Assistant III Kasten, Clerk Typist II Birmingham, and .4FTE Clerk Typist I Neinas – process all regular zoning permit applications submitted to the county, as well as conditional use permit applications which eventually go to the Resource Planning Committee for public hearing and approval or disapproval. Zoning ordinance administration constitutes the vast majority of the work of the zoning administrators and administrative staff, and about one-fourth of Mapping Technician Forslund’s .9FTE time.

The zoning administrators and administrative staff members also process the paperwork for petitions for variance from the Door County Zoning Ordinance, appeals of either Resource Planning Committee or zoning administrator decisions, and petitions for text or map amendments to the zoning ordinance. The public hearings at which decisions are made regarding variances and appeals are held by the Door County Board of Adjustment. Public hearings regarding text or map amendments are conducted by the Resource Planning Committee, with the County Board making the final determinations regarding such petitions.

Goals set in 2008 related to zoning program administration were largely met for 2009. Zoning staff effectively and efficiently administered zoning ordinances and programs (goal 1). Drafting of ordinance amendments by planning staff (in conjunction with zoning staff) in order to ensure

consistency with the comprehensive plan did not occur (goal 2), though, due to the fact that the plan itself was not completed and adopted until late in 2009.

The following chart shows permit application levels for 2005-2009 for all types of zoning permits and hearings. (Note: Permit application information is available by the town level. Please contact the Planning Department at (920) 746-2323.) Note that the chart does not include a wide variety of activities related to the department's regulatory programs, such as: 1) floodplain reviews/approvals; 2) permit compliance inspections; 3) pursuit of violations, including site visits, correspondence, phone calls, court appearances, citation issuance; 4) completion of formal research requests for the development community (approximately 160 letters annually); 5) information exchanged informally (annually 600-1000 letters, not including the previously mentioned "formal" research requests, many thousands of e-mails, tens of thousands of phone calls, and hundreds of drop-in client visits); 6) project-related meetings with applicants, builders, surveyors, architects, attorneys, etc.; 7) educational meetings with municipal officials, interest groups, residents, etc.; 8) meetings with other local, county, regional, or state governmental bodies or agencies; 9) work for two monthly RPC and BOA meetings, including preparation of notices, agendas, mailings, and packets, facilitation of meetings, preparation of minutes, and other follow-up work requested or required; and 10) preparation of materials, as required by state statute, for monthly county board meetings. Note, too, that zoning administrators conduct site visits for nearly every application.

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	5-year total	5-year median	5-year average
Permit type								
Regular zoning permit	729	746	694	574	538	3281	694	656
Site plan review*	2	1	2	0	0	5	1	1
Conditional use permit	16	17	21	19	15	88	17	18
Variance	38	36	37	33	27	171	36	34
Zoning map and text amendments	23	18	11	15	8	75	15	15
Appeals	3	0	3	3	2	11	3	2
Telecommunications tower	8	4	12	5	2	31	5	6
Uncategorized	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	.2
Total	820	822	780	649	592	3663	780	733

* Eliminated in 2007.

As evidenced by the preceding chart, total application levels have been declining. The downward trend appears to be leveling off, however, if not reversing, as between July 1 and December 31, 2009 the total of number of permit applications was higher than for those same six months in 2008.

Permit Applications, July 1 through December 31

APPLICATION TYPE	2008	2009
Regular Zoning Permit	308	330
Regular Zoning Permit - Renewal	3	8
Conditional Use Permit	8	6
Variance	15	15
Zoning Map & Text Amendments	4	5
Appeals	2	1
Tower Permit	0	1
Floodplain Permit	2	3
Wind Energy Facility	2	2
Totals	344	371

In addition to on-site inspections required to issue permits, zoning administrators conduct subsequent compliance inspections to ensure permit conditions have been met. The chart below shows figures for Certificates of Compliance issued 2007-2009. Permit compliance inspections have increased in recent years as zoning administrators have had more time available to conduct such inspections and as more emphasis has been placed on this aspect of regulatory programs.

Certificates of Compliance Issued

TOWN	2007	2008	2009
BAILEYS HARBOR	7	7	148
BRUSSELS	3	1	0
CLAY BANKS	10	16	27
EGG HARBOR	4	0	4
FORESTVILLE	6	4	10
GARDNER	26	15	54
GIBRALTAR	9	93	68
JACKSONPORT	7	8	45
LIBERTY GROVE	41	39	22
NASEWAUPEE	12	9	44
SEVASTOPOL	25	35	58
STURGEON BAY	30	45	18
UNION	25	12	18
WASHINGTON	11	10	160
Totals	216	294	676

Land Division Ordinance Administration

The four zoning administrators process all applications related to land divisions, such work constituting a significant portion of their time. Minor land divisions are reviewed by staff only; major land divisions are reviewed first by staff and then reviewed and approved or disapproved by the Resource Planning Committee at regular business meetings. The chart below shows the number and types of land divisions processed each year for the past five years and the resultant number of new lots created comprised of ten or fewer acres. (For information at the town level, please contact the Planning Department at (920) 746-2323.)

Both of the goals for the department related to land division ordinance administration (goals 1 and 2, above) were largely met for 2009, although no ordinance amendment proposals were drafted. Now that the county comprehensive plan has been adopted, planning staff time will be available to identify, draft, and propose needed ordinance amendments to the RPC for sponsorship. Such work will be conducted in consultation with zoning staff.

Land Divisions Processed and Lots Created, By Year

Year	Minor Land Divisions		Major Land Divisions	
	# of CSMs	# of Lots Created	# of Plats	# of Lots Created
2009	41	65	0	0
2008	57	107	0	0
2007	82	182	1	9
2006	102	223	2	31
2005	121	269	1	8

Notes

Land divisions processed but not approved due to non-compliance with ordinance standards not included.

A Minor Land Division – or Certified Survey Map (CSM) – is a division of land whereby 4 or fewer new lots of 10 acres or less are created. A Major Land Division – or plat – is a division of land whereby more than 4 new lots of 10 acres or less are created.

Other Ordinance Administration

The goals set for 2009 relating to all departmental programs – goals 1 and 2, above – were met for all other regulatory programs (floodplain, telecommunications, wind energy, etc).

Normally, activity levels related to these ordinances is relatively minimal. In 2009, however, a new floodplain ordinance and maps were adopted, as mandated by state and federal agencies. The new regulations and maps have been creating significantly more work in 2009 than is usual for the floodplain program, due to inquiries and insurance requirements of mortgage holders and lenders.

Planning Programs

In addition to developing and implementing comprehensive and other land use-related plans, planning program staff also organize or participate in a wide variety of other activities, including educational and information-sharing programs. Planning staff members are often invited to attend meetings of municipal, environmental, political, or development-related boards, commissions, agencies, and organizations for presentations and discussions about planning and zoning-related issues. They frequently meet, talk, and correspond with municipal elected and appointed officials regarding planning and zoning issues. Planner II Kerwin spends 100% of her time on the planning program, Director Goode, about 40% of her time, and Mapping Technician Forslund, about 50% of her (.9FTE) time.

Planning program staff members worked for approximately three years, 2006-2009, on a new comprehensive plan (Door County Comprehensive Plan 2030) to be in compliance with Wisconsin's "Smart Growth" legislation. In 2009, they completed final drafts, text and maps, of the Resource Report (volume two of the plan) the Vision and Goals section (volume one), conducted four public "open house" meetings regarding the plan, and facilitated RPC and county board hearings regarding adoption of the plan. The county board adopted the plan on October 27, 2009. (Note: All documents regarding the county plan development may be found on the department's website, <http://map.co.door.wi.us/planning/>.) Goal 3 for 2009 was therefore achieved.

Planning staff members conduct or participate in a wide range of educational, training, and coordination activities, and are involved with several other organizations or task forces working on planning-related issues. Specific activities in 2009 included:

- Goode continued as a commission member of Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, attending approximately six meetings during the course of the year.
- Planning staff members Goode and Kerwin began participating in the development of a county-wide bike plan, per the invitation of a work group comprised of public and private partners established in fall 2009.
- Mapping Technician Forslund is participating in the RAMSAR project, an international project involving evaluating significant wetlands.
- All three planning program staff members (Goode, Kerwin, and Forslund) are working with the group of municipalities seeking to have sections of Door County declared a state/federal Scenic Byway, a project the components of which consist of a mixture of planning, mapping, project identification and prioritization, and grant writing.
- All three planning program staff members continued work with Natural Areas Group members on the Door County Greenprinting project. The Greenprint will result in a web-based GIS-driven tool providing the ability to conduct in-depth analysis of lands in the county for natural resource protection and land use planning.
- Continued work by Goode and Kerwin on affordable housing issues, namely with the Door County Economic Development Corporation, and an emerging non-profit/municipal housing trust.

Addressing Program

GIS Addressing/Zoning Specialist Pollock, whose time is entirely allocated to the addressing program, and Mapping Technician Forslund, who spends roughly one-quarter of her (.9FTE) time on the program, continued in 2009 to effectively and efficiently administer the addressing ordinance and program (goal 1). Addressing program work also involved enhancing the GIS layer to include former address assignments, re-addressing and re-mapping work required due to the completion of the State Trunk Highway 57 expansion project, and several other coordination projects required to meet the needs of other county departments and local municipalities.

E. Knowledge Sharing.

All eleven staff members of the Planning Department are constantly sharing knowledge, providing an array of informational and educational services, namely to:

- Each other
- Other county departments
- Local public and private agencies and organizations
- Regional, state, and federal public and private agencies and organizations
- Local residents and property owners
- Local elected and appointed officials
- Local real estate agents, developers, surveyors, architects, attorneys, and builders and their associations. As much as 25-30% of the zoning staff members' time is spent assisting buyers and real estate agents with zoning and general property information.

In addition, our website provides all ordinances, application forms, and comprehensive planning program information to anyone accessing the site. It is frequently updated.

All planning and zoning staff attend various environmental and political agencies' meetings as requested for presentations and discussions, and meet frequently with staff members of other county departments, such as Sanitarian, Deeds, Real Property Listing, Information Systems/LIO, Soil & Water Conservation, and Corporation Counsel, in order to ensure coordination of program administration and for educational purposes. They also meet or talk frequently – for the same reasons – with staff of other governmental agencies, local and state, and local elected and appointed officials. In addition, zoning administrators regularly organize and attend regional conferences and meetings with other county code administrators, with one zoning administrator currently serving on the regional and state code administrators' professional association boards.

Additional planning program staff members' knowledge-sharing activities were discussed above.

F. Department Budget.

	Expenses	Revenues	Levy appropriation
2009 Adopted	\$ 819,024.00	\$ 127,700.00	\$ 691,324.00
2009 Amended	\$ 835,726.00		
2009 Actual	\$ 821,946.32	\$ 133,075.34	
2008 Adopted	\$ 833,359.00	\$ 154,500.00	\$ 678,859.00
2008 Amended	\$ 858,329.00	\$ 159,220.00	
2008 Actual	\$ 842,240.40	\$ 117,851.02	
2007 Adopted	\$ 774,097.00	\$ 152,000.00	\$ 622,097.00
2007 Amended	\$ 817,756.39		
2007 Actual	\$ 759,202.22	\$ 130,893.10	
2006 Adopted	\$ 763,906.00	\$ 154,355.00	\$ 609,551.00
2006 Amended	\$ 800,933.07		
2006 Actual	\$ 757,173.54	\$ 129,842.05	

No grants were received in 2009.

G. Other Accomplishments.

Staff members are continuously seeking ways or undertaking projects to improve individual and departmental performance and improve services, ordinances, programs, and related matters.

Examples from 2009 include:

- "Start-up" activities related to the Town of Forestville joining comprehensive county zoning in late 2008, including conducting an extensive town-wide land use inventory and attending the town's annual meeting to provide information about the county zoning program.
- Holding an educational/discussion meeting for county Board of Adjustment members and local municipal boards of appeal members with University of Wisconsin-Extension.
- Monitoring farmland preservation and shoreland zoning program activity at the state level that will affect county-level programs/ordinances administered.
- Development of new informational sheets and meeting worksheets to guide decision-making by oversight committees.
- Development of new permit application and permit forms, necessitated by new ordinances or amendments to ordinances.
- Working to draft zoning ordinance amendments – ultimately sponsored by RPC and adopted by county board – to revise the process for rezoning areas incorrectly depicted on wetland maps.
- Utilizing an unpaid intern to assist with preparation for and facilitation of comprehensive plan open house meetings and to conduct research/analysis of revised Wisconsin Administrative Code NR115 and the affect it will have on department permitting procedures and workload.
- Analysis and comparison of Door County planning, zoning, and addressing programs and fees to other Wisconsin counties.
- Development with county Information Systems staff of enhancements to digital permit tracking programs.

H. Issues, Concerns, and Restraints.

The condition of the local, regional, and national economies continued to be of concern in 2009, as in 2008, due to the effect on departmental permit application activity and revenue levels. As discussed above, however, based on permit application activity level from July 2009 onward the downward trend appears to be leveling off or reversing.

As directed by County Administrator Mike Serpe, a "white paper" has been prepared detailing the operations of and issues facing the department, and potential efficiencies to be had. The white paper is to be considered an addendum to this report, per Administrator Serpe.

I. Goals and Objectives for 2010.

1. Continue to effectively and efficiently administer ordinances/programs under our jurisdiction.
2. Begin working with affected landowners and municipalities to update the county farmland preservation plan and implementing zoning regulations and map.
3. Draft ordinance amendments necessary to work toward consistency between ordinances and the new county comprehensive plan.
4. Draft zoning ordinance amendments working toward compliance with revised Wisconsin Administrative Code NR115.
5. Monitor emerging state-level wind energy regulations and work on amending the county's ordinance as/if necessary.
6. Finalize the Greenprint model/website and conduct the first three quarterly updates.
7. Re-establish educational/discussion programs for local elected and appointed officials.