

## Longview's New Comprehensive Plan—Do We Want Heavy Industry Next to Residences?

By Charlotte Persons, Interim Conservation Chair

Many WHAS members who live in Longview have already been attending the meetings held for public input on the draft comprehensive plan which will replace the one approved in 1993. WHAS members have been particularly vocal in supporting the need for parks and trails. Your work is appreciated, and hopefully the new drafts of the plan to be presented this fall will reflect your concerns.

There is a new issue which will need to be addressed. This is the heavy industrial usage to be designated for the Mint Farm Industrial Park, even those parts close to residential areas.



*Ethanol plant in Wisconsin, photo source unknown*

On the 1993 Longview Comprehensive Plan and all drafts to date for the new comprehensive plan, the Mint Farm is designated “Light Industrial.” Also, the 1994 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Mint Farm stated that it was expected that the majority of development would be light industrial. This would create a buffer between the heavy industrial uses close to Industrial Way and the residential areas on the eastern border of the Mint Farm.

In actuality, all of the businesses which have located in Phase One of the Mint Farm have been heavy industrial uses. This part of the Mint Farm is close to Industrial Way and far from residences, so there has been little public protest.

However, the proposed ethanol plant will be in the part of Phase Two which is next to residences along 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave. In our comments to DNR on the need for an EIS

for the ethanol plant, WHAS expressed concerns about the ethanol plant being so close to residences since it will have a noisy hammer mill and will create emissions. We also pointed out that the proposed plant is “heavy industrial use,” which is in accordance with the zoning for the Longview Industrial Mint Farm, but at odds with the 1994 EIS, the 1993 Longview Comprehensive Plan and the drafts of the new plan.

John Brickey, Director of Community Development for Longview, sent me a copy of his response to DNR regarding WHAS’s comments on the ethanol plant. He presented evidence that attempted to address concerns about emissions, siting the plant so close to residences, etc. In a short time we will know whether DNR considers that an EIS is necessary.

**However, in his response Brickey stated that staff will be directed, on future drafts of the new comprehensive plan, to designate the Mint Farm as “heavy industrial use” to conform with its actual past usage. This is a significant change as this designation will affect FUTURE development of the Mint Farm.**

While it may look on the surface as if WHAS somehow is responsible for this unfortunate development, this is not the case. Our comments just brought into sharper focus what seems to have always been the plan. Longview never applied for any zoning changes from “heavy industrial” to “light industrial” for any part of the Mint Farm. On its web site that promotes the Mint Farm to businesses, the City of Longview has always stated that the Mint Farm was zoned for “heavy and light industrial use.” Despite the supposed expectation for a “preponderance of light industry” mentioned in the 1994 EIS, it appears that the intention was always to fill the entire Mint Farm with any business—light or heavy industrial. In fact, citizens’ comments on the 1994 EIS included the suspicion that the proposed light industrial uses would never materialize and that heavy industrial development would blight the residential areas that border the Mint Farm.

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