

The Jonathan Story

Jonathan

Contrary to popular thinking, the Jonathan story did not begin just a few years ago with an idea, a desire for profit and the purchase of substantial quantities of land, but instead has its roots in man's failure to plan his living, working, and playing areas so as to take advantage of, but at the same time preserve and protect natural resources and the environment. Down through the ages, one of man's most cherished possessions has been his home and yet it has generally been built on the most convenient patch of bare ground located near his factories and businesses. Thus, the town has grown by accident around the factories and businesses which for the most part have been located in places rich in the natural resources which support the factories. As the natural resources are depleted, the towns decay, and new homes are rebuilt around the town, only to decay again. As the decaying process is repeated, air, water, and land resources are misused and polluted to such an extent that a reasonable question has been raised with respect to our continued ability to survive on earth. The question was of such importance to Henry T. McKnight, a life-long resident of Minnesota and conservationist, that in the early 1960's, he commenced to explore the possibility of constructing a privately financed and planned new town for people, where business would be an economic resource of the people living in the town, and the life style would be one which would provide equal opportunities to all who chose to make their home in the new town.

Intrigued with the dream of a planned community, Mr. McKnight started to put together a business structure, and to build a team of people having the capabilities of making his dream a reality. His primary concern was the creation of a community with the following objectives:

- A community for all kinds of people with all kinds of ideas about how they want to live.
 - A community where people can live up to their full potential and capabilities as human beings.
 - Human needs, rather than traditional restrictions or ordinances, must serve as the basis for planning all design and development.
 - A community without barriers of race, income, education, or age.
 - The fullest possible range of housing types to enable everyone to find the home they want, now and in the future as their needs change.
 - Education and recreational facilities and programs to meet the needs of people with ever-increasing amounts of leisure time.
 - Respect for the land. Preservation and enhancement of natural resources; trees, open space, lake, recreational areas—keeping them accessible for any resident . . . from house or apartment.
 - Built-in capability for city self sufficiency—a complete community where people can earn a living, make their homes and raise their families.
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- Planned in such a way that the community can change and adapt as future needs require and future technologies permit—making it a community that renews itself.

On April 29, 1966, Mr. McKnight joined with other concerned individuals, and incorporated the Ace Development Corporation, predecessor of Jonathan Development Corporation, for the purpose of acquiring approximately 5,000 acres of land in Carver County for a new town. By October, 1967, a substantial portion of the property had been acquired, and the Company's name was changed to Jonathan Development Corporation, and its plans to construct a planned community to be known as "Jonathan," were publicly announced. The name "Jonathan" was selected in memory of Jonathan Carver, an early explorer of Carver County.

Concurrently with the acquisition of land, Jonathan was both in the process of planning and building up a team of professional personnel to carry out its objectives. The substantial costs involved with the initial acquisition and planning were privately financed by Mr. McKnight and the group of concerned individuals, most of whom were local investors. By October of 1970, planning and land acquisition was sufficiently advanced for Jonathan to qualify under Title IV of the New Communities Act of 1968 and it became the first new community in the United States to have the U. S. Government agree to guarantee its bonds. In recognition of the enormous amounts of money necessary at the start of a new town project and because Jonathan was deemed to be a very desirable project, the Government agreed to guarantee \$21,000,000 in bonds, with the funds received from the sale of such bonds being used by Jonathan to provide for grading, installation, and construction of sewer and water facilities, roads, streets, and other similar matters to prepare land for residential, commercial, industrial, and public and common uses. Although the Government guaranteed the bonds, Jonathan had to pay a substantial fee to the Government for the guarantee, and

is required to repay the bond obligation to bondholders, the same as any other obligation which is incurred. The guarantee, however, made it easier for Jonathan to sell its bonds at an appropriate time in order to help finance the heavy front-end expenses of preparing for the new town.

Jonathan, when fully matured over a twenty-year period, will consist of ³five villages, with each village composed of groupings of neighborhoods (the smallest planned units of development). Each village will house communities of approximately 2,000 persons in a variety of housing units, which will be planned to accommodate most price and rent ranges and density types. The villages will be designed for the fullest possible range of people and families of different composition and incomes and will be open to members of all national, ethnic, and racial groups. Each village will have its own internal road system, required municipal facilities, and a village center designed to provide daily convenience services. The focal point of major commercial activity will be a town center, which is to be the regional center for Jonathan and the surrounding area. It will be designed to accommodate major retail, office, medical, entertainment, and apartment structures, and other service facilities required at the town scale.

Jonathan also plans industrial sites at four separate industrial centers. It is anticipated that these industrial developments will provide approximately 18,000 jobs for a wide range of occupational and income groups. A system of controls on the businesses and industrial structures permitted in the industrial areas will be designed so as to maintain the high quality of the environment. Each industrial center is planned to have direct access from both the trunk highway system and the internal arterial system.

Residential areas will be buffered from industrial areas by the open space and park system being planned. Ultimately, over 25% of the total area of Jonathan will be devoted to public and community use. Generally, lake borders shall be set aside for parks and picnic areas, and pedestrian walkway systems shall be developed along the open space network, with plazas and pedestrian areas at convenient locations.

Although Jonathan is referred to as a "new town" the reference is to a design concept and it is not really a town as such term is generally thought of in the governmental structure. In terms of governmental structure, Jonathan is a property owner in the City and as such, is governed and treated like any other property owner in the City.

Since most of Jonathan lies within the corporate limits of the City of Chaska, planning for each area of development must in most areas be approved by the City before the plans are carried out. The City is also, with certain exceptions, responsible for providing most of the usual municipal services such as police and fire protection, sewer, water, and electric, and street maintenance, repair, and upkeep. The City of Chaska is governed by a City Council consisting of four Councilmen and a Mayor. The Council has the responsibility for enacting the ordinances which set policy and govern the residents. A City Administrator is responsible for the day to day administration and operation of the City.

Notwithstanding that the new town of Jonathan is a part of the City of Chaska, Jonathan's design concept provides that all residential property owners have a voice with regard to various matters within the new town. Thus, every resident becomes a member of the Jonathan Association. The primary purpose of the Association is to provide for maintenance and preservation of the greenways, recreational programming, and continuing architectural control of Jonathan after its initial construction, and to promote the health, safety, and welfare of its residents. The Association owns the common areas, such as the greenways, walkways, and recreational areas, and will provide for their maintenance. The Association is also a vehicle which may assist in the development of social, educational, or recreational programs, and the furnishing of various services to the residents.