

MINUTES OF THE NEENAH PLAN COMMISSION
Tuesday, April 29, 2025
4:00 p.m.

Present:

Mayor Jane Lang, Chairperson	PRESENT	Sarah Moore-Nokes, Vice Chairperson	ABSENT	Gerry Kaiser, Director of Public Works	PRESENT
Kate Hancock-Cooke	PRESENT	Karen Genett	ABSENT	Betsy Ellenberger	ABSENT
Gerry Andrews	PRESENT	Alderman Dan Steiner	PRESENT		

Also Present:

Brad Schmidt, Deputy Director of Community Development	Kelly Nieforth, Director of Community Development	Kayla Kubat, Administrative Assistant of Community Development
Alderman Cari Lendrum	Alderman William Pollnow	Alderman Flo Bruno
Scott Roh, 821 Kensington Rd	Deb Langacker, 631 Winnebago Hts	Frank Cuthbert, 1533 Fallow Dr

Minutes: MSC Andrews/Steiner, the Plan Commission, to approve the April 8, 2025 meeting minutes. All voting aye. Motion passed.

Introduction of new Community Development Director.

Public Appearances: Chairperson Mayor Lang opened public appearances to topics not related to the agenda.

Deb Langacker, 631 Winnebago Hts- she shared her experience from the Badger State Housing Alliance Advocacy Day in Madison. She discussed meetings with Senator Kristen Dassler-Alfheim and Representative Dave Murphy, highlighting their differing views on housing issues within the state.

Frank Cuthbert, 1533 Fallow Dr- he shared his top five priorities for affordable housing, including conducting an inventory of city-owned land and reviewing vacant and dilapidated lots. He also suggested encouraging accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and revisiting areas in the city for affordable multi-family housing.

No one else in attendance spoke. Chairperson Mayor Lang closed public appearances.

Public Hearings: None

Action Items:

a. Neenah Housing Study and Needs Assessment – Strategy Implementation

Deputy Director Schmidt went over the next step of the housing study, which is the implementation of the strategies outlined in the study. He made comparisons between Menasha, Oshkosh, and other surrounding municipalities' zoning districts, highlighting the different lot sizes and setback minimums in the R1 and R2 districts. He suggested creating more single-family zoning districts to better accommodate smaller lot sizes and development standards.

Deputy Director Schmidt discussed the challenges of current zoning standards, including restrictive development standards for smaller lots. He proposed removing the 20-foot minimum house width requirement and reducing side yard setbacks in the R2 district. He also recommended looking at the creation of a secondary zoning district and expanding zero lot line development in the R1 district.

Member Hancock-Cooke asked how time intensive it would be to identify City Owned land. Deputy Director Schmidt went over his initial look at city-owned lots, including city water utility, Community Development Authority, and other parcels. He identified 25 developable parcels. He also discussed exploring areas that are not considered parcels, such as land acquired for overpasses.

Member Andrews asked about the advantages of having different zoning subsets versus allowing smaller lots throughout the city. Deputy Director Schmidt explained the benefits of separate districts and used the example of the Freedom Meadows subdivision versus the downtown area, which have different lots sizes and characteristics.

Member Andrews asked if the development cost study should be moved up in the implementation list if it is an easy task. Deputy Director Schmidt stated it is a challenging task and in comparison, to other municipalities, our development costs are rather reasonable already.

Member Hancock-Cooke suggested exploring the idea of zero lot line buildings, which are common in older cities and offer efficiency on smaller lots. Deputy Director Schmidt stated the challenge is trying to determine what the housing market wants. Right now, the demand is single-family housing, but it would be nice to see an introduction of new housing types.

Member Andrews asked about zero lot lines and the introduction of accessory dwelling units (ADUs). If there is the same 6 feet setback, that would cause limits to ADUs. Deputy Director Schmidt stated in a conversation he had with the City of Appleton, they mentioned there hasn't been many issues with ADUs. Director Nieforth stated when the ADU is being built new there are less problems since the ADU is being built by the building code. When residents try to retrofit the ADU, that is when problems arise.

Member Steiner asked what the next steps are for the immediate action items that were outlined. Deputy Director Schmidt went through the process of drafting an ordinance and then bringing to through this committee and council and the public notification process.

Announcements and Future Agenda Items: Next meeting is scheduled for May 13, 2025.

Adjournment: The Commission adjourned its meeting at 4:48 p.m. MSC Steiner/Kaiser. All voting Aye. Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Plan Commission Minutes

April 29, 2025

Page 3

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kayla Kubat". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Kayla" and last name "Kubat" clearly legible.

Kayla Kubat

Administrative Assistant, Department of Community Development