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City of Ashland, Wisconsin
601 Main Street West Ashland, WI 54806 www.coawi.org

PLAN COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

July 15th, 2025 at 6:30PM at the City Hall Council Chambers and via Go To Meetings

The meeting can be joined in person or by using a computer, smartphone or tablet at

<https://meet.goto.com/775025133>

**The meeting can also be joined by phone at
1 866 899 4679 using Access Code: 775-025-133**

Present: Jeff Beirl, JoAnn Erickson, David Eades, Ana Tochtermann, Shawn Brede, Steven Wiley (Planning and Development Director), Mayor Matt Mackenzie, Terri Erickson (Assistant Planner)

Absent: Laurie Gregor

AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
Mayor Mackenzie called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and a quorum was declared present.
2. Approval of Agenda
Mr. Beirl made a motion to approve the agenda and Ms. Erickson seconded. Motion Carried 6-0.
3. Mackenzie asked for approval of the minutes from the April 22nd, 2025 Plan Commission meeting.
Mr. Eades moved to approve as proposed and Jeff Beirl seconded. The motion carried 6-0.
4. Identify potential conflicts of interest
None
5. Citizen Participation (non-agenda items)
None
6. Action Items:
 - a. Public Hearing: Review and approval of a Specific Implementation Plan to allow a Multi-Family Residential land use on Parcel # 201-00356-0000, zoned Mixed Residential/Commercial (MRC) with Gateway Overlay (GTWY-O) and Planned Unit Development Overlay (PUD). Applicant: Vision Inc.

Mayor Mackenzie asked for a motion to go into public hearing. Motion by Ms. Erickson, second by Mr. Eades. The motion carried 6-0.

Mr. Wiley presented a background on the topic. He reviewed the prior GDP application and approval for development of the currently vacant Beaser site to allow the development of a high density multi-family use complex. He noted the city has been working with the developer for some time on this project. The

development agreement had just been approved at the council meeting during the prior week. If this is approved during plan commission tonight, it will move onto council for their approval. He reviewed the subject site, zoning and surrounding uses as well as the plans developed to date. 151 units are being proposed. He noted the site also runs along the pedestrian corridor trail and there would be an access to the parking lot directly from Beaser Avenue through the existing alleyway. He reviewed the setbacks, parking layout, building height allowance, as well as impervious surface standards. He also reviewed the grading and erosion control plan, landscaping requirements, proposed signage and photometric/lighting plan. The Standards for Review were assessed and presented for a PUD according to Section 781 – 3.8. He confirmed the developer has provided the required submittals for a PUD-GDP approval. He noted that Staff recommends APPROVAL of the PUD-SIP contingent on the following conditions:

- Approval is for the finalized plans submitted. If the applicant decides to make changes from the approved plans the applicant shall follow up with Planning and Development staff, and obtain required approvals through staff, and if necessary Plan Commission and Council.
- The applicant shall obtain all necessary Plan Review approvals and building permits for the proposed project prior to starting construction.
- PUD-SIP to allow a multi-family residential land use under a PUD Overlay on Parcel # 201-00356-0000.
- The City Council waived the 10-acre minimum area requirement for a PUD on 4.5-acre Parcel # 201-00356-0000 in the MRC zoning district with the finding that the proposed PUD encompasses a clearly defined area that will not preclude logical development of adjacent properties in a manner consistent with the intent of the UDO.
- Substantial development progress shall occur on Phase 1 of the development within 12 months of PUD-SIP approval.
- City Council granted relief from UDO Section 4.6(C)(3) Maximum height of principal building. forty-five (45) feet. Height allowance up to fifty-five (55) feet.
- City Council granted relief from UDO Section 4.6(C)(7). Minimum floor area per unit in multi-family uses.
 - a. Efficiency Unit. Five Hundred (500) square feet.
 - b. One-bedroom unit. Six hundred (600) square feet.
 - c. Two-bedroom unit. Seven hundred fifty (750) square feet.
 - d. Three or more bedroom units. Seven hundred fifty (750) plus one hundred fifty (150) square feet for each additional bedroom beyond two (2). Under the PUD unit floor areas may be up to 10% less than the ranges above (a-d) prescribed by code.
- Consistent with the approved PUD-GDP, building setbacks shall meet High Density Residential District (R-4) zoning standards.
- Developer to work with City Planning and Public Works staff on finalizing the access between Beaser Avenue and residential alley on the south side of the site. Developer to construct this access during the course of the project.
- The applicant submitted a finalized stormwater management plan including calculations on the amount of runoff anticipated based on the proposed impervious area (to include buildings and drive areas). Planning and Public Works staff shall review the stormwater management plan and calculations and verify that the stormwater management calculations demonstrate that the proposed stormwater retention ponds and other features are sized appropriately to handle all runoff generated onsite and that no runoff onto surrounding properties will occur as a result of this development. If staff determines any changes to the stormwater management plans or calculations are required, staff and the applicant shall work together to resolve any issues.

- Landscaping shall be installed consistent with the submitted landscaping plan and schedule.
- Any signage shall meet UDO standards and require submission of sign proofs for Planning and Development review and issuance of a sign permit prior to installation.
- Lighting shall be installed consistent with the submitted photometric plan. Lighting shall meet the standard for "Commercial residential open parking facilities" as described in UDO Section 6.7(D)(2).
- Any changes in the proposed land use or additional uses proposed shall require a PUD amendment and Plan Commission/City Council review.

Mayor Mackenzie asked if any commission members wanted to ask any questions during the public hearing for better understanding. Mr. Brede asked about accumulative light trespass. Mr. Wiley explained that the developer has submitted a photometric light plan that needs to demonstrate compliance with the required levels described in the UDO. Mayor Mackenzie asked the developer to confirm the changes in the landscaping plan from one large pond to two smaller ones. Mr. Jason Hale of North Shore Development Co. responded to this question and noted the onsite lot provided should prevent parking from occurring on neighborhood streets as well as some additional room for snow storage during winter seasons with high precipitation.

Mr. Wiley noted the required Class 2 public hearing notice was issued on June 26th & July 3rd and discretionary letters were sent to all surrounding property owners within 200 feet of the proposed development. He noted there has been a neighbor, JD Bass, who's been in touch regarding concerns related to access to his property. The city has worked with the developer and public works department to assure that his concerns will be addressed and not be an issue.

Mr. Beirl asked for the rationale of the approval of a 10 percent smaller apartment size. Mr. Wiley responded that it is to achieve the desired unit mix for cash flow requirements and to fit the building and parking onto the given site. Mr. Beirl asked if more land was purchased to make this project work. Mr. Wiley responded that the land on the southwest site of the site is privately owned and the city would not pursue acquiring these properties. Ms. Erickson asked if parking would be underneath the apartments or covered. Mr. Wiley responded there would be parking on the main level of the building underneath three levels of apartments. He clarified there will be entrances off of both 11th Avenue and Beaser Avenue with one sign. He noted that the lighting will utilize full cut-off fixtures with a maximum height of 20 foot high poles.

Mayor Mackenzie asked for a motion to go out of public hearing. Motion by Ms. Erickson, second by Mr. Beirl. The motion carried 6-0.

Mayor Mackenzie asked for a motion to discuss and recommend to council to approve the SIP. Motion by Ms. Erickson, second by Mr. Eades.

No further discussion. Mayor Mackenzie called to question a roll call vote. Motion Carried 6-0.

- b. Public Hearing: Review and approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow a fence exceeding 4 feet in height in the corner side yard at 307 14th Avenue East (Parcel # 201-01797-0000), zoned Single-family Residential (R-1). Applicants: Ceili Shields and Trevor Hansen.

Mayor Mackenzie asked for a motion to go into public hearing. Motion by Mr. Beirl, second by Ms. Erickson. The motion carried 6-0.

Mr. Wiley presented a background on the item. He reviewed the applicant information and property description as well as zoning and surrounding uses. He explained the applicant wants to fence it in for privacy and safety for their dog from other unleashed dogs outside the fence. He showed pictures of the property and a site aerial showing the location of the proposed fence. He explained where the applicant wanted to have a 6-foot high full privacy fence in the corner yard area that would not be allowed by ordinance without a CUP. The wood fence would be painted or stained. He went over the standards for review. He stated that staff recommends approval of this CUP and noted there is no fence being proposed for the front yard. He added the fence type is not picture frame style as shown in the slide but a standard stockade style panel.

Mr. Wiley noted that the required Class 2 public hearing notice was issued on June 26th & July 3rd and discretionary letters were sent to all surrounding property owners within 200 feet of the proposed development. There were no responses.

Ms. Shields, the applicant, thanked the staff and commission for their time and consideration. She noted that there has been up to three dogs in the neighborhood that have chased after her and her dog.

Mr. Brede asked if the purpose of the extra two feet was to protect her? She responded yes, many dogs can jump over a 4-foot fence and that she has witnessed several unleashed dogs in the neighborhood.

Mayor Mackenzie asked for a motion to go out of public hearing. Motion by Ms. Erickson, second by Ms. Tochterman. The motion carried 6-0.

Mayor Mackenzie asked for a motion to approve and recommend to council to approve the CUP for a 6-foot high fence as shown on the presented site plan with the recommended conditions. Motion by Mr. Eades, second by Mr. Beirl.

Discussion: Mr. Eades asked for clarification on where the fence is solid and Mr. Wiley gave an explanation. Mr. Beirl asked if the property owner is responsible for maintenance on both sides of the fence. Mr. Wiley responded yes, this is correct.

No further discussion. Mayor Mackenzie called to question a roll call vote for the Conditional Use for a 6-foot high fence. Motion Carried 6-0.

- c. Public Hearing: Review and approval of a Zone Change for 618 Beaser Avenue (Parcel # 201-00540-0000), from Public Institutional (PI) with Gateway Overlay (GTWY-O) to Mixed Residential/Commercial (MRC) with Gateway Overlay (GTWY-O). Applicant: Beaser Professional Building, LLC.

Mayor Mackenzie asked for a motion to go into public hearing. Motion by Mr. Eades, second by Mr. Bierl. The motion carried 6-0.

Terri Erickson presented a background on the topic. She reviewed the property and explained the proposed new use of the existing building and why it requires a rezone for the transition to a new use. She reviewed the surrounding uses and zoning districts adjacent to the property. The required standards were reviewed including consistency, compatibility and suitability of the rezone with the future land use and comprehensive plans. She noted the staff recommends approval of the zone change request and that the required Class 2 public hearing notice was issued on June 26th & July 3rd and discretionary letters were sent to all surrounding property owners within 200 feet of the proposed development. No feedback or responses were received.

Mayor Mackenzie asked if there were any questions. Ron Brandis asked how many residential units are planned and how many parking spots will be provided? Mayor Mackenzie noted there has been no specific plans developed at this point but that this zone change request is only allowing the use to take place in the future. Mr. Wiley noted the developer is looking at sixteen market rate apartments in the historic Beaser School building. He added the existing parking lot would remain and continue to be used as parking. The developer is not proposing any changes to the exterior of the site at this time. Mr. Wiley added any proposed exterior changes would have to come back to the commission for a site plan review. Ms. Erickson asked if the existing parking could accommodate 16 units. Mr. Wiley responded that he believes it can.

Mayor Mackenzie asked for a motion to go out of public hearing. Motion by Ms. Erickson, second by Mr. Eades. The motion carried 6-0.

Mayor Mackenzie asked for a motion to approve and recommend to council approval of the zone change. Motion by Ms. Tochtermann, second by Mr. Eades. Discussion: Mr. Eades asked if this parcel was included in the TID district recently approved and what affect might this have?

Mr. Wiley responded it doesn't affect anything from a zoning standpoint. He is talking with Mr. Vickroy about entering into a development agreement. Mr. Eades asked if the TID has any requirements for housing as opposed to commercial development with ratios that need to be met. Mr. Wiley responded that under a regular TID there would be a ratio requirement but because this is a blighted area or redevelopment TID there is not that constraint.

No further discussion. Mayor Mackenzie called to question a roll call vote for the rezone request. Motion Carried 6-0.

- d. Public Hearing: Review and approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow a Multi-Family Residential land use for 618 Beaser Avenue (Parcel # 201-00540-0000), contingent on zone change to Mixed Residential/Commercial (MRC) with Gateway Overlay (GTWY-O). Applicant: Beaser Professional Building, LLC.

Mayor Mackenzie asked for a motion to go into public hearing. Motion by Ms. Erickson, second by Mr. Eades. The motion carried 6-0.

Terri Erickson presented a background on the topic. She noted that this CUP request is now relevant since the rezone request was approved. She reviewed the site and surrounding area including zoning and current uses. Pictures were displayed showing the historic character of the buildings and the surrounding views of the exterior and adjacent park space. She explained the intended future uses of the existing spaces. She noted no significant changes are currently proposed for the site. If site changes were proposed during development, a site plan review by the commission would likely be required. She reviewed the standards for a Zoning Map Amendment as required by ordinance 3.3-C. She stated that staff recommends approval of the request to allow for a multi-unit Mixed Residential Commercial use in the newly re-zoned Mixed Residential/Commercial district with a Gateway Overlay with the following conditions:

1. Conditional Use Permit is contingent on the required zone change for the subject property from Public Institutional (PI) with Gateway Overlay (GTWY-O) to Mixed Residential/Commercial (MRC) with Gateway Overlay (GTWY-O).
2. Applicant shall submit all required plans for required Plan Reviews and Building Permits.

Ms. Erickson confirmed the required Class 2 public hearing notice was issued on June 26th & July 3rd and discretionary letters were sent to all surrounding property owners within 200 feet of the proposed development. No feedback or responses were received.

Mr. Brandis asked what the Gateway Overlay refers to. Mr. Wiley responded this proposed development is along a Gateway Overlay zone which requires specific design standards that tend to be a bit more stringent. Ms. Tochtermann asked staff to explain more about the proposed parking and why we are not concerned about having enough. Mr. Wiley responded that the applicant would be required to meet code standards for minimum parking. He added the developer is proposing to do some parking within the footprint of the building. This would be part of the adaptive reuse and would be based on the number of units provided. He noted the owner is proposing 16 units inside the older 3-story building and the design is still in the preliminary development phase. Other uses would be contained in the one-story CESA-12 section. If the number of spaces proposed did not meet the code requirements then a different unit mix would need to be considered and reviewed by the plan commission.

Mayor Mackenzie asked for a motion to go out of public hearing. Motion by Ms. Erickson, second by Mr. Eades. The motion carried 6-0.

Mayor Mackenzie asked for a motion to approve and recommend to council to approve the CUP Request. Motion by Mr. Beirl, second by Ms. Tochtermann. Discussion:

Ms. Erickson asked what the requirements are for a historic building. Mr. Wiley replied that it varies and went on to explain that since this building is under local designation, exterior changes would require a certificate of appropriateness through the Historic Preservation Commission. The developer plans to pursue historic tax credits, both state and federal, for the interior work. The modifications would then be evaluated by SHPO and the National Park Service. Mr. Beirl asked where the 618 Beaser property starts and ends. Mr. Wiley noted they are working to assign a 612 address to the old Beaser school portion. The CESA-12 portion would be numbered 618. The community garden would remain as part of the city park. There will be no new parking at this location. If parking here was ever proposed it would need to come back through Plan Commission for review and approval. Mr. Eades asked if the zone change passes, and becomes an MRC district, there is still a CUP requirement for an MRC development? Mr. Wiley answered yes, this is the case, since it is multi-family. Mr. Eades asked how it is physically possible to put parking inside the building without altering the exterior? Mr. Wiley said we will have to wait and see what the architect comes up with for this. There may need to be some façade modifications but with tax credit dollars being utilized, the design will need to be approved by the designated authorities. Mr. Eades noted that for state and federal designation, the restrictions only apply if they are giving you money. Mr. Wiley stated this is true for private property. Mr. Eades asked if it was common to grant a CUP without any plans? Mr. Wiley responded he would be more hesitant if exterior site changes were being proposed. Because there is not, he feels comfortable approving the CUP with the plan review and permitting requirements still in place.

No further discussion. Mayor Mackenzie called to question a roll call vote for the rezone request. Motion Carried 6-0.

- e. Public Hearing: Review and approval of Unified Development Ordinance Text Amendment.
Applicant: Planning and Development Department

Mayor Mackenzie asked for a motion to go into public hearing. Motion by Mr. Beirl, second by Ms. Erickson. The motion carried 6-0.

Mr. Wiley gave a background on the text amendment proposed to modify the allowable height of a freestanding light fixture in specified districts. The planning department has been working with an applicant who has done past work with the Ashland Medical Center and Northwood Tech. The ordinance regulates freestanding light fixtures as accessory structures. Recently the ordinance was amended to restrict most accessory structures to a twenty-foot maximum height. There are many properties where existing fixtures are greater than twenty-feet including the medical center. The applicant for the Northwood Tech lot permit has asked for greater pole heights. A variance would not apply because there is no real hardship. The best route would be to pursue an ordinance amendment for two zoning districts – Regional Commercial and Public Institutional. This would be to consider raising the pole height limit to thirty-feet. The lighting would still need to meet all other UDO standards such as light trespass, uniformity ratio and foot-candle requirements. The city staff supports this amendment. The intent in this case is to allow for fewer light fixtures to better accommodate a motorcycle training course in the lot. Mr. Wiley reviewed text amendment standards and noted that staff recommends approval of this amendment. He noted the Class 2 public notice was issued on June 26th and July 3rd. There were no responses from the public.

Mayor Mackenzie asked for a motion to go out of public hearing. Motion by Mr. Eades, second by Ms. Erickson. The motion carried 6-0.

Mayor Mackenzie asked for a motion to approve and recommend to council to approve the ordinance text amendment. Motion by Ms. Erickson, second by Mr. Eades. Discussion:

Ms. Erickson asked for verification that this would not affect properties in residential areas such as the church property next to Mr. Monroe and the Birthing Center. Mr. Wiley responded no and explained this property is not zoned as one of the affected districts. Ms. Erickson expressed concern that residential areas could potentially have more lighting due to this change. Mr. Wiley responded that this would only be applicable to higher intensive-use areas. Ms. Tochtermann asked to see the location of these zones on a map. Mr. Eades expressed his concern that there could be unintended consequences. Maybe it would work to allow these as a conditional use instead? Mr. Wiley showed on the map where the affected zone districts are located. Ms. Tochtermann asked what kind of difference it would make if these higher lights were located around a residential district. Mr. Wiley noted he doesn't think it would make much difference. If the lights are higher they will need to be further back from the property line due to the intensity and spread of light. She asked what the restriction designed to do, then? Mr. Wiley responded we don't want people installing fifty-foot high poles so capping it at thirty-feet seems reasonable. Mayor Mackenzie added that historically there was an effort to reduce pole height due to the light radiating out and also keeping with the dark sky initiatives. With more modern LED lighting and down-casting bulbs, there's not near the light spread that there used to be. Mr. Eades stated that he realized a CUP option would not be a good alternate as they should be allowed for uses only and not design standards. This amendment is primarily to allow larger lots to have less fixtures to light the required area.

No further discussion. Mayor Mackenzie called to question a roll call vote for the rezone request. Motion Carried 6-0.

7. Discussion Items:

a. Update on Property Maintenance Enforcement

- Mr. Wiley noted the draft for the metal siding is still in progress. We are waiting on more input and continue to discuss ways of capturing more public input.

- The city is working on closing and transferring the Beaser property to the developer, Vision Inc. They are hoping to start construction yet this summer starting with the relocation of underground utilities from the site.
 - The department is being more proactive about following up on property maintenance, CUP's and building code compliance. The property at 118 10th Ave E has been razed and there is another raze order in the works for 711 3rd St East, damaged by fire. Two chronic problem properties, one on 2nd Ave E by Burger King and the other at 513 7th St W, have been given court orders, warrants and raze orders to get them cleaned up and billed to property taxes.
 - Mr. Beirl commented that it seems property maintenance staff has been more active in the community and inquired if it has helped with the amount of complaints? Mr. Wiley responded that he hasn't noticed a sharp change in the number of complaints and that we still get a number of them. Although sometimes these have been more about neighbor disputes. Cleaning up these problem properties should reduce the number of complaints. Mayor Mackenzie added that the ordinance modifications have helped allow the city more ability to deal with these properties in a timely manner. This has included being able to give warrants to go onto private property and putting liens on them for the cost of work to clean them up.
- b. Update on Building Permits
No Discussion
- c. Update on Miscellaneous Planning and Development Items

Mr. Eades asked what happened with the parking of vehicles in yards that was previously under discussion for an ordinance modification? Mr. Wiley responded that there had been discussion about whether not gravel could be an option for additional parking areas on properties and it was never finalized. He noted property maintenance staff are trying to work with residents when there is an issue and being reasonable regarding general upkeep of parking areas. Going after these situations have not been a high focus at this time.

Ms. Erickson asked for an update on the Marty Reykdal property. Mayor Mackenzie noted that Mr. Reykdal has removed the metal panels and replaced it with board and batten siding. He was told he needed to address the violations on the site and with the garage before he could proceed with work on a house. Once this gets inspected and approved then he can move onto the house, which he has submitted plans for. He has been trying to sell it but the property is not in compliance which creates challenges. He reiterated this problem is an example of why the ordinance was changed to require a primary residence be in place before an accessory structure is allowed.

Mayor Mackenzie mentioned the city is still trying to figure out how to move forward with changes to the metal siding restrictions currently in the ordinance and noted it is not a simple task. There are many metal sided buildings throughout the city now. They are evaluating how it got to this point and how to best deal with it moving forward. Staff continues to consider if there are areas best designated for not allowing the material such as the Historic District. The Mayor asked the commission to share any more ideas or input they have with him or the staff.

Mayor Mackenzie introduced Shawn Brede, the new plan commission member serving as the council rep, replacing Sarah Jackson for District 2.

8. Next Meeting Date

9. Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Erickson, Second by Mr. Eades. Carried 6-0.

Meeting closed at 8:18 pm

It is possible that a quorum of members of other governmental bodies of the municipality may be in attendance at the above stated meeting to gather information or speak about a subject, over which they have decision-making responsibility. Any governmental body at the above stated meeting will take no action other than the governmental body specifically referred to above in this notice. The City of Ashland does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, age or disability in employment or provision of services, programs or activities. NOTE: Upon reasonable notice, the City of Ashland will accommodate the needs of disabled individuals through auxiliary aids or services. For additional information or to request this service, contact the Planning & Zoning Dept. at (715) 682-7041.