



**PLAN COMMISSION MEETING  
IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2026 – 4:00 PM  
CITY HALL – SECOND FLOOR**

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**MINUTES**

**1. Call meeting to order**

Chairperson Manager Houseman called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

**2. Roll call**

Present: Chairperson Manager Houseman, Director of Public Works Navin, Council Representative Schultz, Commissioners Shull and Kessenich. Also present: Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director, Deputy Clerk, Director of Neighborhood Services, Council members Huckabee and Jaeckel.

Commissioner Ciccarelli joined the meeting at 4:16pm

**3. New Business**

*a. Review and possible action relating to the **minutes of the January 27, 2026, Plan Commission meeting** (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*

Shull moved, seconded by Kessenich to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2026 Plan Commission meeting. Motion carried.

*b. Review and possible action relating to a **Site Plan Review for Willow Ridge Apartments** located at 916 Madison Ave. (SPR-2026-01) (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)*

Director Draeger shared that the proposed development includes the retrofitting of the existing +/- 5,000 square foot structure from a mixed-use building (Kent's Big Bar with upper level residential) to a 5-unit multi-family building. The applicant is proposing five residential units (3 on the first floor and 2 on the second floor), ranging from 1-2 bedrooms each. Access to each unit will be provided via three entry points on the east, west, and south sides of the building. Upper-level units will be accessible through interior staircases on the east and west sides of the building.

Other proposed site improvements include:

- Adding two front-facing gables on the south facade of the existing structure, facing

Madison Avenue.

- Exterior façade enhancements on all sides of the structure.
- Removal of the existing covered parking structure, shed, chain link fence, and portions of the asphalt.
- New landscaping on all sides of the property.
- New bicycle parking rack and exterior dumpster enclosure.

Primary access to the site will be retained from Cloute Street on the west side of the property and the reduction in asphalt will result in the removal of impervious surfaces on the lot and access connections to the neighboring property to the east. One on-site parking stall will be accessed via the rear alleyway. The subject parcel lies on the edge of the North Neighborhood and Central Neighborhoods Planning Area and has been identified in both as Mixed-Use. The opportunities indicated in the plan include mixed-use redevelopment close to Madison Avenue and revitalization along Madison Avenue.

The subject property is also shown as Planned Mixed-use and Future Redevelopment Opportunity Area on the Future Land Use Map. This designation includes a blend of commercial, office, multi-family residential, and community facility land uses. Staff believes the proposal is in concert with the Comprehensive Plan.

Kessenich questioned the size of the parking stalls and referenced the stall in the rear of the building. Discussion followed on tenant access and the design submitted by the developer is adequate for the required stalls, tenants and landscaping.

Shultz inquired on the alley in the rear of the building. Houseman stated this is a public alley maintained by Public Works.

City staff recommends approval of the Site Plan, subject to the following conditions:

1. Require the applicant to add a sidewalk connection from the existing sidewalk along Cloute Street to the building to align with the proposed new sidewalk in front of the building.
2. Require the applicant to add a paved walkway to the dumpster enclosure.
3. Require the applicant to add curbing around all paved areas facing Madison Avenue.
4. Allow a minimum throat depth of less than 25 feet due to site constraints and existing curb cut locations.
5. Require the applicant to provide the following information that meets all the requirements of the Zoning Code to be reviewed by City staff:
  - a. Photometrics plan and lighting fixture cut sheets.
  - b. Mechanical locations and proposed screening.
  - c. Materials and height of the dumpster enclosure.

- d. Landscaping plan with species identified and points calculated.
- 6. Any other recommendations of City staff and the Plan Commission.

Discussion continued on allowing tenant walking space between the parked cars and the building. A recommendation of a 5 foot setback was suggested to create a sidewalk between the front of the building and the parking stalls.

Shultz moved, seconded by Ciccarelli to approve the Site Plan for the Willow Ridge Apartments located at 916 Madison Avenue, subject to the conditions in the staff report with the additional recommendation of moving the parking stalls back 5 feet from the building to allow for landscaping and a walkway between the parked cars and the building. Motion carried.

- c. ***Presentation to the Plan Commission on Premier Real Estate Management LLC, Concept Plan for six 12-unit multifamily buildings along Mehta Lane (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)***

Director Draeger presented the concept plan submitted by Premier Real Estate Management, LLC. Premier Real Estate Management, LLC, is proposing a Group Development that will require a Zoning Map Amendment, Certified Survey Map review and a Conditional Use Permit due to the presence of multiple principal structures. City staff and the applicant are presenting the Plan Commission with a conceptual development proposal located on Mehta Lane, encompassing parcel numbers 226-0641-3231-000 and 226-0614-3242-001. Both parcels are currently zoned Suburban Mixed Use (SMU), which does not permit standalone multi-family residential buildings without an accompanying commercial component. As such, a zoning map amendment would be required for this project. The applicant is proposing rezoning the property to Multi-Family Residential-8 (MRL-8), which allows up to eight dwelling units per acre and is consistent with the proposed project density. The adjacent property is already zoned MRL-8.

The project would generate employment opportunities within the City, including one full-time property management position and up to two part-time positions for maintenance and housekeeping. The applicant has experience constructing similar developments in other communities, including the City of Reedsburg and the City of Portage. The building design incorporates attached garages, which provide covered parking while minimizing additional impervious surface area that would otherwise be created by detached garage structures or garage banks.

Overall, City staff believe the proposed concept is compatible with the existing development in the surrounding area, would add quality housing stock to the City, and would provide modest employment opportunities. Additionally, an adjacent property is already zoned MultiResidential-8 (MRL-8) and contains a similar development, reducing concerns related to spot zoning. Note that, due to the preliminary nature of this concept plan, City staff has not vetted this project relating to emergency access, utilities, traffic, or other items. A thorough review will be conducted during the next phases of the project.

Plan Commission takes no action at the Concept Proposal stage. Formal action is taken during the CUP, ZMA, and CSM review and approval processes. City Staff support the proposal as a concept plan and recommends that the Plan Commission provide feedback to staff and the applicant for incorporation into the next phases of the project.

Ciccarelli inquired about the possible extension of Commonwealth Drive. Draeger noted the soil and wetlands would restrict the development.

Houseman recommended sidewalks to connect the building and the street extension of Commonwealth if wetlands allow for EMS.

Schultz inquired how Premier Real Estate Management LLC chose Fort Atkinson for this project. Emily McFarland of Premier Real Estate responded that, as the previous Mayor of Watertown, Manager Houseman has done a great job promoting Fort Atkinson for growth and development. Shultz further commented that while Fort Atkinson is seen as a bedroom community, our recent retail market study shows that we have a net influx of workers, meaning the City is the opposite of a bedroom community.

No action was taken.

- d. *Update on previously approved projects (Houseman)*  
None

#### **4. Adjournment**

Schultz moved, seconded by Shull to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 4:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Courtney Thom  
Deputy Clerk