



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

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, Commissioners Ciccarelli, Shull and Kessenich. Council Representative Schultz arrived at 4:02. Also present: Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director, City Attorney, Deputy Clerk and Director of Neighborhood and Building Services.

3. New Business

*a. Review and possible action relating to the **minutes of the February 10, 2026, Plan Commission meeting** (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*

Ciccarelli motioned to change the minutes to reflect that the extension of Commonwealth streets and sidewalks as permitted. Shull seconded. Motioned carried.

Ciccarelli moved, seconded by Shull to approve the amended minutes of the February 10, 2026 Plan Commission meeting. Motion carried.

*b. **Public Hearing:** Conditional Use Permit relating to occupancy by a construction company, including indoor business activities and ancillary equipment storage at the property located at 525 Jefferson St. (CUP-2026-02) (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)*

Director Draeger presented the Site Plan as required by section 15.10.32 of the City of Fort Atkinson Zoning Ordinance which outlines the requirements for the Conditional Use application and procedure. The subject property provides increased flexibility and opportunity for long-term operational growth while supporting the retention of established local businesses. While the precise number of required parking spaces has not been fully determined as part of this analysis, a commonly used benchmark for a business of this type is approximately one parking space per employee. Based on that general metric, the existing parking area located on the west side of the property, if paved and properly striped, would be capable of accommodating approximately 30 or more parking spaces. This supply would significantly exceed the current number of employees (approximately 10) and would also accommodate the applicant's projected future

workforce of approximately 20 employees.

The Conditional Use Permit (CUP) will facilitate additional vehicle and truck traffic to and from the site as part of the expanded operations. While the applicant is proposing limited improvements, including paving one ADA-compliant handicap stall, painting the exterior of the building, and installing landscaping, additional site improvements are necessary to bring the broader property into greater compliance with City standards. These improvements include paving the existing gravel parking area, installing concrete aprons, and constructing sidewalk improvements at both west parking lot approaches to the site. Sidewalk installation is also required along Clarence and Lorman Streets.

The proposed paving will increase the amount of impervious surface on the site, which requires additional landscaping under City regulations. In the opinion of City staff, the landscaping plan proposed by the applicant satisfies these requirements and provides an appropriate level of site enhancement.

City staff recommend that the sidewalk requirement along Jefferson Street be deferred at this time. Jefferson Street is anticipated to be reconstructed in the future, and sidewalk installation could be completed more efficiently as part of that coordinated public project. Future reconstruction of Jefferson Street will likely impact a portion of the existing parking area on the east side of the property, as several of those spaces currently extend into the public right-of-way. When that reconstruction occurs, those spaces will likely be reduced. The additional parking capacity available on the west side of the property will help offset this future loss and ensure that adequate on-site parking remains available.

City staff have discussed these site improvement requirements with the applicant, and the applicant has acknowledged the need to complete them. Given the scope of the required improvements, particularly the sidewalk installations, consideration should be given to allowing an extended timeline of up to one (1) year for completion. This approach would reduce the immediate financial burden while still ensuring the improvements are completed within a reasonable and defined timeframe.

The proposed development appears capable of meeting applicable City ordinances and is generally consistent with adopted City plans. The proposal supports reinvestment in an existing building and the continued operation and expansion of established local businesses, subject to compliance with the identified site and infrastructure improvements. The CUP process requires a public hearing and action at a separate meeting. However, after thorough review, City staff has prepared the following list of conditions for Plan Commission consideration at this meeting and on March 24th, when the matter returns to the Plan Commission for action:

- 1) Those conditions as listed in Section 15.10.32(9) (CUP procedure) shall apply to all Conditional Uses.
- 2) The Conditional Use permit only applies to permitting a Vehicle Service and Repair land

use on the subject property for the applicant and their associated business. If any other Conditional Use in the UMU zoning district were to be requested in the future by the applicant or a different entity on the subject property, it shall require the completion of a full new Conditional Use process (Section 15.10.32).

3) The Vehicle Service and Repair land use shall be limited to only indoor activities (Section 15.03.10(20)) as proposed by the applicant. If any outdoor activities are requested in the future, an updated Site Plan shall be required to be provided to the Plan Commission for review and approval in accordance with all applicable zoning standards (Section 15.03.10(20)(a)-(c)).

4) Outdoor activity shall be limited to only those permitted by right land uses within the UMU zoning district, including, but not limited to, Outdoor Display (Section 15.03.10(4)) and Incidental Outdoor Storage (15.03.28(17)). All applicable land use requirements associated with any outdoor activity shall be met and maintained in compliance with all the requirements of the City of Fort Atkinson Municipal Code.

5) Require all parking areas be paved with a hard surface per City Standard (15.06.06(19)).

6. Require a parking/stripping plan be submitted and approved by City Staff, which meets City ordinances.

7) Require all approaches be constructed of 6" of concrete per City Standard (15.06.06(19)).

8) Require the installation of a public sidewalk along Clarence and Lorman streets within one year of final approval of this CUP.

9) Require bicycle parking when Jefferson Street is reconstructed by the City.

10) The applicant must obtain all required permits prior to construction.

11) Any other recommendations of City staff and the Plan Commission.

Public hearing opened at 4:09 pm.

Applicant, Mike Foerster of A+ Environmental, proclaimed his excitement about the project and stated he would comply with the conditions of the staff report.

Public hearing closed at 4:12 pm.

- c. ***Public Hearing:*** regarding a Zoning Map Amendment to change the zoning district for the property located on Mehta Lane (parcels 226-0614-3231-000 and 226-0614-3242-001) from Suburban Mixed Use (SMU) to Multi-Family Residential-12 (MRM-12) (ZMA-2026-01) (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)

Director Draeger presented the zoning map amendment as required by section 15.10.31 of the City of Fort Atkinson Zoning Ordinance. The applicant has worked with City staff to develop the proposed project. The proposed Zoning Map Amendment aims to provide an additional housing development opportunity on the subject properties. This location comprises a mix of different land uses that includes multi-family development directly to the east. However, the amendment still continues to maintain the character and appropriate scale of development within the surrounding neighborhood. Overall, the proposed Zoning Map Amendment meets the requirements of the City's ordinances, is in alignment with adopted City plans, and will provide additional tax base and housing units

when the project is complete. The parcels are located within a Tax Incrementation District (#9). City staff recommends that the Plan Commission recommend the City Council approve the Zoning Map Amendment from SMU to MRM-12 for the subject parcels.

Note that the following land use applications are expected for this project, which will require future Plan Commission and/or City Council review and approval:

- A certified survey map combining the two parcels into one to gain right-of-way accessibility conformance with the Zoning Ordinance.
- A conditional use permit for a group development.
- Site, landscape, stormwater, and building material review through the Site Plan Review process.

Public Hearing opened at 4:15 pm.

After three calls and no comments, the public hearing was closed at 4:16 pm.

- d. **Public Hearing:** relating to a request for a General Development Plan for the property located at 23 N. Water St. E. and the westerly adjacent vacant lot (parcels 226-0514-0322-008 and 226-0514-0322-009), to change the zoning from Downtown Historic Mixed Use (DHMU) to Downtown Historic Mixed Use with a Planned Unit Development Overlay to allow for removal of a vacant building and development of a 15-stall parking lot at the site (PUD-2025-03) (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)

Director Draeger presented the General Development Plan (GDP) which is the first step (zoning) in the Planned Unit Development (PUD) approval process. The second step (Specific Implementation Plan), which will include a CSM to combine the lots, will come before the Plan Commission for consideration at a later date.

The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing building on the eastern parcel and combine the two parcels into a single lot to develop a 15-stall off-site parking lot. This new parking lot would provide additional spaces for bank staff and customers, helping meet parking needs as part of the bank's ongoing development. Currently, Premier Bank has an agreement with the adjacent Bienfang's Bar property for staff parking. However, this arrangement may not continue in the future, as the parking area is privately owned and access is not guaranteed long-term. In response, the proposed parking lot will serve as a replacement for the current parking spaces, ensuring long-term, dedicated parking for the bank. To assess the need for parking, the applicant conducted a parking study for the immediate area, which concluded that the proposed lot would help reduce peak parking occupancy in surrounding public parking areas in the downtown area.

City staff recommends approval of the General Development Plan, with the following conditions:

1. A recommendation to the City Council that the General Development Plan for parcels 226-0514-0322-008 and 226-0514-0322-009 be approved, subject to any and all requirements identified by the Plan Commission.
2. All other applicable standards and requirements of the underlying DHMU zoning district

shall continue to be in effect within this established PUD overlay, outside of those flexibilities noted below in item 3.

3. Nine proposed flexibilities from the DHMU zoning district standards:
 - a. Proposed flexibility to allow a permitted by-right principal land use of Off-Site Parking Lots in the DHMU zoning district is granted as proposed in the GDP submittal.
 - b. Proposed flexibility to allow a minimum pavement setback along the street, side, and rear property lines of 0 feet in the DHMU zoning district is granted as proposed in the GDP submittal.
 - c. Proposed flexibility to allow the maximum number of access points to be exceeded up to two on a parcel less than 200 feet in width is granted as proposed in the GDP submittal.
 - d. Proposed flexibility to allow the minimum number of bicycle and pedestrian connections to be less than one is granted as proposed in the GDP submittal.
 - e. Proposed flexibility to allow the minimum vision triangle standards to be less than 10 feet of visual clearance between the driveways and the public right-of-way is granted as proposed in the GDP submittal.
 - f. Proposed flexibility to allow the minimum green space areas for parking lots to be 0 feet along all property lines and between adjacent, neighboring property surface parking lots is granted as proposed in the GDP submittal.
 - g. Proposed flexibility to allow the minimum permitted throat length to be 4 feet is granted as proposed in the GDP submittal.
 - h. Proposed flexibility to allow the minimum aisle width for two-way traffic flow to be 6 feet on along the western property line is granted as proposed in the GDP submittal.
 - i. Proposed flexibility to allow the maximum footcandles at the property line to be exceeded up a maximum as defined within the SIP approval step.
4. Review and approval of a CSM providing cross-access easements with neighboring properties to the West and North and provide a utility easement to the City for replacement of an existing sanitary line, prior to approval of the Specific Implementation Plan.
5. The applicant is required to improve private storm sewer upgrades needed on the parcel and in the surrounding areas in coordination with City staff and adjoining property owners.
6. Any other recommendations of City staff or the Plan Commission.

The public hearing was opened at 4:20 pm. After three calls and no comments, the public hearing was closed at 4:21 pm.

- e. ***Public Hearing:*** relating to amendments to various sections of the Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 15 of the City of Fort Atkinson Code of General Ordinances, relating to the review and approval of Signs (ZTA-2026-01) (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)

Director Draeger stated that City staff have prepared the attached summary of proposed Zoning Text Amendments focused on Article IX: Signage. The proposed amendments would shift review and approval of Permanent Business Signs and Optional Miscellaneous Signs from the Plan Commission to administrative staff review, while retaining the existing

Plan Commission review and approval process for Electronic Message Signs and signage located within the Downtown Historic Mixed Use (DHMU) zoning district.

The proposed changes are based on the recognition that Plan Commission review of many sign types is an additional step, which may delay a property or business owner's sign project. Prior to Plan Commission consideration, staff has already worked with applicants to ensure full compliance with ordinance standards. As a result, Plan Commission review typically does not add new conditions or information once the ordinance requirements are met. In addition, the 2015 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Reed v. Gilbert* requires sign regulations to be content neutral, limiting review to objective factors such as location, materials, and configuration. When a sign meets these standards, the Plan Commission has no authority to further regulate its design or content. The City intends to retain additional oversight where warranted. The DHMU zoning district is a highly sensitive area, and Electronic Message Signs have the potential to create external impacts on surrounding properties. Accordingly, the proposed amendments preserve the current Plan Commission review process for these sign types.

The primary policy change associated with the amendments is the shift of sign permit review and approval authority from the Plan Commission to City staff for most sign types, while retaining Plan Commission review for signage within the DHMU zoning district and for Electronic Message Signs. The City's Management Team has reviewed the proposed amendments, and all comments have been incorporated.

The public hearing opened at 4:23 pm and closed at 4:24 pm after three calls and no comments.

*f. Review and discussion relating to the requested **Conditional Use Permit** on the property located at 525 Jefferson Street (CUP-2026-02) (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)*

Ciccarelli questioned if the evergreen trees in the aerial photos are part of the parcel and landscaping plan. Director Draeger believes that the trees are part of the parcel, but not counted in the current land count.

Ciccarelli further inquired about how the City would ensure that the sidewalks would be constructed at a later date. Director Draeger indicated that this would be captured within permits, letters to businesses, and other future processes.

Ciccarelli suggested when Jefferson Street is reconstructed, the City should reconsider the street parking. Director Draeger stated that parking would be addressed during the Jefferson Street reconstruction, as some of the spaces are currently in the right-of-way.

Schultz stated that if the design plan were to remove bike storage, he would be amenable since there are bike racks across the street.

No action was taken.

- g. *Review and possible recommendation to the City Council regarding a **Zoning Map Amendment** to change the zoning district for the property located on Mehta Lane (parcels 226-0614-3231-000 and 226-0614-3242-001) from Suburban Mixed Use (SMU) to Multi-Family Residential-12 (MRM-12) (ZMA-2026-01) (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)*

Schultz inquired about the difference between MRM-12 and SMU regarding this project. Director Draeger indicated that the biggest difference between the two is that SMU allows for commercial use, whereas MRM-12 does not. Since there is no commercial aspect to this project, the zoning amendment is being requested.

Ciccarelli questioned the possibility of making a public street in advance. Manager Houseman responded that the requirement of a new street for the development could prevent the development from taking place.

Kessenich moved to approve, and Schultz seconded to approve the recommendation to the City Council for the Zoning Map Amendment from SMU to MRM-12 for the subject parcels. Motion carried.

- h. *Review and possible recommendation to the City Council relating to a request for a **General Development Plan** for the property located at 23 N. Water St. E. and the westerly adjacent vacant lot (parcels 226-0514-0322-008 and 226-0514-0322-009), to change the zoning from Downtown Historic Mixed Use (DHMU) to Downtown Historic Mixed Use with a Planned Unit Development Overlay (PUD-2025-03) (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)*

Kessenich commented that she was pleased to see the mature trees on the parcels would remain and additional landscaping would be completed. She inquired about testing soil health and drainage improvement plans for the property. Director Draeger responded that he would make a note to include that in the comprehensive plan for the site.

Kessenich inquired about the availability of parking within the lot for downtown businesses. Director Draeger responded that the primary use would be for the Bank during daytime hours. Although a private lot, the parking spaces would be available for use as long as it doesn't overlap with business hours. However, the lot would remain private, and terms could change in the future.

Ciccarelli moved, seconded by Schultz to recommend to the City Council the General Development Plan for the property located at 23 N. Water St. E. and the westerly adjacent vacant lot (parcels 226-0514-0322-008 and 226-0514-0322-009), to change the zoning from Downtown Historic Mixed Use (DHMU) to Downtown Historic Mixed Use with a Planned Unit Development Overlay to allow for removal of a vacant building and development of a 15-stall parking lot at the site (PUD-2025-03). Motion carried.

- i. *Review and possible recommendation to the City Council relating to **amendments to various sections of the Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 15 of the City of Fort Atkinson Code of***

General Ordinances, relating to the review and approval of Signs (ZTA-2026-01) (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)

Ciccarelli suggested that the Planning Commission receive summary reports for the signage approved by staff. Manager Houseman agreed, and staff will implement signage reporting for the Commission.

Kessenich thinks that the projected signs option is great for the historic downtown buildings.

Schultz motioned, seconded by Shull, to recommend the City Council approve the amendments to various sections of the Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 15 of the City of Fort Atkinson Code of General Ordinances, relating to the review and approval of Signs (ZTA-2026-01). Motion carries.

*j. Review and possible recommendation to the City Council relating to a **Certified Survey Map** for the property located at 1310 Campus Dr. (CSM-2026-03) (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)*

Director Draeger provided that the property owner Tip of the Spear LLC has requested approval of a two-lot Certified Survey Map (CSM) for the parcel located at 1310 Campus Drive. The purpose of the CSM is to divide the existing 5.39-acre property into two separate developable lots. Proposed Lot 1 will have frontage along Campus Drive and Hawthorne Drive and will contain approximately 3.587 acres. Proposed Lot 2 will have frontage along Banker Road and will contain approximately 1.7995 acres. The property owner has submitted a request to divide the existing parcel located at 1310 Campus Drive into two separate parcels through a Certified Survey Map (CSM). The property is currently governed by an approved Planned Unit Development (PUD), including a General Development Plan (GDP) and Specific Implementation Plan (SIP), which were approved by the Plan Commission and City Council in 2023.

Under the PUD framework, the GDP establishes the general zoning and development parameters for the site, while the SIP provides the detailed site design and implementation elements. While these approvals do not have a formal expiration date, modifications to the approved plans may require amendments depending on the nature and scale of the proposed changes. The proposed land division would modify the existing lot configuration and reduce the total acreage associated with the approved development area from approximately 5.39 acres to 3.58 acres. Changes of this nature may affect several components of the previously approved development, including stormwater management, overall site density, and the ratios of building coverage and impervious surface area.

Due to the potential magnitude of these impacts, the proposed land division is considered a substantial change to the previously approved PUD plans. As a result, an amendment to the Specific Implementation Plan (SIP) will be required to evaluate how the revised parcel configuration affects the approved development layout and associated infrastructure. In addition, if the proposed lot division results in development ratios that exceed those

permitted under the underlying Multi-Family Residential–30 (MRH-30) zoning district, an amendment to the General Development Plan (GDP) may also be required.

Because the GDP functions similarly to a zoning map amendment within the PUD framework, any amendment to the GDP would require review and recommendation by the Plan Commission and final consideration by the City Council. Overall, the proposed CSM meets the requirements of the City's Land Division and Development Ordinance and the Dimensional Standards of the City's Zoning Ordinance. The CSM would also create an additional parcel that would be developable into additional residential units.

Ciccarelli recommended to make a pedestrian path in the future.

Ciccarelli motioned, seconded by Kessenich to recommend the City Council approve this preliminary Certified Survey Map, subject to the following conditions:

- Adjust the final CSM to reflect City Council President Kyle Jaeckel under the City of Fort Atkinson Approval Certificate.
- Remove access easements from the Final CSM; noted as 7 and 8 in the Easement Notes of the submitted CSM.

Motion carried

- k. Information relating to the Habitat for Humanity Critical Repair Program (Houseman, City Manager)*

No action was taken.

- l. Update on previously approved projects (Houseman, City Manager)*

Ciccarelli asked about the South Main Street project and moving utilities. Manager Houseman responded that yes, as part of the project, there are several minor utility updates, road rehabilitation, and path.

Manager Houseman informed Commission members that the Willow Ridge project will not move forward as proposed, as the project developer did not have control over the property, and it was sold to someone else.

No action was taken.

4. Adjournment

Kessenich moved, seconded by Schultz to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 5:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Courtney Thom
Deputy Clerk

