



MINUTES FOR PLANNING COMMISSION

A Planning Commission meeting was held on **Thursday, May 01, 2025 at 5:30 PM**
in the **Council Chambers at City Hall, 819 Superior Avenue, Tomah, WI.**

AGENDA

Call To Order

- The meeting was called to order by the City Plan Commission Chairperson, Mayor Paul Dwyer, at 5:30pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Mayor Paul Dwyer: | Present |
| 2. Alderperson Mitch Koel: | Present |
| 3. Alderperson John Glynn: | Not Present |
| 4. Citizen Eric Prise: | Present |
| 5. Citizen Tina Thompson: | Present |
| 6. Citizen Brian Rice: | Present |
| 7. Citizen Brian Meyer: | Present |

Election: Chairperson

- Mayor Paul Dwyer was nominated to serve as the Chairperson of the City Plan Commission.
- Motion to elect Mayor Paul Dwyer as the Chairperson of the City Plan Commission by Eric Prise.
- Second by Tina Thompson.
- Discussion: None.
- Amendments: None.
- Vote: Motion carried 6-0.
 - Mayor Paul Dwyer: Yay
 - Alderperson Mitch Koel: Yay
 - Alderperson John Glynn: Not Present
 - Citizen Eric Prise: Yay
 - Citizen Tina Thompson: Yay
 - Citizen Brian Rice: Yay
 - Citizen Brian Meyer: Yay

Election: Vice Chairperson

- Bryan Meyer was nominated to serve as the Vice Chairperson of the City Plan Commission.

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- Motion to elect Bryan Meyer as the Vice Chairperson of the City Plan Commission by Eric Prise.
- Second by Tina Thompson.
- Discussion: None.
- Amendments: None.
- Vote: Motion carried 6-0.
 - Mayor Paul Dwyer: Yay
 - Alderperson Mitch Koel: Yay
 - Alderperson John Glynn: Not Present
 - Citizen Eric Prise: Yay
 - Citizen Tina Thompson: Yay
 - Citizen Brian Rice: Yay
 - Citizen Brian Meyer: Yay

Election: Secretary

- City staff were nominated to serve as the Secretary of the City Plan Commission.
- Motion to elect city staff as the Secretary of the City Plan Commission by Eric Prise.
- Second by Tina Thompson.
- Discussion: None.
- Amendments: None.
- Vote: Motion carried 6-0.
 - Mayor Paul Dwyer: Yay
 - Alderperson Mitch Koel: Yay
 - Alderperson John Glynn: Not Present
 - Citizen Eric Prise: Yay
 - Citizen Tina Thompson: Yay
 - Citizen Brian Rice: Yay
 - Citizen Brian Meyer: Yay

Anyone Desiring to Appear Before the Commission

- No citizens approached the Commission.

Presentation and Open Discussion: Habitat For Humanity of Greater La Crosse (Kahya Fox)

- Due to technical difficulties Kahya Fox was not able to present when this agenda item was initially reached.
- Motion to table the agenda item until Director Morales could solve the technical difficulties was made by Tina Thompson.
- Second by Alderperson Koel.
- Discussion: None.
- Amendments: None.
- Vote: Motion carried 6-0.

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- Mayor Paul Dwyer: Yay
- Alderperson Mitch Koel: Yay
- Alderperson John Glynn: Not Present
- Citizen Eric Prise: Yay
- Citizen Tina Thompson: Yay
- Citizen Brian Rice: Yay
- Citizen Brian Meyer: Yay

Approval: Recommendation to Staff on Way Forward for Sign of Don Roscovius

- Director Morales requested permission from the Chair to address the Commission. Permission granted. Director Morales explained that a motion is needed to make a recommendation to staff, discussion would then determine different options, then an amendment to the original motion could be made.
- Motion to make a recommendation to staff on way forward for sign of Don Roscovius made by Eric Prise.
- Second by Tina Thompson.
- Discussion:
 - The Chair summoned Mr. Roscovius to address the Commission. Mr. Roscovius explained that he had sought a sign permit via La Crosse Sign Company. He was under the impression that a permit was issued. However, he was later notified by the City that his sign was nonconforming. Director Morales explained the conditions under which the sign was nonconforming, which can be found in the agenda packet. Director Morales further explained that staff must enforce the legislation passed by the City Council. However, the City did in fact issue a permit. Director Morales further explained that in order for the sign to become a conforming sign a variance would need to be granted. State law requires “undue hardship” to be proven for a variance, and this would not meet that criteria. Director Morales proposed three options: enforce the letter of the law, have Mr. Roscovius apply for a variance, or direct staff to work with the City Attorney to draft a memorandum of agreement allowing the sign to stay as long as the City did not need access to the public right of way. Members of the Commission pondered the dilemma that both the City and Mr. Roscovius are facing, empathizing with the fact that the property owner thought he had followed the correct process.
- Amendments: Eric Prise amended his motion recommend to staff that they work with the City Attorney to find a legal agreement that would enable Mr. Roscovius's sign to remain. Tina Thompson amended her second.
- Vote: Motion carried 6-0
 - Mayor Paul Dwyer: Yay
 - Alderperson Mitch Koel: Yay
 - Alderperson John Glynn: Not Present
 - Citizen Eric Prise: Yay
 - Citizen Tina Thompson: Yay
 - Citizen Brian Rice: Yay
 - Citizen Brian Meyer: Yay

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Presentation and Open Discussion: Habitat For Humanity of Greater La Crosse (Kahya Fox)

- During the above agenda item Director Morales was able to get Kahya Fox dialed into the meeting via Zoom.
- During this agenda item Alderperson Glynn joined the meeting in person.
- Kahya Fox of Habitat for Humanity of Greater La Crosse gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Cross-Mod project currently underway in Hillsboro, WI. The presentation may be found in the agenda packet. Discussion following her presentation included questions and answers:
 - Bryan Meyer: How do you get the land?
 - A: TIF and city land
 - Eric Prise: What was Hillsboro investment?
 - A: Land and \$10,000 in TIF for each home
 - Q: How did you get to number of 10 units, available property?
 - A: Correct.
 - Brian Rice: Who builds the homes?
 - Schulte homes in Minnesota
 - Kahya: Home summit in Hillsboro next week.
 - Mitch Koel: How soon could we do this in Tomah?
 - A: Depends on how fast Tomah can move. Contract in the summer, four month delay due to EPA funding.
 - Q: How much land did you use in Hillsboro?
 - A: A little under 5 acres.
 - Q: Would you want to do 10 homes in Tomah? More, less?
 - A: We can do more, 10 was driven by Hillsboro.
 - Eric Prise: Any other projects in Hillsboro or nearby?
 - A: No.
 - Q: What is your feeling on your ability to attract clients?
 - A: We had more than enough applicants and calls from realtors.
 - Brian Rice: What happens if they want to sell the home in 2 years?
 - Q: No restrictions on the first two categories, but there are restrictions on the HFH category to restrict for the first 10 years.
 - Nick Morales: elaborates on timeline.
 - Mitch Koel: What are the next steps?
 - A: Funding stack, site selection, strategic communication plan.
 - Paul Dwyer: Do they have to have a basement?
 - A: They do not have to have a basement.
 - Ben Rohr: How is the project different from others that HFH has done?
 - A: Used to do stick builds, then purchase rehabs, became a licensed dealer in 2022.
 - Q: Was there a private-public-nonprofit partnership?

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- A: Weezer was working on multi-family residential.
- Q: What other formats?
- A: Have done twin homes as well.
- Q: Have you acted as the developer in putting infrastructure in?
- A: Did a project for infrastructure in Holmen.
- John Glynn: Have you partnered with local businesses that can contribute to the project for a tax write-off?
 - A: Yes, did work on veteran housing where the land was donated and they received a tax write-off for the assessed value of the land.
- Mitch Koel: For the triplex what is the bedroom configuration?
 - A: 3 bedroom with basement and garages.

Approval: Recommendation to Staff on Way Forward for Sign of Dr. Mark Mueller

- Motion by Tina Thompson to make a recommendation to staff on way forward for sign of Dr. Mark Mueller.
- Second by Eric Prise.
- Discussion:
 - Dr. Mueller: explains situation with his sign.
 - Director Morales: provides additional context.
 - Alderperson Koel: City does not need to remove people's signs, would like to follow same path as Mr. Roscovius.
 - Eric Prise: Director Morales has a point to investigate old signs. City should investigate role to help citizens.
 - Mayor: Ordinance Committee should look at ordinance amendment.
 - Alderperson Koel: City does not have some permits.
 - Tina Thompson withdraws motion, Eric Prise seconds withdrawal.
- Tina Thompson makes a motion to recommend to staff to work with City Attorney for an alternate remedy for Dr. Mueller's sign.
- Second by Alderperson Glynn.
- Vote: Motion carried 7-0.
 - Mayor Paul Dwyer: Yay
 - Alderperson Mitch Koel: Yay
 - Alderperson John Glynn: Yay
 - Citizen Eric Prise: Yay
 - Citizen Tina Thompson: Yay
 - Citizen Brian Rice: Yay
 - Citizen Brian Meyer: Yay

Approval: Certified Survey Map Submitted by Leigh Bardeen

- Motion by Eric Prise to approve the CSM submitted by Leigh Bardeen
- Second by Tina Thompson.

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- Discussion:
 - Bryan Meyer: Referenced Wis. Stat. 236 and verified it meets all requirements. Only concern is that surveyor referenced working under Monroe County requirements, which is not true. Would highly recommend that this map be approved.
- Amendments: None.
- Vote: Motion carried 7-0.
 - Mayor Paul Dwyer: Yay
 - Alderperson Mitch Koel: Yay
 - Alderperson John Glynn: Yay
 - Citizen Eric Prise: Yay
 - Citizen Tina Thompson: Yay
 - Citizen Brian Rice: Yay
 - Citizen Brian Meyer: Yay

Approval: 3 April 2025 Meeting Minutes

- Motion by Eric Prise to approve the minutes from the 3 April 2025 meeting.
- Second by Alderperson Koel.
- Discussion: None.
- Amendments: None.
- Vote: Motion carried 7-0.
 - Mayor Paul Dwyer: Yay
 - Alderperson Mitch Koel: Yay
 - Alderperson John Glynn: Yay
 - Citizen Eric Prise: Yay
 - Citizen Tina Thompson: Yay
 - Citizen Brian Rice: Yay
 - Citizen Brian Meyer: Yay

Approval: Direct Staff to Develop Amendment to Municipal Code Sec. 8-61: Housing of farm and exotic animals prohibited

- Motion by Eric Prise to direct staff to develop an amendment to Municipal Code Sec. 8-61: Housing of farm and exotic animals prohibited.
- Second by Bryan Meyer
- Discussion:
 - Director Morales provided additional context on the staff report. Alderperson Peterspm and a citizen had asked that the ordinance be amended to allow chickens within city limits. Director Morales explained that he was seeking a directive from the Commission due to the fact that he gets a high volume of requests to amend ordinances. To ensure that staff time is used properly, as well as money that may be required to contract Vandewalle and Associates to assist at \$120 per hour, Director Morales will only work on citizen requests for ordinance amendments after approval from a governmental body. Director Morales further explained that in the agenda packet were past Common Council minutes from 2013 and

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2014 in which similar requests to allow chickens failed to pass a vote. Director Morales also reiterated that chickens are allowed within city limits in agricultural zoned districts, and that neighbors in residential districts will likely oppose allowing chickens in neighborhoods. Eric Prise comments that it is valid for staff to ask for guidance because only one person asked for it and that does not mean it is representative of strong community interest.

- Amendments: None.
- Vote: Motion carried 5-2.
 - Mayor Paul Dwyer: Yay
 - Alderperson Mitch Koel: Yay
 - Alderperson John Glynn: Yay
 - Citizen Eric Prise: Nay
 - Citizen Tina Thompson: Nay
 - Citizen Brian Rice: Yay
 - Citizen Brian Meyer: Yay

Approval: Direct Staff to Develop an Ordinance Allowing Outdoor Dining in Downtown

- Motion by Tina Thompson to direct staff to develop an ordinance allowing outdoor dining downtown.
- Second by Eric Prise.
- Discussion:
 - The Chair summoned Mr. Blaine Hackett, owner of The Brick Sip Haus, to address the Commission. Mr. Hackett gave the Commission a slide presentation advocating for allowing outdoor dining downtown. The presentation may be found in the agenda packet. Following the presentation there was a question and answer period:
 - Eric Prise: How many people asked for this?
 - A: One, but unanimous support amongst several community members and the Fire Department.
 - Alderperson Koel: Would you leave tables and chairs outside after business hours?
 - A: No.
 - Q: Downtown Thursday Nights?
 - A: No.
 - Eric Prise: Do we have historical accounts from City on COVID-19?
 - A: No.
 - Bryan Meyer: We have approved outdoor beer gardens in city before.
 - Alderperson Glynn: Great presentation!
 - Tina Thompson: Would allow smoking cigarettes?
 - A: No.
 - Mayor: Virocqua does well with this.
- Amendments: None.
- Vote: Motion carried 7-0.
 - Mayor Paul Dwyer: Yay

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- Alderperson Mitch Koel: Yay
- Alderperson John Glynn: Yay
- Citizen Eric Prise: Yay
- Citizen Tina Thompson: Yay
- Citizen Brian Rice: Yay
- Citizen Brian Meyer: Yay

Approval: Special Meeting on Monday 5 May at 5:30pm to Receive City Detect Presentation

- Motion by Bryan Meyer to approve a special meeting on Monday 5 May at 5:30pm to receive City Detect Presentation.
- Second by Alderperson Glynn.
- Discussion:
 - Alderperson Koel: Cannot make it.
 - Eric Prise: Cannot make it.
 - Tina Thompson: Cannot make it.
 - Director Morales: Provides context and says that it will be recorded. Explains that price for system has increased from initial assumption, but may still be worth learning what technology is out there.
- Amendments: None.
- Vote: Motion carried 7-0.
 - Mayor Paul Dwyer: Yay
 - Alderperson Mitch Koel: Yay
 - Alderperson John Glynn: Yay
 - Citizen Eric Prise: Yay
 - Citizen Tina Thompson: Yay
 - Citizen Brian Rice: Yay
 - Citizen Brian Meyer: Yay

Discussion: Future Agenda Items

- Mr. Roscovius sign update.
- Dr. Mueller sign update.
- Habitat For Humanity next steps (land, funding stack).
- Ordinance development for voted on items.
- Direct ordinance amendment for sign removal.

Approval: Future Regular Meeting Date Thursday 6 June at 5:30pm

- Motion by Alderperson Glynn to approve future regular meeting date as Thursday 6 June 2025 at 5:30pm.
- Second by Alderperson Koel.
- Vote: Motion carried 7-0.
 - Mayor Paul Dwyer: Yay
 - Alderperson Mitch Koel: Yay

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- Alderperson John Glynn: Yay
- Citizen Eric Prise: Yay
- Citizen Tina Thompson: Yay
- Citizen Brian Rice: Yay
- Citizen Brian Meyer: Yay

ADJOURNMENT

- Motion by Eric Prise to adjourn the meeting.
- Second by Bryan Meyer.
- Discussion: None.
- Amendments: None.
- Vote: Motion carried 7-0.
 - Mayor Paul Dwyer: Yay
 - Alderperson Mitch Koel: Yay
 - Alderperson John Glynn: Yay
 - Citizen Eric Prise: Yay
 - Citizen Tina Thompson: Yay
 - Citizen Brian Rice: Yay
 - Citizen Brian Meyer: Yay
- Meeting adjourned at 7:37pm.

NOTICE: 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. No action will be taken by any governmental body at the above-stated meeting other than the governmental body specifically referred to above in this notice. Please note that, upon reasonable notice, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of disabled individuals through appropriate aids and services. For additional information or to request this service, contact Becki Weyer, City Clerk, at 819 Superior Avenue, Tomah, WI 54660.

Respectfully Submitted by Nicholas M. Morales