

PLAN COMMISSION

City of Kaukauna

Council Chambers

Municipal Services Building

144 W. Second Street, Kaukauna



Thursday, August 7, 2025 at 4:00 PM

MINUTES

In-Person in Council Chambers

Mayor Penterman called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Members Present: Brett Jensen, Giovanna Feller, John Neumeier, Michael Avanzi, Ken Schoenike, Pennie Thiele, Mayor Tony Penterman

Absent: John Moore

Other(s) Present: Planning and Community Development Director Dave Kittel, Associate Planner Adrienne Nelson, Community Enrichment and Recreation Director Terri Vosters, Times Villager Reporter Brian Roebke

Neumeier made a motion to excuse the absent member. Seconded by Thiele. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Approval of Minutes

a. Approve Minutes from June 19, 2025

Feller made a motion to approve the minutes from June 19, 2025. Seconded by Jensen. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Old Business

a. None

4. New Business

a. Park Donation Application Review – Benches

Associate Planner Nelson introduced the park bench donation application submitted by Gail and Jeff Gustman for two benches, to be installed at Riverside Park and Horseshoe Valley Park, in memory of Tom and Suzy Gustman and Elwyn and Margaret Schroeder. The benches would be in the City of Kaukauna's standard bench style and would include plaques. The donors have requested that these benches overlook the baseball

fields at both parks. At Riverside Park, there are currently four benches along the sidewalk that overlook the baseball field. These benches differ in style from the standard benches, but they are in good condition, so they do not need to be replaced at this time. There is room, however, for another bench to be placed in that same area. At Horseshoe Valley Park, there is ample space in the area overlooking the baseball field, and no current benches are in place along the large curve of sidewalk around the baseball field. Both parks would benefit from benches to allow people to comfortably watch the baseball games.

Schoenike made a motion to approve the park bench donations for Gail and Jeff Gustman in memory of Tom and Suzy Gustman and Elwyn and Margaret Schroeder with the finalization of the location to be done by staff. Seconded by Jensen. The motion passed unanimously.

b. 2025-2030 Park Plan

Director Kittel introduced the 2025-2030 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. He explained that this is an introductory item, but if the Plan Commission has no changes they would like made to the document, they can forward it on to the Common Council for review. The plan as presented was shaped by information gathered from the community survey, standards taken from the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), and items that have recurrently been brought up to staff by community members. Items that kept coming up included maintenance, amenities, community events and involvement, and beautification. Staff then worked to pinpoint what the issues were for these areas and why they kept coming up in order to develop tactics to address them.

Kittel then went on to explain each of the items in more depth. For maintenance he explained that, given the large number of parks Kaukauna has, it can be difficult to maintain all of them. Some of the tactics suggested to address this issue included creating an annual park conditions report, creating a formalized user reporting system accessible via QR codes at parks so maintenance issues can be addressed quickly, performing semiannual park inspections, hiring a park foreman and having dedicated park maintenance staff, and investigating security measures at parks in order to reduce vandalism.

For amenities, Kittel explained that many residents want more diverse, accessible amenities for a wide variety of age groups. There were quite a few requests made for ziplines, trails, and dog-friendly parks. Some of the tactics suggested to address this issue included exploring small fenced in areas for dogs at parks, performing public outreach to neighbors when a park is to be updated, creating and providing digital and paper trail maps, improving bike lanes and safety, using national park standards when planning for amenities, investigating the possibility of a permanent event stage, creating a Central Park redevelopment plan, and mapping parks and service areas in order to plan for future park needs.

For community events and involvement, tactics included investigating the possibility of having community gardens, exploring any legal requirements for having beer garden events, and increasing the promotion of parks on social media so community members are aware of existing amenities.

For beautification, tactics included more native plantings, the creation of a beautification committee, adding landscaping at park entrances for larger regional parks, introducing more public art, creating an adopt a park/planter program, and hosting community clean-up events.

Schoenike commented that there are definitely amenities that go unused, such as the boat launch at Riverside Park and the kayak launch at Trestle Park.

Avanzi commended staff for their work and Director Kittel for his presentation on the document. He stated that he would support whatever the rest of the Plan Commission was wanting to do.

Feller made a motion to recommend adoption of the 2025-2030 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan to the Common Council. Seconded by Jensen. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Revised Site Plan Review – 101 Kelso Road (CoVantage)

Associate Planner Nelson introduced the revised site plan for the new CoVantage building to be located at 101 Kelso Road. The original plan was approved by the Plan Commission on May 22, 2025. In order to address items brought forth by the Wisconsin ANR during the wetland permitting process, however, a revised plan was submitted. No changes were made to the driveways, the north parking lot, or the location of the

building. Changes have been made to the location of the drive through, solar panels, and gravel path.

Thiele made a motion to approve the revised site plan with the condition that, prior to issuance of building permits, updated Stormwater and Erosion Control permits are obtained from the Engineering Department. Seconded by Schoenike. The motion passed unanimously.

d. Façade Variance Request – 1020 W Hyland Avenue (GE Contracting) Director Kittel introduced the façade variance request made by GE Contracting for the construction of their new vehicle storage garage at 1020 W Hyland Avenue. The property is zoned Commercial Highway District (CHD) and, per ordinance, the façade must have a minimum of 10% masonry on any side facing a public street. This requirement has already been discussed with the applicant, and they plan to add a knee-high masonry component to the side of their building that faces a public street. They are requesting a variance, however, to allow for the use of metal siding in the façade. Per ordinance, up to 10% of the façade of the building may be metal if approved by the Plan Commission. The applicant wants to use steel siding for a façade because it doubles as a structural component, allows for a stronger building, and helps keep down construction costs. There have been other buildings in the CHD approved and constructed with entirely metal siding. If the Plan Commission were to approve the 10% metal façade, the applicant would go to the Board of Appeals as well to obtain a variance allowing for a fully metal façade (aside from the 10% masonry on the side of the building facing a public street).

Neumeier commented that, in this area of the city, concrete and masonry is used heavily. Metal would appear out of place. He would lean towards following all ordinance requirements and not allowing for a variance.

Mayor Penterman agreed with Neumeier

Thiele noted that these façade ordinances were created for a reason, and that there are residential homes in this area. The ordinances should be followed.

Feller agreed, commenting that there is no reason to have ordinances if they are being bypassed.

Jensen stated that the ordinance should be followed, and that the 10% masonry component should be included in the plans moving forward.

Neumeier made a motion to direct Director Kittel to inform the applicant that the Plan Commission will not support anything outside of the existing ordinance and to return with a new plan. Seconded by Feller. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Other Business

a. None

6. Adjourn

Jensen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Thiele. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

