

PLAN COMMISSION MINUTES

August 24th, 2026

The Plan Commission met in the Council Chambers with the following members present: Mayor Robert Stocks, Alderperson Ken Berg, Kerry Kneser, Nick Krueger, Tom Levi, City Engineer Andrew Beyer, and Zoning Administrator Brian Zirbes.

Others in attendance: Mark & Vicki Cichanofsky, Chris Merklein, David Schroeder, Tom Stocco, Randy Goll, and Sonja Kruesel.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor called the meeting to order at 4:03pm.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Review and take action: Site Plan Review Committee minutes dated August 10, 2026

B. Review and take action: Plan Commission minutes dated August 10, 2026

A motion was made by Krueger and seconded by Kneser to approve the above Site Plan Review & Plan Commission minutes as written, and this motion passed unanimously.

3. BUSINESS

A. Public hearing: Rezoning of 100 E. Division Street & 104 E. Division Street to Planned Development (PD) – Amended General Development Plan (GDP) and Amended Precise Implementation Plan (PIP)

Mayor Stocks opened the public hearing and Tom Stocco of Tessuto Development spoke stating the project increased from 67 to 75 to increase revenue and make this project more viable as a long term investment, along with some engineering changes needed. Stocco said he would comment further later in meeting. The public hearing then closed.

B. Review and take action: Rezoning of 100 E. Division Street & 104 E. Division Street to Planned Development (PD) – Amended General Development Plan (GDP) and Amended Precise Implementation Plan (PIP)

Brian stated this public hearing was to consider whether to approve an amendment to the Planned Development Overlay Zoning District, the General Development Plan and the Precise Development Plan. The current PD – GDP & PIP was approved by our council on March 3rd, 2026. The proposed project creates two multi family buildings with a zero lot line shared wall between these two buildings with one in Dodge County and one in Jefferson County. There would be 7 three-bedroom units, 25 two bedroom units, 38 one bedroom units and 5 studio units. Stocco noted there would be 110 parking stalls and these stalls would be individually charged a cost which he felt would deter some applicants from wanting to pay for this amenity.

Brian then commented the city was recommending approval of their amended PD-GDP/PIP with 10 conditions: Complete and obtain approval of the Development Agreement; Record the approved CSM in both Dodge & Jefferson Counties; Record the Riverwalk Easement in both Dodge * & Jefferson Counties; Obtain assigned addresses for each apartment unit; Submit and obtain approval of a Fire Protection permit; Include the installation of a Knox Box on the building plans; Submit a letter from the State of Wisconsin approving the separation wall between the two structures; Obtain approval of an erosion control and stormwater permit; Include State & Federal ADA accessibility requirements on the building plans; Include a design element in the hallway that clearly indicates the separation between the 2 buildings. Mr. Stocco said the studio rentals would be \$1,300, the 1 bedroom would be \$1,600, and so on with a three times rent formula on income to determine affordability of these units for applicants wanting to reside there. They looked at the income levels and feel there is a market for their unique housing and that it will be successful.

Brian also reminded Commission members there is no parking requirement per say in the Central Business Zoning District but in other parts of this applicable code, they would need 107 parking stalls, so they satisfy that condition. Randy Goll spoke to the stormwater requirements and he stated our city recognized this project as a redevelopment and they meet the quality & quantity

standards when it comes to stormwater runoff. They use a filtration device to treat stormwater and that greatly reduces the runoff amounts to levels that satisfy that requirement.

Alderperson Berg spoke strongly in favor of this project because of the huge investment of funds going into this development to create quality housing for tenants residing there. He also noted the huge benefit it will have on our city's eventual tax base, knowing these investors are estimating this apartment project at \$15 to \$18 million of valuation. Plus, it will incentivize other investors to look at Watertown favorably for investment. The 150 to 200 or more residents will help our city's downtown district and community as a whole with customers, employees and students for our local schools. Kneser wanted reassurance that the community room/fitness room would be retained but apparently moved elsewhere within the building. Stocco stated yes and the new location will make it better for the building layout and the tenants after the change.

Berg moved to approve the motion to amend the proposed PD-GDP/PIP with the 10 conditions identified by the city and noted above, seconded by Levi and approved unanimously.

- C. Review and Discuss Article VI Performance Standards – Vandewalle** Sonja Kruesel of Vandewalle Associates was present to go over article VI of the proposed zoning ordinance which will create new standards for development and how it should be designed, operated and maintained. She noted criteria in looking at a site or development having to do with parking, vision triangles & driveways as examples; operational impacts having to do with how development affects neighboring properties due to lighting, noise or odors; and property standards for residential and non-residential that involve fences, pools, vacant buildings, etc. Sonja noted existing properties would be exempt from these requirements should they not conform to these new zoning, building standards. Permits would continue to be issued by staff and inspections would continue to occur to ensure compliance with our city code. Conditional use permits would not typically be needed as much since zoning and building code would oversee the type of development being considered.

In the downtown, just like it is currently, there is no parking minimum but with commercial space in general there would be a parking standard of one stall per 500 sq ft instead of one per 300 sq ft, while for industrial it is one parking stall per employee on the largest shift. With construction, it was noted that code requires curbing around concrete or asphalt pavement with less curb and gutter for industrially zoned properties. This flexibility in the requirements for curbing are improvements in the code proposed. Noise and odor are two standards that are measured and thresholds that are monitored for operational standards.

Board members had discussion on property maintenance and tools the city can use for enforcement and compliance where vacant buildings in downtown area need to be addressed. Much of regulation forces the property owner to update the city over time on their intentions. The concern is more with commercial and industrial vs residential and high visibility areas of town. The city starts out with a contact with the property owner, then goes to an annual condition report and removal of any signage from the business entity that was there when they were open for business. Next, would be a need for a fire access box to be installed for public safety to have an ability to get in the building if needed. At five years, there could be a code compliance and enforcement component outlined for property owner. Eventually at the 10-year mark, if no improvement and cooperation with property owner of vacant, blighted building, steps could be taken ultimately for demolition of the building and a return to vegetative cover. Members liked the progression steps overall but 10 seemed too long if vacant and no communication with city or progress in its blighted condition over a period of several years. Consensus of board members was to accelerate the timeline somewhat to shorter time frame than 10 years before serious action by property owner required. It was noted that demolition is not required as the ultimate enforcement for a city, it could be anything less than that which motivates the property owner to take action on their vacant, blighted property.

A question was asked about deed restrictions for a house more stringent than our city code which can happen but city officials are not the enforcers of these deed restrictions and the homeowner association has to come up with ways to enforce their rules and not rely on the city to do it for them.

4. ADJOURNMENT

A motion by Kneser to adjourn at 5:21pm and seconded by Levi was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Alderperson Ken Berg

All materials discussed at this meeting can be found at:

https://files-backend.assets.thrillshare.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/5330/Cow/a7497003-b87d-4154-9cc3-b4fe44fa1b8d/August-24%2C-2026-Plan-Commission-Meeting-Packet.pdf?disposition=in