

Village of Fall Creek
Minutes of Special Committee for Downtown Business District
August 17, 2022

1. **Call to Order:** 4:03 p.m., Village Hall Meeting Room, 122 E. Lincoln Ave., Fall Creek
2. **Roll Call:** Members Present: Village President Tim Raap, Amy Boettcher, Karen Herbison, John Kuehn, Jared McKee. Members Arriving Later: Curt Strasburg. Members Absent: Evan Anderson, Chester Goodman, Tania Roberts, Jordan Yule. Staff Present: Clerk/Treasurer Renee Roemhild. Also Present: Karen Hurd.
3. **Certify Open Meeting Law Requirements Have Been Met:** A notice of the meeting and the agenda was posted at the three public places and newspapers were notified.
4. **Adopt Agenda:**
 - MOTION (Kuehn/Herbison) to adopt the agenda as printed. PASSED, without negative vote.
5. **Downtown District Review & Possible Recommendation to Plan Commission:** Village President Tim Raap stated that at the last meeting focus groups were formed to research ordinances from other municipalities for comparison of such things as building maintenance/visual clutter, signage, exterior façade, and ordinances. Member Curt Strasburg arrived at 4:07 p.m.

The first topic discussed was building maintenance/visual clutter. John Kuehn reported on his review, stating he felt it would be good for the Village to have a property maintenance code because it would change the concepts from being a mere suggestion to being a qualified regulation. He felt the single most difficult aspect of it would be enforcement, not wanting to put extra pressure on business owners. Amy Boettcher provided examples from her research on building maintenance & visual clutter, including detailed guidelines for trash can placement. Discussion took place that there is a health and safety component to be considered, stating Eau Claire County Health Department does assist municipalities in inspections and enforcement based on the specific regulations of the municipality. Raap stated we could look at enforcement through the eyes of offering grants, rather than imposing fines by trying to come up with local grants to assist business owners with compliance, possibly requesting the involvement of the Fall Creek Foundation because we want to invest in our community, starting with the Downtown Business District.

- MOTION (Herbison/Kuehn) that ordinances be drafted to bring to the Plan Commission regarding the placement of garbage cans in both the business and residential districts, recognizing there will be some variation between what is required in each district. PASSED, without negative vote.
- MOTION (Herbison/Kuehn) to consider the health and safety aspect of property maintenance, drafting an ordinance that the County could help enforce with regards to property inspection of businesses and multi-family residential units/rental properties. PASSED, without negative vote.

Signage for the Downtown District was discussed next, with Raap clarifying that this was not to be confused with the regulations for other zoning districts. Comments were made about the need for consistency, with discussion that now was a good time to define exactly what was wanted in the Downtown District and to move forward with consistency in enforcement. It was stated that properties along U.S. Hwy 12 will have to abide by the State regulations, but that is outside of the Village's control. Discussion took place on banners, flags, posters, chalkboards, and projected signs, stating they could not project into the road right-of-way and defining a height they must be above the sidewalk for clearance of pedestrians.

- MOTION (Herbison/Boettcher) to update the Downtown District Guidelines with specific sign directives as discussed. PASSED, without negative vote.

Exterior façade was discussed next with Karen Herbison reporting on her research, stating she didn't think there was need to change what is currently in our *Guidelines*. Discussion took place about wanting to be careful to not be too restrictive, as it may snuff out a fresh idea. It was noted that our guidelines do allow for individuality and uniqueness, in fact there was a request over 10 years ago to install a red roof. The application was approved, but the applicant did not follow through with the project. Our standards indicate any improvements should be period specific, consistent with the era's building construction. Consensus was that no change to the Downtown District Guidelines was needed.

6. Adjournment: @ 5:16 p.m.

Renee Roemhild, Clerk-Treasurer