

Village of Fall Creek
Minutes of Plan Commission Meeting
July 6, 2022

1. **Call to Order:** 4:00 p.m., Village Hall Meeting Room, 122 E. Lincoln Ave., Fall Creek
2. **Roll Call:** Members Present: Village President Tim Raap, Bill Boettcher, John Kuehn, Curt Van Auken. Members Arriving Later: Chester Goodman. Members Absent: Evan Nyberg, Curt Strasburg. Staff Present: Administrator/Public Works Director/Zoning Administrator Jared McKee, Clerk-Treasurer Renee Roemhild. Also Present: 3 citizens.
3. **Certify Open Meeting Law Requirements Have Been Met:** A notice of the meeting and an agenda was posted at the three public places and local newspapers were notified.
4. **Adopt Agenda:**
 - MOTION (Kuehn/Van Auken) to adopt the agenda as printed. PASSED, without negative vote.
5. **Consider Sign Permit in Downtown Business District @ 102/104 E Lincoln Ave:** President Tim Raap introduced the application for an approximate 3' x 4' vinyl & wood framed sign with a plexiglass covering stating the sign is intended to be used for advertising and contact information. Raap said there was a review by the Village Architect saying the sign meets the definition of a wall sign and falls within the allowable sign square footage limits for the building. Zoning Administrator Jared McKee stated the dimensions were fine and called attention to the fact that it will be a changeable sign, in which the message can change. He recommended approval of the sign.
 - MOTION (Kuehn/Boettcher) to recommend the Village Board approve the sign permit application of Toby Biegel/Corner Pub for a sign at 102/104 E Lincoln Ave. PASSED, without negative vote.
6. **Consider Sign Permit in Downtown Business District @ 155 E Lincoln Ave:** Bill Boettcher stated he needed to recuse himself from this particular agenda item, as he is working for the applicant so there is a conflict of interest. Raap noted that would leave the Commission without a quorum, so suggested proceeding with other items on the agenda in hopes that more members would arrive. The Board moved on to agenda item #7, with the intention of moving back to #6 if more members arrive.
7. **Consider Ordinance Updates:** Raap stated he and Administrator McKee have been reviewing the Village's current Zoning and Subdivision Code and wanted to bring up some broad topics for the Commission to start thinking about. In comparing our ordinance with other municipalities, we do have some restrictions that may be a deterrent to developers wanting to invest in Fall Creek. The purpose of bringing up these concepts now is to allow Plan Commission members the opportunity to give input on proposed amendments early in the process, as well as giving members time to individually research some of the topics themselves. A draft amendment to the ordinance will be presented for full review sometime in the near future. As it involves Zoning Code, there would also be a public hearing called, which would be noticed in the newspaper at least 15 days ahead of the meeting.
 - Lot Size/Width: Some communities have residential lot widths that are much narrower than ours and minimum lot area requirements that are smaller than ours. Raap stated we don't have to copy everyone else, but we also don't want to push developers away. The Village currently requires a minimum lot area of 10,000 square feet and minimum lot width of 100' in the R1 Zoning District, and a minimum lot area of 8,500 square feet and minimum lot width of 75' in the R1A Zoning District. This compares to the City of Altoona which requires a minimum lot area of 6,000 square feet and minimum lot width of 66' in their R1 Zoning District. John Kuehn questioned if there could be discussion on the lot width. McKee replied yes, but every developer he's talked with has said the 100'

lot is a non-starter at today's construction costs of \$500/ft, stating there would have to be a significant contribution from the Village in order to make the developer be willing to come here. Raap offered that a way to handle that might be to utilize the different zoning districts - R1 when you prefer larger lots and R1A when you prefer smaller lots. Reducing the lot size for one district doesn't mean that every single-family home is going to be a smaller lot. The Village could choose the mix they'd like to see in the development.

Member Chester Goodman joined the meeting via telephone at 4:32 p.m. and later arrived in person at 4:50 p.m.

- Basements: As far as has been able to be determined, the Village is the only community in the area that requires basements. Many developers may still want to put basements in, but is this a requirement the Plan Commission thinks it still valid to have in our ordinances?
- Twin Homes: Our code does not address twin homes and they have become quite popular in other municipalities. A twin home is similar to a duplex, having two separate units that share a common wall in one building. But unlike a duplex that is owned by one person who may live in one unit and rent out the other to a tenant, a twin home has two separate owners who own only half of the building. Some municipalities treat twin homes as a different zoning district because there are complex issues related to twin homes. It is common for a municipality to require the developer submit his *Covenants* for review, showing the shared property and how maintenance will be handled so that improvements such as roof or siding replacement are done at the same time for both sides of the building. The covenants do not become something that the Village is responsible to enforce; they are recorded at the County Register of Deeds Office and give an assurance to the Village that there will not be problems later down the road because the issues were not laid out at the time of submitting the Plat.
- Park Requirements: Our code currently requires a developer to dedicate on average 15% (5% for commercial, 10% for single-family, 15% for duplexes, 20% for multifamily) of the total acreage to be used for park, playground, recreation, or open space areas. This is a high percentage that may no longer be affordable for a developer. If there was still desire for a park component, one way to handle it would be to require compensation that could be put toward development of a park in a different location. Sometimes one larger park is more valuable than several little ones. Boettcher commented that the City of Eau Claire now has some park areas serving as water retention areas as well.

Curt Van Auken stated he appreciated the work that was being done to try to help bring development to the Village. McKee stated we do need to be competitive with other communities but on the other hand, also want to make sure we keep the things that are important to the residents here and important for the long-term vision of the Village. With the arrival of Goodman earlier, the Commission moved back to agenda item #6.

6. **Consider Sign Permit in Downtown Business District @ 155 E Lincoln Ave:** Bill Boettcher recused himself from his position on the Plan Commission. Raap introduced the application for an approximate 4' x 16' billboard sign. Raap stated the property owner previously applied for the projecting sign that had been salvaged after the fire of his old building. That sign was approved in July of 2021, but the specifics of this billboard sign had not been determined at that time so it is being brought back for consideration now. McKee stated he reviewed the sign application and felt the design and coloring fit in with the Downtown Business District Guidelines.

- MOTION (Goodman/Kuehn) to recommend the Village Board approve the sign permit application of Allan Roberts/Chicken Chasers Bar for a sign at 155 E Lincoln Ave. PASSED, without negative vote.

Bill Boettcher returned to his position on the Plan Commission.

8. **Comprehensive Plan Updates:** Raap reported the Comprehensive Plan was done in 2009 and it would be beneficial to review it and possibly update it. In checking on the cost to have an outside professional firm complete the review, it was very costly. Raap thought we could start by breaking it out in sections, review them to look for items that are out of date or any suggestions the reviewers might like to bring forward, and then come back as a group to discuss. Raap assigned the following:
 - Chapter 1&2 (Intro & Vision) – John Kuehn & Curt Van Auken
 - Chapter 3&4 (Future Land Use, Implementation) – Tim Raap & Bill Boettcher
 - Chapter 5 (Existing Conditions, Population) – Chester Goodman & Jared McKee
 - Appendix – Evan Nyberg & Curt Strasburg
9. **Adjourn:** @ 5:00 p.m.

Renee Roemhild, Clerk-Treasurer