

**VILLAGE OF EPHRAIM PLAN COMMITTEE
WORKING SESSION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 2026 - 12:00 PM
9996 WATER STREET**



Present: Andy Bartelt, Grace Held, Laird Hart, Rick Hoyerman, BD Thorp, and Ken Nelson – Chair.

Absent: Monique McClean

Staff: Brent Bristol - Village Administrator and Kim Roberts - Deputy Clerk.

Guests: John Cox (online) and Stuart Chomeau.

Call to Order: K. Nelson called the working session to order at 12:00 PM.

K. Nelson explained to the Committee that he had worked with Bristol and Roberts on his suggested updates to the ordinance so that they could be implemented into the current draft.

The Plan Committee reviewed the current working draft of the Protected Waterfront District Ordinance. Starting with the intent statement §17.20(1), the Committee noted that, in error, the intent statement drafted by Hoyerman had been omitted except for the last sentence. They asked for the full intent statement drafted by Hoyerman to be included in the next draft, along with the new last sentence that was included in the current draft. The Committee discussed replacing the word “leeway” within the intent statement. However, the Committee decided to keep the word “leeway” after considering alternative synonyms.

The Committee reviewed permitted uses §17.20(2), with the Committee requesting that conditional uses listed in §17.20(3)(b)(2) and §17.20(3)(b)(3) be simplified and moved into the permitted use section §17.20(2).

Bristol raised the organizational point that when listing permitted and conditional uses, it is atypical to go into the finer points of what those uses mean, and that detail belongs in the body of the document. He noted that in the draft, the full reproduction definition appeared both in §17.20(3)(b)(3) and in Section 8, creating redundancy. He suggested that §17.20(3)(b)(3) be struck and the definition remain in §17.20(8).

The Committee worked on the definition of “house reproduction” in §17.20(8)(a). Hart added a minor editorial note: the definition of reproduction should begin “means creating” rather than “is creating,” and Hoyerman agreed. As drafted, it described creating an exact replica of an existing house, including all unique features, materials, and architectural details, with materials to be sourced or recreated to ensure authenticity. Several refinements were discussed:

- The word “exact” before “replica” was proposed for removal to avoid an unachievably strict standard, given that original materials such as specific moldings, siding profiles, or rafter dimensions may no longer be available or permitted under current building code.
- Bristol noted that from the most restrictive reading, a true exact replica may be functionally impossible — for example, modern construction requires trusses rather than the rafter systems used 75 years ago, and insulation R-values have changed. The Committee agreed that size and volume should remain exact, while architectural and material details should allow for faithful reproduction using available or recreated equivalents.
- Bartelt suggested adding language explicitly permitting substitution of materials no longer available, subject to design review, to give property owners clarity. K. Nelson expressed caution about creating a slippery slope, but acknowledged that modern equivalents of historic materials are often available at specialty sources.

The Committee discussed §17.20(6)(a)(i) – Footprints. The Committee considered two alternatives for addressing footprints in the PW district. The first, more restrictive option held that footprints cannot be modified at all — no combining, no increasing. The second option allowed for footprint increases under limited circumstances: If an existing accessory building is removed, its footprint square footage could be reclaimed and incorporated into the principal structure, provided the width of the principal structure as measured parallel to State Highway 42 is not increased, and no upper level is added over the reclaimed area.

Hoyerman raised a concern that making the ordinance more restrictive than what was presented to the board, which had been framed as a cleanup of existing language, could be difficult to defend. K. Nelson acknowledged the concern but noted the original intent was always to achieve a certain character of development, and that tightening the dimensional details was necessary to achieve that.

The Committee agreed to eliminate the first restrictive option related to footprints and proceed with the second, more nuanced alternative, which incentivizes the consolidation of structures and removal of accessory buildings to improve shoreline views. Bristol noted that "structure" should be replaced with "building" throughout, as accessory structures such as freestanding fireplaces or carports are not the same as enclosed buildings in §17.20(6)(a)(i)(a).

Hart raised a concern about the use of the word "width," noting that depending on a building's orientation, "length" and "width" could be ambiguous. The Committee agreed to clarify by adding "as measured parallel to STH 42" in section §17.20(6)(a)(i)(b).

Design Criteria

K. Nelson reintroduced language stating that projects in the PW district should generally have the design characteristics of a single-story or one-and-a-half-story house and shall meet the design criteria in §17.26 Historic District Ordinance. The Committee agreed to retain this language as a reference point, though it was noted that "a half story house" appeared as a typographical error and would be corrected to "a one-and-a-half-story house." Hoyerman suggested replacing the word "new residence" with "projects within this district" to avoid confusion, as the section covers additions, modifications, and replacements — not only entirely new construction.

The Committee agreed to add language stating that the number and "varying pitches" of rooflines should be minimized, as a reaction to past projects that featured multiple intersecting rooflines and varying pitches that created a visually busy appearance. The overall guiding principle was articulated as a correction to add "design simplicity and avoidance of bulk," combining a phrase from the historic district ordinance with the Committee's stated concern about overly boxy structures in §17.20(6)(b)(iii).

Regarding visual impact, the Committee agreed that any landscape plan submitted in connection with a building project should not reduce water views between buildings. K. Nelson noted this topic would require additional refinement and suggested setting it aside for further work, as it extends into broader landscaping policy.

House Attachments

K. Nelson introduced the concept of "house attachments" — a newly defined term covering elements such as decks, porches, screened porches, and windowed porches in §17.20(6)(b)(iv). The proposed provision would allow existing attachments to be replaced on a one-for-one basis — a porch replaced by a porch of equal or lesser size, but not upgraded to a screened or windowed enclosure. The Committee noted there is a new definition for "house attachment" in the definitions section §17.09, and members were asked to review it before the next meeting.

Dimensional Standards

The Committee briefly touched on dimensional standards, including a discussion of height limits. The current ordinance sets a maximum height of 23 feet for the principal structure, with a 25-foot allowance for chimneys and other elements. K. Nelson raised the question whether a structure built to only 21 feet should receive the same 25-foot allowance for chimneys, or whether the allowance should be capped at 2 feet above the actual ridge height. No final decision was reached, and the Committee agreed to take up dimensional standards in full at the next meeting. Bristol reminded the Committee that the State Building Code would also need to be contemplated in the final decision.

Held moved, Hoyerman seconded to adjourn at 1:38 PM, all ayes. Motion carried.

Recorded by Kim Roberts – Deputy Clerk